



The Greenwood Library of

# world folktales

STORIES FROM THE GREAT COLLECTIONS

**volume one**

**Africa,  
The Middle East,  
Australia, and  
Oceania**



EDITED BY THOMAS A. GREEN

The  
Greenwood Library  
of  
World Folktales



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Edited by Thomas A. Green

Jack Zipes, Advisory Editor



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# Preface

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**T**he *Greenwood Library of World Folktales* incorporates a broad spectrum of the world's traditional narrative genres for a target audience of educators, students, and the general reader. The introductory notes that precede each of the narratives characterize the ecology and history of the regions from which they are drawn; contextualize the individual item, its characteristics compared with other genres of traditional narrative, and its similarities to related tales in other cultural settings; and strive to establish the relationships between these narratives and other cultural institutions, such as religion, political systems, folk medicine, and material culture. These comments are not intended to be exhaustive. Rather, they are intended to stimulate additional study and discussion.

The following volumes contain a varied collection of folktale types—sacred and secular, fictional and historical—from a wide range of the world's cultures. Although these tales have in most cases been identified in their introductions by terms that are derived from American and European scholarship, within each culturally identified subsection, entries have not been sorted into cross-culturally defined generic categories. This method was decided upon to avoid imposing unwarranted Western misperceptions on indigenous narratives. In a global undertaking of this magnitude, omissions are inevitable; therefore, the best that can be hoped for in this instance is to provide a point of departure for further exploration of this vast subject on the part of the reader.

The collection not only incorporates variants of the narratives that have become “standards” by virtue of their repeated inclusion in folktale anthologies, but also makes a special effort to include those tales that, despite their cultural importance, have been heretofore inaccessible to many potential readers. Such tales were often published in specialized journals or incorporated as data into linguistic or ethnographic studies rather than considered as objects of study in their own right. In other cases, tale collections went out of print before scholars had the opportunity to recognize the intrinsic value of these artifacts from the

## Preface

perspective of contemporary folkloristics. Where possible, the earliest available collections of narratives were consulted to obtain “baseline” tales that represent traditional rather than contemporary repertoires

Although this anthology is designed as an independent collection, readers can benefit from the bibliographies at the end of each volume by consulting them for additional contexts for these narratives both individually and as they relate to the other narratives selected from a given culture. In addition, overviews of folklore theory such as Thomas A. Green’s *Folklore: An Encyclopedia of Beliefs, Customs, Tales, Music, and Art* and reference works that delineate the spectrum of folklore existing in the world’s cultures such as William M. Clements’s *The Greenwood Encyclopedia of World Folklore and Folklife* can provide useful supplemental information.

In terms of academic taxonomies, the narrative genres contained in this four-volume collection include jokes, folktales, legends, myths, and personal experience narratives. Each of these terms and other key terms are highlighted in **boldface** and are defined in the glossary at the end of each volume.

In most cases, narratives are modified from their original forms for the benefit of contemporary readers. In the vast majority of cases, modification has brought the spelling and punctuation of tales into conformity with contemporary American English usage. In some cases, tales have been edited to translate a collector’s attempts at rendering a regional dialect into a dialect of contemporary American English. Occasionally, longer narratives have been abridged while retaining both the style and intent of the originals. Finally, in a small number of cases, alternative terminology has been substituted for terms (particularly racially charged terms) that would prove offensive to contemporary readers. Every effort has been made to perform a minimum amount of modification, however.

Many of the tales included in the collection build on well-known plot structures and include widely distributed narrative motifs. When these are noted, reference is made to Antti Aarne and Stith Thompson, *The Types of the Folktale: A Classification and Bibliography* (cited as AT, followed by the appropriate number) or to Stith Thompson, *The Motif Index of Folk Literature* (cited as Motif, followed by the appropriate letter and numbers). Other indices are based on these two models, some of which are noted at end of this preface.

Following the precedent established by William Clements in *The Greenwood Encyclopedia of World Folklore and Folklife*, the volumes of *The Greenwood Library of World Folktales* are organized in the following fashion:

- Volume 1: Africa, The Middle East, Australia, and Oceania
- Volume 2: Asia
- Volume 3: Europe
- Volume 4: North and South America

Regional divisions are based on the prevailing categories for each continent. In general, these subdivisions are cultural (for example, Hopi, Yoruba, San) or political (Ireland, Italy, India). In certain cases, such as the tales of the African or Jewish Diasporas other strategies have been employed (for example, African American, Sephardim).

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# Introduction to Volume 1

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Volume 1 of *The Greenwood Library of World Folktales* includes continental **Africa** and those islands such as Madagascar customarily classified as belonging to this geographic region by virtue of their proximity to the continent's coast. The volume also includes those North African nations such as Egypt and Morocco that have been classified as Middle Eastern according to some systems. The climate on the vast continent ranges from tropical to subarctic and from rainforests to arid deserts. Cultural exchanges have been documented between indigenous African cultures and Phoenicia, Greece, Rome, and Persia by 300 B.C.E. and between Arabia, China, and the European nations from the seventh century to the present. Therefore, the ecological divisions and the cultural patterns of Africa are extraordinarily diverse. To accommodate this diversity, within the usual geographic divisions of the continent into Northern, Eastern, Western, Central, and Southern Africa, tales as a general rule have been categorized according to the cultural groups from whom they were collected. Thus, within Nigeria are found Efik, Hausa, and Yoruba contributions. This method is practical in contexts in which cultures commonly cross politically imposed national boundaries.

Although, properly speaking, the **Middle East** is located on the Asian rather than the African continent, the proximity of Arabian to Northern African territories and the unifying influence of Islam in much of the area, as well as in parts of Eastern, Northern, and Western Africa makes it practical to include the Middle East within the same volume as Africa. Early civilizations arose in the area of the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers in the vicinity of twenty-first century Iraq. A succession of Eurasian civilizations emerged in the area: Babylonian, Greek, Israelite, Sumerian, Syrian, and Roman—among others. With the rise of Islam on the Arabian Peninsula in the seventh century, an Arabian and later a Turkish Muslim presence came to be felt in the Middle East. All of these cultural traditions left their impact on the folktales of the region.

While tales in this collection are assigned to national categories (that is, Armenia, Syria, Turkey), the arrangement of Middle Eastern materials (like

those of some other regions) present special difficulties. For example, both the Bedouins and the Kurds are distinct cultural entities whose territories extend across the borders of several nations. Palestine, on the other hand, is home to Christian, indigenous, Islamic, and Judaic traditions. These issues are addressed by maintaining the ethnic categories for the Bedouins and the Kurds and by setting up subcategories to accommodate the various religious traditions within the area designated as Palestine. In recognition of the Jewish Diaspora, distinctions have been made between the tales of those Jews who trace their immediate historical origins to Southwest Asia or Africa (the Mizrahim, “Easterners”) as distinct from the Iberian community of Sephardim who fled to North Africa (see “The Weight before the Door,” page 14) after the reconquest from the North African Moors of Portugal and Spain. The Sephardim who owe their origins to Europe as well the European Ashkenazic Jewish community will be considered in Volume 3.

**Oceania** encompasses four distinct regions: **Australia**, **Melanesia**, **Micronesia**, and **Polynesia**. The indigenous populations of Oceania are considered in turn in the present collection, and the classification of each is managed by means of the standard geographic classification of the islands as Australian, Melanesian, Micronesian, and Polynesian. Australia, by virtue of being the most isolated of the world’s continents, allowed its indigenous population to develop diverse traditional lifestyles and languages (estimated at more than 150). The major cultural differences among groups are the results of adaptations to different ecological niches—for example, interior deserts versus coastal areas. Evidence for the time and source of the original population of Australia is not conclusive; however, there is strong support for settlement at least 40,000 years ago from the Indonesian archipelago. Thus, while Australia has been grouped with the Pacific Islands, the languages and cultures of the continent are distinct from the Pacific Islands designated as Melanesia, Micronesia, and Polynesia. The geographic area commonly designated as Melanesia includes the islands of the southwestern portion of Oceania. The northeastern section is labeled Micronesia. Polynesia includes both the islands of the eastern area and the indigenous population of New Zealand—that is, the Maori (who trace their descent from Polynesian immigrants)—despite New Zealand’s proximity to Australia.

# **AFRICA**

## ***Northern Africa***



# EGYPT

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## GIFTS FOR MY SON MOHAMMED

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Sayce, A. H. "Cairene Folklore." *Folklore* 11 (1900): 357–358.

**Date:** ca. 1900

**Original Source:** Egyptian

**National Origin:** Egypt

---

Egypt is located on the Mediterranean and Red Seas. To the south is Sudan, on the west Libya, and on the northeast Israel and the Gaza Strip. From around 8000 B.C.E., Egypt established itself as a major power in Africa: politically, economically, and culturally. Over the millennia, the Greek, Persian, Roman, European, and various Islamic cultures influenced the repertoire of folktales. Since a large portion of the country is given over to the Sahara Desert, the majority of Egypt's population pursues an urban lifestyle clustered in metropolitan centers such as Cairo (the largest city in Africa) and Alexandria, or lives as agriculturalists along the arable stretches watered by the Nile. The division between urban and rural cultures may be seen in the following narrative. As the following tale collected in Cairo during the late nineteenth century demonstrates, the rural agriculturalists, the fellahin (Arabic), were common characters in comic tales and generally were ridiculed on the basis of intellect and ethics by the city dwellers. In the following story, however, the crafty fellah, playing the role of **trickster**, outwits a Turkish soldier who serves as the representative of one of the foreign empires who politically dominated Egypt during the time period in which the tale is set. In this case, therefore, the friction between indigenous Egyptians and the dominant Turks is a more important issue than the urban-rural split. The piastre the fellah uses as a bribe was the coin of the

Ottoman Turkish Empire. The narrative's storyline is a **variant** of "Student from Paradise" (AT 1540).

---

**T**here was once a fellah, who being annoyed with his wife left the village and went away; he came to another village, went to a house there and begged. The mistress came to him, "Where do you come from (she asked)?"

He replied, "I am come from hell."

She said, "Have you not seen my son Mohammed there?"

He answered, "Yes I saw him, poor fellow, naked and hungry."

When she heard that she cried exceedingly, and went and got some clothes, and bread, and money, and gave them to him, saying, "Give these to my son Mohammed along with many remembrances from me."

The fellow took the clothes and went away, saying to himself, "It's not my wife only who is a fool, all women are the same."

Presently the Turkish soldier who was the woman's husband came home and found his wife crying, so he asks, "What's the matter, Fatûna?"

She replied, "A man has come from hell, who has seen my son Mohammed there miserable, and naked, and hungry; so I have given him some linen clothes and some food to take to my son Mohammed."

The soldier cried, "You are a fool; no one ever comes back from hell! Where's the fellow?"

She said, "He is gone in such and such a direction."

The soldier mounted his horse and rode off in order to overtake the fellah and recover from him the linen clothes.

The fellah saw him coming in the distance and hid the clothes in the well of a waterwheel and said to the irrigator, "Take a piastre [coin of the Ottoman Turkish Empire] and bring a stick from the garden yonder."

The lad jumped over the walls; the soldier came and asks the fellah, "Good Sir, has no one passed this way with a bundle of clothes?"

He replied, "Yes, soldier, he has just jumped over into the garden."

The soldier said, "Hold the horse till I come back."

The fellah mounted the horse and took the clothes and went off. The soldier searched and searched; there is no one (to be seen). When he returns from the garden he cannot find the horse. He took his departure and returned home.

His wife came to him, "Where's the horse?"

He answered, "I have sent it to Mohammed in order that he may ride it in hell."

## **A GIFT FOR THE SULTAN**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Sayce, A. H. "Cairene Folklore." *Folklore* 11 (1900): 359–360.

**Date:** ca. 1900

**Original Source:** Egyptian

**National Origin:** Egypt

---

The following folktale of domestic strife is a **variant** of a common **tale type** (for example, “The Silence Wager,” AT 1351). There is no particular indication of stereotyping on the basis of ethnicity or on the rural vs. urban dichotomy discussed in “Gifts for My Son Mohammed” (page 3). As the names Ignoramus and Scold indicate, these are simply **stock characters** in traditional narratives. In addition, the tale reflects the multicultural mix that is typically Egyptian. Power structures that followed in the wake of Islam are apparent in the presence of the Sultan. The character of the “negress slave” is likely to have been Nubian, as Nubians were reported to have entered Cairo from Southern Egypt and the Sudan to serve as domestic servants (Sayce 356). The tale itself is most likely to be Persian in origin.

---

**T**here was a man whose name was Khêba (Ignoramus), who was married to a wife named Nêba (Scold); he was walking one day when he found a very pretty thing, so he said to himself, “It will do as a present to the Sultan.”

He took it and went to the Sultan and said, “Accept this present, O king; I have brought it for you!”

The Sultan said to him, “Tell me what I shall give you in return for it.”

“I want you to fill my house with bread.”

The Sultan replied, “My man, ask for something else.”

He answered, “I want you to fill my house with bread.”

The Sultan ordered accordingly that his house should be filled with bread. When they had filled the house with bread, he and his wife sat down to devour the food.

He said to her, “Get up, Nêba, and moisten the bread!”

She replied, “Get up yourself, and moisten the bread.”

He answered her, and words ran high, as to who should moisten the bread. The two sat opposite one another, but neither he nor she speaks a word.

Now there was a woman with child, who sent her negress slave to fetch Nêba in order that she might help her. When the slave reached the house she began to call to her, “Nêba, wife of Khêba!”

No one answered her. The slave opened the door and found the two sitting opposite each other.

The slave said to her, “Get up, ma’am, and act as midwife.”

She rose and went with her to the house. When the woman had given birth, they killed a sheep, and gave the innards to Nêba. Nêba gave them to the slave and told her to carry them to Khêba.



The slave took them, and went to the house; she cries, “O Khêba, husband of Nêba!” No one answered her.

The slave got angry, opened the door, and went in; there she found Khêba sitting, and said to him, “Take it, Khêba; this is what Nêba has sent you.” No reply was made to her. As he did not answer her, the slave put the tripe round his head, wound the intestines round his neck, and left him and went away.

The dogs smelt the savor (of the tripe); they came gradually nearer and nearer to him. When they got up to him, no one drove them away, so they pulled at the intestines and the fellow falls down; they continue to drag him as far as the Nile.

A fisherman passed by; when he drew up his net, Khêba was in the net. The fisherman cried, “Are you a man or a spirit?” There was no answer. The fisherman thought to himself, “I will take him and make a show of him; I shall make more money thereby than out of my fishing.” Then he threw him over his shoulder and went his way. Nêba went home, but did not find Khêba she said, “Perhaps he has gone to wash the innards.”

She went to the river to see, and found the fisherman carrying him. “What’s the matter, Khêba?” she asked.

“Ah, you have to moisten the bread,” he shouted because she had been the first to speak.

The fisherman exclaimed, “Get down and a curse be on you! Is it only about moistening the bread that you have made this row?”

## **THE TRICKSTER AND THE SULTAN**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Sayce, A. H. “Cairene Folklore.” *Folklore* 11 (1900): 361–364.

**Date:** ca. 1900

**Original Source:** Egyptian

**National Origin:** Egypt

---

Through the character of the first man, the following folktale illustrates the dual nature of the **trickster** figure common not only in the comic tales of Cairo, but cross-culturally. In this tale, he attempts to turn misfortune into gain. When confronted by blocking characters, who imply the corrupt nature of the Turkish sultan’s retainers, he uses his wits to escape harm and punish his persecutors, using the basic plot found in “To Divide Presents and Strokes” (AT 1610). This tale’s final plot twist also suggests that he is able to exact revenge on the neighbor who originally cost him his fortune. This tale is often related as one of the exploits of Nasrudin, also Mullah (Persian, Islamic cleric) Nasrudin, a

trickster who often plays the role of “wise fool” in Islamic tradition. Nasrudin has been a topic of narrative since ca. 1200 C.E. He is often associated with Sufism, an Islamic mystical tradition, but the origins of the figure of Nasrudin have yet to be established. In this folktale, the protagonist is not identified as either Nasrudin, in particular, nor as a holy man, in general.

---

**T**here was once a man who had a thousand piastres [coin of the Ottoman Turkish Empire], but he was afraid to go into business because of fear of losing his money; then he goes away, not wanting to give anything to other people lest he should become poorer.

A neighbor of theirs, a woman, said to his wife, “You had better buy some spring chickens; they will soon grow into fowls, and you can sell each fowl for two piastres and a half or perhaps three piastres, and so you will make a good profit.”

The wife replied, “Very well, when my husband comes I will tell him of it.”

When her husband came in she said to him, “You had better buy some spring chickens so that we may make a good profit out of them. At present ten spring chickens cost a piastre, but after awhile when they grow big, we can sell them for two and a half piastres each, and so make a great deal.”

Her husband replied, “Very good, you are a clever woman.”

So he gave his wife a thousand piastres, and she bought spring chickens with five hundred of them and corn with the (other) five hundred. She put the chickens into a court and crushed the corn and threw it to the chickens, and shut the door upon them. But the kite [a bird of prey] comes and picks out the chickens; the weasel comes and carries off some others.

After a little time they went to see the chickens. They found only one of them left. Then the man said to his wife, “Cook the cock and we will dine off it.” His wife killed the cock and cooked it.

When her husband comes, he said to her, “Who can dine off a thousand piastres? It can only be the sultan; if I should make such a dinner everyone would say, this fellow is mad, no one dines for a thousand piastres except the sultan.”

So he took the cock in a dish and took the bread and went to the palace of the sultan.

The porter said to him, “Hullo, where are you going, good sir?”

He replied, “I am going to the sultan to give him the cock.”

The porter answered, “If the sultan is favorable to you, what will you give me?”

He replied, “I will give you a quarter.”

He said, “Very well, go!”

He reached the second gate; the second porter asked him, “Where are you going?”

He answered, "I have a present for the sultan."

The porter said, "If the sultan grants you a favor, what will you give me?"

He replied, "I will give you a quarter."

So the other said, "Very good, go."

He reached the third gate; the porter asked, "Where are you going?"

He replied, "I have a present for the sultan."

The porter said, "If the sultan grants you a favor what will you give me?"

He answered, "I will give you a quarter."

He said, "Very good, pass on."

He reached the fourth gate; the porter asked him, "Where are you going, good sir?"

He replied, "I have a present for the sultan."

He asked, "If the sultan grants you a favor, what will you give me?"

He replied, "I will give you a quarter."

The porter said, "Very good, pass on."

The fellow entered the palace and found the sultan and the vizier, and the sultan's children, sitting there. He makes obeisance to the sultan; the sultan asks him, "What have you got, good sir?"

He answered, "I have a present for you."

The sultan said, "A present, of what sort is it?"

He answered, "Food."

The sultan said, "All right, I have not yet eaten." They placed the food in the middle of them and sat down to eat. The sultan said to the fellow, "Set on!" [literally, display]

He replied, "Your servant!" and took the cock, broke its head and gave it to the sultan, saying, "The head! You shall take the head."

And he gave the neck to the vizier, saying, "The neck! You shall have the neck."

And he gave the children the wings and said to them, "The wings! And you shall take the wings."

The sultan exclaimed, "What's this, O vizier?"

Then the vizier replied, "The head includes all the people; therefore you take the head."

The sultan was greatly pleased with the fellow and said, "Ask what I shall give you."

He answered, "I want eight hundred blows with the kurbash [a whip about one meter long of Turkish origin]."

The sultan said, "My man, think of something else!"

He said, "No, I want eight hundred blows with the kurbash." When they were going to give him the eight hundred lashes, he cried, "Wait a little! I have a partner!"

They went to the first gate; he said to them, "Give the Nubian two hundred!" When they had given the fellow two hundred blows, they went to the second gate; he told them to give the porter of it another two hundred. Next they came to the third gate; and he told them to give the porter of it another

two hundred. They went to the fourth gate and he told them to give the porter there another two hundred.

The sultan asked, "What is the meaning of this, good sir?"

He replied, "Your majesty, when I came the fellow said to me, 'If the sultan grants you a favor what will you give me?' I answered, I would give a quarter. Each of the porters asked the same question and I made the same reply, 'I will give you a quarter.' So if your honor wishes to give me anything, each will take a quarter, and I shall have nothing. Now each has taken a quarter and I have had nothing."

The sultan laughs greatly; he was pleased with the fellow and gave him plenty of *bakshish* [a bribe, the term is apparently Turkish in origin]. So he went back to his house and was happy.

He had a neighbor, a woman; when she saw that he had received plenty of *bakshish*, she said to her husband, "Come, I will prepare two cocks, and do you give them to the king in order that he may give you plenty of money as he has done to our neighbor."

He replied, "Very well!" She prepared for him four cocks and a little bread, and he took the meat and the bread and went to the palace.

As soon as the porter saw him, he said nothing for fear; so the fellow passed from the first gate to the last.

He found the sultan, and the vizier, and the children, sitting, and made obeisance. The sultan asked, "What have you got, good sir?"

He answered, "I have a present for you."

The sultan asked, "What is the present?"

He answered, "Food."

The sultan said, "Very well, I have not yet eaten."

He put the food in the middle of them, and they sat down to eat.

The sultan said to him, "Set on!" The fellow gave a cock to each.

The sultan said, "Good sir, why is there nothing for yourself?"

He replied, "The wise man eats of the sauce."

The vizier said to the sultan, "This fellow is a fool: he makes us fools and himself the wise man."

The sultan grew angry with the man and said, "He must be beaten well."

Then they beat him and turned him out of the palace."

## ABU-NOWÂS

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Sayce, A. H. "Cairene Folklore." *Folklore* 11 (1900): 365–367.

**Date:** ca. 1900

**Original Source:** Egyptian

**National Origin:** Egypt

The protagonist of the following tale, Abu-Nowâs, Abu-Nuwas al-Hasan ben Hani al-Hakami (756–813 C.E.), was the most famous Arab poet of his era, the second Muslim Dynasty (749–1258 C.E.). Born in Persia, he achieved fame in the cultural center of Baghdad. His reputation both as a libertine and as a court poet resulted in his inclusion as a fictional character in several tales of the *Thousand and One Nights* (*The Arabian Nights*). In the following narrative, he is cast as a **trickster** figure who typically imperils himself through tomfoolery, then frees himself by his wits.

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One day the Sultan told Abu-Nowâs that his wife said a smell went up from her during the night.

Abu-Nowâs replied, “O Sultan, we will contrive something to remove the smell.” Then he brought a pipe, and went to the soldiers who came by night to the Sultan’s palace, telling them that when they hear the watchman overhead they must assemble in the Sultan’s room.

During the night the Sultan was asleep and his wife said, “A smell rises from me!”

Then the soldiers thronged together to the Sultan and the Sultan said, “What’s the matter?” The soldiers answered that Abu-Nowâs had been the cause of it.

In the morning the Sultan said to the vizier, “I never want to see Abu-Nowâs again.”

The vizier replied, “If you don’t want to see Abu-Nowâs, we will throw him into the well where the ape will eat him.”

When Abu-Nowâs comes in the morning the vizier said to him, “The Sultan will throw you into the well today!”

Abu-Nowâs answered that he would come after two or three hours. Then he went and bought a sheep; he bought also a drum and bagpipes; he put them into a saddlebag and went to the Sultan.

Then the vizier said. “What is all this, Abu-Nowâs?”

He replied, “I want food, because the people who are dead have had nothing to eat.” He took the food with him, and then they took him to the well.

Then Abu-Nowâs said that the ape would kill him if he is let slowly down into the well. And the people say, “All right!” When he is let slowly down into the well, he saw the ape in the well; he gave him pieces of meat one by one, and the ape grows satiated.

The people above say, “It’s all over! Abu-Nowâs has been dropped into the well, and the ape has eaten him!” But Abu-Nowâs took the drum, and when the ape grows hungry he gives him a piece of the flesh. The people come to see Abu-Nowâs; they see him making a merry noise at the bottom of the well.

Then the people say to the Sultan, “Always when you throw a man into the well the ape eats him at once, but now Abu-Nowâs beats on his kettledrum, and plays with the bagpipes in the well.”

The Sultan went to the well and said, “Abu-Nowâs!”

Abu-Nowâs answered, “What do you want?”

He says, “Come!”

Abu-Nowâs replies, “No, I don’t want to, I am contented here.” Then the people let down ropes and draw Abu-Nowâs up from the well. And he said, “I was contented in the well; why do you come to me?”

# MOROCCO

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## THE REASON FOR ABSTAINING FROM WINE AND PORK

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Green, Feridah Kirby. "Folklore from Tangier." *Folklore* 19 (1908): 441–443.

**Date:** ca. 1906

**Original Source:** Moorish

**National Origin:** Morocco

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Contemporary Morocco borders Algeria to the east, and the long coast extends from the Atlantic Ocean on the west to the Mediterranean Sea in the north. Across the northern expanse of water lies Spain into which Islamic Morocco extended its influence in eighth century C.E. The population is primarily Berber (an indigenous Northwest African culture speaking languages classified as Afro Asiatic) and Arab (related groups who originated in the Arabian Peninsula of Northwest Asia in the area where the Asia and Africa meet). The Arabs brought their customs, culture, and their religion, Islam, all of which profoundly influenced the indigenous Berbers. The following pair of **legends** are Arabic in origin and offer explanations for the Muslim prohibitions on wine and pork. These narratives demonstrate the profound impact of Islam on the narrative repertoire of Morocco.

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**T**he reason we, the faithful followers of the word revealed through the agency of the holy Nebi ["prophet," that is, Mohammed] touch not wine nor the flesh of swine is this: In the days when the Prophet lived on the Earth there also lived his Sohaba or disciples, holy men who are now called

Saints or Shereefs [also, sharif] likewise, though their glory is a lesser glory than that pertaining to the most glorious Si Mohammed. Among them were Sidna ["our lord," Arabic] Suleyman [Solomon, ruler of Israel] and his father, Sidna Daoud [David, father of Solomon], Sidna Alkoma, and Sidna Ali, and Sidna Mousa, and Sidna Haroun, and Sidna Aisse, venerated by the Nasara [Christians], and many others whose names I cannot remember at the present moment, but who all did great and noble deeds and converted many unbelievers. And these Sohaba in the intervals between their Holy Wars used to hunt and feast together, and they ate of the flesh of the pig, and drank wine even as do the Nasara to this day.

And it came to pass that one day one of these Shereefs, being inflamed with drink, hit his mother a most grievous blow, and when his drunkenness had left him he repented with a great repentance. And he drew forth his sword and was about to cut off his right hand, when the Nebi saw him and called out, "Stay, oh my son! Why art thou about to mutilate thyself thus?"

And the Sid with tears answered, "With this hand, when I was inflamed with wine, did I hit my mother."

And the Prophet said, "Lo, the fault is not with thy hand, neither with thee, oh my son, but with the wine that inflamed thee. Of a truth the juice of the grape is a servant of the Evil One, and through it does he tempt the Faithful to their destruction." And he forbade his Sohaba and all their followers to drink wine again.

And for the not eating of pork, it is thus. Once when the Prophet was away, the Sohaba had a hunting party and slew many pigs and had a feast and were very merry.

And when Si Mohammed returned, one of his disciples, a poor man, came unto him and cried, "I have a claim, oh my Lord."

And the Prophet said "Speak on," and the man said, "I was prevented from joining in the hunt of the other Shereefs, and when they returned and the spoil was divided as is our wont, and they sent to each man a portion, my portion they forgot. And thou knowest, oh my Lord, that I am a poor man, and a piece of meat is not easily procured in my household."

Then said Sidna, "This is not right," and to the other Sohaba he said, "Give the man his portion," and they said, "It is some days since, and what was not eaten we destroyed and none is left."

Then was Sidna wroth, and he said, "Henceforth, for the sake of this my poor disciple whom ye have scorned, that portion of the pig which should have been his shall be cursed, and no true believer shall eat of it."

And the Sohaba bowed their heads and said, "It is well." But when they came to think how they had divided the pig and what pieces had been portioned to each, they found that no man could remember which piece should have been allotted to the poor man, and so for fear of offence they determined



to abstain from the eating of pig; and thus do we also, we, their sons and followers.

## THE WEIGHT BEFORE THE DOOR

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Green, Feridah Kirby. "Folklore from Tangier." *Folklore* 19 (1908): 453–455.

**Date:** ca. 1906

**Original Source:** Moorish

**National Origin:** Morocco

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From the eighth through the fifteenth centuries, portions of the Iberian Peninsula (now occupied by Portugal and Spain) were under Moorish domination. During this period, cities such as Cordoba, Granada, and Seville were established as citadels of learning under a tolerant Islamic rule. Among the groups inhabiting the Iberian Peninsula was the Sephardic Jewish community. The Sephardim (as they came to be called) were persecuted along with Iberian Muslims from Spain and Portugal after the "Reconquest" and the fall of the final Moorish stronghold of Granada. Many of the persecuted fled to Morocco. In North Africa the Sephardim not only escaped the Inquisition that followed the Reconquest, they became valued members of the Moroccan community. The status of the faithful Jewish guardian in the following tale demonstrates the degree to which the Sephardim were assimilated into Moorish society.

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There lived once a man so rich that he measured his money by the mood [a unit of measure equivalent to approximately one bushel], as we poverty-stricken ones measure barley or bran. And it came to pass that he fell very ill, and feeling that his last hour had come, he called his son unto him, and gave over to him all his wealth and property, and said to him, "O my son, I leave thy welfare in the hands of the Almighty, and to the care of such and such a one, a Jew, who is my friend. Harken thou to his words even as though they were mine. Moreover, I have given him charge to find thee a bride when thee desirest to wed" And having blessed his son, the man died.

Now, in course of time the young man desired to marry, and so, according to his father's last words, he went to the Jew and informed him. And the Jew said, "It is well," and bestirred himself and found a damsel, and caused a suitable feast to be prepared and all things necessary.

And the morning before the amareeyah [large cage-like box in which the bride was carried to her groom's house] was sent he called the young man and

said to him, "Oh son of my friend, I have found thee a bride; but before we may know that she is the one destined for thee by Allah, it is necessary that thou shouldst do this. Tonight, after the amareeyah has been brought to thy house and the bride is seated in thy chamber awaiting thee and before thou goest up to her, I will cause a heavy weight to be placed before the door of the room and thou wilt endeavor to remove it. If she be the wife that is fitting for thee, thou wilt succeed; but if not, know that she is not for thee, and divorce her tomorrow without so much as seeing her face."

And the young man wondered, but he said, "It is well."

And that night was the amareeyah brought with much pomp and rejoicing, and the bride was taken to the man's apartment and seated there to await him in a rich robe, with her eyes closed and a veil over her face. And the bridegroom, after tarrying a while in the mosque with the young men of his acquaintance, came up to the door of the room; and it was ajar so that he could see the shrouded figure, but before it lay the weight of which the Jew had spoken. It was round like a ball and not large, so that the youth thought, "I will lift it with ease and tarry not to go in unto my wife." But when he came to try, behold he could not move it, no, not the breadth of a fingernail, and he strove with all his strength to move it by lifting or pushing or rolling it, but in vain, and he did not enter the room.

And the next morning he went unto the Jew and told him, and the Jew said, "Thou must divorce this woman, oh my friend, and I will seek thee another." And this was done.

And the Jew, after he had found a second damsel, caused a yet finer feast to be prepared, and the amareeyah was brought, even like the first time, and the bride was seated in the young man's room, and lo, when he came to enter, the weight again lay before the slightly open door, and though he saw the veiled girl and strove with all his strength to remove the obstacle and go to her he could not, nay, though he struggled till dawn.

And when the Jew heard that the young man had failed once more, he sighed and said, "Neither is this the wife destined for thee by the All-Wise. Let us send her back to her father and I will seek again." And all was done as he said.

And when the young man came for the third time to try to enter the bridal chamber, behold for the third time he saw that the way was blocked. And he said, "But this time I will remove the weight, or if I cannot I will try no more, for if I do not succeed this time I shall know that it is decreed that I should die single." And he bent his back and seized the ball with his two hands and pulled at it till he groaned with weariness, but in vain.

And the maiden within heard his groans, and she said to herself, "Shall I let this man who is my husband kill himself without striving to help him?" And she arose and laid aside her veil and her outer robe of gold and pushed herself through the half-open door. And she approached the young man who was wrestling with the heavy weight, and she said, "Let me help my Lord." And the two

placed their hands together on the ball and pushed with all their force, and lo, it rolled on one side of the door, so that the entrance was free. And the young man looked on the fair face of her who had come to his aid, and saw that she in truth was the bride destined for him, and he embraced her and the two entered the chamber together.

## TALE OF A LANTERN

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Green, Feridah Kirby. "Folklore from Tangier." *Folklore* 19 (1908): 443–453.

**Date:** ca. 1906

**Original Source:** Moorish

**National Origin:** Morocco

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The city of Fez provides the setting for the following tale. Fez was founded by the Idrisid Dynasty of North Africa under the leadership of Idris I (Idris ibn 'Abd Allah ibn Hasan II, ?–791) who is alluded to as Mulai Dris in "Tale of a Lantern." His son Idris II (791–828) developed the area of Fez, already colonized by his father, as a royal residence and capital at the turn of the ninth century C.E. The city ultimately became a major city for trade, science, and theology. Another of the good Sephardim characters rescues the protagonist and sets society back in order in this narrative. The Mellah, the Jewish quarter, accommodated the sizable Jewish population of the city.

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There was once a man, a rich merchant of Fez, who had a very beautiful wife to whom he was greatly devoted. He gave her all that her heart desired, and never allowed another woman, whether white or black, to share her place in his life.

One day while they two were sitting over the evening meal, he drew from his bag a pair of very beautifully wrought silver bracelets and gave them to her, saying, "See if these will fit thy arms, beloved, for this afternoon my fellow merchants refused to buy them from the auctioneer, saying, 'no woman had wrists small enough to slip them on,' and I knew in my heart that my Fatumah would find them a world too large." And Fatumah, smiling, slipped the bracelets on with ease, for surely they fitted her as though they had been made to measure.

Then said Fatumah, "Oh my lord, grant me one request."

And he said, "It is granted, on my head be it."

And Fatumah said, "Should it please the Almighty that I should die before my lord, will my lord promise that he will wed again she whom these bracelets, his munificent gift, will fit?" And the merchant promised.

“Nay,” said she, “but thou shalt swear, and Dada here shall be witness.” And he swore a solemn oath, and the old black woman, who had been Fatumah’s nurse, was witness.

And shortly after, it was decreed that Fatumah should give birth to a daughter, and die.

But the babe lived, and to it was given the name of Shumshen N’har, and the old Dada cared for her and brought her up, even as the daughters of Sultans are brought up. And she grew daily more beautiful so that she surpassed even the loveliness of her mother, and her father regarded her as the apple of his eye.

Now when Shumshen N’har had reached the age of fourteen, the relations and friends of her father spoke to him very seriously, saying, “It is necessary that thou shouldst marry again. Behold thy daughter is growing up and she ought to have a husband found for her, and who could arrange for her wedding so fittingly as her stepmother would? Wouldst thou leave such an important matter to the Dada? Moreover, when thy daughter is married, thy house will be empty and thou wilt require more than ever a wife to cherish thee and care for thy welfare.”

And the merchant saw that they spoke the truth, and said, “It is well. I will wed.” That evening when the Dada stood before him to give an account of her stewardship that day and to hear his wishes, he told her what his friends’ advice was, and that he had determined to follow it.

Then said the Dada, “Has my lord forgotten the oath which he swore to the Lilla Fatumah, on whose soul be peace?”

And the merchant said, “Nay, prepare thou the bracelets, so that when I hear of a suitable bride, thou mayest take them to her and see if they will fit her arms, and if they do, we will know that she is the wife Allah has destined for me, and if not, we will seek further.”

And the Dada kissed his hand and said, “On my head be it.”

Soon after the merchant told the Dada, “Go to the house of such a one. I hear he seeks a husband for his daughter. Maybe she is the one who will do for me.”

And the Dada went even as her lord commanded, but in vain. When the young girl tried to put the bracelets on, they stuck on her thumb bone, though she pushed until her hand was as white as milk. And thus it happened many times, so that the Dada grew weary of going from house to house with the bracelets; and all who saw them marveled at their beauty, and at the smallness of the wrists for which they had been made.

And it came to pass that when the Dada returned from her tenth or twelfth essay, it was late in the evening, and she put down her haik [North African outer garment, a cloak], and the handkerchief containing the bracelets in one corner of the kitchen while she hastened to prepare the evening meal.

And the Lilla Shumshen N’har entered the kitchen to speak with her and to help her. And she said, “I will fold thy haik for thee, oh Dada, and put it

away lest it get soiled.” And when she lifted the haik, she saw the handkerchief knotted in a parcel. Then she said, “Lo, what has Dada here?” and she opened the handkerchief, and when she saw the bracelets she admired them exceedingly and examined them carefully and then she tried them on, for she thought they must be a pair prepared for her by her father, and lo, the bracelets slipped on to her wrists and rested on her arms as though they had been made to her measure.

Then did Shumshen N’har clap her hands and call to her servant, saying, “See, Dada, how beautiful these bracelets are, and how well they fit me. Did my father buy them for me?” And the Dada came with haste and looked, and fell on the floor in a swoon, for she feared greatly.

And Shumshen N’har called the other maids, and they poured water on her face and rubbed her hands till she revived; but she would not tell them what ailed her, but groaned heavily, and then the voice of the master was heard, and Shumshen N’har ran to her own apartments with the bracelets forgotten on her arms, for she feared she knew not what. And that night, when the household was quiet, the Dada stood before her master and recounted to him what had befallen.

Then was that merchant greatly perplexed, and the next day he called all his chief friends and the learned men and the Kadi [village judge], and laid all things before them. And for a long time they talked and wondered, and sought to find a way out of the difficulty, but they found none.

Then did the Kadi say to the merchant, “Oh my son, seeing that thou hast sworn this solemn oath to thy wife, on whose soul the Almighty have mercy, before witnesses that thou wilt marry the woman whom these bracelets will fit, and seeing that these bracelets fit only thy daughter, Shumshen N’har, though thou hast tried them on other maidens, it seemeth unto me that thou must marry her. And if it does not please the All-Wise One to open a door of escape for thee before the wedding, thou canst but divorce her the day after the marriage ceremony and perchance thus thou may accomplish what is written in the Book of Fate.”

And the merchant bowed his head and agreed to what the Kadi said. And a wedding day was appointed, and the merchant went and lived in another house belonging unto him, leaving his former home to Shumshen N’har and the Dada, who set about preparing for the marriage, but with tears and lamentations as though she was preparing for a funeral.

As to Shumshen N’har, she shut herself into her own room and would see no one, and prayed day and night with tears that death might release her. And it came to pass one evening, that as the Dada was bargaining in the courtyard with a Jew, a jeweler, about sundry ornaments of gold that he was preparing, that the moans of Shumshen N’har struck on his ear, and he inquired as to the reason of her grief, and the Dada recounted to him the story.

And the Jew, being a charitable man, and having daughters of his own, was moved with pity for Shumshen N’har. And he said to the Dada, “Verily, this is

a sad tale thou hast related to me, oh my mistress. May it please the Almighty to interpose and avert the evil.”

And he said, “Wallah, my tongue cleaveth to my throat with my wonder and pity. Give me, I pray, a drink of water to steady me before I go forth into the streets.” And the Dada went away to seek a cup.

And whilst she was gone the jeweler whispered at the door of Shumshen N’har’s room, “Oh Lilla, fear not, I will aid thee, God willing.”

And she said, “The blessing of Mulai Dris rest on you, oh charitable man.”

Then said the Jew with haste, “I will send a large lantern for thee to see. Hide thyself in it and I will get thee away from this place,” but before he could say more the Dada returned with the water. And the Jew left, promising to send all the ornaments of gold with his apprentice so that the Dada might show them to her master before she paid for them.

And the next morning the apprentice of the Jew came, and he brought with him a most beautiful lantern made of silver inlaid with gold, and colored glass, and so large that it had to be carried by two men. And the apprentice said, “My master has made this lantern for the son of the Sultan who is about to be wedded to the daughter of his uncle, Lilla Ameenah, and it is to be carried in front of the amareeyah. And my master has sent it for thy master to see, so that if it pleaseth him such another may be made for his wedding.”

And the Dada said, “Well, but my lord does not live here and I cannot carry this great lantern, as I can these jewels, from this house to where he lives, so that he may see it.”

And the apprentice said, “Suffer it to remain here a little while, oh my mistress, for I have paid and dismissed the porters who brought it, and I will go quickly to my master and ask him whether he be willing that I should hire two other porters and carry it to where your master now dwells.”

And the Dada said, “Well, but it is Friday and about eleven o’clock. If you go now, my lord will be at the Mosque. Come back this evening.”

And the boy replied, “I will come back at Dehhor [first call to prayer after mid-day, around 2:00 P.M.] so that thy lord may have time to see it and decide before sunset.” And he went off, leaving the lantern in the courtyard covered with a sheet.

And Shumshen N’har watched from the little window in her door till she saw that the Dada and the other women were busied elsewhere, and then she ran and entered into the lantern, seating herself among the candlesticks, and shutting the door after her. No sooner had she entered it when there came a knocking at the house door, and one of the slave children went to it. There was the jeweler himself and his apprentice and two porters, and the jeweler told how he had come to fetch away the lantern, for a message had come from the Sultan’s house that it should be sent there immediately.

And the two porters lifted the lantern, and the Jew was directing them how to carry it to his shop in the Mellah, when another messenger came from the

Sultan's wife about the lantern, and he interposed, saying, "Take it at once to the palace."

"But, my lord," said the Jew, "I have something yet to do to the door. At present it will not open or shut properly, so I have locked it, and the wife of our blessed Lord the Sultan will not be able to see the interior."

"What matter, dog," said the Sultan's slave rudely.

"Our Lady wishes to see it now, and as to the door, thou canst arrange it tomorrow or next day," so the jeweler perforce let the lantern be carried into the palace with its precious burden.

By the time the porters arrived with the lantern, the Sultan's wife had lost all desire to see it, so the slave had it placed in a corner of the apartment of the Prince, for whose wedding it had been ordered, and left it there, still draped with its sheet.

Now the Prince, whose name was Abd-el-Kebir, had after the morning prayer gone for a long ride outside Fez, and returned to the palace late that evening, and so weary with his exertions that he ordered his people to bring him some supper into his room, and then to leave him to rest. And after partaking of the meal he threw himself on a couch and fell asleep.

Meanwhile Shumshen N'har had remained all day concealed in the lantern, scarce daring to breathe, until, overcome by weariness, she too slept. When she awoke it was about midnight, and she was consumed with hunger. Emboldened by the quiet that reigned around, she opened the door of the lantern and peeped out. She saw that she was in a lofty, spacious room, sumptuously furnished, and lit by a large lamp that hung in the centre of an arch. Beneath this lamp was a small table with a tray and food, and in the recess beyond, on a divan, lay a most beautiful youth fast asleep.

At first, overcome by fear and bashfulness, Shumshen N'har retreated back into her lantern, but her hunger was too much for her. "After all," said she, "this youth seems too sound asleep to awake easily, and the food is not too near unto him. I will creep out, making less noise than a mouse, and assuage my hunger, and return ere ever he sees me." So she stole to the table side, and began eating with fear and trembling. But gradually curiosity made her creep closer to where he lay, so that she might the better see his features, and their beauty was such that she forgot all, but bent over closer and closer, and he, feeling that someone approached him, awoke suddenly.

At first these two glorious creatures gazed speechless at each other, and then with a cry Shumshen N'har strove to flee, but Mulai Abd-el-Kebir seized her caftan and implored her in earnest tones to fear naught, but to recount to him how it was that she was there. And his honeyed words prevailed on Shumshen N'har, so that her fear departed, and she told unto the Prince all her tale.

And Mulai Abd-el-Kebir comforted her, and made her eat food and rest on his divan, and he said, "I will devise a way that thou escape from this dreadful thing that thy people wish to do unto thee, and in the meanwhile thou shalt

remain hidden in thy lantern in this room, and none shall know that thou art here till I can find some other place where thou wilt be safe." And Shumshen N'har and the Prince talked together till the morning light peeped in at the window. And then she returned into her lantern and lay on some cushions he had placed there, and Mulai Abd-el-Kebir called his slaves and said, "Let no one enter this room whilst I am out, and this evening place food there even as ye did last night."

And thus it happened for three days. Every evening when the palace was quiet, Shumshen N'har emerged from her lantern and ate with the Prince, and spent the whole night in converse with him. And the heart of Abd-el-Kebir was filled with love for her, for her beauty was great, and he swore unto her by a great oath that he would save her from her father, and that he would marry her, and in token he gave her his ring, which was a diamond set in silver. And Shumshen N'har loved him with a love greater even than that which he had for her.

And on the fourth day Prince Abd-el-Kebir went with his young men to hunt gazelle, and whilst he was away, his sister, the Lilla Heber, said to her favorite slave. "Mesoda, I will go to my brother's apartments this morning, for the air there is cooler than in mine, and I know that he will not return till evening," and Mesoda said, "It is well," and the two went to the door of Mulai Abd-el-Kebir's rooms.

And the slave that was stationed there endeavored to stop them, saying, "Sidna said none were to enter there," but Mesoda chide him, saying, "Knowest thou not that is his own sister, the Lilla Heber, who wishes to enter?" and the slave feared and let them pass.

And Lilla Heber was much pleased with her brother's room, for it was much cooler than in the woman's court, and the windows opened into a small court full of flowers, and from them one could see the roofs of all Fez. Moreover, the room was filled with beautiful and strange things, and the Lilla and Mesoda amused themselves examining them all.

And Mesoda lifted the sheet off the lantern, saying, "Behold this splendid lantern, oh Lilla. It is for the wedding of thy noble brother and the Lilla Ameenah."

Lilla Heber replied, "It is truly a magnificent thing, and how large it is. I believe I could enter it." And she strove to open it, and Mesoda helped her, and at last they managed to open it, and there lay on some cushions a lovely maiden asleep. And when Lilla Heber saw her, her anger was great and her jealousy was kindled, and she said to Mesoda, "Roll this evil thing in a mattress and bear her forth to the baker's and have her burnt in the oven, saying the mattress is infested with lice."

And Mesoda did as the Princess commanded, stuffing a handkerchief into Shumshen N'har's mouth, and she gave a piece of gold to the slave at the door so that he might not tell Mulai Abd-el-Kebir who had entered the rooms.



And Shumshen N'har, rolled in the mattress and bound about with cords, was taken to the chief oven, and the master thereof told to bake the bale thoroughly, so as to kill the vermin.

But, thanks be to God, the baker's wife saw the bale, and when her husband told her that it was from the Sultan's palace she said, "I will examine it before we put it into the oven, for perhaps it may have gold or silk embroideries on it that may spoil with the heat, and also, perhaps, I may get rid of the vermin in some other manner." And when she cut the cords and the mattress fell open, there within lay neither gold nor silver, nor noisome insects, but a fair and slim young damsel with a face like the silver moon, and hair that covered her as though with a garment. And the baker's wife took her into her own room and gave her reviving drinks until she opened her eyes, and then Shumshen N'har told her all her tale, and the baker's wife recounted how the Lilla Heber's slaves had brought her to the oven in a mattress.

Then did the baker's wife consult with her husband, and they agreed to keep Shumshen N'har hidden from all people, and they clothed her in poor clothes, like unto their own daughter, whose name was Aisha, and Shumshen N'har lived with these good people and assisted them in their labors. And Aisha was never tired of hearing her adventures, and made Shumshen N'har show unto her the bracelets that had been the cause of all her woe, and she tried them on, and lo, they fitted her as if they had been made for her; for Aisha also was a pretty maid and graceful, though not fit to be compared with Shumshen N'har.

But the ring of Mulai Abd-el-Kebir, Shumshen N'har showed to no one, and of his promise to wed her she said naught; but in her heart she dwelt on these things, and when Aisha and her parents slept, she lay awake and wept, and thought on the beauty and goodness of Mulai Abd-el-Kebir, and prayed to Allah and our patron Mulai Drees to keep him from all ill and to restore her to him.

Meanwhile, in the palace of the Sultan reigned woe and sorrow and distress, for Mulai Abd-el-Kebir, the favorite of the Ruler, had fallen sick, and shut himself up in his rooms, and would see no one and would eat no food, but lamented day and night. And no one knew the cause of his suffering. And his mother and his father rose up to comfort him, but he would have none of them.

And his sister, Lilla Heber, said, "Let be, when he is wed with his cousin Ameenah, all will be cured," and she advised her mother to have the wedding accomplished.

But when the Lila's words were repeated to Mulai Abd-el-Kebir he cursed her most dreadfully, and he swore that he would never wed with Lilla Ameenah, no, not if all women died and only she were left.

And the Sultan was greatly perplexed. But the Sultan's wife, she who was mother to Abd-el-Kebir, said, "What matter this talk of brides and weddings? If my son eat not, he will die," and she caused it to be cried through the streets of

Fez that all women versed in cookery might prepare a dish of food which would be taken before the Prince, Mulai Abd-el-Kebir, so that peradventure he might be tempted to partake of one, and thus eat and live. Moreover, the wife of the Sultan promised a rich reward to her whose cookery would tempt her beloved son to eat.

And on the first day many dishes were brought to the rooms of Mulai Abd-el-Kebir, and he glanced at them, but with loathing, and would not touch so much as a grain of kuskusoo. And the second day it happened thus. And that evening the baker recounted to his wife how the Prince had fallen ill and how all the women of Fez were vying with each other to make delicacies for him, so that his oven, yea, and every other oven, were filled with delicacies.

And Shumshen N'har heard what he said, and when he had returned to his oven she said to his wife, "Oh my mother, let me try also whether I can tempt the Prince to eat." And she got couscous, and some fat chickens and onions and vegetable marrows and spices and eggs and dates and raisins, and many other things. And she made a most succulent dish of couscous, and the outside she ornamented most lavishly, and on it she wrote "Bismillah" [in the name of God] and "Long life to our Lord" in cinnamon, and under that she wrote the word "Shumshen N'har," and inside the couscous, right in the middle, she hid the diamond ring.

And it came to pass, that on the third day as the slaves passed before the couch of Abd-el-Kebir, carrying the various dishes that he might see them, that he caught sight of the couscous that Shumshen N'har had prepared, and he read what she had written thereon, and he beckoned to the slave who carried it to set it before him. And the Prince sat up and plunged his hand into the dish, and he felt the ring and he drew forth his hand and ate.

And then he said, "Verily, this is good couscous. Find out who brought it."

And they said, "My Lord, my Lord's baker brought it and his daughter cooked it." And Lilla Heber's slave Mesoda was standing by, and she heard and trembled and fled unto her mistress. And Mulai Abd-el-Kebir arose and mounted his horse and went down to the house where lived the baker.

And the baker's wife brought out Shumshen N'har veiled unto him, and she spoke to him, and he knew her voice. And she told him all that had befallen her, and how she had found a substitute to be her father's bride, even Aisha the baker's daughter, and Mulai Abd-el-Kebir took her home to the palace and married her with great rejoicings. And the lantern was carried before her amareeyah by two porters.

And Lilla Ameenah was wedded to Mulai Abd-el-Kebir brother, Mulai Abd-el-Wahed, and Lilla Heber was sent by the Sultan to Tafilet as a wife for the governor thereof, and Mesoda her slave accompanied her.

And for the Jew, the charitable jeweler, there was a rich recompense.

And Shumshen N'har's and Mulai Abd-el-Kebir's love was blessed by many children, and they lived for many many years in prosperity and happiness.

## THE JINNS

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Green, Feridah Kirby. "Folklore from Tangier." *Folklore* 19 (1908): 455–457.

**Date:** ca. 1906

**Original Source:** Moorish

**National Origin:** Morocco

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The jinns of Arabic folklore are believed to be malicious spirits who are shape-shifters (can change their forms) or become invisible at will. As the first of the following supernatural **legends** states, concerning a type of female jinn, "No other than the bewitched man can see her." In the second and third legends, the jinn assumes the form of an animal. The Tolba are religious scholars, such as Talib Faroosh mentioned in the third legend, who are often reputed to have occult powers.

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**A**s to Jinoon, it is wonderful how many they be, and what shapes they take. One very evil kind take the shape of women.

Traveling at night alongside of a marsh, all mud and with little water, a man may sometimes hear a woman making that cry we call the Zachr-hut. If he searches, he will see her submerged to her breast in the mud. A fair woman, beautifully clothed, and apparently no whit different to others.

If he be wise he will flee from her, but if foolish, he will stop and speak. And she will answer with soft words, and he will help her out of her muddy home, and take her to wife. Then will she bewitch him, and take all his senses from him, and make him do mad things, and perhaps finally kill him.

Mostly will her power be on him when he approaches water, rivers, springs, or marshes. No other than the bewitched man can see her, but it is well known what has befallen him. He himself will declare that he is wed to her, and will describe her. Such a man lived in our village once, and I myself have seen him when a lad. Sometimes the "Tolba" are able to help to exorcise the witch, but over some evil spirits no one can wield power.

Once a man was sitting in a mosque and he heard the cry of a hedgehog, even as that of a young child. So he rose and searched for it, and finding it, caught and rolled it in a secure ball with his garment. He tied it in most firmly, but when he came to open the bundle, behold, though the knots were untouched, the hedgehog was gone. It was a jinn.

Once another man was walking along a road when he saw a fine black goat, apparently straying. Said he, "I will take this beast to the Sook [market], and if no one claims it, I will sell it," so catching it, he flung it over his shoulders and went on.

Scarcely had he gone a few steps when there occurred a wonder! The goat spoke! "Am I not heavy?" said he.

The man nearly dropped his burden in his surprise, but he was truly courageous. "Am I not strong?" he answered, and clutched the tighter.

Then he thought, "This most certainly is a jinn. Now will I take him to Talib Faroosh, who is a holy man, and reported to have much power over all such evil things," and he went as fast as he could to the Talib's house.

When Talib Faroosh saw the goat, he at once recognized him, and began to "beat him with his tongue" [abuse him soundly], "for," said he, "thy mother has been searching for thee, high and low. What evil pranks hast thou been doing, oh Son of the Wicked One?"

And the Jinn was very meek, answering that he had only been taking a walk when caught by the man. Then the man told how he had found, as he thought, a goat straying, but that when it had spoken he had perceived that it was a Jinn, and had brought it at once to the learned Talib.

And then he demanded a reward from the jinn.

"It is just," said the Talib. "Name thy price," and the man asked for 120 mitzakil. Then said the Talib, "It shall be paid thee. But thou wast foolish not to ask more, for this Jinn is the one son of his mother, and very dear to her, and she would be able and willing to pay any sum you choose to ask. However, go now in peace," and the man returning to his own home, found the 120 mitzakil awaiting him.

Jinns are exceedingly rich, as they are able to draw upon the supplies of treasure hidden everywhere about this our country. The money paid by them is good, but of such ancient date, that it cannot pass, and must be melted by the jewelers back into lumps of gold and silver. Some of these coins are of a long shape, not round like our dollars.

Certain Talibs there are who are able to convert pieces of paper written on and cut into small rounds like coins, into money, but these are of a truth useless, for if thou trust to change them, they turn back into paper.



# ***Eastern Africa***



# LUHYA

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## ORIGIN OF THE JA-LUO

**Tradition Bearer:** Uganda

**Source:** Hobley, C. W. "British East Africa: Anthropological Studies in Kavirondo and Nandi." *The Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 33 (1903): 327–328.

**Date:** 1903

**Original Source:** Luo

**National Origin:** Kenya

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This origin **myth** of the Luo of Kenya portrays their divine ancestor Apōdtho as a **culture hero**. Bringing with him cattle and the seeds of the Luo's staple crops, he establishes the basis of their indigenous pastoral and agricultural lifestyle. As is the case in many of the world's mythologies, the culture hero brings the gift of fire, which represents technology. The importance of lineage is apparent in the narrative's careful delineation of the descendants of Apōdtho. Moreover, the myth accounts for the presence of the Bantu lineages that preceded the Nilotic Luo into the area of Uganda and Kenya.

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**A**pōdtho was the ancestor of all men; he descended to the earth from above, and brought with him two head of cattle, some fowls, and seeds of *mtama* [sorghum], *sem-sem* [sesame seeds], and *wimbi* [millet]. He found the tobacco plant growing on earth; the elephant gave him the sweet potato and beans. He also brought the knowledge of making fire by rubbing two pieces of wood together, and he taught the Ja-Luo to mix cow's urine with the milk. He reached the earth in the country away to the north of the lake, and



died in that country; at his death, he turned into a rock. Apōdtho had supernatural powers and possessed the power to turn into a rock at will.

When he was old, the Ja-Luo conspired to kill him, but for a long time nothing came of it, because they were afraid of him; but one day sickness overcame him; the conspirators sent a girl to see if he was really sick, as they thought it would be a good opportunity to kill him. She took a small horn, used for cupping blood, in her hand, and, while talking to him, she placed the cupping horn on his shadow; to her surprise it drew blood from the shadow. She returned and told her friends that, if they wanted to kill Apōdtho, they must not touch his body, but spear his shadow; they did so, and he died and turned into a rock, which the Ja-Luo afterwards considered to possess special virtues for sharpening spears on.

Ramogi was the first member of the Ja-Luo race to come to Kavirondo, and he built in Kadimu country, near what is now the village of the chief Anam. The Ja-Mwa (or Bantu Kavirondo) are descended from Anyango and came to Kavirondo before the Ja-Luo. They also came from the north, but belong to a different stock, the Baganda and Ba-Soga. The Nandi came from the Ja-Lango. The Ja-Luo on the south side of Kavirondo Gulf originally lived on the north side, and crossed over by canoes. The Koloa and various Ja-Luo clans on the Kitoto plain are the descendants of one Kanu, who is said to have come from Masai land, and to have married the sister of Rachonyo and settled down in the Kitoto plain; they are to this day often grouped together under the name Ja-Kanu.

Gemi, Lego, Sakwa, Kadimu, Ugenya, the founders of the tribes of the same name, were not sons of Ramogi, but were collaterally descended from Apōdtho.

## **AWA-WANGA ANIMAL FABLES**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Hobley, C. W. "British East Africa: Anthropological Studies in Kavirondo and Nandi." *The Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 33 (1903): 337–339.

**Date:** 1903

**Original Source:** Luhya

**National Origin:** Kenya

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The Awa-Wanga people are now subsumed under the Luhya, an amalgam of more than a dozen subgroups inhabiting the area of contemporary Kenya. The Luhya along with approximately 400 other distinct groups distributed from west-central to southern Africa are categorized as Bantu on the basis of linguistic relationships and certain cultural similarities.

One of these Bantu traits is a highly developed repertoire of **animal tales**. According to C. W. Hopley, the collector of the following set of narratives,

[T]he general type of story [that is, animal tales] is usually the meeting of a savage animal with a harmless one, and the eventual triumph of the harmless animal by some simple trick. These stories are told in the evening, when the members of the village congregate and gossip after their meal is finished; one will start and tell a story, and then another will tell one, and so on; they try to outvie one another by striving to see who can recount the greatest number; the children sit round, and, as the same stories are heard over and over again on different occasions, they become firmly imprinted on their memories, and are thus perpetuated from generation to generation. (337)

Each of the four Luhya tales that follow incorporates device of cleverness to overcome advantage. Furthermore, “The Fable of the Leopard and the Hyena” and “The Story of the Rat and the Cat” serve the explanatory function found cross-culturally in many such animal tales.

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### **The Fable of the Leopard and Hyena**

The leopard and the hyena met over a kill belonging to the leopard, and the leopard reviled the hyena and said, “I kill meat and you come and try to eat it,” and the leopard gave the hyena a kick. This made the hyena angry and he snapped at the leopard’s leg and bit it off, and the leopard died from the effects of the bite. But before he died, he gathered his children together and said unto them, “Beware of the hyena, and when you kill an animal, take the meat up into a tree where the hyena cannot get it.” This is the custom of the leopard to this day.

The young leopards remembered the words of their father, and some time after one of them was eating some meat up in a tree and the hyena came by and waited at the foot of the tree. The young leopard was much afraid; so he bit off a small bone and dropped it to the hyena, who snapped it up, and he said, “You killed my father, and now you come here and want to take my meat and kill me, but I will give you only bones,” and he thereupon threw down a big bone, the hyena snatched at it and ran off a short distance, and as the hyena was worrying the bone, the leopard quickly slipped down the tree, gave a big jump, and made off into the bush.

### **The Story of the Rat and the Cat**

A cat found a rat in a river, and it was likely to drown, and the rat called out, “Pick me out of the water or I shall die,” and the cat said, “Very well, what

will you give me?" and the rat replied, "I have nothing to give you, but when I am out of the water, you can eat me as your recompense."

The cat agreed, and helped him out of the water, and then said, "Well, now what about the bargain?" and the rat looked round, and espying a little hole between two rocks, he replied, "Wait a little till I am dry; I do not want to be eaten while I am still wet."

And the unsuspecting cat agreed, and gave him time for his coat to dry. Then waiting his opportunity, the rat made for the hole and slipped into it. The cat was exceeding wroth, and shouted down the hole, "You have cheated me this time, but if I meet you again, I will catch you and eat you." And this is the reason why the cat is the great enemy of the rat to this day, and is always hunting it.

### **The Story of the Buffalo and the Lion**

A lion, out hunting one day, chanced to find a buffalo, which he pursued, and sprung on to its back and seized it. The buffalo then said to the lion, "You have caught me, but wait a moment, I will not struggle, but lie down and die quietly."

At the same time as he said this, he had his eye on a tree close by, which had fallen over and left a space under its trunk. The lion was still hanging on to his back, and he moved on quietly until he and the lion were under the tree-trunk, and then he raised himself with all his might, and crushed the lion to death between his back and the tree. Thus was the lion outwitted by the buffalo.

### **The Story of the Kite and the Mole**

The kite was poised in the air over some young moles who were playing about, and was on the point of swooping down to seize one, but their mother, happening to come out, saw the danger, and cried out, "Stay, I will give you one of my young ones, but let me pick the one I am least fond of."

The kite paused, and just at that moment, the mole picked up some earth and threw it into the kite's eyes, and before he had cleared the earth out of his eyes, the moles had all burrowed underground and disappeared.

# MADAGASCAR

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## THE CROCODILE AND THE DOG

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Sibree, James, Jr., and W. C. Pickersgill. "The Oratory, Songs, Legends, and Folk-Tales of the Malagasy." *The Folk-Lore Journal* 1 (1883): 208–210.

**Date:** ca. 1883

**Original Source:** Madagascar

**National Origin:** Madagascar

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Madagascar is the fourth largest island in the world, situated in the Indian Ocean off the southeast coast of Africa. Malagasy culture shows the influence of both African and Asian culture. Linguistic evidence demonstrates that, despite the island's proximity to Africa, the earliest settlers of Madagascar arrived from the area of Indonesia. Subsequent African, Middle Eastern, and South Asian cultural infusions influenced traditional Malagasy folklore. Folk performance is highly valued, and tales are classified as either true (for example, **legends, myths**) or intentional fictions. Even conscious fictions, however, may be used to embody basic social truths. Such moralizing is often encapsulated in proverb form, as in the **fable** of "The Crocodile and the Dog."

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Once upon a time a crocodile and a dog chanced to meet suddenly on the road. Then said the crocodile, "Where are you from, my younger brother?"

"Just hereabouts, my elder brother," said the dog. Upon that the dog also asked the crocodile, "Where are you from, elder brother? I've just come from such a place, younger brother," said he.

And said the dog, "What do you think about my proposal? Do you agree or not?"

"What proposal is that, younger brother?"

"Let us strike up a friendship together," said the dog.

"Yes, all right," said the crocodile; "if a little fellow like you knows what is right, much more a senior like myself. Come along then, young friend."

"Agreed," said the dog. So the two struck up a firm friendship, and went on talking thus, "Whoever proves false," said the crocodile, "shall be scouted."

"Agreed," said the dog.

Some little time afterwards the crocodile said, "Come, let me give you a meal, young friend."

So he supplied the dog with food, and when he had eaten his fill, the dog said, "Come, carry me over, old friend." So the crocodile carried him; but half-way across he stopped and sank down into the water. Upon that the dog struggled a little, but presently got across; and as soon as he landed the crocodile emerged from the water.

So the dog said, "You've broken the agreement, old fellow."

"Why, wasn't I there below you all the same? For, I want you to be able to swim." Nevertheless if the dog had not been able to swim he would have been drowned.

Then said the dog in his turn, "Come now, old fellow, do you go yonder with me tomorrow."

"But where is the place of meeting, young friend?"

"Yonder, at such-a-place," said the dog.

"Agreed," replied the crocodile.

On the morrow accordingly the dog took him some distance towards ground covered with the trailing tendrils of gourds. But it was to pay him out for what he had done. So the dog said, "I will give you a signal, old fellow; when I bark, then run off, for people are coming."

The crocodile, be it said, had brought his wife and family with him. And when they all arrived the dog set food before them, but before the meal was halfway through he began to bark. So off they all ran, but some of the young ones were entangled in the trailing tendrils of the gourds and killed.

So when they got to the water, the crocodile said, "What kind of a dog are you? What's the meaning of this, fellow?"

"There's no retribution, but the past returns," said the dog.

The crocodile rejoined, "If my descendants and heirs do not destroy dogs from henceforth, then let me have no heirs to inherit!"

And this was the origin of the enmity between dogs and crocodiles.

## **THE WILD CAT AND THE RAT**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Sibree, James, Jr. "The Oratory, Songs, Legends, and Folk-Tales of Malagasy (Continued)." *The Folk-Lore Journal* 1 (1883): 312.

**Date:** ca. 1883

**Original Source:** Malagasy

**National Origin:** Madagascar

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**Animal tales** commonly serve either moral or explanatory functions. “The Wild Cat and the Rat” is a classic Malagasy example of the latter function of this **genre**.

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**I**t once happened, ‘tis said, that the wild cat and the rat played together; the rat was housekeeper, and the wild cat was the hunter. So the cat went hunting, and the rat dug a hole without the cat knowing what his intentions were, and these two took counsel together and decided to go and steal an ox.

So they went off to rob, and got a fattened ox; and the rat was overreached by the cat, for the latter ate the flesh and gave the rat only the bones. And when the pair had eaten, there was still a great deal left, so the rat begged some flesh, but the cat would not give it, but gave him the skin. Then the cat made *kitoza* (dried meat cut up in long strips) of the flesh and sewed it up in a basket, and after hanging it up from the ridge of the house went away to hunt.

After the cat had gone away hunting, the rat made a hole in the basket and ate up all the dried meat. As soon as the cat came home from hunting he said, “Come, let us get some *kitoza* to serve as a relish for our rice, my friend.” But lo and behold, when he looked he found nothing. So the cat was extremely angry, and chased the rat; but he got into his hole and so was not taken. Then the cat invoked a curse, saying, “Whoever are my descendants indeed, they must kill these rats.” And that, they say, is why the cat eats rats.

## THE HEDGEHOG AND THE RAT

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Sibree, James, Jr. “The Oratory, Songs, Legends, and Folk-Tales of Malagasy (Continued).” *The Folk-Lore Journal* 1 (1883): 313.

**Date:** ca. 1883

**Original Source:** Malagasy

**National Origin:** Madagascar

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As in the preceding **animal tale**, “The Wild Cat and the Rat” (page 34), rat proves to be a self-serving and untrustworthy character. In this narrative, the offense is graver. Rat violates a kinship bond with hedgehog,

deceives his maternal cousin, and dines on his remains. The concluding proverbial statement, “a hedgehog climbing a rock and can’t get halfway,” alludes to the fact that hedgehog is a terrestrial (often subterranean) creature, who suffers by being tempted to abandon his natural habitat.

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Once upon a time they say that the hedgehog and the rat chanced to be amusing themselves at the foot of a rock; and the rat, it is said, gave advice to the hedgehog thus: “I perceive, Mr. Hedgehog, that you are mother’s brother’s son, so I don’t deceive you, but tell you the truth. There up in the tree are some good things to eat.”

The hedgehog answered, “I knew that long ago, but that belongs to the birds, and I’m afraid of them.” The rat answered again, “When the birds come, then jump down.” But the hedgehog declined, and would not consent.

And another day these two chanced to meet; so the rat led the hedgehog climbing up a very high rock; but he was exhausted through the heat of the sun; so the hedgehog died there and was devoured by the rat. Then the rat, they say, wept, but made a jest of him, saying, “A hedgehog climbing a rock and can’t get halfway.”

## THE WAY IN WHICH ANDRIANORO OBTAINED A WIFE FROM HEAVEN

**Tradition Bearer:** Vakin-Ankaratra

**Source:** Sibree, James, Jr., and W. C. Pickersgill. “The Oratory, Songs, Legends, and Folk-Tales of the Malagasy.” *The Folk-Lore Journal* 1 (1883): 202–208.

**Date:** ca. 1883

**Original Source:** Malagasy

**National Origin:** Madagascar

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The following narrative, known in some versions as “The Story of Ibonía,” has been labeled the favorite, longest, and most interesting Malagasy folktale (Sibree and Pickersgill 202). The *laloména* mentioned in the text is an animal said to be like an ox that lives in the water. It has two red horns and possesses extraordinary strength (Sibree 1883, 173).

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Once upon a time there was, it is said, a man named *Adriambahbaka-in-the-midst-of-the-land*, and this man had three children—one son and two daughters. The son’s name was ... *Andrianoro*, and those of his

two sisters, Ramatba [eldest daughter] and Rafaravavy [youngest daughter]. Adriambahbaka was rich and had large estates, and these two daughters of his were unmarried. Then said the son named Andrianoro to his father and mother, "Get me a wife, oh daddy and mammy." So his parents agreed to obtain a wife for their son. But when they had fetched the wife for Andrianoro, he could by no means like her. So his father said, "We will no more fetch a wife for you; you yourself shall choose whom you like." And after some time, so the story goes, someone spoke to Andrianoro and said, "There is a most enchanting lake yonder, and delightful sands, and the water clear as crystal; and there are three sisters whom we have seen swimming in that clear lake, and whose beauty we have never seen the like of."

Then said Andrianoro, "I will capture one of them for my wife." So he said to his subjects, "Where lives the person most skilful in divination?"

The people replied, "Go to Ranakombe, for he is the most skilful diviner." So Andrianoro went to Ranakombe and said, "Be so good as to divine for me, Ranakombe, for there is a person whom I wish for a wife in this lake; but, if any one approaches the lake then she flies away, for in heaven, they say, is her dwelling place; so please give me good counsel as to what I should do to capture her." Then Ranakombe answered, "Go thou away to the lake and change into three very ripe lemons, and then while the three sisters are playing do thou desire them; and when the three take thee, then do thou change again into a man, and so lay hold of one of the three sisters for thy wife."

So when Andrianoro had come to the sand where the three sisters played, he changed into three lemons, according to Ranakombe's directions. And when the three sisters came there and saw the lemons, they were exceedingly astonished. So the youngest of the three said, "Come, let us take these lemons for ourselves." But the eldest and the second one replied, "Don't let us touch these lemons, for it is a snare, for from long ago there have been no such lemons here." Then they flew away, and went up into the sky.

So the lemons changed again, it is said, and became Andrianoro once more, and off he went afresh to Ranakombe to inquire what divination would enable him to obtain his wish; and the divination worked by Ranakombe gave answer, "Do thou change into bluish water in the midst of the lake, and when the three sisters swim there, lay hold of them." So Andrianoro went away again. But when the three sisters came again to swim they were afraid to do so, for they said, "That water is a snare, like the lemons we saw before."

And after a little while again, Andrianoro changed again in an instant into the seed of the anamamy [a vegetable] growing by the water side; but the sisters knew all about it. So Andrianoro was perplexed, and did not see what he could do, for he wished to obtain one of the three for a wife. And off he went again to Ranakombe to ask some more suitable counsel as to how he might obtain her. So Ranakombe said, "Do thou change into an ant, and walk upon the sand."



Then the three sisters came down from the sky again and sat on the sand, and then Andrianoro caught one of them, the youngest, and said to her, "Thou art my wife, Ifaravavy." But she replied, "I am not thy wife, Andrianoro."

Then said Andrianoro, "What is it makes thee unwilling to marry me?"

She answered, "There are many things about you which trouble me."

"What things are they?" said he. Ifaravavy replied, "My parents do not live here on the earth, but in the skies; and thou art of humankind here on the earth, and art not able to live in heaven with father and mother; for if father speaks the thunderbolt darts forth; and besides, I do not drink spirits (rum), for if spirits even touch my mouth I die."

Then said Andrianoro, "I can endure all that for my love to thee, my darling" [literally, "piece of my life"]. Then she consented to be his wife. And when the pair went home to Andrianoro's house they were met by a great many people, and both his subjects and his father and mother rejoiced. And Andrianoro made an exceedingly strong town, with seven inclosures, one within another did he make it; and together with Andrianoro there lived also his younger sister, whom he loved best of the two.

And after a long time, Andrianoro's wife said to him, "I should like to play with the horns of the *laloména*." So he replied, "I will go to seek it, my dear, wherever it may be; so do not trouble yourself needlessly about it, my wife." Then Andrianoro told his parents that he was going to seek the thing desired by his wife, speaking to them thus, "I am going, father and mother, to procure the horns of the *laloména*, and lo, here is my wife for you to take care of, if you love me; and let my sister Rafaravavy stay with her until I come, for if I do not find the horns of the *laloména* I shall not return" (they say he did find them). So Andrianoro's father and mother agreed to take good care of his wife and children until he returned. Then his dependants and servants pounded rice for the journey, for he was about to go. And when the rice was pounded, he went and took leave of his parents and his wife and sisters, saying, "Farewell [literally, "May you live"] then until I come back, so do not grieve fruitlessly!" And then Andrianoro set off with very many of his people to seek the horns of the *laloména*. And after he had remained away a long time, his father and mother and eldest sister said, "Come, let us kill this woman, for it is through her only it has come about that Andrianoro has gone off to a country he knew not. So her father-in-law said, "How shall we manage to kill her?" Then her mother-in-law and sister-in-law replied, "Give her spirits in a horn, for that is what she told Andrianoro before they were married." So they went to buy rum, and put it in a horn. But Rafaravavy, Andrianoro's sister, was there with his wife, and overheard about their killing her. So the wife charged Rafaravavy, saying, "When I am dead, then say to the chief people, 'Bury her in the road by which Andrianoro will come'."

"Yes," said Rafaravavy, "but cannot I be a substitute for what is to befall you, my relative, for what will it matter to me? For I will inform the chief people secretly."

So the two sisters-in-law locked all the gates (seven deep), and Andrianoro's parents and sister and wife went and fetched the toaka. Soon the father called at the gateway, "Open me the gate, my child, open me the gate, my child; for here is the toaka for thee." Then his daughter-in-law replied, "I do not drink toaka, O dada; for if I drink that I die, no matter if in a white horn, or in a black horn." Then again her mother-in-law and her sister-in-law called, and to the same effect, but Andrianoro's wife still refused, as she had done before. Then the three broke the gate where the wife was, together with her sister Rafaravavy; and they forced toaka into Andrianoro's wife's mouth, and she died. So the sister went to the chief people and said, "Bury her in the road by which Andrianoro will come, for that was the charge she left."

So she was buried there; and there was a voice crying out for Andrianoro there in his wife's grave. And after some time Andrianoro said to the people who went with him, "Come, let us return to the land of our ancestors, for I am longing to see my wife, for she appears to me constantly in dreams" [or visions]. And after a long journey he got back to his house; and his sister Rafaravavy chanced to be in the house weeping for sorrow for her brother's wife. And when she ceased weeping she declared to her brother about her father and mother killing his wife. Then Andrianoro was in a swoon a long time before coming to his senses. And after he had lamented her a long time he said, "Where did you bury my wife?" His sister replied, "In the very road by which you came we buried her." So Andrianoro commanded his people to be gathered together at his wife's grave. Then they brought a quantity of red lambas [cloths] to remove the corpse, and numbers of oxen to be killed as votive offerings, and dug open the grave; and when it was uncovered, and the cloths undone in which she was wrapped, lo and behold, Andrianoro's wife was alive again, and her face was exceedingly fair and fresh [literally, "green"] and tender as the young shoots of the banana. Then Andrianoro swooned when he saw his wife alive again; but they blew upon him, and he recovered from his fear. Then he bade all the people return to their homes. And Andrianoro was exceedingly glad, and killed many oxen, those indeed all but sacrificed for his wife, so that the people might eat. Then he said to his father and mother and eldest sister, "Go, depart you three, for I will not suffer you to remain here; and the populace also dislike you because you killed their loved one, and sought to destroy me too, therefore I cast you forth now; and if you will not depart I shall bid the people kill you, for they dislike you and I hate you." So the three departed and wandered in an unknown country.

And after a little while again Andrianoro's wife said to him, "I will go now to father and mother in the sky, for it was thee I waited for in the grave; for had I gone when your parents killed me, they could not have killed me by any means; but on account of your love for me and my love for you also I waited for you, although I endured so much here. So now let me go to visit father and mother in the sky." But Andrianoro said, "I beseech you, my lady do not go away."

But his wife said again, "Let me go, my lord, for my father and mother grieve for me; for the day is thundering, and that is a sign of their grief." Then said Andrianoro, "Suffer me then to go along with you, if you will not stay." But his wife replied again, "Remain here, my lord; for father is obstinate, and when he speaks the thunderbolt darts forth. And not only so, but the sky is no dwelling place for you, for you are of humankind here on the earth; and also, there are spacious fields and giant trees, and if you cannot till the fields and fell the trees, father will kill you, for he will in no case suffer you to live; but if, on the other hand, you are able to accomplish it, he will give me to you afresh for your wife. Besides, that is not all, for there are also a thousand spades buried in a great lake, and if you are not able to obtain them you will be killed; and also, there are a thousand cows, and the mothers and the calves are exactly alike, but if you cannot distinguish which are the mothers you will be killed. Besides that, we three daughters and our mother are alike in appearance, but if you cannot tell which is our mother, then father will kill you; but if, on the contrary, Andrianoro, you can distinguish all these things, then father will give me to you for a wife, and you shall live and not die. So, therefore, I beseech of you, Andrianoro, do not go, but remain here; besides that, your sister will be desolate if you leave her, my lord." Then said Andrianoro, "I will nevertheless go with you, my dear one." So he went and bade farewell to his sister, who wept profusely. Then, just before going away, Andrianoro went into the fields and called thus to all the beasts and the birds in the fields, "O, animals! O, animals! Help me, for I am in sore distress!" So all the birds and beasts came to him, and Andrianoro killed oxen to feed the beasts and the birds. And he recounted to them what had befallen him (that is, the things he was to do in the skies, and the tests by which he was to know them); so the beasts and birds gave him encouragement, that they would accomplish the things that troubled him. So Andrianoro and his wife went up to the sky. And when they arrived at the gate of heaven Andrianoro wept for sorrow about his sister, and called out, "O, this earth below us! This spacious earth! The earth where my dear Rafaravavy lives!" Then his sister also wept, and replied to her brother's voice thus, "O, Andrianoro, do not forget me, thy relative!" And just as the gate of heaven was really about to be opened he was bidden again by his wife to return, for his difficulties were just at hand. "Besides, I grieve for thee, my dear," said she, "so do thou return."

Then her father in the sky heard her words, and it thundered fearfully. And when Andrianoro would still not return, his wife gave him this advice: "When you come in to father and mother do not be persuaded to advance first, but remain there at the place where the firewood is stored, for they will kill you."

"Very well," said he.

And when he came in his father-in-law said, "Come forward, child." Then the thunderbolt flashed out. But Andrianoro was breathed upon for some time by his wife, and so he still lived. "Advance yonder to the golden chair," said his

father-in-law. So he went into that part of the house. "Give him rice in my plate," said his father-in-law again. But Andrianoro refused, and ate from the plate of the servants. So his father-in-law was astonished, and said, "Art thou the husband of my daughter?"

"Yes," said Andrianoro.

Then said he again, "If thou, my lad, art indeed her husband, then go and do this work for me: cut down yonder trees which hide the sun; and fetch those thousand spades buried in the lake which is full of crocodiles; and also find out which are the mothers which bore those thousand oxen, for the mothers and the offspring are alike; and also find out which is the mother amongst my wife and daughters. For if you cannot accomplish all these things you shall surely die, so do not hope to live. If, on the contrary, you can perform these acts, and can cut down the trees, then you shall have my daughter to wife, and shall also have wherewith to live."

"Yes, my lord," replied Andrianoro. So he went off to call the beasts and the birds who had made a compact with him to help him, saying, "Help me, O beasts and birds!" So he went to work, and the beasts ploughed up the earth with their tusks, so that it was dug all over; and the trees were plucked up by the birds and uprooted by the beasts, so they were all felled. And the thousand spades were brought by the crocodiles until they were all fetched. And the great cattle-fly said, "Those which I bite on the nose are the mothers among those thousand cattle." And the little fly also said, "The woman on whose nose I settle is the mother, so take good heed."

So Andrianoro bade his father-in-law come out to look at the work which he had performed, and also pointed out the mothers among the cattle, and the mother amongst the four women. Then his father-in-law was astonished, and gave Andrianoro his daughter for his wife. And he gave a quantity of oxen, and numbers of slaves, and much money, to him and his wife. So the pair returned to the husband's fatherland, and they all came in peace and safety to their house, but Andrianoro's sister, Rafaravavy, had died of sorrow.

"It is not I who tell fictions (literally, "lies"), but the people in former times related them. The heat of the sun tomorrow breaks the bald head; I break the bones, but you are those who stick them out." [Closing words of the narrator].

# SOMALIA

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## GERHAJIS AND ARAB

**Source:** Haji Ali Mohammed

**Source:** Kirk, J. W. C., and E. S. Hartland. "Specimens of Somali Tales." *Folklore* 15 (1904): 325.

**Date:** ca. 1904

**Original Source:** Somali

**National Origin:** Somalia

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Somalia is located on the east coast of Africa on what has been called the Horn of Africa. By land, Djibouti, Ethiopia, and Kenya comprise Somalia's northwest, west, and southwest borders, respectively. Known as the Land of Punt to classical Egypt, Somalia has been continuously inhabited for the last 2,500 years. Trade was carried on by sea with the Greeks and Romans in the first century C.E. As the following narratives attest, Islam is firmly established in modern Somalia and has been since ca. 900 C.E. From the thirteenth to the sixteenth centuries city-states and kingdoms developed in the territory of contemporary Somalia. Clan membership and lineage are important determinants of social relationships, although sources conflict on the particulars of clan divisions. The following **legend** focuses on the history of one of the noble clans, Ishhak (also spelled Isaaq). All of the tales presented below were performed by members of the Ishhak clan. Kirk and Hartland, suggest that the mullah from whom they collected "Gerhajis and Arab" is likely to have derived the tale in fragmentary form from Islamic texts rather than from oral tradition (325). The authors suggest that the plot is a **variant** of the biblical narrative of the sons of Judah:

And it came to pass in the time of her travail, that, behold, twins were in her womb.

And it came to pass, when she travailed, that the one put out his hand: and the midwife took and bound upon his hand a scarlet thread, saying, This came out first.

And it came to pass, as he drew back his hand, that, behold, his brother came out: and she said, How hast thou broken forth? This breach be upon thee: therefore his name was called Pharez.

And afterward came out his brother, that had the scarlet thread upon his hand: and his name was called Zarah. (Genesis 38:27–30)

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**G**erhajis and Arab were the twin sons of Sheikh Ishhak (the ancestor of one of the two great divisions of the Somalis) by his wife Magado. Before birth one child put out his hand, and the mother wishing to mark him wanted to put a ring on his finger, but, no ring being available, tied on a piece of thread round the little finger. Then the hand was withdrawn.

Subsequently one boy was born, but no thread was found on his finger; this child was called Arab. Later, the other was born, having the ring of thread, and called Gerhajis.

When they were grown up, there was a dispute as to which was the elder. For the elder son, besides becoming head man, must always be married before the younger is allowed to do so. But it was decided that the one that put his hand out, namely Gerhajis, was the first born.

## THE GIRL WITHOUT LEGS

**Tradition Bearer:** Mohammed Jibril

**Source:** Kirk, J. W. C., and E. S. Hartland. "Specimens of Somali Tales." *Folklore* 15 (1904): 319–321.

**Date:** ca. 1904

**Original Source:** Somali

**National Origin:** Somalia

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"The Girl Without Legs" exemplifies the **novelle** or romantic tale. The plot most resembles "Innocent Slandered Maiden" (AT 883A). Although the tale does not appear to be borrowed from a European source, the magical restoration of the slandered girls legs, her redemption and social elevation through marriage, and the final retribution against the lecherous priest who had caused her suffering have analogues in Indo-European traditions.

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A sultan had a daughter, and the daughter used to be taught the Koran. One day the Sultan went on a pilgrimage, and entrusted his daughter to a priest and said, "Continue to teach that girl the Koran."

The priest coveted the girl, wishing to lie with her, but the girl refused. One day she said, "Come to me tomorrow." On the day arranged she removed from the house the ladder by which the priest used to ascend.

He then sent a letter to her father, and he wrote, "Your daughter has become a whore."

The Sultan returned from the pilgrimage, and he was angry with the girl, and he handed her over to some slaves, and he said, "Cut that girl's throat."

Then the slaves took the girl, and brought her to a wooded place, and they cut off her legs while they dug her grave. While they were digging the grave she crawled away, and went into some trees and hid. When the slaves had dug the grave, they looked in the place where she had lain and could not find her. Then they slew a gazelle, and the gazelle's blood they poured into a bottle, and brought the blood to the Sultan and said, "We have slain the girl." One day later a caravan passed by the place and camped where the girl lay. In the afternoon, as the party were loading up the camels, they saw the girl sitting under a tree. A man took the girl, and put her on a camel, and brought her to the town they came to. The man who took the girl put her to live in a house.

Later on the son of the Sultan saw the girl's face, and the young man saw that her face was beautiful, and he said to the man whose house she dwelt in, "Let me marry that girl from you."

And the man said, "The girl has no legs."

Then the Sultan's son said, "I will marry her, give her to me." And so the man said, "Well and good."

And the Sultan's son married her. She bore two children, and while she was with child the young man said, "I am going on a pilgrimage." And he left her a ram, and went on the pilgrimage.

While he was away on the pilgrimage his wife had a dream, and she dreamed that two birds sat upon her two legs, and her legs had grown out, and that she made the pilgrimage. In the morning at break of day she saw the two birds sitting upon her two legs, and the legs had grown out.

After daylight she took her two children and the ram and the two birds and went on the pilgrimage. She came to a building at the half way, and there came to her her father and her brother and the priest and her husband, none of whom knew her. She told stories to her children, and she related all that had happened to her, and her father heard and the priest.

Then the priest tried to run away, but the Sultan said, "Sit down until the story is finished." Then the Sultan, the girl's father, cut the priest's throat, and the girl and her father and husband went on together and made the pilgrimage. And so the girl and her father were reconciled.

## LAME HABIYO

**Tradition Bearer:** Mohammed Jibril

**Source:** Kirk, J. W. C., and E. S. Hartland. "Specimens of Somali Tales." *Folklore* 15 (1904): 316–318.

**Date:** ca. 1904

**Original Source:** Somali

**National Origin:** Somalia

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The following **ordinary folktale** draws on cross-culturally distributed **motifs**. For example, "Helpful Horse" (B401), "Stepmother Demands Bull's Blood" (K961), and "Hero Is Driven from Home by His Stepmother" (S31). The medieval setting implied by the characters and lifestyles of narrative is consistent with the ordinary folktale. The tale is localized by the inclusion of the political structures that followed in the wake of Islam, local fauna (that is, the rhinoceros), and the Jew who sets events in motion. However, unlike the benevolent Sephardim of the Moroccan tales "The Weight before the Door" (page 14) and "Tale of a Lantern" (page 16), the Jew in this tale behaves maliciously.

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**T**here once was a Sultan who had a son, whose mother was dead. But the Sultan married another wife and went on a pilgrimage.

Now a certain Jew was a friend of the Sultan's wife, but the Sultan's son and the Jew were enemies. The Jew said to the woman, "Let us kill the boy."

So she mixed some poison in his food. But the boy had a mare, who knew everything, and the mare said to the boy, "Don't eat the food," and when the food was put before him, the boy refused it.

The next day the Jew came to the Sultan's wife and said, "When the Sultan comes back, say you are sick, and when he asks what will cure you, tell him the liver of the mare."

The next day the Sultan came. Then she laid the skin on the bed and placed under it some fig leaves, and when she lay down the leaves crackled.

Then the Sultan said, "What is the matter with you?" and she said, "I have a pain in my ribs."

"What will cure you?" he said; and she answered, "The liver of your son's mare."

The Sultan called the boy and said, "I intend to kill your mare for your stepmother."

And the boy said, "Very well, but let me take a ride on her this evening." In the evening the boy rode the mare, and said to his father, "Good-bye, Father," and departed with the mare.



He went to a town, and near the town he saw six girls washing at a well. The youngest of the girls saw him, and when she saw the man, she ran away from the well, being ashamed in front of the man. Then he singed the tail of the mare, who went up into the sky. The young man then pretended to be a cripple, and went into the town, and there became a servant.

Later on the daughters of the Sultan said, "We wish to marry."

The Sultan beat his drum, and announced, "My daughters wish to marry." Then the rich young men came together, and the girls were brought, and the people stood in the plain. Then the girls were asked, "Are the men you want all here?" And the young girl said, "The man I wanted is not here." The slave girls who were summoning the men were told to call all the men in the town, so they called the young cripple, *Lame Habiyu*. Then the Sultan asked the girls, "Are the men all here?" And they said, "Yes." The girls were given six oranges, and they were told, "Let each girl hit the man she wants." The five other girls hit five rich young men; the young girl hit *Lame Habiyu*. Then her father and mother were so struck with horror that they lost their sight, and the young man married the girl. On the next day they were told, "That which will cure the Sultan and his wife is rhinoceros' milk." And the young men who married the five girls were given five good horses, and *Lame Habiyu* was given a donkey, and they left the town. There came to *Lame Habiyu* the mare, whose tail he had burned, and he put on his gold dress and sword, and mounted the mare. The mare flew up and reached the sky. Then he went to a place where rhinoceroses are born. A young rhinoceros he cut open, and opened out the skin, and made a figure from it. In the afternoon the mother rhinoceros came, and *Lame Habiyu* pretended to be the young one. The first portion of milk he milked into one skin, and the second portion he milked into another skin. Then the rhinoceros went to graze. Then the young man threw away the figure and took the milk. He went to a tree and tied his mare to it. While he slept under the tree the five young men who married the other girls came to him and said, "Salam Alekum."

And *Lame Habiyu* said, "Alekum Salam." Then he said, "Where are you going?"

And they said, "We are looking for rhinoceros' milk."

Then he said, "I have some rhinoceros' milk. What will you give for it?"

And they said, "Whatever you wish."

Then he said, "Wealth do I not want, but I will brand my name on the hinder parts of each of you."

Then they said, "Agreed."

So he branded his name on the hinder parts of all five. Then he gave them the first milk, and the second milk *Lame Habiyu* took for himself. They went to the town where the Sultan lived, and took the milk. The five young men carried the milk, and it was poured on the eyes of the Sultan, but was of no use. Another day *Lame Habiyu* gave his milk to his wife and said, "Let not your

father and mother see you when you pour it in.” Then she took the milk and she poured it in. And the eyes of the Sultan and her mother were opened. Then the girl came running away and came to her house.

Then the Sultan learned that Lame Habiyo had opened his eyes, and the Sultan called the other young men that married his daughters, and he said, “To the young man Lame Habiyo who married my young daughter have I given authority over my town, and you, be his servants.”

Then Lame Habiyo said, “O, Sultan, ‘twas I who did bring you the rhinoceros’ milk, and my name is on the five young men’s hinder parts.” And they looked, and the name of Lame Habiyo was found. Afterwards Lame Habiyo became Sultan.

## HOW TO CHOOSE A WIFE

**Tradition Bearer:** Ismail

**Source:** Kirk, J. W. C., and E. S. Hartland. “Specimens of Somali Tales.” *Folklore* 15 (1904): 323–324.

**Date:** ca. 1904

**Original Source:** Somali

**National Origin:** Somalia

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The following tale falls into the category of “The Bride Test.” The success of the third, and youngest, candidate is a common structural pattern in many folktale traditions.

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A man had a son, and the son said to his father, “Father, I want to marry a wife.”

Then his father said, “Do you take a widow.” So he took a widow, and his father said, “Marry her.” So he married her. Then his father said, “Tie her with a rope, and when she speaks to you, untie the rope.”

So he tied her with a rope, and the woman said, “This is not what I have been accustomed to see. What are you doing with me?” Thereupon he untied the rope.

In the morning his father came and said, “What did she say?”

And he answered, “She said to me, This is not what I have been accustomed to see. Why are you doing that to me?”

Then his father said, “Send her away.” That was one.

The father said to his son, “Take another wife, take a grown girl.” Then he said, “Tonight tie her with a rope, and when she speaks to you, untie it.”

So he tied her, and she said, "This is not what I have been accustomed to hear. Why are you tying me with that?" So he untied her.

In the morning he came to his father and he said, "She said, 'This is not what I have been accustomed to hear. What are you doing to me with the rope?'"

Then his father said, "Send her away too." And that was another.

Then his father said, "Do you go and take a nice young girl." So he took one, and he said, "Tonight tie her with a rope, and when she speaks to you, untie it."

So the young man did so and went to sleep, and was asleep all night.

In the early morning the girl woke him up, and said, "The rope with which you tied me has fallen off and is not tied to me, tie it upon me."

And in the morning he told his father. "Father, she said, 'The rope has fallen off and is not tied to me, tie it upon me'."

Then his father said, "Keep that one, she is the right one." So she was the one he afterwards married.

# SWAHILI

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## THE CARPENTER AND THE AMULET

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Werner, A. "The Bantu Element in Swahili Folklore." *Folklore* 20 (1909): 450–454.

**Date:** ca. 1909

**Original Source:** Swahili

**National Origin:** Unavailable

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The Swahili inhabit the East African coast of the Indian Ocean from Somalia in the north through Kenya and Tanzania to Mozambique in the south. The Swahili people have for the past 2000 years drawn into their ranks Middle Eastern as well as indigenous African cultures. The Swahili language has spread over a vast area of the African continent. As a result, there is contemporary controversy over who should be considered Swahili. There is general agreement, however, that culture arose from a Bantu base powerfully influenced as early as the late seventh century C.E. by the Arab world, especially Islam. Traditionally, the coastal Swahili subsisted through fishing, agriculture, animal husbandry, and by the twelfth century C.E., trade networks. The tale of "The Carpenter and the Amulet" with its mixture of traditional Bantu culture and Middle Eastern Islamic features represents the effects this diversity has had on Swahili folklore.

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There was once a carpenter named Makame, whose work was to cut logs into shape. He went away into the bush and shaped a *mvinja* (casurina) tree into a figure like a human being, with fingers, ears, nose, eyes, mouth, and chin. And he called a *mwallim* [teacher with a knowledge of the

Qur'an] to read the Qur'an over it, and it was turned into a person. And he called a weaver, and he wove a cloth for it, and he took it away to his house.

It was a very beautiful woman; there was no other like her. And her owner Makame hid her in the bush, and many people passed by and saw her, and carried off that woman. And when Makame returned with his loads of logs, he looked for his wife in that place, and she was not there. And Makame cried, and came home to his village and stayed there in his house.

And the woman, in the place to which she was taken, did not speak with her mouth; she stayed just like a dumb person.

And they said to her, "How is it, you woman, that you do not speak?" And she said nothing.

Many people came, and reasoned with her, and tried to persuade her, but she still kept silence. She did not speak, neither did she laugh or show herself pleased. And Makame sought for his wife, whom he had cut out of a tree, and the woman sought for someone who could find out her husband and give him back to her, and Makame went to the place where his wife was, and when he saw her he recognized her, and said, "This is my wife." And he said to those people, "He who does not know the meaning is not told the meaning, for I want this woman who does not speak. Perhaps she has been stolen and is grieving for her husband, and that is why she does not speak. I want that we should draw up an agreement to the following effect: If she does not speak, my head shall be forfeit to you; if she speaks, she is my own wife."

And they drew up a contract, and each person kept his own copy. And Makame went and sat down on a seat, and the woman was sitting in a place apart. And where Makame sat, there was a bird which is called asiraji.

And Makame said to this bird, "My father called a carpenter (and told him) to hew a tree into the likeness of a child of Adam, to make it in every way like a human being. And there came a mwallim and read over it and put an amulet on it, and it was turned into a person who can talk and laugh. And there came a weaver and wove cloth for it. Now, you, asiraji, (tell me) which of these three men is the owner of the woman?"

And the asiraji was silent. How should he answer? He is a bird. But the man was not speaking to the asiraji; he was speaking to his wife.

Makame was angry, and said, "You, asiraji, I will beat you; tell me truly which of these three men is the owner of the woman."

And he rose up, and was going to strike the bird, when the woman said, "Leave him alone, master. Why should you strike this bird?" And as soon as the woman had spoken, the people were astonished.

And Makame took his wife home to his village, and lived with her many days. One day he said to her, "Wife, I am going up country to trade." And he said, "The sultan of this country is a very profligate man who kidnaps men's wives. Do you keep quiet and stay in your house." And Makame started and went his ways up country to trade, and his wife remained behind.

One day a slave-lad of the sultan came and entered Makame's house, and asked for fire. And he was told, "Go on into the upper room," and he went up. And when that lad saw Makame's wife he fell down (with astonishment). And he went to his master, and said, "Master, I have seen a very beautiful woman in Makame's house. Your wife is very ugly compared with Makame's wife."

And the sultan said, "Is it true?"

And he said, "It is true, sir."

The sultan sent an old woman to Makame's house, who persuaded his wife to come away with her, and said to her, "The sultan will give you many clothes of silver and vessels of gold, and you will be a great person."

And she went to the sultan's house and stayed there, and he was her husband, and as for Makame's house she forgot it altogether (literally, she cast it far away from her).

And when Makame came back, he cried "Hello" at the door of his house, and found everything silent, and said, "Perhaps she has gone to my mother's, her mother-in-law's." And he went to his mother's house, and asked if his wife were there, and his mother said, "She is not." And Makame went his way home, and entered his house, and thought, "The sultan has taken away my wife." And he said, "Never mind." And he called a bird whose name is kurumbiza, and said, "Go to the sultan's house, I, Makame, send you to bring back my things: if you get them, we will share them equally, you and I." And the bird went to the sultan's house, and sat on the roof and sang its song, saying,

I do not eat the fruit of the tree.  
 Do you (that is, the sultan) take her,  
 I do not want her.  
 Put on her anklets and neck-ornaments and a bead girdle.  
  
 The woman sang,  
 Take these,  
 He does not want the things.  
 Take Makame's things,  
 He wants me myself.  
 Makame is not my husband.

And she gave him all his things, chains, and anklets, and rings, and cloth, everything which women wear, and she gave them to Makame. And that bird took them to him, and said, "Here are your things, Makame. I have brought them all." Makame said, "My things have not yet come. You have forgotten one thing. Go again." And the bird went again, and sang as before, and the woman answered as before. And she said, "I have given you your things, what more do you want?"

And she cried bitterly, and her husband the sultan came, and said to her, "Why do you weep, my wife? Give Makame his things. And if it is that amulet,

give him that too. I have plenty of amulets here, whether of magic (za uchawi) or silver or gold (ornaments), take them and put them on, “What is Makame’s amulet?” And he took it from her by force, and gave it to the bird, and immediately there sprang up a mvinja tree (that is, she was turned into one).

And the sultan was quite confounded. And Makame stayed at home, and this is the end of the story.

## THE STORY OF THE FLESH OF THE THIGH

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Werner, A. “Some Notes on East African Folklore (Continued).” *Folklore* 26 (1915): 63–67.

**Date:** ca. 1915

**Original Source:** Swahili

**National Origin:** Kenya

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The following tale is a Swahili rendering of “A Pound of Flesh” (AT 890). The same plot is used by William Shakespeare in “The Merchant of Venice.” This tale was introduced into the Swahili repertoire from South Asia; as the collector Alice Werner notes, the tale was told by a banyan. The term “banyan” signifies a Hindu merchant.

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Long ago there was a Banyan who was very rich. And there was another Banyan, and he was not poor, but had just money enough to live on. One day he met a woman (whom he wished to marry); and she was the daughter of a rich man. So they two came to an agreement, and he set about providing money in order to marry, but he (found he) had not enough to pay for the wedding. So one day he went to the rich Banyan and said to him, “Sir, I pray you, be so kind as to lend me a thousand rupees, for my property is insufficient for my wedding.”

That man said to him, “I, for my part, cannot lend you even one, for you are not able to repay me anything.”

His neighbor said, “Even though I have nothing, yet you may trust that I will pay you.”

The rich man said, “If you want me to pay you all this money, you must tell me the day of your repaying it.”

The poor man said, “Be patient for the space of one month, and on the fifteenth day of the second month I will repay you all your money.”

The rich man said, “Write here a paper with your own hand, and you must also have it witnessed.” The man fetched witnesses, and then the rich man said, “And if you fail to pay this money, what shall I do to you?”

The poor man said, "I will give you leave to cut off a piece of flesh from my thigh." So the witness signed with his own hand, and the poor man likewise, and the rich man likewise. Then the rich man gave him a thousand rupees, and he took his leave and went away.

The poor man went to his father-in-law's house and gave him the money, and then he had a very grand wedding, just like that of a rich man. When the wedding was over—two, or three, or ten days later—the owner of the money sent his soldiers with a letter, saying, "The time is up—tomorrow morning you must come with my money."

The poor man received the letter and said, "Go—tomorrow morning I will come myself." So the soldiers returned and gave the message to their master. Now, the bride loved her husband very much, and since the wedding day they had been very happy together; but today she saw that he was no longer joyful, he was overwhelmed with grief.

The bride asked him, "Sir, what is the matter with you today?" The bridegroom took the letter and gave it to her, and when she had read it she was much grieved and said to him, "Explain to me the meaning of this letter."

He said, "This money is the money of our wedding, for mine was not enough..." (Here follows the account of the transaction already given.)

The bride said, "This is a strange business." The bridegroom took leave of his father-in-law and set off. But now the wife set about devising means to rescue her husband. What did she do? She went away and took off her clothes and put on men's clothes and shaved off her hair, and took gum and smeared it on her chin and stuck hair on to it, and took a cap and a sword and a dagger and put these on also. Then she set out for the place where the case was being tried. When she reached the baraza it was the third hour of the morning (that is, 9:00 A.M.). The owner of the money said, "Come, give me my money now, for this is the day we agreed on."

The poor man said, "Sir! I have not yet got your money!"

The owner of the money said, "I do not know (whether you have or not)—what I do know is that today is the day of our agreement and of the document (khati)."

The poor man said, "Do as it pleases you, sir."

So he said, "Now I will cut the flesh from your thigh." And he ordered men to sharpen knives, and also that there should be a man ready to cut that piece of flesh.

Now the woman came and spoke before the court, saying, "What has this man done, that he should have flesh cut out of his thigh?"

Those assembled replied, "Sir, this is (a matter of a) debt, and it was agreed between (the parties) that after the space of one month and fifteen days of the second month the creditor should get his money, and if the debtor had none, he should take the flesh of his thigh: so today the time is up and he has no money, and it is fitting that (the creditor) should take the flesh of his thigh."

The wife spoke, with a good and beautiful voice [sic] like that of a man, and said these words: "Take off your trousers" (suruali), and he did so; then she said, "You with the knives, come here," and they came, and she said, "Let the



creditor draw near himself, because if it had been money he would have had no hesitation in receiving it himself, and also (the debtor) received this gentleman's money in his own hands; so today the judgment of this court is that it is fitting he should cut the flesh himself, since this flesh takes the place of the money." The assembly agreed to this saying. The creditor took off his coat and turned up his shirt-sleeves, and took a knife and approached the debtor, saying, "Sit down properly, for I wish to take my money," and his neighbor said, "Very well, sir." Now he put out his hand and seized his leg, but the lady (disguised as a man (Bibi mume) said, "Sir, are you going to cut him?"

The rich man answered, "Yes."

The lady again said, "Did you agree as to flesh, or what?"

The rich man said, "As to flesh only."

The lady said, "Do you not know of any other thing?"

He said, "I do not."

She said, "Well, then, cut." He lifted up the knife and was going to cut, when she said, "But understand that you are to take flesh only, no blood, for you know yourself that flesh and blood are not the same thing."

The rich man said, "What is the good of your cleverness? Do you not know that flesh is (always found) together with blood?"

She answered, "Yes! but you did not make an agreement concerning flesh and blood, but only as to flesh."

The whole court assented to these words and said, "Yes, truly, flesh and blood are not the same thing, but blood is greater." The man was unbound and given leave to go his way, but he took off his ring and the sash (he was wearing) round his waist and his leather belt, and gave them to the clever (pleader)."

The wife returned home in haste and resumed her own clothes. The husband also returned, with great joy beyond all comparison, and the lady saluted him with all courtesy, and said, "What is the news, master? for I have been doubting in my heart whether you would return or not, for you have no money to pay so that you might escape from having your flesh cut."

The husband answered, "God be praised, for your father sent a very clever fellow who can turn round the truth so as to make it a lie, and a lie so as to make it the truth. There came a very handsome person, whose face was very much like yours, only he was a man and you are a woman—still he was very much like you. He came and made inquiries and was told of the case, and spoke well..." (Here follow the proceedings in court, in almost the same words as before.) "The owner of the money let me go, saying, 'As long as I live I will never again press you for that debt.' And I for my part took my ring and my sash and my belt, and gave them to Akilimali by way of thanks."

His wife said, "But do you know that man for certain?"

"No," he said, "I do not know him."

His wife said to him, "Well, I am the person!" She took off the cloth from her head and gave him the ring, the sash and the belt. The husband believed

her, and praised God for the beautiful wife He had given him. And then she said to him, “As long as you live, never do so again.”

(The story) ends here. (Anekoma Napa.)

## THE CHILDREN AND THE CANNIBAL

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Werner, A. “The Bantu Element in Swahili Folklore.” *Folklore* 20 (1909): 448–450.

**Date:** ca. 1909

**Original Source:** Swahili

**National Origin:** Unavailable

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This narrative is also known as “The Story of the Children and the Zimwi.” Alice Werner notes that “Zimwi ... implies something more than a mere [eater of human flesh] ... the being [is] in some respects preternatural, but also preternaturally stupid, like our northern giants” (448).

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Some children went to a river to look for cowries. One found one cowry, and laid it on a rock. And they searched and found and went home; but that child forgot his shell, and, as it was a very fine one, he asked his companions to go back with him and fetch it. They said, “Go and fetch it, and we will wait for you,” and he went and sang:

Little by little it has dawned;  
 My shell, I have forgotten it.  
 I said, I will go back and fetch it.  
 There they stood all in a row.  
 My inside said, “kuchukuchu.”

And he found a zimwi (cannibal) sitting on the rock, who said to him, “What do you want?” and the child sang (in answer), and the zimwi said, “I cannot hear, come closer.” And, when the child came near, he took him and put him into a cask and carried him off. And as he went he came on some people sitting in the baraza, (as we might say, “on the village green”), and he said to them, “I have my drum; I want a fowl and rice that I may eat.”

They said, “Sing,” and the child sang. The zimwi was given food, and he ate, but he gave none to the child, he ate it all himself. He went to the boy’s own village, and the people (there) said, “We have heard that you, Zimwi, have a very fine drum, sing for us!”

And he said, "I want beer." And the child sang, and all the people (knew his voice and) said, "This is our child." They gave the Zimwi beer, and he got drunk and went to sleep. Then the people went and took his drum, and found the child and carried him off and hid him in the inner compartment of the hut, and into the drum they put snakes and bees and biting ants, and fastened it up as it was before. And they went and awakened him, and said, "Zimwi, wake up! Some people have come and want to hear your drum." He took his drum and beat it, and heard (literally) silence; he did not hear the child's voice. So he went his way, and on the road he opened it and found a snake, and it bit him, and he died. Where he died there sprang up pumpkins and cucumbers, and some children came that way and said, "These pumpkins are fine; let us go and get father's sword and cut them open" (literally, strike them). One pumpkin got angry and pursued those children, and they ran away till they came to a river, and they saw an old man there, and said, "Eh! father, please ferry us over to the other side, we are running away from a pumpkin." The old man ferried them across and they ran till they came to another village, where they found plenty of people sitting in the baraza and said to them, "Hide us from that pumpkin: the zimwi has turned into a pumpkin, so do you take it and burn it in the fire."

The pumpkin arrived, and said, "Have you seen my people who have run away?"

The people said, "What sort of people are yours? We do not know them."

But it said, "You have shut them up inside." And they took the pumpkin and threw it into a big fire, and it was burnt up so that only ashes were left, and they threw them away. So they let out the children, who then went home to their mothers.

## **BABOON DISGUISES HIMSELF AND BECOMES A FARMER**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Werner, A. "Some Notes on East African Folklore (Continued)." *Folklore* 26 (1915): 61–62.

**Date:** ca. 1915

**Original Source:** Swahili

**National Origin:** Kenya

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Given the Swahili identification with the maritime trade situated on the Indian Ocean, most scholarship has focused on urban, coastal life. The following narrative, however, attests to the fact that tales recalling bases of subsistence other than the maritime are traditional for the Swahili as

well. The plot of “Baboon Disguises Himself and Becomes a Farmer” calls on other important features of the **animal tale** in many African traditions. The **motif** of the failure of disguise and trickery to achieve a desired end and denying one’s proper role in the cultural order are common. Moreover, the story of a young woman’s marriage to an animal (boar, snake, bull, among others) in human disguise is a common plot that even managed to survive in the African Diaspora.

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**T**he baboons, tired of getting a precarious living by stealing maize in people’s gardens, whereby, as they said, “we may get enough to eat one day, and the next be driven off into the woods with our hunger,” hit on the plan of disguising one of their number by the simple process of cutting off his tail, and sending him to settle in a village, build a house and take a human wife. “You can then,” they said, “cultivate seven gardens, two for you and five for us.” This was done, and the couple hoed and planted with exemplary industry, the husband’s relations coming when the crops were ripe, and feeding in peace in the gardens set apart for them. This went on for some time, but at last the wife grew tired of the arrangement, and remarked, “Ah, what sort of a nuisance is this—to cultivate every day for those baboons only!” The husband agreed with her, saying, “Truly this is a nuisance!” They were overheard by a baboon hidden in the bush beside the garden, who immediately went home and informed the clan. They immediately took his tail, which seems to have been carefully preserved in the meantime, and set out for the village. Finding that he was not at home, but had gone to help thatch his father-in-law’s house, they followed him there and sang:

Nyani he! nyani! hala muchirao,  
Nyani lie! nyani! hala muchirao!

“Baboon! come and fetch your tail!” So the secret was revealed to the wife and her relations, and the baboon, resuming his tail, returned to the bush with his own people.

## **THE TREACHEROUS JACKAL**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Werner, A. “Some Notes on East African Folklore (Continued).” *Folklore* 26 (1915): 70–71.

**Date:** ca. 1915

**Original Source:** Swahili

**National Origin:** Kenya

In the following **animal tale**, the gedal (jackal) plays the role of **trickster** that is commonly played by hare in many African traditions, especially in the Bantu narrative repertoire. Exploitive and malicious, the jackal repays kindness and hospitality with cruelty.

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The gedal sat in the bara, crying, all by himself. The lion passed by and asked him what was the matter.

“My father and mother are dead-I am a poor orphan!”

“I will take you with me, do not cry any more.” The lion took him to his village and told him to herd the cattle for him, which he did for some time. One day the lion, having killed a bullock, said he would go and look after the cattle, and desired the gedal to stay at home and cook the beef. He heated a stone in the fire, wrapped it up in a very fat piece of meat, and when the lion came home hungry told him to open his mouth wide, threw the stone down his throat, and so killed him.

The hyena then came and asked for a share of the meat. The gedal gave him some bones, telling him to look out, as the lion was asleep; he thereupon sat down between the hyena and the dead lion, and asked the former to let him play with his tail.

The hyena, busy with the bones, did not notice that the gedal was tying his tail to the dead lion's, but was roused by a sudden cry, “Take care, the lion is awake!”

He started off at a run, dragging the lion after him, and dived into his burrow, the mouth of which was, of course, blocked by the lion's body. The hyena, thinking the lion was still alive, did not move for some time, till at last the carcass became decomposed and the tail parted company with it. He then ate up the carrion and came out.

Meanwhile the gedal, having finished the beef and being unable to procure other food, again went and sat in the tiara, crying, till the elephant came by, carrying a bag of honey.

Questioned, he replied as he had done to the lion, adding the information that “father used to carry me on his back.”

The compassionate elephant said, “Up with you, then!” and the gedal climbed on his back and began eating the honey. From time to time he let some drops fall, and, when the elephant asked if it were raining, answered that the thought of his mother made him cry. Having finished the honey, he remarked that his father was in the habit of walking under trees, so that he could pick the fruit. The elephant fell into the trap, and passed under the overhanging branches. When he got home the honey and the gedal had alike disappeared.

## ***Western and Central Africa***



# AKUAPEM

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## HOW ANANSE TALES GOT THEIR NAME

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Barker, W. H. “Nyankopone and Ananse in Gold Coast Folklore.” *Folklore* 30 (1919): 161–162.

**Date:** ca. 1919

**Original Source:** Akuapem

**National Origin:** Ghana

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Akuapem are an Akan ethnic group residing in southern Ghana and related linguistically to the Ashanti, Baule, and Fante groups of Ghana and Côte d’Ivoire. The area in which these groups reside was labeled the Gold Coast because of Akan domination of the gold trade in the area. Economics revolved primarily around the trade of gold and, later, slaves. This prosperity allowed the development of advanced and extensive political systems before the European colonial period. The following narratives relate exploits of the classic West African **trickster**, Anansi (also, Ananse, Annancy). Anansi in both the Diaspora and in Continental Africa is an anthropomorphic spider with a penchant for pranks and an insatiable appetite. As with most other trickster figures, Anansi loves wit—usually at the expense of all other characters in the **cycles** in which spider is featured. Striking parallels exist between Ananse in the following two tales, the Caribbean “Nancy and the Honey Tree” (Volume 4, page 405), “Nancy Fools His Wife” (Volume 4, page 407), and “Annancy and the Yam Hills” (Volume 4, page 424), and the U.S. “How Come Mr. Buzzard to Have a Bald Head” (Volume 4, page 163). Further comparisons can be made between the African American trickster rabbit and Anansi. The following two narratives offer alternative explanations of how trickster tales came to be called “Ananse Tales”



among the Akuapem. Alternate explanations of this sort are common in oral tradition.

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One day the spider went to God and begged him to let God's tales be called spider's tales. This was agreed to, providing Ananse brought three things: an earthen vessel full of bees, a tiger and a large snake.

That very day the spider took an earthen pot to a place where he knew the bees passed. After a few minutes he saw the bees coming and began a conversation with himself.

"These bees will not fill this pot."

"They will fill the pot."

"They will not fill the pot," and so on.

The bees asked what was the matter with him.

"Yesterday, God said you bees would not fill this pot, and I said you would, so I beg you will all go in and let me see, and I will pay you for it."

At once all went into the vessel, and the spider shut it and sent it to God.

On the next day he took a long stick and went to a place where he knew a large snake lived. He began by saying these words to himself:

"He is as long as this stick."

"He is not as long as this stick."

He repeated these words several times till the snake came out and asked him what he wanted.

"There has been an argument," said the spider, "in God's town since yesterday that you are not as long as this stick. I said you were, so I pray you will let me measure you. The snake obeyed, and the spider tied and bound him from head to tail and sent him straight to God.

On the next day the spider bought some needles and thread and sewed up his eyes and mouth. He now went to a tiger's path, singing and shouting. Suddenly the tiger came and asked him what he wanted. The spider said, "Don't you see my eyes and mouth? I have never seen anything so fine as this since I was born, and it is good to tell your friend when you get new things, therefore come and try."

The tiger sat down and allowed the spider to sew up his eyes and mouth. He was then quickly carried to God.

That is how we get spider's tales.

## **ANANSE BUYS THE TOWN**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Barker, W. H. "Nyankopone and Ananse in Gold Coast Folklore." *Folklore* 30 (1919): 160–161.

**Date:** ca. 1919

**Original Source:** Akuapem

**National Origin:** Ghana

Ananse and Ananse kokuroko [Ananse the Great] argued one day about a grain of corn. Ananse said he could buy a whole town and its population with a single grain of corn.

“Impossible,” said Ananse kokuroko, “if you are able, I will give you my Anyankasem.”

Ananse took the corn and went from town to town. When he saw some fowls he threw them the corn which was picked up by a cock. Ananse caught the cock and began to weep. The owner came, and Ananse said, “This corn was given me by the Creator to sow, and from this all men on the surface of the earth shall live. As I was holding it, it dropped and the cock swallowed it, therefore go and excuse yourself before the Creator.”

The owner, in fear, gave Ananse the cock.

He went to another town, where he allowed the cock to be trampled on and killed by some oxen. He seized one of them, and in the same manner as before, it passed into his possession.

Ananse went on to the next village, where he met a funeral procession. He coaxed the people and obtained the dead body in exchange for the ox.

After dark, he entered the next town with the dead body and went into a house. He was provided with food, and his “man” put to sleep with some boys who beat him soundly. When Ananse saw what had been done he wept very much, and said to his host, “Three years ago, I was sent by Ananse kokuroko to fetch this man, for the world about to be created is to be put on him. You and the king of the town had better go to Ananse.”

Not a soul was left in the town, all arose and followed Ananse, who sang:

Mede brofua m’agye akoko,  
 Mede akoko m’agye nantwi;  
 Mede nantwi m’agye efunu,  
 Mede efunu agye kuro-man.  
 (I have won a cock with one grain,  
 An ox for a cock;  
 My ox wins me a dead body,  
 My corpse brings me a town’s population.)

The company appears before the Creator, who with his counselors is astonished at Ananse’s success, and he announces that in future Anyankasem [“Ananse the Great stories”] shall be called Anansesem [“Ananse stories”].

# BULU

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## THE TWO HUNCHBACKS

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Krug, Adolph N. "Bulu Tales from Kamerun, West Africa." *The Journal of American Folklore* 25 (1912): 109–111.

**Date:** ca. 1912

**Original Source:** Bulu Fang

**National Origin:** Cameroon

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The Bulu are one of the major ethnic subdivisions of the Fang, a Bantu culture of Cameroon. While there were opportunities to engage in coastal trade with Europeans, the primary Bulu resources were their fields and the surrounding forests. Many of the animal species that the Bulu hunted (for example, the pangolin, civet, elephant), and with whom they competed for game (leopard) appear as characters in their folktales. **Fables** such as "The Two Hunchbacks" are a major narrative **genre** among the Bulu.

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Once upon a time there was a man who was a hunchback; and when he went a-courting, he saw a woman who was also a hunchback, even as he himself. So he said to the woman, "I wish to marry you, because you are a hunchback, even as I myself: therefore I wish to marry you." The woman assented, and they were married.

But the man happened to hear of a person who had the power to heal hunchbacks, so he arose to go to this man. As he was journeying on the road, he came upon a very old man, and he gave him some food; although he was offensive and ugly and dirty, nevertheless he gave him of his food.

Thereupon the very old man said to him, "My young man, when you have reached the town, and they cook food for you, and take it to a house that is old and tumble-down, do not object, but go and eat there." And the man did after this fashion.

When he had reached the town, they cooked food for him, and took it to a bad-looking house; but he also went, and entered the house and began to eat the food. Suddenly he noticed a very old man lying there, and he took part of his food and gave it to the old man. The old man asked him, "Who instructed you in this matter?" and he answered, "I myself." Thereupon said the old man to him, "This very night, if they come and ask you, 'Which do you prefer, a fetish covered with the skin of the genet [small mammal related to the mongoose], or a fetish covered with the skin of the civet-cat?' you reply, 'I prefer a fetish covered with the skin of the genet'; and if they ask you again, 'Which do you prefer to be, straight as an arrow or bent over?' you answer, 'Straight as an arrow.'"

When night had come, they showed him a house in which he was to sleep. During the night, when they came to ask him all these questions, just as the old man had instructed him, he answered rightly; and thus he was healed, because he did not disdain the evil things he met at the beginning. Thus did he return to his own town, a man healed completely.

When his wife saw this, she was very much grieved, because she and her husband had both been hunchbacks, but now her husband was a well man. So the woman jumped up quickly and started to go; but her husband called out to her, and said, "Wait a moment! I will instruct you as to what you should do."

But she replied, "No, indeed! Did you tell me at all, or say good-bye, when you went away?" Thus did she go in great haste; and when she came upon the old man lying by the roadside, she spit on the ground, and said, "What a horrid old thing this is!"

And the old man, in turn, said, "My youthful maiden, go on to where you wish to go." The woman also said to him, "I see that you wish to offer me insult with your talk." Thus did she leave him lying there, and went on her journey.

When she had come to the town, they cooked food for her, and they took the food to the house where the old man was staying. So she said, in her pride, "Am I, indeed, of no account, that they take food for me to such a horrible place?"

The people said to her, "We knew of no better place where you could have gone to eat food." And the woman ate all the food herself; never a bite did she give to the very old man. When night came, they showed her a house to sleep in. When they came during the night, and asked her, "Which do you prefer to be, straight as an arrow or bent over?" she replied, "Bent over."

And when they asked her again, "Which do you prefer, a fetish covered with the skin of the genet, or one covered with the skin of the civet-cat?" she replied, "A fetish covered with the skin of the civet-cat." Thereupon the hunch on her back became even worse than the one she had previously borne.

When she returned home to her husband, he said to her, "I will never live in marriage with you again." Thus did the woman go from bad to worse, because she had no pity on people in distress, but lifted herself up in pride; and thus it was that she saw all this trouble.

Upon whom rests the blame of this affair? Is it upon the woman herself, or her husband? Thus did this woman go from bad to worse.

## WHAT HAPPENS TO WIVES WHEN THEY THINK MORE HIGHLY OF ANYTHING ELSE THAN OF THEIR HUSBANDS

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Schwab, George. "Bulu Tales." *The Journal of American Folklore* 32 (1919): 428–429.

**Date:** ca. 1919

**Original Source:** Bulu Fang

**National Origin:** Cameroon

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The following narrative combines the **animal tale** form with the **fable** function.

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It happened thus. Great hunger came upon the forest. Then Male-Gorilla took his wives, and they all went walking. As they walked, they found an engong tree [tree with large, plum-like fruit] laden with ripe fruit. Then Male-Gorilla said to himself, "I am going to act wisely. I will test my wives." So he climbed an Stunga tree [*Brachychiton discolor*] which grew beside the engong tree, and bent it down to the ground. His wives climbed it and from it to the engong tree, where they began eating with the greediness of hunger. Then said Male-Gorilla thus to his wives, "As you are eating up there, is it me or is it the fruit you like most?"

They answered him thus, "We like only you," and they came down laden with fruit. So he, too, ate until he was tired eating. Then they all returned to their village, passing the village of Chimpanzee, where there was also great hunger.

Now, when Husband-Chimpanzee saw the stains of the engong fruit on the hands and faces of Male-Gorilla and his wives, he asked of them the location of the engong in the forest. Male-Gorilla instructed him.

Then Husband-Chimpanzee called all his wives, and they walked to the place of the tree engong in the forest. They became tired searching for the place where Male-Gorilla and his wives had climbed up, until suddenly Husband-Chimpanzee

spoke thus, “Ke! It was by the path of the Stunga.” So he climbed up and bent it to the ground, and then his wives climbed on to it and over on to the tree engong. At once they began to eat greedily. “I will test them,” said Husband-Chimpanzee to himself. So he asked, “You, up there! Is it myself or is it the engong fruit which you like most?”

They thus to him, “We like a bunch of engong fruit.” Again Husband-Chimpanzee asked, “Myself or engong fruit, which is it you surpass liking?”

They thus, “A bunch of the fruit engong.” So Husband-Chimpanzee let go of the Stunga tree, and began to eat the fruit that his wives dropped.

It happened that a man walking in the forest came to the engong tree. Husband-Chimpanzee saw him, ran away and hid himself. When Man looked up into the tree and saw the chimpanzees eating, he quickly returned to his village, called the people, who went out to the tree engong, where they saw the chimpanzees. “Woe is us!” said Wives-of-Chimpanzee. “Let us quickly descend by way of the unga!” But they could not reach it, so all were killed, dying with a great dying. Thus did Wives-of-Chimpanzee suffer because of their greed.

## NEVER TELL THE THINGS OF TABOO YOU HAPPEN TO SEE

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Schwab, George. “Bulu Tales.” *The Journal of American Folklore* 32 (1919): 437.

**Date:** ca. 1919

**Original Source:** Bulu Fang

**National Origin:** Cameroon

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According to George Schwab, a kôn is a small, dark anthropomorphic being that is the spirit of a deceased human being when one dies. The following **legend** provides an explanation for adhering to taboos imposed by the kôn.

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**S**on-of-Man went to the forest, where he found a honey-tree. He cut the vines about the tree, and prepared it otherwise for climbing to the beehive. Thus he said to himself, “Tomorrow I’ll come and get the honey.” Away he went.

Then came Kôn, who also saw the tree. “I’ll come tomorrow and get the honey,” he said.

When he arrived the next morning, he divided himself into three parts. The part with his head climbed the tree. The part consisting of buttocks and legs he left at the foot of the tree. The trunk was put aside.

While this was going on, Son-of-Man came along, saw the thing that Kôn did, and watched the head-part climb the tree. He hid himself to see what would happen.

When Kôn finished taking out the honey from the tree, he descended. Suddenly he saw Son-of-Man where he was standing. "Where have you come from?" he asked. "Was it when I climbed up, or when I came down, when was it you came?"

Son-of-Man thus, "While you were yet standing at the foot of the tree, then it was I came." So Kôn took the honey, dividing evenly with Son-of-Man. As he was doing this, for the second time, he asked Son-of-Man when it was he came. Again Kôn was told, "While you were yet standing at the foot of the tree." Then Son-of-Man turned to leave for his village. But ere he left, Kôn asked him the same question again, twice. "You will not tell this thing to any other person," said Kôn as Son-of-Man left him.

When Son-of-Man reached his village, he called his wife, asking her to bring him his food. When she had given it to him, he gave her a portion of the honey. "Where have you gotten this?" she asked. "Go to your hut, I'll remain here," he answered. But again she asked where he had gotten the honey. So he told her the wonderful thing he had seen Kôn do. When he had ended telling her, Son-of-Man fell over dead. His wife cried the death cry. Her mother heard it, and came rushing out to see what had happened. Wife of Son-of-Man told her all the things her husband had told her, and of his death. Then she too fell down dead.

From that day even to this, when Kôn gives a taboo, the sons of men refuse to break it.

## **THE TORTOISE AND THE ELEPHANT**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Krug, Adolph N. "Bulu Tales from Kamerun, West Africa." *The Journal of American Folklore* 25 (1912): 106–107.

**Date:** ca. 1912

**Original Source:** Bulu Fang

**National Origin:** Cameroon

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Tortoise rivals hare as the **trickster** protagonist of Continental African **animal tales**. In fact, it has been asserted that, without exception, next to the hare, the tortoise is the most conspicuous figure in Bantu folklore (Werner 1933). In "The Tortoise and the Elephant," tortoise manifests the usual traits of trickster: wit to defeat superior size and strength, clever use of words, and greed.

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Once upon a time the Tortoise and the Elephant went on a journey, and they said one to the other, "Let us go and visit Zambe, the son of Mebe'e!"

Thereupon they started on their journey; and when they came to a river, they stopped and took a bath. When they had finished taking a bath, the Tortoise began, and said to the Elephant, "Come, my friend, we will take new names for ourselves!" When the Elephant therefore asked him, "What names shall we take?" the Tortoise began, and said, "My name is 'Guests, go to the house'"; but the Elephant was named "Guests, remain seated." After this the Tortoise said, "Now we have finished taking new names for ourselves, therefore we will do after this manner: when we have arrived in town, and you hear the people call, 'Guests, go to the house,' then they are calling me, the Tortoise; but if you hear them call, 'Guests, remain seated,' then they are calling the Elephant."

When they had thus finished taking new names, they left the river crossing, and came to the village. Zambe, the son of Mebe'e, was greatly surprised, and said, "Great guests have come to my village." So he killed a fowl and gave it to a woman to cook, and the woman prepared and cooked it. After this Zambe called a boy, and said to him, "Go and call my guests from the palaver-house." The boy accordingly went to the palaver-house, and called out, "Guests, go to the house!"

The Tortoise thereupon quickly arose, saying, "They have called me by my name," and he said to his children, "Let us go to the house!" So the Tortoise and his children went to the house; and they ate the fowl, and saved for the Elephant and his children only a piece of the breast.

Thereupon said Zambe, the son of Mebe'e, "Perhaps the Elephant despised the fowl." So he killed a dog and had it cooked, and said to the boy, "Go and call my guests from the palaver-house."

The boy therefore went to the palaver-house and called out. So the Tortoise again said, "It is I they are calling," and he and his children went in and ate the dog, but they kept for the Elephant and his children only a small piece of the dog.

After this Zambe, the son of Mebe'e, killed a sheep and had it prepared also. Then he said again to the boy, "Go and call my guests from the palaver-house." The boy therefore went to the palaver-house and called out, "Guests, go to the house!" The Tortoise therefore said again, "It is my name they have called," so the Tortoise and his children went to the house, and they ate all of the sheep, keeping for the Elephant and his children only a piece of a leg.

When the next morning had dawned, the Elephant and the Tortoise said one to the other, "Now we will go home." Thereupon Zambe, the son of Mebe'e, took a staff in his hand, and said to the Elephant, "On the day you arrived here I killed a fowl, but you did not eat of it; after that I killed a dog, but you did not eat of it, either; so at last I killed a sheep, but never a bite did



you eat of it, either; therefore I want to ask you, what is it you desire that I should now kill for you?"

To this the Elephant replied, and said, "I did not eat, not because there was too little food, but because we took new names when we came to this town. Therefore I did in this manner: the name of the Tortoise is 'Guests, go to the house'; and the Tortoise always went, because you always called his name, 'Guests, go to the house.' I did not go because I did not hear you call 'Guests, remain seated.' If, however, you had called me in that manner, I certainly should have gone."

Therefore the people said to the Elephant, "You are certainly a great big blockhead. Will any one with any sense ever take such a name for himself?"

Thus did the Tortoise deceive the Elephant.

## TURTLE DRINKS AT THE EXPENSE OF THE OTHER BEASTS

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Schwab, George. "Bulu Folk-Tales." *The Journal of American Folklore* 27 (1914): 273–274.

**Date:** ca. 1914

**Original Source:** Bulu Fang

**National Origin:** Cameroon

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Tortoise's usual adversary in the Bulu tale corpus is leopard. Despite leopard's strength and ferocity, he is inevitably duped by tortoise. As in the following narrative, tortoise—translated as Turtle in this instance—shows no particular reluctance to sacrifice okpweng, the blue duiker (a tiny, forest-dwelling antelope); sô, the bay duiker (a related, somewhat larger species); and any other animal who might succumb to his guile to steal leopard's wine.

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One day Leopard climbed a wine palm, which he tapped. Turtle, who happened by at the time, saw him suspend the gourd to catch the wine. So he hunted up Okpweng, telling him, "Come, let us go to the forest at gray dawn in the morning and drink Leopard's palm wine!" Okpweng agreed to do so. At gray dawn in the morning he came, calling Turtle.

He thus, "Have you a bag?"

Okpweng thus, "Yes." Then they went out into the forest, climbed the palm tree, and drank the palm wine. After they had emptied the gourd, Turtle thus, "You help me down, then remain up here until more wine drips into the gourd.

Then let it down to me in your bag.” Okpweng then helped Turtle down, he himself remaining in the tree. When he reached the ground, Turtle quickly hid himself in a leafy thicket.

Then appeared Leopard, who, seeing Okpweng up in the tree, said in a loud, scolding voice, “So you are the one who constantly drinks my palm wine?” Then Leopard climbed the tree, and caught and killed Okpweng.

Turtle now went to Sô, saying, “Early in the morning we shall go to the forest to drink Leopard’s palm wine.” Sô agreed. Very early in the morning it was, when Sô came to call Turtle, saying, “Show me the path [literally, “go with me”] to Leopard’s palm wine.” They both climbed the tree, drinking the wine, as on the day before. After they had emptied the gourd, Turtle asked Sô to help him down. Sô did, remaining in the tree. Then Turtle again quickly hid in the leafy thicket.

Soon Leopard came along to collect his palm wine. Seeing Sô, and finding his wine gone as before, he caught and killed Sô too.

Thus did Turtle to all the beasts, deceiving them, and himself drinking Leopard’s wine.

## HOW TURTLE INHERITED LEOPARD’S GOODS

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Schwab, George. “Bulu Tales.” *The Journal of American Folklore* 32 (1919): 430–431.

**Date:** ca. 1919

**Original Source:** Bulu Fang

**National Origin:** Cameroon

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The following tale of tortoise’s deception of his arch-competitor leopard reveals the cunning and amoral way in which **trickster** figures operate. In this case, trickster satisfies his greed by cleverly and patiently trapping, then murdering his “business partner,” leopard.

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**I**t happened thus. Leopard and Turtle arose, and said they would go to the forest to camp and hunt and set traps. So they left their villages and went. They walked through the forest until they found a place to build a shelter.

When they had built it, they said, “Now we’ll go out and set traps.” So each went his own way into the forest, where he set his traps. When Leopard had finished setting his traps, Turtle set a noose-trap near a log. Then they both returned to the camp. Night fell. At dawn they went out to look at their traps

to see if anything had been caught. Leopard had caught many animals in his traps.

These he took along. He came upon Turtle, whom he found near a tree from which a noose-trap was suspended.

Then Leopard said to him, "Ah, my Brother Turtle! and do people set traps to catch animals as you have set this one?"

Turtle asked of him, "Ah, Leopard! How is it that traps are set? Show me how it is done."

So Leopard cut the end off a sapling, dug the shallow pit for the noose-trap, and then set the trap for Turtle. Now Turtle said, "Ah, Leopard! Show me also how it is an animal can get caught in that thing you have made." Leopard answered him, "Is it that you wish to snare me?"

Turtle thus to him, "I'll come quickly and release you."

So Leopard put his head through the noose of the trap, which caused the sapling to spring up, suspending Leopard in the air. Leopard struggled with a great struggling to free himself. Turtle took up his spear, wounded Leopard, who quickly died. Then Turtle cut him into pieces, took all the animals he had caught, put them into a basket, and went to his village.

Soon the wives of Leopard came to him, asking what had become of their husband. Turtle thus, "If he comes not today, he'll never come. This he said to me when we parted in the forest. He was tired living with homely wives like you, he said. But in my eyes you are all surpassingly beautiful."

Then the wives of Leopard went back to their village, waiting even until nightfall for the return of their husband Leopard. At last the head wife said, "And why is it that we wait here for him in whose eyes we are ugly?" So they took their baskets and all the things of Leopard's village, and went to live with Turtle. And thus it was that Turtle became rich at Leopard's cost.

## **TURTLE DECEIVES ZOE, GIVING LEOPARD THE BLAME FOR STEALING ZOE'S DAUGHTER**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Schwab, George. "Bulu Tales." *The Journal of American Folklore* 32 (1919): 429–430.

**Date:** ca. 1919

**Original Source:** Bulu Fang

**National Origin:** Cameroon

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Tortoise's ruse of disguise to achieve his own ends is consistent with **trickster's** shape-shifting. In the following tale, tortoise uses his disguise, his powers of observation, and his wits not only to win the competition

for Zoe's (civet cat) daughter, but also to kill leopard. Using song to work his will on his dupes is common tool for tricksters.

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It happened thus. Zoe made preparations for a great dance, inviting all his forest friends to come on the night that the moon would begin to wane. When Turtle heard of it, he said, "Woe is me! Leopard will be there! He and I are very great enemies."

So Turtle went to Porcupine's village to ask what he should do. Porcupine answered him thus, "Go to Okpweng [blue duiker] and ask him for his horns," said Porcupine.

So Turtle left Porcupine and went to Okpweng, begging him for his horns for a night. Okpweng answered, "Take them." Then Turtle went to the dancing place.

Now, Turtle and Leopard met at the joining of the path, near Zoe's village, which they entered together. As soon as Zoe's daughters saw them coming, both fell in love. Turtle spoke thus in his heart, "There will be a blood-feud here to-night." As night fell, Leopard felt great hunger in his stomach; so he took up a fruit of the adjap tree and ate it, leaving only a small piece.

Turtle saw Leopard eating. Now, Turtle wanted to marry Zoe's younger daughter. So he went to her hut, where she was ornamenting herself for the dance, and said thus, "Ah, Daughter-of-Zoe! You will get a real woman's present if you will go out behind the adjap tree and await me, as soon as you hear the dance-drum begin to talk."

As the moon began to rise, Zoe called all his guests to come to the place near the palaver-house. "Who will begin the dance, and who will pound the drum for him?" asked Zoe. "I will; and Leopard, who surpasses every one in the beating of the dance-drum, he will pound for me." Zoe thus, "Yes, Okpweng, even so shall it be."

So Leopard went to the dance drum and began, while Turtle danced. And even as he, danced, Turtle began to sing, "He! He! Where is beautiful Youngest-Daughter-of-Zoe? Has not he on whose mouth the adjap fruit has stuck, has not even he hidden her to elope with him? He! He! Why is she not at the dance?"

The guests all looked at one another, but no adjap fruit did they see sticking to the mouth of any one. No, not so much as would fill the eye of a needle. "He! He! Under the adjap tree she awaits him. The fruit on his hands stuck to hers! He! He!" continued Turtle as he danced.

Then rose Zoe and went to the adjap tree, where he found his youngest daughter with adjap fruit on her hands, which Turtle had put there as a sign that he might know her in the dark. Zoe carried her back. As Turtle saw them coming, he sang, "He! He! Why does the drum's head stick to the hands of the drummer? He! He!"

"It is even as Okpweng sings," said Zoe, who went over to Leopard and looked at his face. "I invited Leopard, and he is spoiling my village by way of

thanks for my friendship!" So Zoe took his spear and wounded Leopard, so that he died. Then said Zoe to all the guests, "And where can I find a son-in-law who can surpass Okpweng in cunning?" So Turtle took her to his village.

## HOW TURTLE DECEIVED LEOPARD INTO EATING HIS OWN MOTHER

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Schwab, George. "Bulu Folk-Tales." *The Journal of American Folklore* 27 (1914): 267–268.

**Date:** ca. 1914

**Original Source:** Bulu Fang

**National Origin:** Cameroon

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Tortoise perpetrates yet another act of cruelty on Leopard to satisfy his physical desires. Tortoise uses ngong to simulate his mother's blood; the ngong is plum-size fruit that produces a large quantity of dark red juice. "Bundle cooking" is accomplished by wrapping the food to be cooked in large leaves and then boiling the resulting package.

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It happened thus. Turtle and Leopard were very hungry, having no food at all. Turtle said, "Come, Leopard, let us kill and eat our own mothers!" Leopard, feeling great hunger, said, "Come on, then, we will kill them at the stream."

Turtle answered him, "Mine is across the stream. I'll go bring her." So Turtle left Leopard, crossing the stream alone. Then he went into the forest, where he gathered two basketfuls of the fruit ngong. From this he pressed the juice with his hands, then poured it into the stream. It flowed down to Leopard, who, seeing the colored water, believed it to be the blood of Mother Turtle. Then Leopard seized and killed his own mother.

Turtle and Leopard now returned to the village, Turtle going to his mother's hut. Her he hid in a large peanut-basket. Having done this, he returned to Leopard's hut, where they cooked the bundle containing Mother Leopard's corpse. Leopard went out to the back of the hut to look for something. During his absence, Turtle hastily exchanged the bundle containing Mother Leopard's corpse, which they had been cooking, for his own bundle. When Leopard returned, Turtle said, "Let us eat our mothers now!" Leopard agreeing, Turtle went, and soon returned with Leopard's bundle. They ate up everything in it. "Now," said Turtle, "you take your bundle, and we will eat what it contains too." To his surprise, Leopard found ngong fruit in his own bundle. Then he spoke angrily thus,

“Why did you say, ‘Come, let us eat our mothers?’ For this thing I shall go and seize and kill your mother.”

Turtle made answer, “You are truly a foolish thing. Does one kill and eat his own mother? Yes, your foolishness is truly great.” Thus did Turtle deceive Leopard to satisfy his hunger.

## **TURTLE SURPASSES MAN IN INGENUITY**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Schwab, George. “Bulu Folk-Tales.” *The Journal of American Folklore* 27 (1914): 271.

**Date:** ca. 1914

**Original Source:** Bulu Fang

**National Origin:** Cameroon

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In the following tale, tortoise demonstrates that he is even more clever than man. Man’s reaction demonstrates an admiration for quick wit.

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It happened thus. Man, whose name was Zomeyomebe’e, had a daughter. Now, Man said thus, “No one can ever give me a dowry and marry this virgin of mine for it. She can only be married by the man who brings me water from the stream in a basket.” So all men tried to thus win her, but all failed to obtain her in marriage. At last came Turtle one day to Man, saying, “I have come to marry your daughter.” Man answered, “Go fetch me basketfuls of water from the stream.”

So Turtle made himself a basket. This basket did he take to the stream, where he dipped it into the water. Then he called a child of that village, Man’s child it was, and told it thus, “Go tell your father, if he wishes me to carry to him this basketful of water, to make and bring to me a carrying-strap of smoke.” But Man tired trying to make the carrying-strap of smoke, saying at last, “Turtle, you have surpassed me in ingenuity. Come, take and marry my daughter!” So Turtle came and took Man’s daughter in marriage. Then lived Turtle and Man many days in great friendship, because Turtle had won Man’s daughter by his surpassing ingenuity.

## **HOW TURTLE’S GREED BROUGHT HIM TO A SAD END**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Schwab, George. “Bulu Folk-Tales.” *The Journal of American Folklore* 27 (1914): 284–285.

Date: ca. 1914

Original Source: Bulu Fang

National Origin: Cameroon

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The concluding statements “Thus perished Turtle because of his greed and deceit” and “A man who has wisdom in his heart will listen to the words of this tale” attest to the fact that the following **animal tale** serves as a **fable**. Okpweng, Mian, Mvin, and Zip are all types of duikers, small forest antelopes.

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**I**t happened thus. Turtle left his village and went to see Leopard to beg of him one of his claws. When he had reached the palaver-house, he spoke thus to Leopard, “Ah, father mine! cut off one of your claws for me; I wish to be able to catch game.” So Leopard did as Turtle had requested of him, for there was a surpassing friendship between them. Turtle took it and put it on one of his fingers, then said, “Now I am going out to catch animals with my claw.” He returned home, and, taking his cutlass, went to the forest to set noose-traps. As he was setting one of them, he saw Okpweng coming along. So he called to Okpweng, “Come, help me set this trap!” Okpweng came over and set the trap for Turtle. “Now teach me how they get fast in these traps,” he begged.

To oblige him, Okpweng walked along as animals do when they are unaware of the presence of traps. Then he lightly placed one foot on the stick which held the noose in place, and, kpwing! Up snapped the sapling to which the noose was fastened, catching Okpweng by the neck and pulling him up into the air. He thus to Turtle, “Come quickly and take the noose from off my neck or I’ll die!”

Turtle thus, “No! Was it I that called you here?” Then he struck Okpweng on the head with a club and tore him with his claw, so that he died. Then he took the corpse and hid it. As he was about to again set the trap, he saw Mvin coming along the path, and repeated to him the same words he had used to Okpweng. Mvin was also caught around the neck by the noose and pulled up into the air. “Take me out of this!” he called.

“Not at all! Was it I that called you?” cried Turtle. Then he killed Mvin and also hid his body. Thus did Turtle to many of the forest beasts, Zip being the last to get caught and killed.

Mian, who happened along unnoticed by Turtle as he entrapped and killed Zip, saw and heard what Turtle was doing. Now, after a time Mian showed himself. Turtle tried the same words he had used to the others, but Mian pretended to be very stupid. “Ah, friend Turtle,” said he, “my stupidity is surpassingly great. Show me first how it is done, then all the days to come I can help you. Surely one as wise as you are, knows a bit about this sort of thing.”

“Is it that a beast puts its neck into the noose this way?” asked Turtle, as he cautiously stuck his head into it. “Let me see,” said Mian, as he came closer. Then he quickly touched the stick which held the noose in place with his foot, and up into the air went Turtle. Ne kpwek! did Mian bring down a club on his head, causing him to die. Thus perished Turtle because of his greed and deceit.

A man who has wisdom in his heart will listen to the words of this tale.



# CONGO

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## THE LEOPARD IN THE MAIZE FARM

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Weeks, John H. "The Leopard in the Maize-Farm: A Lower Congo Folk-Tale."  
*Folklore* 20 (1909): 209–211.

**Date:** ca. 1909

**Original Source:** Congo

**National Origin:** Democratic Republic of Congo

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The Democratic Republic of Congo (formerly the Belgian Congo) is located in the west-central area of Africa amid the countries of Zambia, Angola, Republic of Congo, Central African, Republic, Sudan, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda, and Tanzania. Within the tropical climate of equatorial Africa, the topography and lifestyles of the Democratic Republic of Congo are diverse. In excess of 200 distinct ethnic groups have been identified in the area. While not as familiar as spider (Anansi), hare, or tortoise, gazelle plays the **trickster** role in the folktales of the Lower Congo. The following narrative of the magical Nkondi used as a trap to catch an arrogant thief is known in both African American and Continental African traditions as tarbaby and wax-girl, respectively.

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Once upon a time the Leopard and the Gazelle made new maize farms for themselves. When the ground was ready for planting, the Gazelle put some maize into a saucepan to boil, and hid the rest of his maize in another place. While the pot was on the fire, the Leopard arrived and asked, "Friend Gazelle, what are you boiling?"

“Some maize,” said the Gazelle, “and when it is cooked I am going to plant it in my farm.”

The Leopard said, “Indeed! Do you plant boiled maize?”

“Yes,” answered the Gazelle, “I boil all my maize, and then it grows better.” The Leopard returned home at once, rubbed all his maize off the cobs, and boiled it. The next morning they both went and planted their maize, each in his own farm. During the following night the Gazelle went and planted some unboiled maize in the Leopard’s farm.

After a few days they went to look at their farms, and in the Gazelle’s fields the whole of the maize was sprouting well, but in the Leopard’s only the raw maize which the Gazelle had planted was growing. The Leopard could not understand it, for he had boiled his maize well.

By and by the maize was ripe for plucking, and the Gazelle and Leopard went and pulled what they wanted and returned home. For several nights after that the Leopard went stealing maize in the Gazelle’s farm, and one day the Gazelle said to him, “Friend Leopard, who is stealing maize from my farm?”

“I don’t know,” replied the Leopard.

The Gazelle went and carved a wooden fetish, called Nkondi, and put it in his farm. The next night the Leopard went and stole some more maize, and, as he was leaving the farm, the Nkondi said, “Oh! you are the thief, are you?”

“If you talk like that,” growled the Leopard, “I will hit you.”

“Hit me,” said the Nkondi. The Leopard hit him, and his paw stuck to the image.

“Let go!” exclaimed the Leopard, “or I will hit you with my other hand.”

“Hit me,” said the Nkondi. The Leopard hit him with the other hand, and that also stuck to the image.

“Let go!” angrily cried the Leopard, “or I will kick and bite you.”

“Hit me,” repeated the Nkondi. The Leopard did so, and his feet and mouth stuck to the fetish image, and then both the Leopard and the Nkondi fell to the ground together.

By and by the Gazelle arrived, and, when he saw the Leopard sticking to the Nkondi, he said, “Oh! You are the thief, are you?” and, having punished him, he cut some leaves and made a charm to set the Leopard free. After that the Leopard never went stealing again in the Gazelle’s maize farm.

# EFIK

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## THE ELEPHANT AND THE TORTOISE; OR, WHY THE WORMS ARE BLIND AND WHY THE ELEPHANT HAS SMALL EYES

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Dayrell, Elphinstone. *Folk Stories from Southern Nigeria, West Africa*. London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1910, 58–61.

**Date:** ca. 1910

**Original Source:** Efik

**National Origin:** Nigeria

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The Efik reside in the Cross River area of southeastern Nigeria, a region known as Calabar. Their economy was originally based on fishing, but as early as the eighteenth century, the Efik developed a lively trade in which slaves, as well as palm oil and similar indigenous products, were traded for European goods. In this system, the Efik served as intermediaries between European merchants and inland Africans. The lucrative network persisted into the early twentieth century. In the following Efik **animal tale**, the **trickster** tortoise behaves out of character and turns his talents to the service of the community as he attempts to find a means to control the elephant's gluttony. As a result of tortoise's manipulations, the elephant and the worm exchange eyes, which explains their current natures.

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**W**hen Ambo was king of Calabar, the elephant was not only a very big animal, but he had eyes in proportion to his immense bulk. In those days men and animals were friends, and all mixed together quite

freely. At regular intervals King Ambo used to give a feast, and the elephant used to eat more than any one, although the hippopotamus used to do his best; however, not being as big as the elephant, although he was very fat, he was left a long way behind.

As the elephant ate so much at these feasts, the tortoise, who was small but very cunning, made up his mind to put a stop to the elephant eating more than a fair share of the food provided. He therefore placed some dry kernels and shrimps, of which the elephant was very fond, in his bag, and went to the elephant's house to make an afternoon call.

When the tortoise arrived the elephant told him to sit down, so he made himself comfortable, and, having shut one eye, took one palm kernel and a shrimp out of his bag, and commenced to eat them with much relish.

When the elephant saw the tortoise eating, he said, as he was always hungry himself, "You seem to have some good food there; what are you eating?"

The tortoise replied that the food was "sweet too much," but was rather painful to him, as he was eating one of his own eyeballs; and he lifted up his head, showing one eye closed.

The elephant then said, "If the food is so good, take out one of my eyes and give me the same food."

The tortoise, who was waiting for this, knowing how greedy the elephant was, had brought a sharp knife with him for that very purpose, and said to the elephant, "I cannot reach your eye, as you are so big."

The elephant then took the tortoise up in his trunk and lifted him up. As soon as he came near the elephant's eye, with one quick scoop of the sharp knife he had the elephant's right eye out. The elephant trumpeted with pain; but the tortoise gave him some of the dried kernels and shrimps, and they so pleased the elephant's palate that he soon forgot the pain.

Very soon the elephant said, "That food is so sweet, I must have some more," but the tortoise told him that before he could have any the other eye must come out. To this the elephant agreed; so the tortoise quickly got his knife to work, and very soon the elephant's left eye was on the ground, thus leaving the elephant quite blind. The tortoise then slid down the elephant's trunk on to the ground and hid himself. The elephant then began to make a great noise, and started pulling trees down and doing much damage, calling out for the tortoise but of course he never answered, and the elephant could not find him.

The next morning, when the elephant heard the people passing, he asked them what the time was, and the bush buck, who was nearest, shouted out, "The sun is now up, and I am going to market to get some yams and fresh leaves for my food."

Then the elephant perceived that the tortoise had deceived him, and began to ask all the passers-by to lend him a pair of eyes, as he could not see, but every one refused, as they wanted their eyes themselves. At last the worm groveled past, and seeing the big elephant, greeted him in his humble way. He was much

surprised when the king of the forest returned his salutation, and very much flattered also.

The elephant said, “Look here, worm, I have mislaid my eyes. Will you lend me yours for a few days? I will return them next market-day.”

The worm was so flattered at being noticed by the elephant that he gladly consented, and took his eyes out—which, as every one knows, were very small—and gave them to the elephant. When the elephant had put the worm’s eyes into his own large eyesockets, the flesh immediately closed round them so tightly that when the market-day arrived it was impossible for the elephant to get them out again to return to the worm; and although the worm repeatedly made applications to the elephant to return his eyes, the elephant always pretended not to hear, and sometimes used to say in a very loud voice, “If there are any worms about, they had better get out of my way, as they are so small I cannot see them, and if I tread on them they will be squashed into a nasty mess.”

Ever since then the worms have been blind, and for the same reason elephants have such small eyes, quite out of proportion to the size of their huge bodies.

## **THE TORTOISE WITH A BEAUTIFUL DAUGHTER**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Dayrell, Elphinstone. *Folk Stories from Southern Nigeria, West Africa*. London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1910, 1–5.

**Date:** ca. 1910

**Original Source:** Efik

**National Origin:** Nigeria

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As in the preceding tale (“The Elephant and the Tortoise; or, Why the Worms Are Blind and Why the Elephant Has Small Eyes,” page 80), tortoise behaves with greater wisdom and decorum than might be expected of the African **trickster**. A number of cultural elements that need explanation are introduced in the narrative. The pieces of cloth (each generally 8 by 1 yards in size), the rods (brass hoops 16 by 6 inches used as local currency), money, clothes, yams, and palm oil were given to tortoise under the custom of “bride price.” Bride price is a sum paid to the family of a woman by the family of the proposed husband in compensation for the loss of the labor and other potential contributions that the woman might have made to her lineage if she had not joined her new husband’s family. “Fatness” is regarded as a positive attribute in the traditional Efik ideal of female beauty. Therefore, the fattening house emerged as a practice for achieving this ideal state by keeping the bride in confinement and feeding her as much as possible for some weeks

previous to her marriage. The Egbo (also Ekpo or Ekpe) society, to which the king must appeal in order to set aside a law he made in anger, is an all-male secret society charged with the enforcement of justice in the community. The Egbo also refers to a masquerade figure who takes on the role of the supernatural head of the society. In general, this is a terrifying being who may carry a whip and lash out at bystanders when he is out roaming the village.

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There was once a king who was very powerful. He had great influence over the wild beasts and animals. Now the tortoise was looked upon as the wisest of all beasts and men. This king had a son named Ekpenyon, to whom he gave fifty young girls as wives, but the prince did not like any of them. The king was very angry at this, and made a law that if any man had a daughter who was finer than the prince's wives, and who found favor in his son's eyes, the girl herself and her father and mother should be killed.

Now about this time the tortoise and his wife had a daughter who was very beautiful. The mother thought it was not safe to keep such a fine child, as the prince might fall in love with her, so she told her husband that her daughter ought to be killed and thrown away into the bush. The tortoise, however, was unwilling, and hid her until she was three years old. One day, when both the tortoise and his wife were away on their farm, the king's son happened to be hunting near their house, and saw a bird perched on the top of the fence round the house. The bird was watching the little girl, and was so entranced with her beauty that he did not notice the prince coming. The prince shot the bird with his bow and arrow, and it dropped inside the fence, so the prince sent his servant to gather it. While the servant was looking for the bird he came across the little girl, and was so struck with her form, that he immediately returned to his master and told him what he had seen. The prince then broke down the fence and found the child, and fell in love with her at once. He stayed and talked with her for a long time, until at last she agreed to become his wife. He then went home, but concealed from his father the fact that he had fallen in love with the beautiful daughter of the tortoise.

But the next morning he sent for the treasurer, and got sixty pieces of cloth and three hundred rods, and sent them to the tortoise. Then in the early afternoon he went down to the tortoise's house, and told him that he wished to marry his daughter. The tortoise saw at once that what he had dreaded had come to pass, and that his life was in danger, so he told the prince that if the king knew, he would kill not only himself (the tortoise), but also his wife and daughter. The prince replied that he would be killed himself before he allowed the tortoise and his wife and daughter to be killed. Eventually, after much argument, the tortoise consented and agreed to hand his daughter to the prince as his wife when she arrived at the proper age. Then the prince went home and

told his mother what he had done. She was in great distress at the thought that she would lose her son, of whom she was very proud, as she knew that when the king heard of his son's disobedience he would kill him. However, the queen, although she knew how angry her husband would be, wanted her son to marry the girl he had fallen in love with, so she went to the tortoise and gave him some money, clothes, yams, and palm oil as further dowry on her son's behalf in order that the tortoise should not give his daughter to another man. For the next five years the prince was constantly with the tortoise's daughter, whose name was Adet, and when she was about to be put in the fattening house, the prince told his father that he was going to take Adet as his wife. On hearing this, the king was very angry, and sent word all round his kingdom that all people should come on a certain day to the market-place to hear the palaver [discussion]. When the appointed day arrived the market-place was quite full of people, and the stones belonging to the king and queen were placed in the middle of the market-place.

When the king and queen arrived all the people stood up and greeted them, and they then sat down on their stones. The king then told his attendants to bring the girl Adet before him. When she arrived the king was quite astonished at her beauty. He then told the people that he had sent for them to tell them that he was angry with his son for disobeying him and taking Adet as his wife without his knowledge, but that now he had seen her himself he had to acknowledge that she was very beautiful and that his son had made a good choice. He would therefore forgive his son.

When the people saw the girl they agreed that she was very fine and quite worthy of being the prince's wife, and begged the king to cancel the law he had made altogether, and the king agreed and as the law had been made under the "Egbo" law, he sent for eight Egbo, and told them that the order was cancelled throughout his kingdom, and that for the future no one would be killed who had a daughter more beautiful than the prince's wives, and gave the Egbo palm wine and money to remove the law, and sent them away. Then he declared that the tortoise's daughter, Adet, should marry his son, and he made them marry the same day. A great feast was then given which lasted for fifty days, and the king killed five cows and gave all the people plenty of foo-foo [a West African dish made from mashed yam, cassava, or plantain] and palm-oil chop, and placed a large number of pots of palm wine in the streets for the people to drink as they liked. The women brought a big play to the king's compound, and there was singing and dancing kept up day and night during the whole time. The prince and his companions also played in the market square. When the feast was over the king gave half of his kingdom to the tortoise to rule over, and three hundred slaves to work on his farm. The prince also gave his father-in-law two hundred women and one hundred girls to work for him, so the tortoise became one of the richest men in the kingdom. The prince and his wife lived together for a good many years until the king died, when the prince ruled in his place. And all this shows that the tortoise is the wisest of all men and animals.

Moral: Always have pretty daughters, as no matter how poor they may be, there is always the chance that the king's son may fall in love with them, and they may thus become members of the royal house and obtain much wealth.

## THE DISOBEDIENT DAUGHTER WHO MARRIED A SKULL

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Dayrell, Elphinstone. *Folk Stories from Southern Nigeria, West Africa*. London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1910, 38–41.

**Date:** ca. 1910

**Original Source:** Efik

**National Origin:** Nigeria

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The **motif** of the unnatural suitor is common cross-culturally (see, for example, the African American tale “The Bride of the Evil One,” Volume 4, page 193). The plot also crosses generic boundaries, as in “The Demon Lover” (variously titled “James Harris” and “The House Carpenter”) that presents the plot in the form of a British ballad.

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**E**fiong Edem was a native of Cobham Town. He had a very fine daughter, whose name was Afiong. All the young men in the country wanted to marry her on account of her beauty; but she refused all offers of marriage in spite of repeated entreaties from her parents, as she was very vain, and said she would only marry the best-looking man in the country, who would have to be young and strong, and capable of loving her properly. Most of the men her parents wanted her to marry, although they were rich, were old men and ugly, so the girl continued to disobey her parents, at which they were very much grieved.

The skull who lived in the spirit land heard of the beauty of this Calabar virgin and thought he would like to possess her; so he went about amongst his friends and borrowed different parts of the body from them, all of the best. From one he got a good head, another lent him a body, a third gave him strong arms, and a fourth lent him a fine pair of legs. At last he was complete, and was a very perfect specimen of manhood. He then left the spirit land and went to Cobham market, where he saw Afiong, and admired her very much.

About this time Afiong heard that a very fine man had been seen in the market, who was better looking than any of the natives. She therefore went to the market at once, and directly she saw the skull in his borrowed beauty, she fell in love with him, and invited him to her house. The skull was delighted,



and went home with her, and on his arrival was introduced by the girl to her parents, and immediately asked their consent to marry their daughter. At first they refused, as they did not wish her to marry a stranger, but at last they agreed.

He lived with Afiong for two days in her parents' house, and then said he wished to take his wife back to his country, which was far off. To this the girl readily agreed, as he was such a fine man, but her parents tried to persuade her not to go. However, being very headstrong, she made up her mind to go, and they started off together. After they had been gone a few days the father consulted his Ju Ju man, who by casting lots very soon discovered that his daughter's husband belonged to the spirit land, and that she would surely be killed. They therefore all mourned her as dead.

After walking for several days, Afiong and the skull crossed the border between the spirit land and the human country. Directly they set foot in the spirit land, first of all one man came to the skull and demanded his legs, then another his head, and the next his body, and so on, until in a few minutes the skull was left by itself in all its natural ugliness. At this the girl was very frightened and wanted to return home, but the skull would not allow this, and ordered her to go with him.

When they arrived at the skull's house they found his mother, who was a very old woman quite incapable of doing any work, who could only creep about. Afiong tried her best to help her, and cooked her food, and brought water and firewood for the old woman. The old creature was very grateful for these attentions, and soon became quite fond of Afiong.

One day the old woman told Afiong that she was very sorry for her, but all the people in the spirit land were cannibals, and when they heard there was a human being in their country, they would come down and kill her and eat her. The skull's mother then hid Afiong, and as she had looked after her so well, she promised she would send her back to her country as soon as possible, providing that she promised for the future to obey her parents. This Afiong readily consented to do.

Then the old woman sent for the spider, who was a very clever hairdresser, and made him dress Afiong's hair in the latest fashion. She also presented her with anklets and other things on account of her kindness. She then made a Ju Ju and called the winds to come and convey Afiong to her home. At first a violent tornado came, with thunder, lightning and rain, but the skull's mother sent him away as unsuitable. The next wind to come was a gentle breeze, so she told the breeze to carry Afiong to her mother's house, and said good-bye to her. Very soon afterwards, the breeze deposited Afiong outside her home, and left her there.

When the parents saw their daughter they were very glad, as they had for some months given her up as lost. The father spread soft animals' skins on the ground from where his daughter was standing all the way to the house, so that

her feet should not be soiled. Afiong then walked to the house and her father called all the young girls who belonged to Afiong's company to come and dance, and the feasting and dancing was kept up for eight days and nights. When the rejoicing was over, the father reported what had happened to the head chief of the town. The chief then passed a law that parents should never allow their daughters to marry strangers who came from a far country. Then the father told his daughter to marry a friend of his, and she willingly consented, and lived with him for many years, and had many children.

## THE WOMAN WITH TWO SKINS

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Dayrell, Elphinstone. *Folk Stories from Southern Nigeria, West Africa*. London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1910, 11–19.

**Date:** ca. 1910

**Original Source:** Efik

**National Origin:** Nigeria

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“The Woman with Two Skins” incorporates the historical figure Eyamba I as a central character. Therefore, by some criteria, the narrative would be classified as a **legend**. The supernatural power of the Ju Ju men, the sorcerers, and the Water Ju Ju are credible in the Efik worldview. In fact, the use of supernatural medicines for combat sports, such as wrestling, persists in many areas of contemporary Africa. The introduction of the spider as Eyamba's father-in-law, however, disqualifies the narrative as legend. The anthropomorphic spider family would be more appropriate in **myth**. In addition, the inclusion of **motifs** such as the false bride are reminiscent of the **ordinary folktale** and **novella**. Overall, this tale illustrates not only Efik tradition, but also the fact that indigenous categories of art frequently defy attempts to put them into cross-cultural categories.

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**E**yamba I of Calabar was a very powerful king. He fought and conquered all the surrounding countries, killing all the old men and women, but the able-bodied men and girls he caught and brought back as slaves, and they worked on the farms until they died.

This king had two hundred wives, but none of them had borne a son to him. His subjects, seeing that he was becoming an old man, begged him to marry one of the spider's daughters, as they always had plenty of children. But when the king saw the spider's daughter he did not like her, as she was ugly, and the people said it was because her mother had had so many children at the

same time. However, in order to please his people he married the ugly girl, and placed her among his other wives, but they all complained because she was so ugly, and said she could not live with them.

The king, therefore, built her a separate house for herself, where she was given food and drink the same as the other wives. Every one jeered at her on account of her ugliness; but she was not really ugly, but beautiful, as she was born with two skins, and at her birth her mother was made to promise that she should never remove the ugly skin until a certain time arrived save only during the night, and that she must put it on again before dawn.

Now the king's head wife knew this, and was very fearful lest the king should find it out and fall in love with the spider's daughter; so she went to a Ju Ju man [sorcerer] and offered him two hundred rods to make a potion that would make the king forget altogether that the spider's daughter was his wife. This the Ju Ju man finally consented to do, after much haggling over the price, for three hundred and fifty rods; and he made up some "medicine," which the head wife mixed with the king's food.

For some months this had the effect of making the king forget the spider's daughter, and he used to pass quite close to her without recognizing her in any way. When four months had elapsed and the king had not once sent for Adiaha (for that was the name of the spider's daughter), she began to get tired, and went back to her parents.

Her father, the spider, then took her to another Ju Ju man, who, by making spells and casting lots, very soon discovered that it was the king's head wife who had made the Ju Ju and had enchanted the king so that he would not look at Adiaha. He therefore told the spider that Adiaha should give the king some medicine which he would prepare, which would make the king remember her.

He prepared the medicine, for which the spider had to pay a large sum of money; and that very day Adiaha made a small dish of food, into which she had placed the medicine, and presented it to the king. Directly he had eaten the dish his eyes were opened and he recognized his wife, and told her to come to him that very evening. So in the afternoon, being very joyful, she went down to the river and washed, and when she returned she put on her best cloth and went to the king's palace.

Directly it was dark and all the lights were out she pulled off her ugly skin, and the king saw how beautiful she was, and was very pleased with her; but when the cock crowed Adiaha pulled on her ugly skin again, and went back to her own house.

This she did for four nights running, always taking the ugly skin off in the dark, and leaving before daylight in the morning. In course of time, to the great surprise of all the people, and particularly of the king's two hundred wives, she gave birth to a son; but what surprised them most of all was that only one son was born, whereas her mother had always had a great many children at a time, generally about fifty.

The king's head wife became more jealous than ever when Adiaha had a son; so she went again to the Ju Ju man, and by giving him a large present induced him to give her some medicine which would make the king sick and forget his son. And the medicine would then make the king go to the Ju Ju man, who would tell him that it was his son who had made him sick, as he wanted to reign instead of his father. The Ju Ju man would also tell the king that if he wanted to recover he must throw his son away into the water.

And the king, when he had taken the medicine, went to the Ju Ju man, who told him everything as had been arranged with the head wife. But at first the king did not want to destroy his son. Then his chief subjects begged him to throw his son away, and said that perhaps in a year's time he might get another son. So the king at last agreed, and threw his son into the river, at which the mother grieved and cried bitterly.

Then the head wife went again to the Ju Ju man and got more medicine, which made the king forget Adiaha for three years, during which time she was in mourning for her son. She then returned to her father, and he got some more medicine from his Ju Ju man, which Adiaha gave to the king. And the king knew her and called her to him again, and she lived with him as before. Now the Ju Ju who had helped Adiaha's father, the spider, was a Water Ju Ju, and he was ready when the king threw his son into the water, and saved his life and took him home and kept him alive. And the boy grew up very strong.

After a time Adiaha gave birth to a daughter, and her the jealous wife also persuaded the king to throw away. It took a longer time to persuade him, but at last he agreed, and threw his daughter into the water too, and forgot Adiaha again. But the Water Ju Ju was ready again, and when he had saved the little girl, he thought the time had arrived to punish the action of the jealous wife; so he went about amongst the head young men and persuaded them to hold a wrestling match in the market-place every week. This was done, and the Water Ju Ju told the king's son, who had become very strong, and was very like to his father in appearance, that he should go and wrestle, and that no one would be able to stand up before him. It was then arranged that there should be a grand wrestling match, to which all the strongest men in the country were invited, and the king promised to attend with his head wife.

On the day of the match the Water Ju Ju told the king's son that he need not be in the least afraid, and that his Ju Ju was so powerful, that even the strongest and best wrestlers in the country would not be able to stand up against him for even a few minutes. All the people of the country came to see the great contest, to the winner of which the king had promised to present prizes of cloth and money, and all the strongest men came. When they saw the king's son, whom nobody knew, they laughed and said, "Who is this small boy? He can have no chance against us." But when they came to wrestle, they very soon found that they were no match for him. The boy was very strong indeed,

beautifully made and good to look upon, and all the people were surprised to see how like he was to the king.

After wrestling for the greater part of the day the king's son was declared the winner, having thrown every one who had stood up against him; in fact, some of his opponents had been badly hurt, and had their arms or ribs broken owing to the tremendous strength of the boy. After the match was over the king presented him with cloth and money, and invited him to dine with him in the evening. The boy gladly accepted his father's invitation; and after he had had a good wash in the river, put on his cloth and went up to the palace, where he found the bead chiefs of the country and some of the king's most favored wives. They then sat down to their meal, and the king had his own son, whom he did not know, sitting next to him. On the other side of the boy sat the jealous wife, who had been the cause of all the trouble. All through the dinner this woman did her best to make friends with the boy, with whom she had fallen violently in love on account of his beautiful appearance, his strength, and his being the best wrestler in the country. The woman thought to herself, "I will have this boy as my husband, as my husband is now an old man and will surely soon die." The boy, however, who was as wise as he was strong, was quite aware of everything the jealous woman had done, and although he pretended to be very flattered at the advances of the king's head wife, he did not respond very readily, and went home as soon as he could.

When he returned to the Water Ju Ju's house he told him everything that had happened, and the Water Ju Ju said, "As you are now in high favor with the king, you must go to him tomorrow and beg a favor from him. The favor you will ask is that all the country shall be called together, and that a certain case shall be tried, and that when the case is finished, the man or woman who is found to be in the wrong shall be killed by the Egbos before all the people."

So the following morning the boy went to the king, who readily granted his request, and at once sent all round the country appointing a day for all the people to come in and hear the case tried. Then the boy went back to the Water Ju Ju, who told him to go to his mother and tell her who he was, and that when the day of the trial arrived, she was to take off her ugly skin and appear in all her beauty, for the time had come when she need no longer wear it. This the son did.

When the day of trial arrived, Adiaha sat in a corner of the square, and nobody recognized the beautiful stranger as the spider's daughter. Her son then sat down next to her, and brought his sister with him. Immediately his mother saw her and said, "This must be my daughter, whom I have long mourned as dead," and embraced her most affectionately.

The king and his head wife then arrived and sat on their stones in the middle of the square, all the people saluting them with the usual greetings. The king then addressed the people and said that he had called them together to hear a strong palaver at the request of the young man who had been the victor of the

wrestling, and who had promised that if the case went against him he would offer up his life to the Egbo. The king also said that if, on the other hand, the case was decided in the boy's favor, then the other party would be killed, even though it were himself or one of his wives; whoever it was would have to take his or her place on the killing-stone and have their heads cut off by the Egbos. To this all the people agreed, and said they would like to hear what the young man had to say.

The young man then walked round the square, and bowed to the king and the people, and asked the question, "Am I not worthy to be the son of any chief in the country?"

And all the people answered "Yes!"

The boy then brought his sister out into the middle, leading her by the hand. She was a beautiful girl and well made. When every one had looked at her he said, "Is not my sister worthy to be any chief's daughter?" And the people replied that she was worthy of being any one's daughter, even the king's. Then he called his mother Adiaha, and she came out, looking very beautiful with her best cloth and beads on, and all the people cheered, as they had never seen a finer woman. The boy then asked them, "Is this woman worthy of being the king's wife?" And a shout went up from every one present that she would be a proper wife for the king, and looked as if she would be the mother of plenty of fine healthy sons.

Then the boy pointed out the jealous woman who was sitting next to the king and told the people his story, how that his mother, who had two skins, was the spider's daughter; how she had married the king, and how the head wife was jealous and had made a bad Ju Ju for the king, which made him forget his wife; how she had persuaded the king to throw himself and his sister into the river, which, as they all knew, had been done, but the Water Ju Ju had saved both of them, and had brought them up.

Then the boy said, "I leave the king and all of you people to judge my case. If I have done wrong, let me be killed on the stone by the Egbos; if, on the other hand, the woman has done evil, then let the Egbos deal with her as you may decide."

When the king knew that the wrestler was his son he was very glad, and told the Egbos to take the jealous woman away and punish her in accordance with their laws. The Egbos decided that the woman was a witch; so they took her into the forest and tied her up to a stake, and gave her two hundred lashes with a whip made from hippopotamus hide, and then burnt her alive, so that she should not make any more trouble, and her ashes were thrown into the river. The king then embraced his wife and daughter, and told all the people that she, Adiaha, was his proper wife, and would be the queen for the future.

When the palaver was over, Adiaha was dressed in fine clothes and beads, and carried back in state to the palace by the king's servants.

That night the king gave a big feast to all his subjects, and told them how glad he was to get back his beautiful wife whom he had never known properly before, also his son who was stronger than all men, and his fine daughter. The feast continued for a hundred and sixty-six days; and the king made a law that if any woman was found out getting medicine against her husband, she should be killed at once. Then the king built three new compounds, and placed many slaves in them, both men and women. One compound he gave to his wife, another to his son, and the third he gave to his daughter. They all lived together quite happily for some years until the king died, when his son came to the throne and ruled in his stead.

## THE KING AND THE JU JU TREE

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Dayrell, Elphinstone. *Folk Stories from Southern Nigeria, West Africa*. London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1910, 98–103.

**Date:** ca. 1910

**Original Source:** Efik

**National Origin:** Nigeria

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The following narrative details the role and methods of traditional healers as they attempt to confront supernaturally caused affliction. As in “The Disobedient Daughter Who Married a Skull” (page 85), a young woman is transported to the spirit world as a bride. In this tale, however, the skull proves benevolent and assists the girl in her flight from the cannibal spirits.

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**U**do Ubok Udom was a famous king who lived at Itam, which is an inland town, and does not possess a river. The king and his wife therefore used to wash at the spring just behind their house.

King Udo had a daughter, of whom he was very fond, and looked after her most carefully, and she grew up into a beautiful woman.

For some time the king had been absent from his house and had not been to the spring for two years. When he went to his old place to wash, he found that the Idem Ju Ju tree had grown up all round the place, and it was impossible for him to use the spring as he had done formerly. He therefore called fifty of his young men to bring their machetes and cut down the tree. They started cutting the tree, but it had no effect, as, directly they made a cut in the tree, it closed up again; so, after working all day, they found they had made no impression on it.

When they returned at night, they told the king that they had been unable to destroy the tree. He was very angry when he heard this, and went to the spring the following morning, taking his own machete with him.

When the Ju Ju tree saw that the king had come himself and was starting to try to cut his branches, he caused a small splinter of wood to go into the king's eye. This gave the king great pain, so he threw down his machete and went back to his house. The pain, however, got worse, and he could not eat or sleep for three days.

He therefore sent for his witch men, and told them to cast lots to find out why he was in such pain. When they had cast lots, they decided that the reason was that the Ju Ju tree was angry with the king because he wanted to wash at the spring, and had tried to destroy the tree.

They then told the king that he must take seven baskets of flies, a white goat, a white chicken, and a piece of white cloth, and make a sacrifice of them in order to satisfy the Ju Ju.

The king did this, and the witch men tried their lotions on the king's eye, but it got worse and worse.

He then dismissed these witches and got another lot. When they arrived they told the king that, although they could do nothing themselves to relieve his pain, they knew one man who lived in the spirit land who could cure him; so the king told them to send for him at once, and he arrived the next day.

Then the spirit man said, "Before I do anything to your eye, what will you give me?" So King Udo, said, "I will give you half my town with the people in it, also seven cows and some money." But the spirit man refused to accept the king's offer. As the king was in such pain, he said, "Name your own price, and I will pay you." So the spirit man said the only thing he was willing to accept as payment was the king's daughter. At this the king cried very much, and told the man to go away, as he would rather die than let him have his daughter.

That night the pain was worse than ever, and some of his subjects pleaded with the king to send for the spirit man again and give him his daughter, and told him that when he got well he could no doubt have another daughter but that if he died now he would lose everything.

The king then sent for the spirit man again, who came very quickly, and in great grief, the king handed his daughter to the spirit.

The spirit man then went out into the bush, and collected some leaves, which he soaked in water and beat up. The juice he poured into the king's eye, and told him that when he washed his face in the morning he would be able to see what was troubling him in the eye.

The king tried to persuade him to stay the night, but the spirit man refused, and departed that same night for the spirit land, taking the king's daughter with him.

Before it was light the king rose up and washed his face, and found that the small splinter from the Ju Ju tree, which had been troubling him so much, dropped out of his eye, the pain disappeared, and he was quite well again.



When he came to his proper senses he realized that he had sacrificed his daughter for one of his eyes, so he made an order that there should be general mourning throughout his kingdom for three years.

For the first two years of the mourning the king's daughter was put in the fattening house by the spirit man, and was given food; but a skull, who was in the house, told her not to eat, as they were fattening her up, not for marriage, but so that they could eat her. She therefore gave all the food which was brought to her to the skull, and lived on chalk herself.

Towards the end of the third year the spirit man brought some of his friends to see the king's daughter, and told them he would kill her the next day, and they would have a good feast off her.

When she woke up in the morning the spirit man brought her food as usual; but the skull, who wanted to preserve her life, and who had heard what the spirit man had said, called her into the room and told her what was going to happen later in the day. She handed the food to the skull, and he said, "When the spirit man goes to the wood with his friends to prepare for the feast, you must run back to your father."

He then gave her some medicine which would make her strong for the journey, and also gave her directions as to the road, telling her that there were two roads but that when she came to the parting of the ways she was to drop some of the medicine on the ground and the two roads would become one.

He then told her to leave by the back door, and go through the wood until she came to the end of the town; she would then find the road. If she met people on the road she was to pass them in silence, as if she saluted them they would know that she was a stranger in the spirit land, and might kill her. She was also not to turn round if any one called to her, but was to go straight on till she reached her father's house.

Having thanked the skull for his kind advice, the king's daughter started off, and when she reached the end of the town and found the road, she ran for three hours, and at last arrived at the branch roads. There she dropped the medicine, as she had been instructed, and the two roads immediately became one; so she went straight on and never saluted any one or turned back, although several people called to her.

About this time the spirit man had returned from the wood, and went to the house, only to find the king's daughter was absent. He asked the skull where she was, and he replied that she had gone out by the back door, but he did not know where she had gone to. Being a spirit, however, he very soon guessed that she had gone home; so he followed as quickly as possible, shouting out all the time.

When the girl heard his voice she ran as fast as she could, and at last arrived at her father's house, and told him to take at once a cow, a pig, a sheep, a goat, a dog, a chicken, and seven eggs, and cut them into seven parts as a sacrifice, and leave them on the road, so that when the spirit man saw these things

he would stop and not enter the town. This, the king did immediately, and made the sacrifice as his daughter had told him.

When the spirit man saw the sacrifice on the road, he sat down and at once began to eat.

When he had satisfied his appetite, he packed up the remainder and returned to the spirit land, not troubling any more about the king's daughter.

When the king saw that the danger was over, he beat his drum, and declared that for the future, when people died and went to the spirit land, they should not come to earth again as spirits to cure sick people.

# FANTE

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## WHY ANANSE LIVES IN THE CEILING

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Barker, W. H. "Nyankopone and Ananse in Gold Coast Folklore." *Folklore* 30 (1919): 162–164.

**Date:** ca. 1919

**Original Source:** Fante

**National Origin:** Ghana

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The Fante are one of the Akan ethnic groups of coastal Ghana. See the discussion of Akan culture in the introductory notes to "How Ananse Tales Got Their Name" (page 61) for additional information. The following narrative has the quality of **myth** in its description of the events that led to the contemporary characteristics of the spider **trickster**, Ananse.

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Once upon a time father Kweku Ananse met Ananse Panyin and asked him whether slander was to be preferred to bodily wounds. Ananse Panyin thought a moment and said that bodily wounds were much more grievous than slander. Kweku Ananse contradicted him; they argued and argued, but neither could convince the other. To settle the dispute, Kweku Ananse suggested that he should come to Ananse Panyin's house the next day with a sharpened cutlass and he would allow himself to be cut in several parts of the body. After this Kweku Ananse would spread a report against Ananse, and then they would be able to decide which was the more painful. Ananse consented to the proposal and they departed.

Early next morning Kweku Ananse presented himself before Ananse, who made many deep cuts in Kweku's body. He returned home with blood all over his body. His wife, seeing that, asked him how he came to be in such a sad state.

Kweku Ananse, feeling rather proud of his courage, related to his wife the affair between himself and Ananse. He asked his wife to tend his wounds, and after his recovery she would see what would happen to Ananse. His wife therefore did her best, and in the course of a month or two Kweku Ananse was well again.

Just about that time Ananse was about to go to a certain place to marry the beautiful daughter of a king. When Kweku Ananse was well he went to Ananse Panyin to show himself and how he had recovered from bodily wounds.

It was now Kweku's turn to prove the grief of slander. A week later, Ananse Panyin went with his retinue to the lady's place, where the marriage was to be celebrated. Time went slowly on and at last the appointed day came. On the same day Kweku Ananse too came to the place, and during the night he went to the kitchen of Ananse's mother-in-law and polluted it. He hired a rat to make a hole in the ground, and when the people assembled and began to ask questions of the room, the rat replied that the bridegroom was the cause of the pollution.

On the day following the marriage, a girl was sent to sweep the kitchen and make the necessary arrangements for cooking. She was shocked and horrified, and exclaimed, "Who has done this?"

"It was the bridegroom," answered the rat from under the ground. The girl, not heeding what was said by the rat, began to shout at the top of her voice. Her alarm brought a crowd of people to the place, among whom was Kweku Ananse, who all the time was keeping watch near the place.

When he arrived he said, "I will find out who has done this." He then called aloud for the name of the culprit three times, and each time the answer was heard: "The bridegroom has done this."

The people then began to jeer and point the finger at the bridegroom, until he was so ashamed that he left the town with his wife and came to his native land. But Kweku Ananse had been in the place before him and had spread the report all over the town. The people jeered at him and so did his servants in spite of the thrashing he gave them, and he lost much of the respect that used to be given him. In society and in the streets people ridiculed and looked down upon him. Thus he remained until the day of his death, at which time Kweku Ananse declared that it was he and not Ananse Panyin who had done the mischief. He explained why he did it, and when he had finished his tale he jumped to the ground and made for the ceiling of his house, and there he has remained to the present day.

# HAUSA

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## A SHORT HISTORY, PURPORTING TO GIVE THE ORIGIN OF THE HAUSA NATION AND THE STORY OF THEIR CONVERSION TO THE MOHAMMEDAN RELIGION

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Rattray, R. Sutherland. *Hausa Folk-Lore: Customs, Proverbs, Etc.* London: Clarendon Press, 1913, 2–34.

**Date:** ca. 1913

**Original Source:** Hausa

**National Origin:** Nigeria

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The Hausa reside primarily in northern Nigeria, a West African nation bordered by the Gulf of Guinea, Benin, Niger, Cameroon, and Chad. Traditionally, the Hausa were villagers who pursued an agricultural way of life raising crops and livestock. Between 500 and 700 C.E. seven Hausa city-states arose. These city-states remain the basis of some of the modern Hausa states mentioned in the narrative, for example, Kano and Katsina. As the following historical narrative details, there is a historical connection to Bornu in the area of Lake Chad, and the Hausa people are thoroughly Islamicized (although traditional indigenous practices are still respected), following the lead of their aristocracy who adopted the religion in the eleventh century C.E. The following narrative, part **myth** and part **legend**, demonstrates the long presence of Islam in Hausa life and owes at least as much to literate tradition as to oral tradition.

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In the name of Allah the Compassionate, the Merciful, and may the peace of Allah be upon him, after whom there is no prophet. This is the history of the Hausa nation. It has been familiar to every one from the time of their grandfathers and grandmothers, and is a thing which has been handed down from the malamai [Islamic scholars] and these elders. Any account other than this one is not authentic. If a questioner ask of you saying, "Where did the Hausa people have their origin?"

Say (to him), "Truly their origin was (from) the Barebari and Northerners." And this is the account of how this came to pass.

The king of Bornu had a horse with a golden horn. This horse did not neigh just at any time, but only on Fridays. If it neighed you would say it was a tornado. It was hidden away in a house. Now the king had a son. He (the son) continually gave him who looked after the horse money and robes in order that (he might persuade him) to bring his horse out, and they should come, and he should mate the horse with his mare. And it was always thus. (And) one day the man who was looking after the (king's) horse took (it) the horse out and brought it. The king's son too took his mare out. They went into the forest and the mare was covered.

Now the king has (had) previously said that whoever was seen (with) a foal from this horse at his house, he would have his throat cut. Things remained at this, (and) one day the mare gave birth, (and nothing happened) till the colt grew up, (when) one day the king's horse neighed, then the young horse answered. And the king said, "At whose ever house they see it let (that person) be killed (literally, be cut), and do not let him be brought before me." Then the councilors scattered (to make search) in the town. They were searching for the young horse.

And they came to the house of the king's son, and behold as it were the king's horse with its golden horn. Then the councilors said, "The king has said we must come with you."

Then the king's son lifted his sword. He cut down two men, the remainder were scattered. Then he saddled up the young horse. He mounted. The king ordered he should be seized and brought (before him). The whole town mounted their horses (and) followed him. They did not come up with him. He has gone his way. The king, moreover, has given orders that his own horse is not to be mounted, and if not his horse, then there was not the horse to overtake him.

The king's son (rode) went on and (eventually) dismounted in the country of Daura. He saw the daughter of the king of Daura, she possessed the town. He stayed with her. And one day she said she wanted him in marriage and he too said he loved her. So they married. The king's daughter became with child. She bore a child, a son. She weaned it. She was again with child (and) bore a girl. And that was the origin of the Hausa nation.

The Barebari and Daura people were their ancestors. But the Mohammedan religion, as far as that is concerned, from Bornu it came. Hausas and Barebari

and whatever race (you can name) in the West were at first in early times pagans. Then the maalamai (scribes) said that this is what happened.

There was a certain man away there at Bornu from among the children of their royal house, his name (was) Dalama. When he came to the throne he was called Mainadinama, the meaning of that is, "a chief more powerful than any other." After he had reigned for some months then he sent a messenger to the Caliph.

Now at this time Abubakari Sidiku, the blessing of Allah be upon him, was Caliph. You have seen the beginning of his being sent, referring back to that man (Mainadinama), was that he was hearing about Mohammedanism before he succeeded to the kingdom. Behold the name of his envoy whom he sent, his name was Gujalo. At the time when the envoy came he found the Caliph's attention occupied with a war. He said nothing to the envoy. All he said was, "Remain here." Then he did not again remember his words because his mind was so occupied with words of the war of the father of the twins.

The messenger remained there till the messenger died. After three months and a few days then the Caliph Abubakari Sidiku too died. After some months Umaru Ibunuhutabi was set up. He was the Caliph after Abubakari Asidiku. Then he called to mind the report of the envoy and his death. Then they held a consultation, they his friends who remained. They joined their heads about the question of sending an envoy to Bornu. Umaruasi was sent with manuscripts of the Koran. It was said the writing of Abdulahi the son of Umoru the Caliph, and turbans and a sword and spears and shields and the kingly fez and such things and plates; all these presents from the Caliph to Mainadinama.

When the envoy drew near he sent to them one to acquaint them of the news of his coming. The king of Bornu and his men mounted their horses and met him afar off. When he (the envoy) entered his town, then he bound the turban on him, he was established in his right to the kingdom, he was given the name of the king of Bornu, he (the king) gave him everything he was told to give him, because of the presents which he (the envoy) had been sent with for him. He lived among them. He was instructing them (the people of Bornu) in the creed of Allah and the names of His messengers, may the salvation and trust of Allah be assured to them.

They continued to honor him, to the extreme that honor could be carried. They sought a blessing (by eating) the remains of his meals and his food and from the spot (he) set his feet. Half of them were seeking blessing from the mucus from his nose and his spittle (by rubbing it on their persons). They were climbing the roofs in order to see him. They also sought blessing by touching his robes and his slippers and his whip, until it was even said they looked for a blessing from his beasts, and the remains of their fodder and their dung.

Now he wrote manuscripts for them in the writing of his own hand, the blessed one. He lived amid such works up to the very end of (his) sojourn (and this went on) till he was informed that, "Other owners of (another) land are behind you (and) are wishing for the Mohammedan religion, should they see you they would follow you."

He did not give (this report) credence until he had sent one to spy out (the land), his name is unknown. He (the spy) went and traveled over Hausa land. He made secret inquiries. He heard they were praising the Mohammedan faith and that they wished for it. He returned and gave Umaru Ibunuasi the news. Umaru Ibunuasi told his people. He said they must go (and preach the Mohammedan religion). They agreed.

Then he made preparations. He sent Abdulkarimu-Mukaila to Kano. About three hundred men, Arabs, followed him. When Abdulkarimu was near to them (the people of Kano) then he sent one to inform them. He (the messenger) came and said, "Tell them the envoy of the envoy has come."

When he came to them he told them what (message) he had been sent with. They believed him, they received the thing which he had brought. Now at this time Kano was an unenclosed town but not a walled town, the name of the man (man) at Kano (was) Muhamadu Dajakara at the time when Abdulkarimu alighted amongst them. He (Abdulkarimu) wrote them books in the writing of his own hand, the blessed one, because he had not come to them bringing books from Umaru Ibunuasi.

And thus it has come to be reported that every one who wished to be able to write well let him set out towards Bornu and remain there (till he had learned to write) and then return (home). But Abdulkarimu continued to instruct them the laws of Allah and the commands of the law until they made inquiries about things which were not (to be found) in Arabia. He did not know what answer to give them. Then he said to them to leave the matter open till he returned (to Arabia).

Among the things they were asking about were panthers, and civet-cats, and rats, and servals, and tiger cats, and such like (whether clean or unclean). He lived with them (many) months (and) every day instructed them well in the Koran and the Traditions, till at length he was informed, "There is another town near this town, it is called Katsina, should the people of the town see you they would believe you and him who sent you." When he heard (them speak) thus, then he made ready, He set out himself to go to it (the town).

When they got news of his coming, then they met with him afar off. When he alighted among them he taught them about what (he had come) to instruct them in. He instructed one who was to write books for them. It was said, speaking of him, he did not write the Koran with his own hand, and because of this the Kano people surpass the Katsina in their knowledge of the Koran till today.

Then, after the completion of his work at Katsina, he went back, going to Kano, (and) remained there a short time. Then when he thought of returning to go to Bornu he said to them, "Shortly I shall return to you with the answer to what you were asking about." Then he rose up and went away.

But many among his people did not follow him, only a few among them followed him. The rest remained and continued to perform great deeds in Kano. Their descendants are found (and) known in Kano until today, till people called



them seraphs, but surely they were not seraphs, they were just Arabs. Of a truth Abdulkarimu has set up a judge in Kano, and one to lead in prayers, and one to slaughter (live stock), and one who was to instruct the youths in the Koran, and one to call (them) to prayer.

He made lawful for them that which Allah had made lawful, and forbade that which Allah had forbidden. When he returned to go to Umaru Ibunuasi he gave him an account of what they had asked him about. And Umaru Ibunuasi was silent (on the subject) till he returned to go to the Caliph and then he sent an answer to it (the question) after six months had elapsed. He made lawful for them half of it, half he made unlawful. But Abdulkarimu did not return to Bornu after his return to their (his, Abdulkarimu's) town or to Kano. Thus (also) Umaru Ibunuasi, but he ruled over Egypt after his return home.

Now the remainder of the towns were coming in, half of them to Kano in order to know about the (new) religion, and half also to Katsina, until the creed filled all Hausa-land. Now the Kibi country, speaking of them, they refused (to adopt) the Mohammedan religion, they continued in their paganism. They persisted in it. Their kings, (these) were their names, Barbarma, Argoji, Tabariu, Zartai, Gobari, Dadafani, Katami, Bardo, Kudamdani, Sharia, Badoji, Karfa, Darka, Gunba, Katatar, Tamu. All these refused the Mohammedan creed after his advent into the land of the Hausas.

Then at the time, when Zaidu came to the throne [then], he became a Mohammedan and those who were with him. The Kabi country became Mohammedan up to the time of Bata-Musa. These were the kings of Kabi under the Mohammedan régime. The first of them was Zaidu, (then) Muhamadu, Nama-kata, Sulaimana, Hisrikoma, Abdulabi, Dunbaki, Alia, Usmanu, Chisgari, Barbarmanaba, Muwashi, Muhamadu-Karfi, Bata-Musa.

After them Fumu ruled. He turned Mohammedanism into paganism. These were they who became pagans. The first of them (was) Fumu, (then) Kautai, Gunba, Sakana-Murtamu, Kanta, Rataini, Gaiwa, Gado, Masu, Chi-da-gora, Gaban-gari, Maikebe, Marshakold, Lazimu, Mashirana, Makata. These were they who all continued in paganism.

At the time when Kanta ruled he revived the Mohammedan religion (and) inquired of the learned men the contents of (their) books, He established the faith in his time and in that of them who followed him, till the whole of the Kabi country became Mohammedan. These were their names, Kantahu, Gofe, Dauda, Hamidu, Sulaimana, Mali, Ishaka, Muhamadu-Nashawi, Amuru, Muhamadu-Kabe, Kantanabaiwa, Muhamadu-Shifaya, Hamidu. All these continued in the Mohammedan faith.

When Barbarma, became king he changed the Mohammedan religion (and) became a pagan. Paganism lasted up to the time of Hudu. He was the one Usmanu the son of Fodio made war against. He drove him out (and pursued him) till he slew him near to Kebi. Buhari the son of Abdu-Salimi, he it was who slew him. He was the king of Jega. His family are its kings till today.

It is finished. But as for Kano in (it) the faith continued after his, Abdulkarimu's, return (home). The faith continued to increase always with force and power. And it lasted on such footing for many years until the time of Mainamugabadi. It was he who changed the order of things Abdulkarimu had set up. He set at naught the law (of Mahomed), he made the kingship all powerful, he disregarded the Mohammedan faith, he exalted fetish worship, and was arrogant. He surpassed (all his predecessors in evil). Instructors endeavored to instruct him, but their admonitions were of no avail against him, but he increased in pride. He was vainglorious. He continued thus till he died.

His brother Kunbari reigned in his stead and followed in his ways. He too continued in this (evil) till the time of Kunfa. He also spread paganism and evil-doing. It was he who married one thousand maidens. He instructed (people) to prostrate themselves and put earth on their heads before saluting him. He said, let not him whose name happened to be the same as that of his parents be called so, but (let him be called) by some sobriquet. He completely destroyed the creed, he sold free men, he built a palace, the one which the kings of Kano enter today. He did what he wished.

And it was so with all the people of Kano except a very few, speaking of them, they kept to the Mohammedan faith, they were not powerful, only the Kano people did not know how to make beer, except a few among them, men in outlying villages. Thus they did not eat any animal that had died a natural death. They removed the clitoris of their women, they covered their heads with a veil. They did nothing else but this.

They continued in such (conduct) until learned men were found in Kano, who had renounced the world, who feared Allah. (Of these learned men one) his name was Muhamadu-Zari. He stood up and preached. Rumfa paid no heed to whatever admonitions he admonished them. But they planned to kill him, till at last they did kill him in the night by slaying him from behind, in the road to the mosque, and he lay (there) murdered, cast aside, till dawn. He was buried about eight in the morning. His grave is known in Kano, it is visited and watched over, he was called "the Kalgo man," blessings are sought by prayers being made for him.

Then Abdulahi-Sako stood up (to proclaim the creed) after him. He was admonishing them but they paid no heed to him, except some people of no importance, but those in authority did not hear. And they frightened him so that he fled to the outlying towns in order to instruct the people of the lesser towns. Then the king sent one to seize him. They seized him, and continually flogged him till he was brought before (the king). He was (by this time) in and died after a few days. His grave is known, (it lies) behind the rock (known as "the single rock," but it is not visited or watched over.

And so it came to pass that paganism existed till the time of Muhamadu-Alwali. It was he Usmanu, the son of Fodio, made war on, after he had ruled in the kingdom for seventeen years. He (Usmanu-dan-Fodio) drove him out and

his men, he fled in the direction of the country on the right and none know where he settled till this day, (some) say Barnabarna (some) say it was not there. The learned men said that from the coming of Abdulkarimu till the coming of Usmanu, the son of Fodio, there were seventy-six kings. All their graves have remained in the town of Kano, but two of them, that of Bawa and Muharnadu-Alwali, are in Katsina.

The creed continued after the return of Abdulkarimu. The faith continued to grow always and took firm hold. Men from Gobir continued to come to Katsina and were adopting the Mohammedan faith with (in all) truth and earnestness, they embraced it, all together. The faith took hold among them also as it had taken hold in Katsina.

And so it was until the time of Agarga. He was the first who changed the state of things that Abdulkarimu had established in Katsina. Instructors (strove) to admonish him. He heard not. He remained in his heathenism till he died.

Kaura ruled the kingdom, and (then) his son; he followed the path his father had taken. Paganism continued till the time of Wari-mai-kworria. It was he who did evil and was most arrogant. He married one thousand maidens. He embraced evil (and) did not cease. He sought for (a) medicine in order that he might go on living in the world and not die, till (at last) a certain wizard deceived him, saying he would never die, That doctor did for him what he did from (his knowledge of) medicines.

This king gave him much wealth, it was said one hundred slaves, one hundred female slaves, a hundred horses, a hundred black robes, and a hundred cattle, cows and bulls, and a thousand rams, and a thousand goats. He gave him robes which could not be counted by reason of their number, and things of this description, Allah he know (what all).

In his reign two learned men made their appearance in Katsina, men who renounced the world (and) who feared Allah. The name of one was Muhamadu Ibumusina, the name of the other also was Muhamadu Dunmurna. Each one among them gave instruction, (such) instruction as enters into the heart. He did not hear them. Then they made them afraid in order to dissuade them from preaching. They did not desist. The kings also did not pay any attention till these learned men died. In Katsina their graves are known till today, where young and old visit and guard, and at which blessings are sought by prayers for them.

Now Wari-mai-kworria, speaking of him, he lived eight years after he had had the medicine made for him to prevent his dying. He died the ninth year after (taking) it. When he died a quarrel about the kingdom arose among the king's sons. Half were slaying the other half until about one thousand men were killed in the town of Katsina among both free men and slaves. Then the younger brother of Wari ruled after slaying the son of Wari.

He again continued in heathenism. (And) heathenism continued in Katsina till the reign of Bawa-Dungaimawa. It was he Usmanu, the son of Fodio, drove

out of Katsina, he and his men, they went to Maradi, they settled there until today. His descendants continue to make war on the descendants of Usmanu, the son of Fodio, till today.

But the (men of) Gobir assembled together and continued in the faith and dwelt in it till the reign of Babari. He was the first who changed the true faith, it became lax, he exalted (and) set up paganism (and) was arrogant. The preachers (of the faith) preached to him, but he would not receive (their instructions), but persisted in his heathenism till he died.

Bachira ruled over the kingdom, he did what his predecessor had done, he added to the evil he had done, and the harm, the foam from the wave of heathenism rose in the land of Gobir, its kings were proud. They sold free men, they acted as they wished until report had it that every king that ruled married one hundred maidens. But (the only redeeming point was) they did not know how to make beer, except a few among them, (and) they did not eat animals that had died a natural death, but when they greeted (their kings) they poured earth over their heads, they served idols.

(Some) who cleaved to the faith were (still) among them, at that time only a few (and) without power or influence among them. And they continued thus till the time of Bawajan-gwarzo. He went on (living) in heathenism. He was arrogant till a learned man was found in his reign, one who had fled from the world, one who served Allah. He was called Alhaji-jibrilu. It was said, speaking of him, he went from Gobir, he came to Mecca and performed the pilgrimage and resided (away) there twenty years. It was said he lived in Egypt eighteen years. He stayed in Mecca two years, and then returned to Gobir. He instructed them each new day and night, in secret and openly. They refused the thing (message) he brought and thought to kill him.

All the kings of Hausa (land) plotted to slay him. They could not. The malamai were in Kalawa at that time, but they could not speak from their (store) of knowledge for fear of the chiefs. Only Alhaji-Jibrilu, speaking of him, he stood (fast) in (his) preaching and strove openly (and) they were not able to kill him. He could not, however, prevent them (doing) the evil they dwelt in. And they continued in evildoing and heathenism in this reign.

(Then) Usmanu, the son of Fodio, was born at the time when Alhaji-Jibrilu died. Usmanu, the son of Fodio, began to preach little by little till (the time when) Bawajan-gwarzo died. His brother Yaakubu reigned in his stead. Then Usmanu proclaimed (his) preaching openly till he did what (all the world knows) he did (and) finished. We have drawn the history to a close.

Allah, he is the one who knows all. It is finished.  
The salvation and blessing of Allah  
be upon  
the prophet.  
Amen.

## HOW BROTHERS AND SISTERS CAME TO QUARREL

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Rattray, R. Sutherland. *Hausa Folk-Lore, Customs, Proverbs, Etc.* London: Clarendon Press, 1913, 50–66.

**Date:** ca. 1913

**Original Source:** Hausa

**National Origin:** Nigeria

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The following tale bears the marks of oral tradition with its **formulaic** opening (“A story, a story”) and closing (“Off with the rat’s head”). Similar narratives of sibling rivalry are common cross-culturally (for example, “The Singing Bone,” AT 780). What makes the adaptation to Hausa culture distinctive, however, is the focus on “hatred among the children of one father by different mothers.” Among Hausa men, polygamy traditionally has not only been permitted but also considered obligatory if economically feasible. Wives are housed in separate rooms within the same dwelling, thus making rivalries more likely than in those contexts where co-wives each have their own houses.

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A story, a story.  
This tale is about a maiden. A certain man had three children, two boys and a girl, (and) it was the girl he loved. Then (one day) their big brother went with them to the forest (bush), telling them to come for sticks. And when they had reached the forest, he seized her (the girl), climbed a tree with her, (and) tied her on to the tree, (and) came (and) said, “The maiden has been lost in the forest,” (and said) they did not see her, so they came home.

They were weeping. Then their father asked them what had happened, (and) they said, “Our young sister she was lost in the forest (and) we did not see her. We searched until we were tired, but we did not see her.”

Then their father said, “It cannot be helped.” Then one day traders came and were passing in the forest. She (the girl) heard their voices and she (sang) said, “You, you, you, who are carrying kola nuts, if you have come to the village on the hill, greet my big brother Hallabau, greet my big brother Tanka-baka, (and) greet my big brother Shadusa.” When the traders heard this they said that birds were the cause of this (singing). Then again she repeated (the song). Then the leader of the caravan said he would go (and) see what it was that was doing (singing) thus.

So he went off (and) came across the maiden fastened to the tree. And he said, “(Are you) alive or dead?” The maiden said, “Alive, alive.” So the leader of the caravan himself climbed up the tree and untied her. Now long ago the

caravan leader had wished for offspring, but he was childless. Then he said, "Where is the maiden from?"

And the maiden said, "Our father begat us, we were three, two boys by one mother, I also alone, by my mother. Our father and mother loved (me), (but) did not love my brothers. And because of that our big brother brought me here, deceiving me by saying we were going for sticks. He came with me here, tied me to a tree (and) left me. Our father is a wealthy man, and because of that, he (my brother) did this to me."

Then the leader of the caravan said, "As for me, you have become my daughter."

So the leader of the caravan took her home (and) nursed her till she recovered. She remained with him until she reached a marriageable age, and grew into a maid whose like was nowhere. And whenever she was heard of, people came to look on her, until a day (when) her elder brother reached manhood. He had not found a wife. Then he heard the report which said that a certain wealthy man had a daughter in such and such a village; in all the country there was not her like. Then he went to their (his) father (and) said he had heard about the daughter of a certain wealthy man (and) it was her he wished (to marry).

So his father gave him gifts, (and) he came to seek a wife in marriage. And Allah blessed his quest and he found what he sought, and the maid was wedded to him. They came home, but when he would consummate their union, she would not give herself to him; (and) it was always thus. Only, when they (all) went off to the farms she would lift her mortar and golden pestle which her father had given her, saying she was going to make "fura" cakes. And she poured the grain into the mortar of gold and pounded and (sung) said, "Pound, pound, mortar, father has become the father of my husband, alas for me! Mother has become the mother of my husband, alas, my mortar!" And so on till she had finished pounding. She was weeping (and) singing.

Now a certain old woman of the place heard what she was (saying). It was always so, until one day she told the mother of (the girl's) husband, and she said, "When you are all about to go to the farm, do you, mother of the husband, come out, give her grain, (and) bid her pound 'fura,' as you are going to the farm. When you get outside steal away (and) come back, enter the house, (and) remain silent (and) hear what she says." So the mother of the man came out, their father came out, the boys and the woman all came out, and said they were off to the farm.

A little while after the man's mother came back (and) entered the hut (and) crouched down. Then the maiden lifted her mortar and golden pestle. She was singing and saying, "Pound, pound, my mortar, father has become (my) husband's father, alas, my mortar! Mother has become (my) husband's mother, alas for me!" She was singing thus (and) shedding tears, the mother also was in the room and was watching her until she had done all she had to do.

When the people of the house who had gone to the farms came back, the mother did not say anything. When night came, then she told her husband; she said, "Such and such the maid did."

The father said, "Could it possibly be the maid who was lost?"

Then they said, "But if it is she there is a certain mark on her back ever since she was an infant, she had been left in a house with a fire (and) it had burned her."

She was summoned. They adjured her by Allah and the Prophet (and) said, "This man who gave you in marriage, is he your father or were you given to him to be brought up only?" But the maiden refused to answer. Try as they could they could not get an answer.

Then the father said, "Present your back that I may see."

She turned her back, (and) they saw the scar where the fire had burned her when she was an infant. Then they said, "Truly it is so. From the first when you came why did you (refuse) to tell me (us)?" And they knew it was their daughter. And they sent to her (foster) father, the one who had found her, and he was told what had happened. And he said, "There is no harm done. I beg you give me the maiden. If I have found another I shall give her to him (the husband)." But they (the girl's real father and mother) refused to consent to this.

As for the husband, when he heard this he took his quiver and bow. He went into the forest (and) hanged himself. He died. And this was the beginning of hatred among the children of one father by different mothers.

That is all.

Off with the rat's head.

## ORIGIN OF THE SPIDER

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Rattray, R. Sutherland. *Hausa Folk-Lore, Customs, Proverbs, Etc.* London: Clarendon Press, 1913, 108–116.

**Date:** ca. 1913

**Original Source:** Hausa

**National Origin:** Nigeria

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The following Hausa **animal tale** incorporates two common west African **tricksters**, hyena and spider. In this case, hyena is finally outwitted by human persistence, and from this devious group of humans, lion creates the supreme west African trickster, spider.

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This is a story about a certain chief. A tale, a tale. Let it go and let it return.

A certain chief, by name Kurunguthe-bad-fish, grew old in his kingdom, and when he was near to death—he had many children—he called them together and said, “If I were to die what would you all do to observe my funeral?”

His eldest child said, “When you are dead I shall mourn for you by (slaughtering) a lion.”

Each one said what he would do.

His youngest said, “When you are dead I shall mourn for you by killing a hyena.” And it came to pass that not long after he died, and each brought what he said; only the eldest and the youngest remained (to fulfill the promise).

Then the youngest went to the bush, he was walking, and he came across a cow and brought it back. They slaughtered it and made a skin bag of it, and they took the cow’s head and feet and pushed them into the bag. Then he went and called the hyena. She came (and) he (the man) said, “We divided up the meat (when) you were not there, (and) we set aside your share.”

They showed her the bag, they said, “There it is, go in and lift (the meat).”

Then the hyena put in her head and entered. Then the youngest son immediately closed the mouth of the bag (and) they tied it up, the hyena inside, and they dragged the hyena and brought her above their father’s grave. And they kept flogging her until the skin burst. The hyena found an exit, got out, and ran off. Then the youngest son got angry and said, “I shall catch her again.”

And so another day he found a cow, he brought it back and killed (it), he searched for porridge and covered his eye with it and went off to the forest. He saw the hyena and said, “Hyena, we have divided up the meat in your absence, we looked for you until we were tired. And as for us, we are a people who keep a promise to our parents, and when they were about to die they said we must continually give (gifts), and whoever found anything let him seek his brother (to share with him).”

The hyena said, “That is quite true, but some one has come here and deceived me. It was thus he enticed me away and he was wanting to kill me.”

Then the youngest son said, “Come now, hyena, would a man call his brother to kill (him)?”

The hyena answered, “Let us go.”

They took the road, they were coming, when the hyena stood still and said, “No, yesterday he who came to call me, like you was he, let me hear it was not you.”

The youngest son said, “This man, had he one eye?”

The hyena said, “Let us go on.”



They took the road and were going on (and) they reached the house. Then the youngest son showed her where the cow's hide was, and he said, "Enter, your (share) is within."

Then the hyena, when he (she) was about to push in his (her) head, came out and said, "No, friend, do not come and do to me as your brother did to me."

The youngest son was standing by, and he said, "Come then, hyena, if it is that you do not want the meat, leave it, and go about your business. Does a man call his brother in order that he may do him harm? The meat I show you if you do not eat, leave it, and get out."

Then the hyena said, "No, I am (going) to eat it."

So she put her head in and entered. As she was going to lift the meat and then come out, then the youngest son seized the mouth of the bag and closed it. And they all came up and tied up the hyena and dragged it and brought it over their father's grave. They kept beating it, they beat it till the skin burst, and the hyena found an exit, and came out, and ran off.

But the youngest son said, "I will find and bring her back again." Then some time passed and the hyena forgot. And the youngest son found a very large cow and brought it back. They slaughtered it, flayed it, and made a skin bag; they lifted a hind leg and put (it) in the bag, and made a trap. Then the youngest son got some porridge, went to the bush, came near the hole where the hyena was, then took the (*dawo*) porridge, and covered up his eyes; then he could not see.

Then he called, "Where is the hyena's den? Look at this, a cow has been slaughtered since yesterday, they put on one side a leg for her, and she is not to be seen."

Then the hyena heard, she was in the hole, so out she came and said, "Here I am." And the hyena said, "Where is the meat?"

Then the youngest son held out to her a large piece of meat and said, "You see the sign (that what I say is true)."

Then the hyena took it and swallowed it right off, and the hyena said, "Let us go at once." Then the hyena remembered, and he (she) pulled up, and said, "My friend, some one of your kindred, it was just thus he deceived me; he took me away and he wanted to kill me."

Then the youngest son said, "Come now, hyena, how can a blind man manage to kill another person?"

And the hyena said, "Let us go on." They took the road, they were coming, until they got to where the trap was.

Then the youngest son said, "Hyena, look at the meat there." Then the hyena saw a very fat hindquarter. The hyena, without a thought, leaped and went in, in order to lift the meat out; she did not know it was a trap, till the trap caught her. Then the hyena began to shout, and the youngest son ran off and went home and called his brothers, (and) they flogged the hyena until the hyena became insensible. (And) they bound her and dragged her, and brought

her to their father's grave, and (there) they cut her throat, and skinned her, and divided up the meat, and ate.

Then they said, "Each one has observed the funeral rites of our parent with the exception of our eldest brother."

Then their eldest brother lifted up an anvil, and took it to the bush; he was forging metal, Then the lion came, and said, "Friend smith, let me come and work the bellows for you."

He said, "Yes." So the lion came and worked the bellows.

Now of a truth the smith had done something, he had sought leaves of a certain kind and put (them) between his legs. Then he lifted the tongs and put (them) in the fire, and he told the lion to blow the bellows; and the lion blew them until the tongs were red hot. Then the smith got up and bent down and said to the lion, "Friend, my anus is itching"; (and) he lifted the tongs and pushed them among the leaves, (and) the leaves were set on fire. The lion thought it was the smith's anus. The smith too left them there until the tongs were cold.

After this the lion said, "An insignificant person like you, you have strength of mind to do this?" Then the lion put the tongs into the fire, he was blowing the bellows until the tongs were red hot. Then the lion said, "Friend, lift (them) and place them for me." So the smith lifted the tongs, he worked them up and down the lion's anus until the lion fainted.

Then the smith with all speed went home and summoned his younger brothers, (and) they came (and) they pulled (the lion) (and) brought it home. Then he entered the house to get some water to bring for the young men, the lion is lying still. Then the smith drew the water (and) came, (and) the people gathered round and looked on, then the lion came round from his faint and said, "My friend, what are you doing to me?"

And the smith said, "I have seen you were weary, and so I brought you home to pour water on you."

But the lion said, "You are a liar."

And the lion leaped and trampled him and tore (him). That was the origin of the spider; when he (the lion) trampled on him (the smith), he broke up, and made many feet. That was the beginning of the spider; formerly he was a smith.

Off with the rat's head.

## **A STORY ABOUT A GIANT, AND THE CAUSE OF THUNDER**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Rattray, R. Sutherland. *Hausa Folk-Lore, Customs, Proverbs, Etc.* London: Clarendon Press, 1913, 108–116.

Date: ca. 1913

Original Source: Hausa

National Origin: Nigeria

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Like many **fables**, “A Story about a Giant, and the Cause of Thunder,” combines explanation with admonition. After attributing the origin of thunder to a wrestling match between two genuine giants, the tale concludes with the moralizing typical of this **genre**: “That is why I was always telling you whatever you do, make little of it. Whether it be you excel in strength, or in power, or riches, or poverty, and are puffed up with pride, it is all the same; some one is better than you. You said, it was a lie. Behold, your own eyes have seen.”

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**T**his story is about a forest giant, about him and a man called, A-Man-among-Men.

A story, a story. Let it go, let it come.

There was a certain man by name, A-Man-among-Men, always when he came from the bush he used to lift up a tree (and) come, (and) throw (it down), and say, “I am A-Man-among-Men.”

His wife said, “Come now, leave off saying you are A-Man-among-Men; if you saw A-Man-among-Men you would run.”

But he said, “It is a lie.”

Now it was always so, if he has brought in wood, then he would throw it down with force, (and) say, “I am A-Man-among-Men.”

The wife said, “Come now, leave off saying so; if you have seen A-Man-among-Men, you would run.”

But he said, “It is a lie.”

Now one day his wife went to the stream. She came to a certain well; the well bucket, ten men were (necessary to) draw it up. She came, (but) had to do without the water, so she turned back.

She was going home, when she met another woman (who) said, “Where are you going with a calabash, with no water?”

She said, “I have come and seen a bucket there. I could not draw it; that is what caused me to turn back home.”

And this (second) woman, who had this (a) son, said, “Let us return that you may find (water).”

She said, “All right.”

So they returned together to the well. This woman, who had the son, told the boy to lift the bucket and draw water. Now the boy was small, not past the age when he was carried on his mother’s back. Then he lifted the bucket then and there, and put it in the well, (and) drew up the water. They filled their

large waterpots, they bathed, they washed their clothes, they lifted up the water to go home. This one was astonished.

Then she saw that one who had the boy has turned off the path and was entering the bush. Then the wife of (him called) A-Man-among-Men said, "Where are you going?"

She said to her, "I am going home, where else?"

She said, "Is that the way to your home?"

She said, "Yes."

She said, "Whose home is it?"

She said, "The home of A-Man-among-Men."

Then she was silent; she did not say anything till she got home. She told her husband. He said that tomorrow she must take him (there). She replied, "May Allah give us a tomorrow."

Next morning he was the first to get up from sleep. He took the weapons of the chase and slung them over his shoulder. He put his axe on his shoulder and wakened her (his wife) from sleep. He said, "Get up, let us go. Take me that I may see, that I may see the (one called) A-Man-among-Men."

She got up, lifted her large waterpot, and passed on in front. He was following her until they got to the edge of the well. Now they found what they sought indeed. (As) they were coming, the wife of A-Man-among-Men came up, both she and her son.

They greeted her, and the wife of this one showed him the bucket (and) said, "Lift it and draw water for me."

So he went and lifted the bucket in a rage and let it down the well; but the bucket pulled him, (and) he would have fallen into the well, when the little boy seized him, both him and the bucket, and drew (out) and threw them on one side. Then the boy lifted up the bucket, put it in the well, drew water, and filled their waterpots.

His wife said, "You have said you are going to see him called A-Man-among-Men. You have seen this is his wife and son. If you still want to go you can go together. As for me, I am not going."

The boy's mother said, "Oh, what is the matter? You had better not come." (But) he said he would come; and she said, "Let us be off." They set out.

When they arrived (at the house) then she showed him a place for storing meat, (and) he got inside. Now he, the master of the house, was not at home; he has gone to the bush. She (his wife) said, "You have seen he has gone to the bush; but you must not stir if he has come." He sat inside till evening came.

The master of the house came. He keeps saying, "I smell the smell of a man."

His wife said, "Is there another person here? It is not I." Thus, if he said he smelled the smell of a man, then she would say, "Is there another person here. Is it not I? If you want to eat me up, well and good, for there is no one else but I."

Now he was a huge man, his words like a tornado; ten elephants he would eat. When dawn came, he made his morning meal of one; then he went to the bush, and if he should see a person there he would kill him.

Now he (A Man-among-Men) was in the storehouse, hidden. The man's wife told him, saying, "You must not move till he is asleep. If you have seen the place dark, he is not asleep; if you have seen the place light, that is a sign he is asleep; come out and fly." Shortly after he saw the place has become light like day, so he came out.

He was running, he was running, until dawn, he was running, till the sun rose he was running, he did not stand.

Then that man woke up from sleep and he said, "I smell the smell of a man, I smell the smell of a man." He rose up, he followed where the man had gone. He was running. He also, the other one, was running till he met some people who were clearing the ground for a farm, (and) they asked what had happened.

And he said, "Some one chased (is chasing) me."

They said, "Stand here till he comes."

A short time passed, and the wind caused by him came; it lifted them (and) cast them down. And he said, "Yes, that is it, the wind he makes (running); he himself has not yet come. If you are able (to withstand him) tell me. If you are not able, say so."

And they said, "Pass on."

So he ran off, and came and met some people hoeing. They said, "What chased (is chasing) you?"

He replied, "Some one pursued (is pursuing) me."

They said, "What kind of a man chased (is chasing) (one) such as you?"

He said, "Some one who says he is A-Man-among-Men."

They said, "Not A-Man-among-Men, A-Man-among-Women. Stand till he comes."

He stood. Here he was when the wind of him came, it was pushing about the men who were hoeing. So he said, "You have seen, that is the wind he makes; he has not yet come himself If you are a match for him tell me; if not say so."

And they said, "Pass on"; and off he ran. He was running.

He came across some people sowing; they said, "What are you running for?"

He said, "Some one chased (is chasing) me."

And they said, "What kind of a man is it who chased (is chasing) the likes of you?"

He said, "His name is A-Man-among-Men."

They said, "Sit here till he comes." He sat down.

In a short time the wind he made came (and) it lifted them and cast them down. And they said, "What kind of wind is that?"

He, the man who was being pursued, said, "It is his wind."

And they said, "Pass on." They threw away the sowing implements, (and) went into the bush (and) hid, but that one was running on.

He came (and) met a certain huge man; he was sitting alone at the foot of a baobab tree. He had killed elephants and was roasting them, as for him, twenty elephants he could eat; in the morning he broke his fast with five. His name was "The Giant of the Forest."

Then he questioned him and said, "Where are you going in all this haste?"

And he said, "A-Man-among-Men chased (is chasing) me."

And the Giant of the Forest said, "Come here, sit down till he comes."

He sat down. They waited a little while. Then a wind made by A-Man-among-Men came, and lifted him, (and) was about to carry him off, when the Giant of the Forest shouted to him to come back.

And he said, "It is not I myself who am going off, the wind caused by the man is taking me away."

At that the Giant of the Forest got in a rage, he got up and caught his hand, and placed it under his thigh.

He was sitting until A-Man-among-Men came up and said, "You sitting there, are you of the living, or of the dead?"

And the Giant of the Forest said, "You are interfering."

And A-Man-among-Men said, "If you want to find health give up to me what you are keeping there."

And the Giant of the Forest said, "Come and take (him)." And at that he flew into a rage and sprang and seized him. They were struggling together.

When they had twisted their legs round one another they leaped up into the heavens. Till this day they are wrestling there; when they are tired out they sit down and rest; and if they rise up to struggle that is the thunder you are wont to hear in the sky; it is they struggling.

He also, that other one, found himself (escaped), and went home, and told the tale.

And his wife said, "That is why I was always telling you whatever you do, make little of it. Whether it be you excel in strength, or in power, or riches, or poverty, and are puffed up with pride, it is all the same; some one is better than you. You said, it was a lie. Behold, your own eyes have seen."

Off with the rat's head.

# OVIMBUNDU

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## THE RABBIT AND THE PYTHON

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Bell, William C. "Umbundu Tales, Angola, Southwest Africa." *The Journal of American Folklore* 35 (1922): 118.

**Date:** ca. 1922

**Original Source:** Ovimbundu

**National Origin:** Angola

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Angola, the home of the Ovimbundu, is a coastal nation with the Atlantic Ocean on its western shore. The Democratic Republic of the Congo lies to the north, Zambia to the east, and Namibia to the south. The Ovimbundu traditionally consisted of individual kingdoms centered on the Benguela Plateau in west-central Angola. Early in their history (ca. eighteenth century) the Ovimbundu developed trade networks between central Africa and the coast. When the Portuguese usurped this role two centuries later, the Ovimbundu turned to agriculture. The following **animal tale** typically offers a moral precept in its conclusion. This tale and the two that follow, "A Clever Hunter and a Bird" and "The Swallow and the Tortoise," are representative of this narrative genre among the Ovimbundu.

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The rabbit was with young, and the python also; and they swore friendship one with the other, for they loved each other a great deal. The rabbit said, "O Python, the day we give birth to our children, you, Python, take my children; and I, the rabbit, will have your children."

So they did as they had agreed. The children of the python stretched themselves out long, because they were not habituated to nurse. The children of the rabbit were with the python, and they wished to nurse, as was their custom; but the python did not have “breasts” with which to nurse the children of the rabbit.

Soon, when the rabbit perceived that her children which she had given birth to were getting stronger, she ran away with them whilst the python was in the woods. When the python returned from the bush, and she found that the rabbit had run off with her children, she was angry, and called together all the pythons, saying, “Let us follow the trail of the rabbit and her children!”

So the pythons began singing, “Let us follow the rabbit who stole [ate] her debt to the python! ... Let us follow the rabbit—the rabbit—who stole her debt to the python!”

The rabbit, hearing this song, began to shake. She found a large animal, and said to it, “Save me!” The animal, hearing the song of the pythons, said, “Impossible [I am not able].”

The rabbit went to all the animals, and they all shunned doing anything. Finally she found a cricket, and cried, “Save me!”

The cricket replied, “All right.” So then the cricket put the rabbit and her children into a burrow, blocking it up with dirt. When the pythons came, they questioned the cricket, saying, “Have you seen the rabbit?”

And he replied, “Indeed, I have; she is in that burrow [pointing to a different one from that in which the rabbit was]—in there is the rabbit.”

So the one python wished to enter; but the cricket said, “All of you had better go in and find the rabbit”; and when they had done so, the cricket took hot water, pouring it into the burrow where were all the pythons, thus killing them. The rabbit was saved.

Moral: Little things are able to accomplish large results; all shunned helping save the rabbit, nevertheless the little cricket was able to do it.

## A CLEVER HUNTER AND A BIRD

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Bell, William C. “Umbundu Tales, Angola, Southwest Africa.” *The Journal of American Folklore* 35 (1922): 137–138.

**Date:** ca. 1922

**Original Source:** Ovimbundu

**National Origin:** Angola

**A** man once set a snare in the plain, and then went on to his village. In the morning, he says to himself, “I am going to have a look at my snares and see if perchance some large bird has been caught.” And so it proved. He found one, and he lifted his stick to kill it. Then the bird spoke to him, saying,



“Save me here on the plain, and some day I will save you in the thick woods.” The man heeded and untied the bird, and it went. When the man reached his village, his wife asked, “Did nothing get caught?” to which the man replied, “As you say.”

One day the woman said to the man, “Come, and let us go and visit our village!”

To which the man responded, “All right, surely!” And the woman began to pound the meal for the journey.

In time they got started; and as they were going along the path, suddenly there appeared before them a very large snake, so that the whole path was blocked, with nowhere to pass. The big snake spoke, saying, “Give me something, give me something, give me something, you there, standing upon the path!” They gave him their mush, which he took quickly, and yet demanded, “Give me more, give me more, give me more, you standing there upon the path!” So they gave him the basket of meal, which he quickly swallowed. However, he did not let up with his demands until all they had was given him. Finally he gave the child and his wife, and the snake swallowed them all.

Yet he was not satisfied, and continued demanding more. The man could not flee, neither could he pass and go on ahead, for the snake blocked the whole woods. The man climbed a tree; and then he remembered how long ago the bird had begged to be released, saying, “Save me here on the plain, and some day I will save you in the thick woods.”

So at once he began to call for the bird Cinjila, “Cinjila, oh, I saved you! Will you not save me? Cinjila, oh, I saved you! Will you not save me? We have both been in trouble—the two of us in trouble! We have both been in trouble—the two of us in trouble!”

Before very long the bird heard the man calling, and yet he called a second time. Then the bird replied, “All r-i-g-h-t!” and when he came, asked what it was.

The man replied, “The big snake.” So the bird killed the snake; and when they cut him open, they found within him everything he had swallowed—the woman and the child, both alive, and all their belongings. Then they proceeded on to their village.

This proverb illustrates kindness: If you show kindness to another, someone in time will show you a kindness.

## THE SWALLOW AND THE TORTOISE

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Bell, William C. “Umbundu Tales, Angola, Southwest Africa.” *The Journal of American Folklore* 35 (1922): 116–117.

**Date:** ca. 1922

**Original Source:** Ovimbundu

**National Origin:** Angola

Once there was a beautiful maiden, and the tortoise and the swallow went to court her. They found her, and they found also her relatives, and they did not wish to give the girl either to the tortoise or to the swallow.

However, the relatives set a test from Bailundo even to Dondi, saying, “He who arrives quickest, he takes the girl.” So they rose up the both of them, the swallow taking his little handbag; and when the two arrived at the point indicated, the swallow took fright and went to the woods (to stool). Whilst he was thus gone, the tortoise climbed into the handbag of the swallow. Soon the swallow returned from the woods, picked up the handbag in which was the tortoise (this was his wisdom, as he did not possess fast legs), and the swallow was much disturbed thinking that the tortoise had already gone on before: so he flew hurriedly.

Soon the swallow arrived at the village; and as soon as he reached the outskirts, he put down his handbag, in which was the tortoise, saying, “I shall not enter the village yet, until I first go to the woods.” So he went, leaving his handbag behind him.

Immediately the tortoise climbed out of the handbag which the swallow had carried, and speedily entered the village. The girl was given to him. When the swallow came from the woods, he picked up his handbag, entered, but found that the tortoise had already received the girl, and consequently was very sad; but the tortoise was happy.

## A MAN WITH A WIFE WHO COULD CHANGE HERSELF INTO A WILD ANIMAL

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Bell, William C. “Umbundu Tales, Angola, Southwest Africa.” *The Journal of American Folklore* 35 (1922): 129.

**Date:** ca. 1922

**Original Source:** Ovimbundu

**National Origin:** Angola

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The following tale is developed on the **motif** of the “Cruel Stepmother” (S31). The plot element of the shape-shifting spouse is cross-culturally distributed.

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A man married a woman; but this woman was one who could change herself into an animal. When the man would go to the woods, she would give peanuts to her two children—one her very own, the other a stepchild. Whenever she would give them peanuts, she also would eat some, but hers she would eat very quickly; and when she was through, she would

snatch away by force those of her stepchild. And if the child would not willingly give them up, the mother would change herself into a wild animal, and then the child would flee and climb a tree. Meanwhile the animal came to the foot of the tree and began gnawing it, so it would fall to the ground. Then the animal would begin to chew at the child, which would cry out loudly, “Father, father, who has gone to hunt, who has gone to hunt, the hunter who has gone to hunt, father, here’s a wild animal of the woods!”

The father, hearing the cry, responded, “All right! ... all right!” When the woman heard the voice of her husband, she ran quickly to the river and threw herself in, at which she became again a person.

One day the father secreted himself near by. The woman again gave peanuts to the child; and when it began to eat, she annoyed it in the same manner as formerly, and it fled for refuge to a tree. There upon the woman began to chew at the tree—in the guise of an animal, as before—and the man fired at and killed her.

## THE ORDER OF THE HIDEOUS MASKED PERSONS, AND HOW THEY MET THEIR FATE

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Bell, William C. “Umbundu Tales, Angola, Southwest Africa.” *The Journal of American Folklore* 35 (1922): 134–135.

**Date:** ca. 1922

**Original Source:** Ovimbundu

**National Origin:** Angola

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The youthful monster-slayer is a familiar folktale theme. In Native American tradition, semi-divine twins are often the protagonists in such narratives (for example, the Wichita story of “The Two Boys Who Slew the Monsters and Became Stars,” Volume 4, page 148). In the world’s mythologies, the monster-slayer is commonly elevated to the role of **culture hero**, as is the case in the Greek myth “How Theseus Slew the Devourers of Men” (Volume 3, page 231).

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**I**n a certain country the goblins (*akisikisi*) were very numerous, and they were eating up all of the people. So it came about that but one person was left, and she a woman soon to give birth. So she ran away to the river, and crawled in among the reeds and hid there until she had a child. Then she came out, the child carrying a bow in front. In course of time the boy said to her, “Today you pound some salt, and you do me obeisance, because I am going to the village of the goblins.” So his mother did as she was told, and minded him

most explicitly. He took his bag and his bow, and went on and on until he arrived at the village of the goblins, where he found no one except those who were cooking big pots filled with meat. All had gone to the woods to hunt. He immediately ate up all the pots of meat; and when found by the leader who returned, the leader cried, "And I am going to eat you up!"

The child screamed out, crying, "Just lick away at me, because I am sweet, I am sweet, I am sweet." Then he left, and returned to his mother. And so it happened day after day, when the owners returned from their hunt, they found the pots entirely empty. They asked those who tended the pots who it was that had been eating the meat; and they replied, "Just only a little boy, but he is very sweet." So they agreed among themselves, saying, "Today let us stay at home and watch for that person, and see who it is." Soon they saw him coming; and the word was passed, "There he's coming."

When he arrived, he finished up the pots; and as they thought to kill him, he said, "Do not kill me, for I am sweet, I am sweet, I am sweet."

They licked him with their tongues; and then they asked him, "How do you do it?"

And he said, "Do you really wish to know?"

And they said, "Sure." So then he told them to get together a lot of firewood and to find some big pots; to fill these with water and get them to boiling good.

They were also to find some corn-bins (these are made of bark, and portable); and when the water was boiling well, they were to climb into these bins. "I will sprinkle a little water upon your bodies; but not one of you make an outcry, but keep as still as mice, because it is only then that the charm will work." So when the water was boiling, they all climbed into the corn-bins, and he poured great quantities of boiling water upon them until they were all dead. Then he returned to his mother, and said, "Now we've got our pay, they are all dead."

## **TWO BOYS AND THEIR GRANDMOTHERS**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Bell, William C. "Umbundu Tales, Angola, Southwest Africa." *The Journal of American Folklore* 35 (1922): 145–147.

**Date:** ca. 1922

**Original Source:** Ovimbundu

**National Origin:** Angola

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With its admonitions against greed and imitation, the following tale functions as a **fable**. The plot is reminiscent of "The Kind and the Unkind" (AT 480).

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Two boys started off with their grandmothers to begin a new village. When they arrived, they did not find any huts in which to stay. So they at once began to build—one boy building for his grandmother, and the other for his grandmother. Soon the rain began to fall. One boy had built his very quickly; and so his grandmother entered, and was protected from the rain. The other one had not finished; and so he begged of the other, saying, “Do a kindness, and let my grandmother come into your hut!” The other would not, replying, “You also are a man. Why didn’t you hurry faster with your building? I won’t agree to it!”

So his grandmother sought cover under a large tree called the “omanda.” As the storm increased, the lightning struck the tree under which she was; and it was torn open, and the grandmother was killed. The boy picked her up and wrapped her in cloth, put her upon his shoulder, and started with her to the other side of the river Quanja, where there were pools into which they threw those who died. As he was on his way, he met a goblin, who greeted him with friendliness, saying, “Where are you going with your grandmother?” And he responded thus:

Honored sir, I am carrying her to the other side of the river Quanja,  
The deer is crying hi-hi;  
Oh, the deer is crying hi-hi;  
The deer is crying hi-hi;  
Oh, the deer is crying hi-hi.

The friendly spirit said to him, “Cut me off the head, that I may use it as a gourd with which to drink.” He did so; and then on he went again, complying with all the requests made of him. One of the spirits would ask an arm; another, a leg with which he might stir his mush. Pretty soon he met a little old woman, who begged, “Give me the lungs, because they are soft,” and so he did. Soon one advised him, saying, “Throw your grandmother into the pool, and the water will become clear!” When he arrived at the pool, he did as he was told. He stood upon the bank, and he saw her come to the surface twice; and the third time she sank. Then at once from the pool there came forth white men and white women, with all their belongings. Among them was his grandmother, who was turned into a white woman. She asked him, saying, “Who am I?” And he recognized her. Then they all came to the village and built houses and put up tents, so that the village was filled with white folks.

Now, the other boy, who had been stingy about his hut, forbidding the grandmother to shield herself in it from the rain, when he saw all that had happened, became filled with greed, and said to his grandmother, “Come, let me kill you! and we also shall become wealthy.” But his grandmother rebelled, but he struck her and killed her, and, wrapping her in cloth, lifted her upon his shoulder.

As he was going along the path, he met a friendly spirit, which greeted him kindly, and asked, "Where are you going with your grandmother?" He replied,

Sir, I am going with her to the other side of the Quanja,  
 The deer is crying hi-hi;  
 Oh, the deer is crying hi-hi;  
 The deer is crying hi-hi;  
 Oh, the deer is crying hi-hi!

"Give me the head," said the spirit; but the boy replied, "And why, sir, should I do that?" Then he went on; and though he met many spirits, he would not comply with the requests of any of them, for he said, "The other boy is insignificant, but I am far wiser." He met also the little old woman; and she begged for the lungs, saying, "Give me, for my teeth are all gone," but he would not. Then she said to him, "Even though you are mean to me, let me give you advice: take your grandmother to the pool where the water is red, for there are found the white folks, and there is where the other boy went." So he hurried along to the pool described, and threw in his grandmother.

He stood upon the bank waiting for her; for he said, "A stone will not come to the surface." He remained there a long time; and soon there appeared some little boxes, and with them a native servant, who said, "These boxes contain that which you so much desire. When you reach your village, build a very fine house, not forgetting to put in windows. When finally you open these boxes, be entirely by yourself, and be sure you lock yourself in."

When he arrived at the village, he said to the other boy, "I have gone and gotten them too!" Then he built a house; and when it was finished, he shut himself in all by himself, and began to open the boxes. One he opened contained bees, another snakes, another hornets. All of them were filled with insects which bit and stung. When he had finished opening all of the boxes, then they assailed him and killed him.

His own sin had condemned him.

First, he was stingy about his hut; second, because of imitation, he killed his own grandmother, thus shedding blood.

# YORUBA

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## HOW SHANGO HANGED HIMSELF AND WHAT RESULTED

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Parkinson, John. "Yoruba Folk-Lore." *Journal of the Royal African Society* 8 (1909): 175–177.

**Date:** ca. 1909

**Original Source:** Yoruba

**National Origin:** Nigeria

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The Yoruba people are associated primarily with the West African nation of Nigeria (for additional information on Nigeria, see introductory note to "A Short History, Purporting to Give the Origin of the Hausa Nation and the Story of Their Conversion to the Mohammedan Religion," page 98). Yoruba culture is a presence in neighboring Benin, Togo, and Ghana, as well in the Americas.

Historically, the Yoruba were primarily farmers. City-states emerged in the early centuries of the current epoch, and, for example, by 900 C.E. the city-state of Ile Ife had established political and cultural influence throughout the region. The Yoruba continue to be recognized for sophisticated aesthetic and theological systems. The following **myth** focuses on Shango, a King of Oyo who became the orisha (a major manifestation of the divine essence in Yoruba theology) who is represented in the natural force of lightning, among other symbols and forces associated with him. Shango's wife, Oiya (more commonly spelled Oya), is the orisha associated with powerful winds: whirlwinds and tornados.

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Formerly Shango was a King of Oyo, and had two servants famous for their wickedness, the one called Timini, the other Bonka; and these two servants troubled Shango.

Then Shango thought, "What shall I do to get rid of them?" And he said, "The next time there is war I will send them and have them killed."

After a time he sent Timini to a certain place, and then he sent Bonka, telling him to go and fight with Timini in the place where he put him. When Bonka came to Timini they fought, and Bonka conquered Timini and brought him as a prisoner back to Oyo. When Bonka got back to Oyo, he led Timini before Shango the King, saying, "I have conquered your enemy; here he is."

Shango replied, "I have no time now, come tomorrow" and when they came again Shango said, "I do not believe you fought." Then was Bonka so annoyed at Shango's words that he drew his sword and killed Timini and cut off his head.

Then went Bonka to the King and said, "I am of opinion you sought my death, otherwise you would not have sent me to fight Timini in that place, and when I brought him home say, 'I am not satisfied, you must fight again.'"

"If I had not been very strong Timini might have killed me, and therefore I will make war with you yourself."

"Moreover," continued he, "what have you to distinguish you? Once fire came from your mouth, that is all; and I will prove I am stronger than you. I should like you to collect together all the people of Oyo; tell them to get firewood, and to pour palm oil upon it."

Then the next day Shango assembled the people and ordered the wood. And Bonka said to Shango, "Before you set the wood on fire, pack it upon me, I lying on the ground."

When all the people were assembled Bonka lay down, and they put wood upon him and poured oil upon it, and set fire to it, and all the wood burnt to ashes. And Shango said, "This man is dead in spite of his boasting. I am glad."

Whilst they talked Bonka suddenly came out of the ashes, and at once went up to Shango saying, "What more have you to boast of? You see the fire from your mouth is not as big as the fire you put upon me, yet I am not dead. I will give you four days in which to leave this country."

But when the fourth day came, Shango said he would not go, and then the elders had a meeting, and concluded that Shango should go, and, moreover, that they would go with him, for, "If not," said they, "this man will destroy us all in this country of Oyo." Then Shango agreed and made preparations to go on the day indicated, and all the people said, "We will go with you."

Now Shango had an intimate friend called Mōgba, and he also promised he would leave Oyo with Shango, but Mōgba did not appear, so Shango went, taking as much of his baggage as he could and his wife Oiya.

As they journeyed, Oiya said, "Why do I come with you? I shall change my mind; you go to your country and I will go to mine." And Oiya left him and went to Ira, leaving Shango alone. And Shango, seeing his friend did not come,



and that his wife had left him, said, “Where am I to go who once was King of Oyo? I am now alone; this degradation is more than I can bear, I will die,” and he took a rope and hanged himself.

Now when some of the people were coming from the farms to Oyo they saw a man hanging by the side of the path, and approaching, found it was Shango, the King. Then as they went towards Oyo they spread the news, “The King has hanged himself.” When they came to Oyo this became the talk of the day, and was heard by Mōgba. Then they held a meeting and said, “It is degrading to us that this constant talk should go on that the King Shango has hanged himself. Something must be done so that the people will not repeat this.” And they made a medicine, so that whosoever said, “The King has hanged himself,” his house should be set on fire. But the elders who convened the meeting did not tell of this medicine to the inhabitants of Oyo.

Shortly the fires became too numerous and the people inquired from the “idols,” of whom Mōgba was the chief priest, and Mōgba said, “It is on account of your sin; as long as you continue to say, ‘Shango the King has hanged himself,’ your houses will burn, but if when people come to you, you say, ‘It is a lie, the King has not hanged himself’ this burning will cease.”

And they did so, and the burning ceased, as Mōgba said. Then all the people held a meeting and agreed to call the spot where Shango hanged himself “K’oso, not hanged.” And to this day if a man’s house catches fire, the people know that he has offended Shango.

## **HOW THUNDER CAME FOR THE FIRST TIME**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Parkinson, John. “Yoruba Folk-Lore.” *Journal of the Royal African Society* 8 (1909): 166–168.

**Date:** ca. 1909

**Original Source:** Yoruba

**National Origin:** Nigeria

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According to John Parkinson the connection between the Irogun bird and thunder is logical: “Irogun is the original name for Shango—the lightning is Shango’s fire.” Audience participation via singing a chorus is common in both continental African tradition and in the African Diaspora.

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**A** small, small rat (Eliri) gave birth to three sons; an elephant, a buffalo, and a ram. They made a farm in which the elephant planted okro [okra]; the buffalo osun [camwood], and the ram igba [eggplant]. The

three sons told their mother she must go to their farm when in need and take her choice of what was there.

The first time the mother Eliri came she took okro and igba, but the second time she found out that someone had been there before her, and she cursed the man that stole, praying that he would not die well. [Chorus in which the audience joins in singing the mother Eliri's curses]. Then Irogun the bird came from the bush and said, "I, Irogun, I came to this farm, I plucked the elephant's okro, the buffalo's osun, and the ram's igba."

And the bird Irogun took a whip and flogged the mother.

When the mother reached home she told her son, the elephant, that she had been to the farm, had seen things stolen, and that while she cursed the thief, Irogun the bird came from the bush, acknowledged the theft, and, moreover, flogged her into the bargain.

The elephant replied that he had seen no one who would so dare to flog his mother, and that he would come to the farm.

So the small rat Eliri and the elephant her son came to the farm and the mother repeated the cursing. [Chorus.]

Then Irogun the bird came out and drove the elephant and the mother away. When they reached home Eliri the mother repeated the story to her son the buffalo, saying how she had been flogged, and she and the elephant together driven away by Irogun the bird. The buffalo said it was impossible that anyone could so flog the elephant, but that he himself would go to the place and see.

So the mother and her son the buffalo went, and, as before, the mother cursed. [Chorus.] Irogun the bird again appeared, and, flogging both mother and son, drove them away. They returned home, and the mother went to make complaint to the ram.

Meanwhile the ram had gone to market, but his mother went out and met him by the way, and related what had occurred and how she had been flogged. Then the ram put down the load he was carrying and said he should like to see the man who could so flog his mother Eliri, the small, small rat.

Then the mother and her son the ram went to the farm, and the ram asked his mother to repeat the curse. This she did. [Chorus.] And the bird Irogun again appeared, and repeated to the ram what he had said to the elephant and the buffalo, that he was the man who had stolen from the farm.

Then the ram wrestled with Irogun the bird, until his horns were broken and the claws of Irogun were broken also. Then they paused, and the ram sent home for ten new horns and the bird Irogun for ten new claws.

The ram sent his wife the sheep, the bird his wife the bitch. Meanwhile Eliri, the mother of the ram, got a fat piece of beef, roasted it, and going to the bird's home hung it just above the level to which the bitch could reach. The sheep got the ten horns and brought them back to the ram; but the claws for Irogun had not yet come, for as the bitch reached home she saw the fat dropped from the beef above and stopped to lick it up, then once more the fat dropped,

and looking up she saw the beef above her. And at the sight of the beef she forgot the message. When the ram had got his new horns, he said, "Now we will fight again"; but Irogun said, "I have no claws, let us wait." And the ram said, "Very well, we will wait for a short time."

Then Irogun looked round and saw the bitch afar off trying to reach the beef, and he hailed her saying, "Carry out my message." But the bitch, thinking only of the fat dropping down from the beef, did not listen; and so when the time allowed by the ram had elapsed, the ram said, "It is not my fault if you have no claws," and so they fought. Irogun sank to his knee, then his body touched the ground, and at last he was altogether down.

From that day when there is thunder the ram digs in the ground with its foot, and says, "One day we will fight again, the fight is not finished yet, one day we will fight again."

And since that time the bird Irogun has dwelt in the ground and not on the trees as before. But the noise of the fight between Irogun and the ram was the noise of the first thunder.

## **THE WORSHIP OF THE THUNDERBOLT: A STORY OF SHANGO**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Parkinson, John. "Yoruba Folk-Lore." *Journal of the Royal African Society* 8 (1909): 174–175.

**Date:** ca. 1909

**Original Source:** Yoruba

**National Origin:** Nigeria

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The following **myth** provides additional detail on the orisha Shango prior to his deification.

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**F**ormerly Shango was a man like other men and his wife's name was Oiya, and Shango was said to be the best doctor living at that time. Now a time came when Shango left the world, but before he left it he made a medicine and sprinkled it over the face of the world and pronounced a curse.

And where the medicine fell there grew a herb called yonri, and the curse so lay that any who ate of yonri, the medicines that he made should fail of their power and neither work nor cure, and this because Shango had sown yonri. Then he threw a chain up to Heaven and climbed by it to the sky. When Shango had gone one of the elders took an oath that he would not eat this yonri leaf, and one day he went to the farm and took the roots of the yonri

first, and then a yam (*begbi*) and said that he would make a medicine of these two and burn them both together. While the two roots burned Shango saw and came down from the sky, and took the medicine from the fire and threw it away. When he had gone the Ivan again went into the farm to get more roots, and again he burnt them to prepare the medicine. And Shango came down a second time and said, “I told you before, do not burn these roots together,” and for the second time he threw the roots away. But the man would not be advised, and for the third time he burnt the roots together and again Shango saw. But he said, “I will not go down for a third time; I will put an end to the man’s life.” Then, taking a certain medicine, he dropped it on the man’s head, and the man died.

Then when the people got to the place they found it very, very hot, and when they dug in the place they found a small round stone. Then from that day to this they worshipped the thunderbolt, and the name of the place was Ira.

## IFA

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Parkinson, John. “Yoruba Folk-Lore.” *Journal of the Royal African Society* 8 (1909): 184.

**Date:** ca. 1909

**Original Source:** Yoruba

**National Origin:** Nigeria

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The following **myth** describes the origin of Ifa divination. The system continues to be practiced both in continental Africa and the Diaspora by the class of priests known as Babalawo (“Father of Secrets”).

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**I**n the olden days Ifa was a great doctor, and once while he pursued his profession he asked of God (Olorun), “What shall I do that I may become rich in the world?”

And Olorun said, “You have tried by your own skill and have never asked me, knowing all the time that I was your Creator. If you had asked me at first I would have made you rich, but even now as you have at length asked I will grant your request.”

And slowly Ifa became rich and the people called him Orumila—“rich of God.” And God gave him a palm of no ordinary kind, the nuts of which were Ifa’s messengers. After his death the people, knowing his wealth, thought that if they worshipped him they also would become rich, and so they made him a God; but before making a petition they inquire of the nuts which were his

messengers whilst he was on the earth, and the nuts convey their request to Ifa and he grants the petition. And the Babalawo are the priests who divine by aid of the messengers of Ifa.

## THE ELECTION OF THE KING OF THE ANIMALS

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Lomax, John A. "Stories of an African Prince: Yoruba Tales." *The Journal of American Folklore* 26 (1913): 4.

**Date:** ca. 1912

**Original Source:** Yoruba

**National Origin:** Nigeria

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This and the following four **animal tales** collected by John A. Lomax represent potential sources for the African American and Caribbean tales best known through Joel Chandler Harris's anthologies of folktales from the southern United States.

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All the animal gathered to elect their King. But it was said that either Lion or Elephant will be chosen as the King. Before the election they have to run a race. The one that wins will get the King. But Elephant knowing that he couldn't run, he said that he ought to be the King, because he is strong and can do many things that Lion couldn't do. And at the same time the Lion replied that he can do anything that that great big Elephant couldn't do. He can roar and let the earth shakes, run and fight at any time. And that Elephant couldn't do anything but drink up a whole river up, if they let him. Why Elephant went on telling some of the things he is able to do. Suddenly Lion cut him off and said, "Let's run and gets through." They line up; Rabbit is the judger. First Elephant ahead; after a short while Lion was ahead. Then Elephant stop. And said, "You can have it." The Lion was chosen as the King of the beast. After that, Lion and the Elephant hard to get along. They always try to fight one another, but they afraid of one another. Then come Rooster, and said to Elephant, "I knew that you not any count. You remember when we picking ground?" Elephant said in a rough voice, "You little scoundrel! If you don't get away from him, he is going to eat him up." It ends in this way, that Elephant and Lion was after all a good friend. They can't do without one another. Even Elephant run the throne by telling Lion what to do. This shows us that before you can become anyone's friend, you have to go in hard work or trouble. So end the election for the day.

## THE ELEPHANT AND THE ROOSTER

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Lomax, John A. "Stories of an African Prince: Yoruba Tales." *The Journal of American Folklore* 26 (1913): 3–4.

**Date:** ca. 1912

**Original Source:** Yoruba

**National Origin:** Nigeria

**D**uring our forefathers' time, an Elephant was known as the largest animal amongst the other animals, strong and brave, and also they thought that he ought to be called the "King" of all the beasts.

But one day Elephant was walking in thick woods, he met a Rooster by the way, and he asked him who he was. And the Rooster said to him, "I'm a little bird that walk on two feet, sharp quill to pick the ground with so as to get the bugs and worms."

Then said the Elephant, "Oh, yes! I have heard so much about your picking the ground. Tell me how many acres of land can you pick in an hour?"

"About ten acres," reply the Rooster.

"That's nothing," Elephant replied. "I could do twice as much as that in a second."

Before an Elephant through talking, there came a hungry Tiger, looking terrible, and wanted to know what's the matter with them. But he wants to jump on that Rooster to devour him. But Elephant would not allow him. Therefore, he went on and left two of them there, disputing on their subject. Few minutes afterwards, the Rooster said to the Elephant, "It is not a nice thing to stand up here discoursing. But let us try and see who will win." Before starting, Elephant made a promise that if Rooster can beat him picking the ground, he shall give him his whole house and his wife.

They started. About half an hour, Rooster through with five acres of land whilst Elephant has not completed one-third of an acre. But after Rooster got through with his, in a certain hour he promised to be through. As he was going back he found an Elephant under a tree, tired and sleepy, without getting through with half an acre.

Rooster woke him and asked him if he believes what he can do. Elephant said, "Yes." Rooster ask for what Elephant promised him, but he didn't answered him. Then Rooster got mad, and jumped on him, and pecked him at his nose. Then his nose started swelling up, kept swelling up till it hang down, which we call this day an Elephant snout. Rooster is the one the cause Elephant nose to look so long, long. If not, Elephant shall have a nose just like the other animals. And at the same time he didn't get to be the King of the beasts.

## THE FAMINE AND THE SPIDER

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Lomax, John A. "Stories of an African Prince: Yoruba Tales." *The Journal of American Folklore* 26 (1913): 10–12.

**Date:** ca. 1912

**Original Source:** Yoruba

**National Origin:** Nigeria

One day in a little town where there is nothing to eat but hot water. And in that village there was a Spider, with three wives and four children. But in those days Spiders were made like a human being. But during this famine, everybody in that village have to drink this hot water. But Spider claim to be tired of it. He said to himself one day that "I'm going to find me something to eat."

In fact he started on his journey, with a large bag hanging on his shoulder. As he was going along through the woods, he looked toward his left and found a stream of water with a large palm tree which bear lots of kernel nuts. And will ripen. He jumped in this water and swim towards the palm tree. He climb to the top, and start picking some of these kernel nuts. About two or three of them happen to dropped into this stream of water, and Spider jumped into it, looking for these nuts. And with his surprise, he found himself in a strange house, and a fierce looking man. And who said in a rough voice, "What do you want here?" And that startled Spider. With trembling voice he related all of his trouble to the man. And the man said to him, "Take these two pots, and say to them, 'Do what you can do; let me see,' and they will show you." Spider had not reach halfway home, when set these pots down by the side way and began to repeat these words. In his surprise he found a native food called "iyau"; in another, called "obe." He sat down, and eat them with satisfaction without any remembrance of his wives and children. After he got through he took them into his house and hid them, because he didn't want anybody to see it. But when he return from his journey his wives and children were so glad to see him, and they serve him some of this water. He refuse it, and told them that he is old and wise and he could stay hungry all the time. So they must go and drink that hot water. He said the same thing every day. But his wives knew that he brought something with him from where he returned, but they didn't know where he placed it. So they watched him and found out where he put these thing. And out of these pots; with their surprise, they found these food appear. They called their children and sat down and ate it. Then they went around and found some basket and a large clay dish and repeat these word three time, and they fill out these basket and also the dish; and after they are through they bore a hole in each pot, and that will not produce no more food for Spider. In a few minutes after they through, Spider came in with hope that these pots going to give

something to eat. One of his child brought him some hot water, but he wouldn't drink it. He went where these pots are and repeat these words, but nothing doing. He said it must have been because I'm dirty; I'm going swim. He went; about two minutes he came back and repeat these words, but all in vain. He found out that they all had holes in them; they couldn't supply him any more of that food. He ran to his wives and asked for that hot water. And he drank about two buckets full. That evening he started toward this stream again, and swim to the palm tree, and began to pick these palm nuts and threw few of them into this water himself. Then he jumped in it and went to this same house, and the man ask him what did he want. He related his trouble the second time, and the man gave him a long whip, and told him to say the same word he used for those pots. Spider with joy had not reached halfway home he lay the whip down and repeat these word. When that whip started poor Spider hollered; made so much noise, but in vain.

A bird happen to pass by and said, "Stop," before the whip could [be] stopped. Spider took the whip with him to his house and went all round the town and invite, King and Queen, rich men, poor men, blind men, and also his own wives and children, to come and have some supper with him.

That evening nearly everybody in that town came to Spider house and he locked them up in his large room and went out himself and told the King to said those words, and the king repeated after him. Oh! the whip started and whipped everyone in that room, killed some of them, and they broke the door and ran out. Then they jump out and beat Spider, till he burst to a little insect with eight legs crawling on the wall from then to this modern day.

## THE BEAR AND THE FOX

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Lomax, John A. "Stories of an African Prince: Yoruba Tales." *The Journal of American Folklore* 26 (1913): 6.

**Date:** ca. 1912

**Original Source:** Yoruba

**National Origin:** Nigeria

One day, a Bear met a Fox by way with a dead meat, and he asked Fox where did he get the fish from? Old Fox answered him and said, "Brother Bear, I caught the fish in that river." Bear asked him, how did he catch it? He told Bear that he stock his tail in the water, and he let it stay there till he feel something biting him, before he pulled it out. There is a fish tangle to the end of his tail. He told Bear to go and do the same thing. So Brother Bear went there and stuck his tail in the water for about five minutes; he feels something catching whole of his tail. Then he start to pull his tail; he couldn't get it out, and pulled hard, and got his tail cut into two. When Bear



started to pull his tail, Fox stood on the bank of the river, and commence to laugh at him: and when he got his tail cut, Fox ran off, and left him there. That's why Bear and Fox never agreed together or didn't like one another. That's why Bear now has his short tail.

## THE FLY AND THE ANT

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Lomax, John A. "Stories of an African Prince: Yoruba Tales." *The Journal of American Folklore* 26 (1913): 9.

**Date:** ca. 1912

**Original Source:** Yoruba

**National Origin:** Nigeria

The Fly and the Ant had a big discussion one day about how they make their living. First, says Fly, that among all the flying birds he suppose he is the only one can go anywhere without anyone disturbing him. He said the first seat in the church was his; he admitted in the court; even that he can be crown as a King. But he didn't care for it, because he always sit at the shoulders of the King. And he think that that enough for his can. And that he doesn't have to work before he live in this world.

By that time Ant study just what to say. As soon as he was through, Ant said, "It is true that you don't have to work, because you flying around; but to be invited to a King's house, to different entertainment that' another big thing too." Then Ant also said, that she work and get her something to put up, for when the sun too hot he can be able to eat. But she doesn't believe in waiting until she invited, before she can look for anything to eat. That's why we must depend on ourselves, not on others. We got that lesson from ants.

## ***Southern Africa***



# SAN

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## ORIGINS

**Tradition Bearer:** Qing

**Source:** Orpen, J. M. "Folklore of the Bushmen." *Folklore* 30 (1919): 143–151.

**Date:** ca. 1874

**Original Source:** San (Maluti)

**National Origin:** South Africa

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The San are popularly known as the Bushmen of southern Africa. Traditionally they were nomadic hunters and gatherers living in loosely organized bands and subsisting on plant and animal resources such as those described in the following origin **myth**. While the San are found in diverse geographic settings, most have made the Kalahari Desert—covering more than 200,000 square miles of southern Africa—home. Cagn (praying mantis) appears again in "The Mantis Assumes the Form of a Hartebeest" (page 154).

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**C**agn was the first being; he gave orders and caused all things to appear and to be made, the sun, the moon, stars, wind, mountains, and animals. His wife's name was Coti. He had two sons, and the eldest was chief, and his name was Cogaz; the name of the second was Gcwi. There were three great chiefs, Cagn, Cogaz, and Qwanciqutshaa (of all three legends are here given), who had great power, but it was Cagn who gave orders through the other two. Cagn's wife Coti, took her husband's knife and used it to sharpen a digging stick ("Cibi" on which a perforated stone is put), and she dug roots to eat. When Cagn found she had spoiled his knife, he scolded her and said evil should come to her. Upon this she conceived and brought forth a little eland's

calf in the fields, and she told her husband, and said she did not know what sort of a child it was, and he ran to see it, and came back and told Coti to grind canna, so that he might inquire what it was. She did so, and he went and sprinkled these charms on the animal, and asked it, "Are you this animal? Are you that animal?" but it remained silent till he asked it, "Are you an eland (Tsha)?" when it said "Aaaa." Then he took it and folded it in his arms, and went and got a gourd, in which he put it, and took it to a secluded kloof enclosed by hills, and precipices, and left it to grow there. He was at that time making all animals and things, and making them fit for the use of men, and making snares and weapons. He made then the partridge and the striped mouse, and he made the wind in order that game should smell up the wind, so they run up the wind still. Cagn took three sticks and sharpened them, and he threw one at the eland and it ran away, and he called it back, and he missed with each of them, and each time called it back, and then he went to his nephew to get arrow poison, and he was away three days. While he was away his sons Cogaz and Gcwi went out with young men to hunt, and they came upon the eland their father had hidden, and they did not know about it. It was a new animal. Its horns had just grown, and they tried to encircle it and stab it, and it always broke through the circle and afterwards came back and lay down at the same place. At last, while it was asleep, Gcwi, who could throw well, pierced it, and they cut it up and took the meat and blood home; but after they had cut it up they saw the snares and traps of Cagn, and knew it was his, and they were afraid. And Cagn came back the third day and saw the blood on the ground where it had been killed, and he was very angry, and he came home and told Gcwi he would punish him for his presumption and disobedience, and he pulled his nose off and flung it into the fire. But he said, "No! I shall not do that," so he put his nose on again, and he said, "Now begin to try to undo the mischief you have done, for you have spoilt the elands when I was making them fit for use," so he told him to take of the eland's blood and put it in a pot and churn it with a little native churn stick, which he made to spin in the blood by rubbing the upright stick between the palms of his hands, and he scattered the blood and it turned into snakes, and they went abroad, and Cagn told him not to make fright-things, and he churned again and scattered the blood and it turned into hartebeests, and they ran away, and his father said, "I am not satisfied; this is not yet what I want; you can't do anything. Throw the blood out! Coti, my wife! cleanse this pot and bring more blood from the little paunch where they put it, and churn it," and she did so, and they added the fat from the heart, and she churned it, and he sprinkled it, and the drops became bull elands, and these surrounded them and pushed them with their horns, and he said, "You see how you have spoilt the elands," and he drove these elands away and then they churned and produced eland cows, and then they churned and produced multitudes of elands, and the earth was covered with them, and he told Gcwi, "Go and hunt them and try to kill one, that is now your work, for it was you who spoilt them," and Gcwi ran and did his best, but he

came back panting and footsore and worn out; and he hunted again next day, and was unable to kill any. They were able to run away because Cagn was in their bones. Then Cagn sent Cogaz to turn the elands towards him, and Cagn shouted and the elands came running close past him, and he threw assegais and killed three bulls, and then he sent Cogaz to hunt, and he gave him a blessing, and he killed two, and then he sent Gcwi, and he killed one. That day game were given to men to eat, and this is the way they were spoilt and became wild. Cagn said he must punish them for trying to kill the thing he made which they did not know, and he must make them feel sore.

A daughter of Cagn became cross because her father had scolded her and she ran away to destroy herself by throwing herself among the snakes (qabu). The snakes were also men, and their chief married her and they ate snake's meat, but they gave her eland's meat to eat, because the child of Cagn must eat no evil thing. Cagn used to know things that were far off, and he sent his son Cogaz to bring her back, so Cogaz went with his young men, and Cagn lent him his tooth to make him strong.

When the snakes saw Cogaz approaching with his party, they became angry and began to hide their heads, but their chief said, "You must not get angry, they are coming to their child," so the snakes went away to hunt, and his sister gave him meat, and they told her to tell her husband they were come to fetch her and she prepared food for the road and they went with her next morning, and they prepared themselves by binding rushes round their limbs and bodies, and three snakes followed them. These tried to bite them, but they only bit the rushes; they tried to beat them with reins, but they only beat rushes, and they tried throwing sand at them to cause wind to drive them into the water, not knowing he had the tooth of Cagn, and they failed. The children at home, the young men with the chief of the snakes, knew that when those snakes came back they would fill the country with water. So they commenced to build a high stage with willow poles, and the female snakes took their husbands on their return and threw them into the water, and it rose above the mountains, but the chief and his young men were saved on the high stage; and Cagn sent Cogaz for them to come and turn from being snakes, and he told them to lie down, and he struck them with his stick, and as he struck each the body of a person came out, and the skin of a snake was left on the ground, and he sprinkled the skins with canna, and the snakes turned from being snakes, and they became his people.

The big people you have seen painted with deformities are the Qobe—they carried battle axes, and are so drawn, they were cannibals, they cut people's heads off, they killed women and drew the blood out of their noses. Cagn sent Cogaz to their residence to deliver a woman from them, and he lent him his tooth. His toothache had told him to send Cogaz. Cogaz went, and when he was coming back Cagn saw the dust, and sent the little bird that flies up and says tee-tee, called moti in Sesuto, and gouka in Bushman language, but it told

nothing; then he sent another bird, the tinktinki, or tintinyane—qinqininyq in Bushman—and it brought no news. Then he sent a third, the qeiv, a black and white bird that sings in the early morning, called tsqanafike in Sesuto; and he rubbed canna on its beak, and it flew to the dust and brought back word that the giants were coming. The giants attacked Cogaz several times but he used to get upon the tooth of Cagn and it grew up to a great height, and they could not reach him. He used to cook his food up there, and then he used to play on his reed flute, and this put them to sleep; and he would go on, and they would wake up, follow him, and he would get up on the tooth again. At last, when they continued attacking him, he killed some of them with poisoned arrows, and Cagn said he would not have these people, but drive them far off and kill them as they were cannibals, and he cut up his kaross and sandals and turned them into dogs and wild dogs and set them at the Qobe giants and destroyed them.

Qwanciqutshaa, the chief, used to live alone. He had no wife, for the women would not have him. A man sent a number of little boys to get sticks for the women to dig ants' eggs. One of the women grumbled, saying the stick she received was crooked and those of the others were straight. That night she dreamed that a baboon came to take for his wife a young girl who had refused Qwanciqutshaa. Next day, as she was digging alone, the baboon came to her in a rage (it had been present and heard her observation about the stick, and thought she was mocking at the crookedness of its tail), and it said, "Why did you curse me?" and it threw stones at her, and she ran home and told the girl of her dream and that it was coming true, and told her to escape to Qwanciqutshaa. The girl sank into the ground and came up at another place, and sank again. She sank three times and then came up and went to Qwanciqutshaa's place. Qwanciqutshaa had killed a red rhebok and was skinning it when he saw his elands running about and wondered what had startled them. He left the meat and took the skin and went home, and asked why she came. She said she was frightened of the baboon. He told her to fetch water to wash the blood off his hand, and she went, and came running back in a fright, and spilt some on Qwanciqutshaa.

He said, "What is the reason of this?"

She said, "It is fright at the baboon."

He said, "Why are you frightened; he is your husband, and comes from your place?"

She said, "No, I have run to you for fear of him."

Then he put her up on his head and hid her in his hair. The baboon had in the meantime come to the people she had left, and asked for her, and they said they did not know where she was; but he smelt where she had gone down into the ground, and he pursued, scenting her at each place, and when he came towards Qwanciqutshaa the elands started and ran about and gazed at him.

He came up to Qwanciqutshaa with his keeries, saying, "Where is my wife?"

Qwanciqutshaa said, "I have no wife of yours."

It flew at Qwanciqutshaa, and fought him, but Qwanciqutshaa got it down and struck it through with its own keerie, and Qwanciqutshaa banished it to the mountains, saying, "Go, eat scorpions and roots as a baboon should," and it went screaming away; and the screams were heard by the women at the place it came from and all the baboons were banished. And Qwanciqutshaa killed an eland, purified himself as the baboon had defiled him, and he told the girl to go home and tell the people he was alive. But the young men wanted to marry this girl, and she said, "No, I love none but Qwanciqutshaa, who saved me from the baboon." So they hated Qwanciqutshaa; and when he had killed a red rhebok and put meat on the fire to roast, those young men took fat from a snake they had killed and dropped it on the meat, and when he cut a piece and put it in his mouth, it fell out; and he cut another, and it fell out; and the third time it fell out, and the blood gushed from his nose. So he took all his things, his weapons, and clothes, and threw them into the sky, and he threw himself into the river.

And there were villages down there and young women, and they wanted to catch Qwanciqutshaa; but he turned into a snake and said, "No it is through women I was killed," and he eluded and threatened them, and they all ran away. The only girl that remained was the girl he had saved, and she made a hut and went and picked things and made canna, and put pieces in a row from the river bank to the hut. And the snake came out and ate up the charms, and went back into the water, and the next day she did the same, and that night he came and went to the hut and took a mat and went up to the sky and got his kaross and came down and slept on the mat. And when the girl saw he had been there she placed charms again, and lay in wait, and the snake came out of the water and raised his head, and looked warily and suspiciously round, and then he glided out of the snake's skin and walked, picking up the charmed food, to the hut, and when he was asleep she went in and seized him and quickly forced more charms into his mouth, and he struggled to escape, but she held him fast, and he was exhausted and trembled, and said, "Why do you hold me, you who caused my death?"

And she said, "Though I was the cause, it was not my fault, for I loved you, and none but you!" and she smothered him in the kaross and ran to the skin and sprinkled it with canna and burnt it, and they remained there three days. And Qwanciqutshaa killed an eland and purified himself and his wife, and told her to grind canna, and she did so, and he sprinkled it on the ground, and all the elands that had died became alive again, and some came in with assegais sticking in them, which had been struck by those people who had wanted to kill him. And he took out the assegais, a whole bundle, and they remained in his place; and it was a place enclosed with hills and precipices, and there was one pass, and it was constantly filled with a freezingly cold mist, so that none could pass through it, and those men all remained outside, and they ate sticks at last, and died of hunger. But his brother (or her brother), in chasing an eland he had



wounded, pursued it closely through that mist, and Qwanciquitshaa saw the elands running about, frightened at that wounded eland and the assegai that was sticking in it, and he came out and saw his brother, and he said, "Oh! My brother I have been injured; you see now where I am." And the next morning he killed an eland for his brother, and he told him to go back and call his mother and his friends, and he did so, and when they came they told him how the other people had died of hunger outside; and they stayed with him, and the place smelt of meat.

Cagn sent Cogaz to cut sticks to make bows. When Cogaz came to the bush, the baboons (cogn) caught him. They called all the other baboons together to hear him, and they asked him who sent him there. He said his father sent him to cut sticks to make bows. So they said "Your father thinks himself more clever than we are, he wants those bows to kill us, so we'll kill you," and they killed Cogaz, and tied him up in the top of a tree, and they danced around the tree singing (an untranscribable baboon song), with a chorus saying, "Cagn thinks he is clever." Cagn was asleep when Cogaz was killed, but when he awoke he told Coti to give him his charms, and he put some on his nose, and said the baboons have hung Cogaz. So he went to where the baboons were, and when they saw him coming close by, they changed their song so as to omit the words about Cagn, but a little baboon girl said, "Don't sing that way; sing the way you were singing before."

And Cagn said, "Sing as the little girl wishes," and they sang and danced away as before. And Cagn said, "That is the song I heard, that is what I wanted, go on dancing till I return"; and he went and fetched a bag full of pegs, and he went behind each of them as they were dancing and making a great dust, and he drove a peg into each one's back, and gave it a crack, and sent them off to the mountains to live on roots, beetles and scorpions, as a punishment. Before that baboons were men, but since that they have tails, and their tails hang crooked.

Then Cagn took Cogaz down, and gave him canna and made him alive again. Cagn found an eagle getting honey from a precipice, and said, "My friend, give me some too," and it said, "Wait a bit," and it took a comb and put it down, and went back and took more, and told Cagn to take the rest, and he climbed up and licked only what remained on the rock, and when he tried to come down he found he could not. Presently he thought of his charms, and took some from his belt, and caused them to go to Cogaz to ask advice; and Cogaz sent word back by means of the charms that he was to make water to run down the rock, and he would find himself able to come down; and he did so, and when he got down, he descended into the ground and came up again, and he did this three times, and the third time he came up near the eagle, in the form of a huge bull eland; and the eagle said, "What a big eland," and went to kill it, and it threw an assegai, which passed it on the right side, and then another, which missed it, to the left, and a third, which passed between its legs, and the

eagle trampled on it, and immediately hail fell and stunned the eagle, and Cagn killed it, and took some of the honey home to Cogaz, and told him he had killed the eagle which had acted treacherously to him, and Cogaz said, "You will get harm some day by these fightings." And Cagn found a woman named Cgorioinsi, who eats men, and she had made a big fire and was dancing round it, and she used to seize men and throw them into the fire, and Cagn began to roast roots at the fire, and at last she came and pitched him in, but he slipped through at the other side, and went on roasting and eating his roots, and she pitched him in again and again, and he only said, "Wait a bit until I have finished my roots and I'll show you what I am." And when he had done he threw her into the fire as a punishment for killing people. Then Cagn went back to the mountain, where he had left some of the honey he took from the eagle, and he left his sticks there, and went down to the river, and there was a person in the river named Quuisi, who had been standing there a long time, something having caught him by the foot, and held him there since the winter, and he called to Cagn to come and help him, and Cagn went to help him, and put his hand down into the water to loosen his leg, and the thing let go the man's leg, and seized Cagn's arm.

And the man ran stumbling out of the water, for his leg was stiffened by his being so long held fast, and he called out, "Now you will be held there till the winter," and he went to the honey, and threw Cagn's sticks away; and Cagn began to bethink him of his charms, and he sent to ask Cogaz for advice through his charms, and Cogaz sent word and told him to let down a piece of his garment into the water alongside his hand, and he did so, and the thing let go his hand and seized his garment, and he cut off the end of his garment, and ran and collected his sticks, and pursued the man and killed him, and took the honey to Cogaz.

The thorns (dobbletjes) were people—they are called Cagncagn—they were dwarfs, and Cagn found them fighting together, and he went to separate them, and they all turned upon him and killed him, and the biting ants helped them, and they eat Cagn up; but after a time they and the dwarfs collected his bones, and put them together and tied his head on, and these went stumbling home, and Cogaz cured him and made him all right again, and asked what had happened to him, and he told him; and Cogaz gave him advice and power, telling him how to fight them, that he was to make feints and strike as if at their legs, and then hit them on the head, and he went and killed many, and drove the rest into the mountains.

Cagn found a woman, who had been left behind by people, and he thought he would take her home and make her his wife, so he picked her up and put her on his back, and she stuck on his back like wax, and he went to a tree to scrape her off, and she stuck to the tree too like wax. At last he got home to his wife Coti, and she scolded him for his conduct—he who was so great a king picking up with any woman he met with—and she boiled water and melted the woman off him, and when he got loose, Cagn gave her a tremendous thrashing for sticking to him like wax, and he drove her away.

## THE LION AND THE JACKAL

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Honey [Honeij], James A. *South African Folk-Tales*. New York: Baker & Taylor, 1910, 33–40.

**Date:** ca. 1910

**Original Source:** San

**National Origin:** Unavailable

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The following **animal tale** reveals Jackal as another of the San **tricksters**. Featured in many of the group's tales, he is believed to be as cowardly as he is wily. For example, if one should eat a jackal's heart that person will become timid and easily frightened. Boer is the Afrikaans term for the descendants of European agriculturalists in southern Africa. In the following animal tale, the so-called tiger is actually the leopard.

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**N**ot because he was exactly the most capable or progressive fellow in the neighborhood, but because he always gave that idea—that is why Jackal slowly acquired among the neighbors the name of a “progressive man.” The truly well-bred people around him, who did not wish to hurt his feelings, seemed to apply this name to him, instead of, for instance, “cunning scamp,” or “all-wise rat-trap,” as so many others often dubbed him. He obtained this name of “a progressive man” because he spoke most of the time English, especially if he thought some of them were present who could not understand it, and also because he could always hold his body so much like a judge on public occasions.

He had a smooth tongue, could make quite a favorable speech, and especially with good effect could he expatiate on the backwardness of others. Underneath he really was the most unlettered man in the vicinity, but he had perfect control over his inborn cunningness, which allowed him for a long time to go triumphantly through life as a man of great ability.

One time, for instance, he lost his tail in an iron trap. He had long attempted to reach the Boer's goose pen, and had framed many good plans, but when he came to his senses, he was sitting in front of the goose pen with his tail in the iron trap, the dogs all the time coming for him. When he realized what it meant, he mustered together all his strength and pulled his tail, which he always thought so much of, clean off.

This would immediately have made him the butt of the whole neighborhood had he not thought of a plan. He called together a meeting of the jackals, and made them believe that Lion had issued a proclamation to the effect that all jackals in the future should be tailless, because their beautiful tails were a thorn in the eyes of more unfortunate animals.

In his smooth way he told them how he regretted that the king should have the barbaric right to interfere with his subjects. But so it was; and he thought the sooner he paid attention to it the safer. Therefore he had had his tail cut off already and he should advise all his friends to do the same. And so it happened that once all jackals for a long time were without tails. Later on they grew again.

It was about the same time that Tiger hired Jackal as a schoolmaster. Tiger was in those days the richest man in the surrounding country, and as he had had to suffer a great deal himself because he was so untutored, he wanted his children to have the best education that could be obtained.

It was shortly after a meeting, in which it was shown how important a thing an education was, that Tiger approached Jackal and asked him to come and teach his children.

Jackal was very ready to do this. It was not exactly his vocation, he said, but he would do it to pass time and just out of friendship for his neighbor. His and Tiger's farm lands lay next each other. That he did not make teaching his profession and that he possessed no degree was of no account in the eyes of Tiger.

"Do not praise my goodness so much, Cousin Jackal," laughed he. "We know your worth well enough. Much rather would I entrust my offspring to you than to the many so-called schoolmasters, for it is especially my wish, as well as that of their mother, to have our children obtain a progressive education, and to make such men and women of them that with the same ability as you have they can take their lawful places in this world."

"One condition," said Jackal, "I must state. It will be very inconvenient for me, almost impossible, to come here to your farm and hold school. My own farm would in that case go to pieces, and that I cannot let happen. It would never pay me."

Tiger answered that it was not exactly necessary either. In spite of their attachment to the little ones, they saw that it would probably be to their benefit to place them for a while in a stranger's house.

Jackal then told of his own bringing up by Wolf. He remembered well how small he was when his father sent him away to study with Wolf. Naturally, since then, he had passed through many schools, Wolf was only his first teacher. And only in his later days did he realize how much good it had done him.

"A man must bend the sapling while it is still young," said he. "There is no time that the child is so open to impressions as when he is plastic, about the age that most of your children are at present, and I was just thinking you would be doing a wise thing to send them away for quite a while."

He had, fortunately, just then a room in his house that would be suited for a schoolroom, and his wife could easily make some arrangement for their lodging, even if they had to enlarge their dwelling somewhat.

It was then and there agreed upon. Tiger's wife was then consulted about one thing and another, and the following day the children were to leave.

“I have just thought of one more thing,” remarked Jackal, “seven children, besides my little lot, will be quite a care on our hands, so you will have to send over each week a fat lamb, and in order not to disturb their progress, the children will have to relinquish the idea of a vacation spent with you for some time. When I think they have become used to the bit, I will inform you, and then you can come and take them to make you a short visit, but not until then. “It is also better,” continued he, “that they do not see you for the first while, but your wife can come and see them every Saturday and I will see to all else.”

On the following day there was an unearthly howling and wailing when the children were to leave. But Tiger and their mother showed them that it was best and that some day they would see that it was all for their good, and that their parents were doing it out of kindness. Eventually they were gone.

The first Saturday dawned, and early that morning Mrs. Tiger was on her way to Jackal’s dwelling, because she could not defer the time any longer.

She was still a long way off when Jackal caught sight of her. He always observed neighborly customs, and so stepped out to meet her.

After they had greeted each other, Mrs. Tiger’s first question was, “Well, Cousin Jackal, how goes everything with the small team? Are they still all well and happy, and do they not trouble you, Cousin Jackal, too much?”

“Oh, my goodness, no, Mrs. Tiger,” answered Jackal enthusiastically, “but don’t let us talk so loud, because if they heard you, it certainly would cause them many heartfelt tears and they might also want to go back with you and then all our trouble would have been for nothing.”

“But I would like to see them, Cousin Jackal,” said Mrs. Tiger a little disturbed.

“Why certainly, Mrs. Tiger,” was his answer, “but I do not think it is wise for them to see you. I will lift them up to the window one by one, and then you can put your mind at rest concerning their health and progress.”

After Mr. and Mrs. Jackal and Mrs. Tiger had sat together for some time drinking coffee and talking over one thing and another, Jackal took Tiger’s wife to a door and told her to look through it, out upon the back yard. There he would show her the children one by one, while they would not be able to see her. Everything was done exactly as Jackal had said, but the sixth little tiger he picked up twice, because the firstborn he had the day before prepared in pickle for their Sunday meal.

And so it happened every Saturday until the last little tiger—which was the youngest—had to be lifted up seven times in succession.

And when Mrs. Tiger came again the following week all was still as death and everything seemed to have a deserted appearance on the estate. She walked straight to the front door, and there she found a letter in the poll grass near the door, which read thus:

“We have gone for a picnic with the children. From there we will ride by Jackals’ dance for New Year. This is necessary for the completion of their progressive education.”

Saturday after Saturday did Mrs. Tiger go and look, but every time Jackal's house seemed to look more deserted; and after a while there was a spider's web over the door and the trail of Snake showed that he, too, had taken up his abode there.

## THE MONKEY'S FIDDLE

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Honey [Honeij], James A. *South African Folk-Tales*. New York: Baker & Taylor, 1910, 14–18.

**Date:** ca. 1910

**Original Source:** San

**National Origin:** Unavailable

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The following **ordinary folktale** is based on a widely distributed **tale type** (AT 592) in which a condemned prisoner earns freedom by using a magic fiddle to compel the court and would-be executioners to dance until revoke their sentence of death.

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**H**unger 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 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 Brer 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 [Leopard], 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 of slaughter 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, ape, 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.

## **CROCODILE'S TREASON**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Honey [Honeij], James A. *South African Folk-Tales*. New York: Baker & Taylor, 1910, 64-72.

**Date:** ca. 1910

**Original Source:** San

**National Origin:** Unavailable

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In the following narrative Jackal's wiles save him, and he attempts to save his fellow land dwellers from the deceit of Crocodile. The two threats to the animal characters described in the tale, drought and Boerer incursions, posed equal danger to the San.

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Crocodile was, in the days when animals still could talk, the acknowledged foreman of all water creatures and if one should judge from appearances one would say that he still is. But in those days it was his especial duty to have a general care of all water animals, and when one year it was exceedingly dry, and the water of the river where they had lived dried up and became scarce, he was forced to make a plan to trek over to another river a short distance from there.

He first sent Otter out to spy. He stayed away two days and brought back a report that there was still good water in the other river, real sea-cow [manatee] holes, that not even a drought of several years could dry up.

After he had ascertained this, Crocodile called to his side Tortoise and Alligator.

"Look here," said he, "I need you two tonight to carry a report to Lion. So then get ready; the veldt is dry, and you will probably have to travel for a few days without any water. We must make peace with Lion and his subjects, otherwise we utterly perish this year. And he must help us to trek over to the other river, especially past the Boer's farm that lies in between, and to travel unmo-  
lest by any of the animals of the veldt, so long as the trek lasts. A fish on land is sometimes a very helpless thing, as you all know."

The two had it mighty hard in the burning sun, and on the dry veldt, but eventually they reached Lion and handed him the treaty.

"What is going on now?" thought Lion to himself, when he had read it. "I must consult Jackal first," said he. But to the commissioners he gave back an answer that he would be the following evening with his advisers at the appointed place, at the big vaarland willow tree, at the farther end of the hole of water, where Crocodile had his headquarters.

When Tortoise and Alligator came back, Crocodile was exceedingly pleased with himself at the turn the case had taken.

He allowed Otter and a few others to be present and ordered them on that evening to have ready plenty of fish and other eatables for their guests under the vaarland willow.

That evening as it grew dark Lion appeared with Wolf, Jackal, Baboon, and a few other important animals, at the appointed place, and they were



received in the most open-hearted manner by Crocodile and the other water creatures.

Crocodile was so glad at the meeting of the animals that he now and then let fall a great tear of joy that disappeared into the sand. After the other animals had done well by the fish, Crocodile laid bare to them the condition of affairs and opened up his plan. He wanted only peace among all animals; for they not only destroyed one another, but the Boer, too, would in time destroy them all.

The Boer had already stationed at the source of the river no less than three steam pumps to irrigate his land, and the water was becoming scarcer every day. More than this, he took advantage of their unfortunate position by making them sit in the shallow water and then, one after the other, bringing about their death. As Lion was, on this account, inclined to make peace, it was to his glory to take this opportunity and give his hand to these peace-making water creatures, and carry out their part of the contract, namely, escort them from the dried-up water, past the Boer's farm and to the long sea-cow pools.

"And what benefit shall we receive from it?" asked Jackal.

"Well," answered Crocodile, "the peace made is of great benefit to both sides. We will not exterminate each other. If you desire to come and drink water, you can do so with an easy mind, and not be the least bit nervous that I, or any one of us will seize you by the nose; and so also with all the other animals. And from your side we are to be freed from Elephant, who has the habit, whenever he gets the opportunity, of tossing us with his trunk up into some open and narrow fork of a tree and there allowing us to become biltong [Afrikaans word for dried meat]."

Lion and Jackal stepped aside to consult with one another, and then Lion wanted to know what form of security he would have that Crocodile would keep to his part of the contract.

"I stake my word of honor," was the prompt answer from Crocodile, and he let drop a few more long tears of honesty into the sand.

Baboon then said it was all square and honest as far as he could see into the case. He thought it was nonsense to attempt to dig pitfalls for one another; because he personally was well aware that his race would benefit somewhat from this contract of peace and friendship. And more than this, they must consider that use must be made of the fast disappearing water, for even in the best of times it was an unpleasant thing to be always carrying your life about in your hands. He would, however, like to suggest to the King that it would be well to have everything put down in writing, so that there would be nothing to regret in case it was needed.

Jackal did not want to listen to the agreement. He could not see that it would benefit the animals of the veldt. But Wolf, who had fully satisfied himself with the fish, was in an exceptionally peace-loving mood, and he advised Lion again to close the agreement.

After Lion had listened to all his advisers, and also the pleading tones of Crocodile's followers, he held forth in a speech in which he said that he was

inclined to enter into the agreement, seeing that it was clear that Crocodile and his subjects were in a very tight place.

There and then a document was drawn up, and it was resolved, before midnight, to begin the trek. Crocodile's messengers swam in all directions to summon together the water animals for the trek.

Frogs croaked and crickets chirped in the long water grass. It was not long before all the animals had assembled at the vaarland willow. In the meantime Lion had sent out a few dispatch riders to his subjects to raise a commando for an escort, and long ere midnight these also were at the vaarland willow in the moonlight.

The trek then was regulated by Lion and Jackal. Jackal was to take the lead to act as spy, and when he was able to draw Lion to one side, he said to him, "See here, I do not trust this affair one bit, and I want to tell you straight out, I am going to make tracks! I will spy for you until you reach the sea-cow [manatee] pool, but I am not going to be the one to await your arrival there."

Elephant had to act as advance guard because he could walk so softly and could hear and smell so well. Then came Lion with one division of the animals, then Crocodile's trek with a flank protection of both sides, and Wolf received orders to bring up the rear.

Meanwhile, while all this was being arranged, Crocodile was smoothly preparing his treason. He called Yellow Snake to one side and said to him, "It is to our advantage to have these animals, who go among us every day, and who will continue to do so, fall into the hands of the Boer. Listen, now! You remain behind unnoticed, and when you hear me shout you will know that we have arrived safely at the sea-cow pool. Then you must harass the Boer's dogs as much as you can, and the rest will look out for themselves."

Thereupon the trek moved on. It was necessary to go very slowly as many of the water animals were not accustomed to the journey on land; but they trekked past the Boer's farm in safety, and toward break of day they were all safely at the sea-cow pool. There most of the water animals disappeared suddenly into the deep water, and Crocodile also began to make preparations to follow their example. With tearful eyes he said to Lion that he was, oh, so thankful for the help, that, from pure relief and joy, he must first give vent to his feelings by a few screams. Thereupon he suited his words to actions so that even the mountains echoed, and then thanked Lion on behalf of his subjects, and purposely continued with a long speech, dwelling on all the benefits both sides would derive from the agreement of peace.

Lion was just about to say good day and take his departure, when the first shot fell, and with it Elephant and a few other animals.

"I told you all so!" shouted Jackal from the other side of the sea-cow pool. "Why did you allow yourselves to be misled by a few Crocodile tears?"

Crocodile had disappeared long ago into the water. All one saw was just a lot of bubbles; and on the banks there was an actual war against the animals. It simply crackled the way the Boers shot them.

But most of them, fortunately, came out of it alive.

Shortly after, they say, Crocodile received his well-earned reward, when he met a driver with a load of dynamite. And even now when the Elephant gets the chance he pitches them up into the highest forks of the trees.

## RABBIT'S [HARE'S] TRIUMPH

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Honey [Honeij], James A. *South African Folk-Tales*. New York: Baker & Taylor, 1910, 79–83.

**Date:** ca. 1910

**Original Source:** San

**National Origin:** Unavailable

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**Variants** of this tale enjoy not only a general popularity thanks to a widely read version, “The Wonderful Tar-Baby Story,” by Joel Chandler Harris and the twentieth-century Walt Disney print and film versions, but also a wide oral distribution as well. See, in this collection, the Caribbean’s “Brother Rabbit an’ Brother Tar-Baby” (Volume 4, page 414); see also the tale of “The Tarbaby and the Rabbit” (AT 175). The plot, which is often coupled with the “Briar-Patch Punishment for Rabbit” (AT 1310), enjoys worldwide distribution with versions found in South and East Asia, Africa and Europe, as well as the Western hemisphere. In the following **animal tale**, the two most popular African **tricksters**, hare and tortoise, are matched.

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**T**here was a frightful drought. The rivers after a while dried up and even the springs gave no water.

The animals wandered around seeking drink, but to no avail. Nowhere was water to be found.

A great gathering of animals was held: Lion, Tiger, Wolf, Jackal, Elephant, all of them came together. What was to be done? That was the question. One had this plan, and another had that; but no plan seemed of value.

Finally one of them suggested, “Come, let all of us go to the dry river bed and dance; in that way we can tread out the water.”

Good! Everyone was satisfied and ready to begin instantly, excepting Rabbit, who said, “I will not go and dance. All of you are mad to attempt to get water from the ground by dancing.”

The other animals danced and danced, and ultimately danced the water to the surface. How glad they were. Everyone drank as much as he could, but

Rabbit did not dance with them. So it was decided that Rabbit should have no water.

He laughed at them, "I will nevertheless drink some of your water."

That evening he proceeded leisurely to the river bed where the dance had been, and drank as much as he wanted.

The following morning the animals saw the footprints of Rabbit in the ground, and Rabbit shouted to them, "Aha! I did have some of the water, and it was most refreshing and tasted fine."

Quickly all the animals were called together. What were they to do? How were they to get Rabbit in their hands? All had some means to propose; the one suggested this, and the other that.

Finally old Tortoise moved slowly forward, foot by foot, "I will catch Rabbit."

"You? How? What do you think of yourself?" shouted the others in unison.

"Rub my shell with pitch, and I will go to the edge of the water and lie down. I will then resemble a stone, so that when Rabbit steps on me his feet will stick fast."

"Yes! Yes! That's good."

And in a one, two, three, Tortoise's shell was covered with pitch, and foot by foot he moved away to the river. At the edge, close to the water, he lay down and drew his head into his shell.

Rabbit during the evening came to get a drink. "Ha!" he chuckled sarcastically, "they are, after all, quite decent. Here they have placed a stone, so now I need not unnecessarily wet my feet."

Rabbit trod with his left foot on the stone, and there it stuck. Tortoise then put his head out. "Ha! Old Tortoise! And it's you, is it, that's holding me. But here I still have another foot. I'll give you a good clout." Rabbit gave Tortoise what he said he would with his right fore foot, hard and straight; and there his foot remained.

"I have yet a hind foot, and with it I'll kick you." Rabbit drove his hind foot down. This also rested on Tortoise where it struck.

"But still another foot remains, and now I'll tread you." He stamped his foot down, but it stuck like the others.

He used his head to hammer Tortoise, and his tail as a whip, but both met the same fate as his feet, so there he was tight and fast down to the pitch.

Tortoise now slowly turned himself round and foot by foot started for the other animals, with Rabbit on his back.

"Ha! ha! ha! Rabbit! How does it look now? Insolence does not pay after all," shouted the animals.

Now advice was sought. What should they do with Rabbit? He certainly must die. But how? One said, "Behead him"; another, "Some severe penalty."

"Rabbit, how are we to kill you?"

"It does not affect me," Rabbit said. "Only a shameful death please do not pronounce."

“And what is that?” they all shouted.

“To take me by my tail and dash my head against a stone; that I pray and beseech you don’t do.”

“No, but just so you’ll die. That is decided.”

It was decided Rabbit should die by taking him by his tail and dashing his head to pieces against some stone. But who is to do it?

Lion, because he is the most powerful one.

Good! Lion should do it. He stood up, walked to the front, and poor Rabbit was brought to him. Rabbit pleaded and beseeched that he couldn’t die such a miserable death. Lion took Rabbit firmly by the tail and swung him around. The white skin slipped off from Rabbit, and there Lion stood with the white bit of skin and hair in his paw. Rabbit was free.

## **THE MANTIS ASSUMES THE FORM OF A HARTEBEEST**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Bleek, W. H. I., and Lucy C. Lloyd. *Specimens of Bushman Folklore*. London: George Allen & Company, Ltd., 1911, 3–16.

**Date:** ca. 1911

**Original Source:** San

**National Origin:** South Africa

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Mantis who is featured as the creator figure among the San in “Origins” (page 137), appears in this narrative as their central **trickster** figure. His ability to change shape from mantis to hartebeest (a large African antelope) to human being is typical of the trickster character. The trait of mantis’s ability to will his various bodily parts to animate themselves to allow the trickster to work his wiles is cross-culturally distributed.

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**T**he Mantis is one who cheated the children, by becoming a hartebeest, by resembling a dead hartebeest. He feigning death lay in front of the children, when the children went to seek gambroo (*kui*, a sort of cucumber); because he thought (wished) that the children should cut him up with a stone knife, as these children did not possess metal knives.

The children perceived him, when he had laid himself stretched out, while his horns were turned backwards. The children then said to each other, “It is a hartebeest that yonder lies; it is dead.” The children jumped for joy (saying), “Our hartebeest! we shall eat great meat.” They broke off stone knives by striking (one stone against another), they skinned the Mantis. The skin of the

Mantis snatched itself quickly out of the children's hands. They say to each other, "Hold thou strongly fast for me the hartebeest skin!" Another child said, "The hartebeest skin pulled at me."

Her elder sister said, "It does seem that the hartebeest has not a wound from the people who shot it; for, the hartebeest appears to have died of itself. Although the hartebeest is fat, (yet) the hartebeest has no shooting wound."

Her elder sister cut off a shoulder of the hartebeest, and put it down (on a bush). The hartebeest's shoulder arose by itself, it sat down nicely (on the other side of the bush), while it placed itself nicely. She (then) cut off a thigh of the hartebeest, and put it down (on a bush); it placed itself nicely on the bush. She cut off another shoulder of the hartebeest, and put it upon (another) bush. It arose, and sat upon a soft (portion of the) bush; as it felt that the bush (upon which the child had laid it) pricked it.

Another elder sister cut off the other thigh of the hartebeest. They spoke thus, "This hartebeest's flesh does move; that must be why it shrinks away."

They arrange their burdens; one says to the other, "Cut and break off the hartebeest's neck, so that (thy) younger sister may carry the hartebeest's head, for, (thy) yonder sitting elder sister, she shall carry the hartebeest's back, she who is a big girl. For, we must carrying return (home); for, we came (and) cut up this hartebeest. Its flesh moves; its flesh snatches itself out of our hand. It of itself places itself nicely."

They take up the flesh of the Mantis; they say to the child, "Carry the hartebeest's head, that father may put it to roast for you." The child slung on the hartebeest's head, she called to her sisters, "Taking hold help me up; this hartebeest's head is not light." Her sisters taking hold of her help her up.

They go away, they return (home). The hartebeest's head slips downwards, because the Mantis's head wishes to stand on the ground. The child lifts it up (with her shoulders), the hartebeest's head (by turning a little) removes the thong from the hartebeest's eye. The hartebeest's head was whispering, it whispering said to the child, "O child! the thong is standing in front of my eye. Take away for me the thong; the thong is shutting my eye." The child looked behind her; the Mantis winked at the child. The child whimpered; her elder sister looked back at her. Her elder sister called to her, "Come forward quickly; we return (home)."

The child exclaimed, "This hartebeest's head is able to speak." Her elder sister scolded her, "Lying come forward; we go. Art thou not coming deceiving (us) about the hartebeest's head?"

The child said to her elder sister, "The hartebeest has winked at me with the hartebeest's eye; the hartebeest desired that I should take away the thong from his eye. Thus it was that the hartebeest's head lay looking behind my back."

The child looked back at the hartebeest's head, the hartebeest opened and shut its eyes. The child said to her elder sister, "The hartebeest's head must be alive, for it is opening and shutting its eyes."

The child, walking on, unloosened the thong; the child let fall the hartebeest's head. The Mantis scolded the child, he complained about his head. He scolded the child, "Oh! oh! my head! Oh! bad little person! hurting me in my head."

Her sisters let fall the flesh of the Mantis. The flesh of the Mantis sprang together, it quickly joined itself to the lower part of the Mantis's back. The head of the Mantis quickly joined (itself) upon the top of the neck of the Mantis. The neck of the Mantis quickly joined (itself) upon the upper part of the Mantis's spine. The upper part of the Mantis's spine joined itself to the Mantis's back. The thigh of the Mantis sprang forward; it joined itself to the Mantis's back. His other thigh ran forward, racing it joined itself to the other side of the Mantis's back. The chest of the Mantis ran forward, it joined itself to the front side of the upper part of the Mantis's spine. The shoulder blade of the Mantis ran forward, it joined itself on to the ribs of the Mantis.

The other shoulder blade of the Mantis ran forward, while it felt that the ribs of the Mantis had joined themselves on, when they raced.

The children still ran on; he (the Mantis, arose from the ground and) ran, while he chased the children—he being whole—his head being round, while he felt that he was a man. Therefore, he was stepping along with (his) shoes, while he jogged with his shoulder blade.

He saw that the children had reached home; he quickly turned about, he, jogging with his shoulder blade, descended to the river. He went along the river bed, making a noise as he stepped in the soft sand; he yonder went quickly out of the river bed. He returned, coming out at a different side of the house (that is, his own house) he returned, passing in front of the house.

The children said, "We have been (and) seen a hartebeest which was dead. That hartebeest, it was the one which we cut up with stone knives; its flesh quivered. The hartebeest's flesh quickly snatched itself out of our hands. It by itself was placing itself nicely upon bushes which were comfortable; while the hartebeest felt that the hartebeest's head would go along whispering. While the child who sits (there) carried it, it talking stood behind the child's back."

The child said to her father, "O papa! Dost thou seem to think that the hartebeest's head did not talk to me? For the hartebeest's head felt that it would be looking at my hole above the nape of the neck, as I went along; and then it was that the hartebeest's head told me that I should take away for him the thong from his eye. For, the thong lay in front of his eye."

Her father said to them, "Have you been and cut up the old man, the Mantis, while he lay pretending to be dead in front of you?"

The children said, "We thought that the hartebeest's horns were there, the hartebeest had hair. The hartebeest was one which had not an arrow's wound; while the hartebeest felt that the hartebeest would talk. Therefore, the hartebeest came and chased us, when we had put down the hartebeest's flesh. The hartebeest's flesh jumped together, while it springing gathered (itself) together,

that it might mend, that it might mending hold together to the hartebeest's back. The hartebeest's back also joined on.

"Therefore, the hartebeest ran forward, while his body was red, when he had no hair (that coat of hair in which he had been lying down), as he ran, swinging his arm like a man.

"And when he saw that we reached the house, he whisked round, He ran, kicking up his heels (showing the white soles of his shoes), while running went before the wind, while the sun shone upon his feet's face (soles), while he ran with all his might into the little river (bed), that he might pass behind the back of the hill lying yonder."

Their parents said to the children, "You are those who went and cut up the old man 'Tinderbox Owner.' He, there behind, was one who gently came out from the place there behind."

The children said to their fathers, "He has gone round, he ran fast. He always seems as if he would come over the little hill lying yonder when he sees that we are just reaching home. While this little daughter, she was the one to whom the hartebeest's head, going along, talked; and then she told us. Therefore, we let fall the hartebeest's flesh; we laid our karosses on our shoulders, that we might run very fast.

"While its flesh running came together on its back, it finished mending itself. He arose and ran forward, he, quickly moving his arms, chased us. Therefore, we did thus, we became tired from it, on account of the running with which he had chased us, while he did verily move his arms fast.

"Then he descended into the small river, while he thought that he would, moving his arms fast, run along the small river. Then he thus did, he, picking up wood, came out; while we sat, feeling the fatigue; because he had been deceiving. While he felt that all the people saw him, when we came carrying his thighs, when he went to die lying in front of us; while he wished that we should feel this fatigue, while this child here, it carried his head, he looked up with fixed eyes. He was as if he was dead; he was (afterwards) opening and shutting his eyes; he afar lay talking (while the children were running off). He talked while he mended his body; his head talked, while he mended his body. His head talking reached his back; it came to join upon the top (of his neck).

"He ran forward; lie yonder will sit deceiving, (at home), while we did cut him up with stone knives (splinters). *A-tta!* he went feigning death to lie in front of us, that we might do so, we run.

"This fatigue, it is that which we are feeling; and our hearts burnt on account of it. Therefore, we shall not hunt (for food), for we shall altogether remain at home."



# XHOSA

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## THE CANNIBAL MOTHER AND HER CHILDREN

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Theal, George McCall. *Kaffir Folk-Lore: A Selection from the Traditional Tales Current Among the People Living on the Eastern Border of the Cape Colony*. London: S. Sonnenschein, Le Bas & Lowrey, 1886, 137–143.

**Date:** ca. 1886

**Original Source:** Xhosa

**National Origin:** South Africa

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Originally the Xhosa resided in an eastern area of contemporary South Africa. Traditional Xhosa culture was built on a subsistence base of pastoralism and horticulture. A strict division of labor prevailed. Women tended the crops such as millet and pumpkins; men herded cattle, hunted, and waged war. The Xhosa diet consisted primarily of the products of their gardens, milk, and occasionally meat. They lived in villages composed of huts arranged around a central cattle pen or kraal. According to the Aarne-Thompson system of folktale classification, the narrative of “The Cannibal Mother and Her Children” most resembles the **ordinary folktale** by virtue of pursuit by an ogre (the cannibal mother) and the use of magical assistance in their escape attempt. The magical qualities of the avian world are introduced through the power of the bird who sings for the salvation of the cannibal mother’s children appear to be indigenous to the Xhosa worldview. This theme also appears in the **myth** of “The Bird That Made Milk” (page 161).

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There was once a man and a woman who had two children, a son and a daughter. These children lived with their grandfather. Their mother was a cannibal, but not their father.

One day they said to their grandfather, "We have been long with you, we should like very much to go and see our parents."

Their grandfather said, "Ho! Will you be able to come back? Don't you know your mother is a cannibal?"

After a time he consented. He said, "You must leave at such a time that you may arrive there in the evening, so that your mother may not see you, only your father."

The boy's name was Hinazinci. He said, "Let us go now, my sister."

They started when the sun was set. When they arrived at their father's house, they listened outside to find out if their mother was there. They heard the voice of their father only, so they called to him. He came out, and when he saw them he was sorry, and said, "Why did you come here, my dear children? Don't you know your mother is a cannibal?"

Just then they heard a noise like thunder. It was the coming of their mother. Their father took them inside and put them in a dark corner, where he covered them with skins. Their mother came in with an animal and the body of a man. She stood and said, "There's something here. What a nice smell it has!"

She said to her husband, "Sohinazinci, what have you to tell me about this nice smell that is in my house? You must tell me whether my children are here."

Her husband answered, "What are you dreaming about? They are not here."

She went to the corner where they were, and took the skins away. When she saw them, she said, "My children, I am very sorry that you are here, because I must eat people."

She cooked for them and their father the animal she had brought home, and the dead man for herself. After they had eaten, she went out.

Then their father said to them, "When we lie down to sleep, you must be watchful. You will hear a dancing of people, a roaring of wild beasts, and a barking of dogs in your mother's stomach. You will know by that she is sleeping, and you must then rise at once and get away."

They lay down, but the man and the children only pretended to go to sleep. They were listening for those sounds. After a while they heard a dancing of people, a roaring of wild beasts, and a barking of dogs. Then their father shook them, and said they must go while their mother was sleeping. They bade their father farewell, and crept out quietly, that their mother might not hear them.

At midnight the woman woke up, and when she found the children were gone, she took her axe and went after them. They were already a long way on their journey, when they saw her following them. They were so tired that they could not run.

When she was near them, the boy said to the girl, "My sister, sing your melodious song; perhaps when she hears it she will be sorry, and go home without hurting us."

The girl replied, "She will not listen to anything now, because she is in want of meat."

Hinazinci said, "Try, my sister; it may not be in vain."

So she sang her song, and when the cannibal heard it, she ran backwards to her own house. There she fell upon her husband, and wanted to cut him with the axe. Her husband caught hold of her arm, and said, "Ho! If you put me to death who will be your husband?"

Then she left him, and ran after the children again.

They were near their grandfather's village, and were very weak when their mother overtook them. The girl fell down, and the cannibal caught her and swallowed her. She then ran after the boy. He fell just at the entrance of his grandfather's house, and she picked him up and swallowed him also. She found only the old people and the children of the village at home, all the others being at work in the gardens. She ate all the people that were at home and also all the cattle that were there.

Towards evening she left to go to her own home. There was a deep valley in the way, and when she came to it she saw a very beautiful bird. As she approached it, the bird got bigger and bigger, until at last when she was very near it, it was as big as a house (that is, a native hut).

Then the bird began to sing its song. The woman looked at it, and said to herself, "I shall take this bird home to my husband."

The bird continued its song, and sang, "I am a pretty bird of the valley, you come to make a disturbance at my place."

The bird came slowly towards her, still singing its song. When they met, the bird took the axe from the woman, and still sang the same song.

The cannibal began to be afraid.

She said to the bird, "Give me my axe; I do not wish for your flesh now."

The bird tore one of her arms off.

She said, "I am going away now; give me what is mine."

The bird would not listen to her, but continued its song.

She said again, "Give me my axe and let me go. My husband at home is very hungry; I want to go and cook food for him."

The bird sang more loudly than before, and tore one of her legs off.

She fell down and cried out, "My master, I am in a hurry to go home. I do not want anything that is yours."

She saw that she was in danger. She said to the bird again, "You don't know how to sing your song nicely; let me go, and I will sing it for you."

The bird opened its wings wide, and tore open her stomach. Many people came forth, most of them alive, but some were dead. As they came forth she caught them and swallowed them again. The two children were alive, and they ran away. At last the woman died.

There was great rejoicing in that country. The children returned to their grandfather, and the people came there and made them rulers of the country, because it was through them the cannibal was brought to death.

The girl was afterwards married to a son of the great chief, and Hinazinci had for his wife the daughter of that great one.

## THE BIRD THAT MADE MILK

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Theal, George McCall. *Kaffir Folk-Lore: A Selection from the Traditional Tales Current Among the People Living on the Eastern Border of the Cape Colony*. London: S. Sonnenschein, Le Bas & Lowrey, 1886, 29–47.

**Date:** ca. 1886

**Original Source:** Xhosa

**National Origin:** South Africa

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The following **myth** establishes the importance and origin of two staples of Xhosa subsistence: milk and millet. The division of labor along lines of gender and special relationships between the human and the animal world are validated in the narrative as well.

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There was once upon a time a poor man living with his wife in a certain village. They had three children, two boys and a girl. They used to get milk from a tree. That milk of the tree was got by squeezing. It was not nice as that of a cow, and the people that drank it were always thin. For this reason, those people were never glossy like those who are fat.

One day the woman went to cultivate a garden. She began by cutting the grass with a pick, and then putting it in a big heap. That was the work of the first day, and when the sun was just about to set she went home. When she left, there came a bird to that place, and sang this song:

Weeds of this garden,  
Weeds of this garden,  
Spring up, spring up;  
Work of this garden,  
Work of this garden,  
Disappear, disappear.

It was so.

The next morning, when she returned and saw that, she wondered greatly. She again put it in order on that day, and put some sticks in the ground to mark the place.

In the evening she went home and told that she had found the grass which she had cut growing just as it was before.

Her husband said, "How can such a thing be? You were lazy and didn't work, and now tell me this falsehood. Just get out of my sight, or I'll beat you."

On the third day she went to her work with a sorrowful heart, remembering the words spoken by her husband. She reached the place and found the grass growing as before. The sticks that she stuck in the ground were there still, but she saw nothing else of her labor. She wondered greatly.

She said in her heart, "I will not cut the grass off again, I will just hoe the ground as it is."

She commenced. Then the bird came and perched on one of the sticks.

It sang:

Citi, citi, who is this cultivating the ground of my father?  
Pick, come off;  
Pick handle, break;  
Sods, go back to your places!

All these things happened.

The woman went home and told her husband what the bird had done. Then they made a plan. They dug a deep hole in the ground, and covered it with sticks and grass. The man hid himself in the hole, and put up one of his hands. The woman commenced to hoe the ground again. Then the bird came and perched on the hand of the man, and sang:

This is the ground of my father.  
Who are you, digging my father's ground?  
Pick, break into small pieces  
Sods, return to your places.

It was so.

Then the man tightened his fingers and caught the bird. He came up out of the place of concealment.

He said to the bird, "As for you who spoil the work of this garden, you will not see the sun any more. With this sharp stone I will cut off your head!"

Then the bird said to him, "I am not a bird that should be killed. I am a bird that can make milk."

The man said, "Make some, then."

The bird made some milk in his hand. The man tasted it. It was very nice milk.

The man said, "Make some more milk, my bird."

The bird did so. The man sent his wife for a milk basket. When she brought it, the bird filled it with milk.

The man was very much pleased. He said, "This pretty bird of mine is better than a cow."

He took it home and put it in a jar. After that he used to rise even in the night and tell the bird to make milk for him. Only he and his wife drank of it. The children continued to drink of the milk of the tree. The names of the children were Gingci, the firstborn son; Lonci, his brother; and Dumangashe, his sister. That man then got very fat indeed, so that his skin became shining.

The girl said to her brother Gingci, "Why does father get fat and we remain so thin?"

He replied, "I do not know. Perhaps he eats in the night."

They made a plan to watch. They saw him rise in the middle of the night. He went to the big jar and took an eating mat off it. He said, "Make milk, my bird." He drank much. Again he said, "Make milk, my bird," and again he drank till he was very full. Then he lay down and went to sleep.

The next day the woman went to work in her garden, and the man went to visit his friend. The children remained at home, but not in the house. Their father fastened the door of the house, and told them not to enter it on any account till his return.

Gingci said, "Today we will drink of the milk that makes father fat and shining; we will not drink of the milk of the euphorbia today."

The girl said, "As for me, I also say let us drink of father's milk today."

They entered the house. Gingci removed the eating mat from the jar, and said to the bird, "My father's bird, make milk for me."

The bird said, "If I am your father's bird, put me by the fireplace, and I will make milk."

The boy did so. The bird made just a little milk.

The boy drank, and said, "My father's bird, make more milk."

The bird said, "If I am your father's bird, put me by the door, then I will make milk."

The boy did this. Then the bird made just a little milk, which the boy drank.

The girl said, "My father's bird, make milk for me."

The bird said, "If I am your father's bird, just put me in the sunlight, and I will make milk."

The girl did so. Then the bird made a jar full of milk.

After that the bird sang:

The father of Dumangashe came, he came,  
 He came unnoticed by me.  
 He found great fault with me.  
 The little fellows have met together.  
 Gingci the brother of Lonci.  
 The Umkomanzi cannot be crossed,  
 It is crossed by swallows  
 Whose wings are long.

When it finished its song it lifted up its wings and flew away. But the girl was still drinking milk.

The children called it, and said, "Return, bird of our father," but it did not come back. They said, "We shall be killed today."

They followed the bird. They came to a tree where there were many birds.

The boy caught one, and said to it, "My father's bird, make milk."

It bled. They said, "This is not our father's bird."

This bird bled very much; the blood ran like a river. Then the boy released it, and it flew away. The children were seized with fear.

They said to themselves, "If our father finds us, he will kill us today."

In the evening the man came home. When he was yet far off, he saw that the door had been opened.

He said, "I did not shut the door that way."

He called his children, but only Lonci replied. He asked for the others.

Lonci said, "I went to the river to drink; when I returned they were gone."

He searched for them, and found the girl under the ashes and the boy behind a stone. He inquired at once about his bird. They were compelled to tell the truth concerning it.

Then the man took a riem [leather strap] and hung those two children on a tree that projected over the river. He went away, leaving them there. Their mother besought their father, saying that they should be released; but the man refused. After he was gone, the boy tried to escape. He climbed up the riem and held on to the tree; then he went up and loosened the riem that was tied to his sister.

After that they climbed up the tree, and then went away from their home. They slept three times on the road.

They came to a big rock. The boy said, "We have no father and no mother; rock, be our house."

The rock opened, and they went inside. After that they lived there in that place. They obtained food by hunting animals, they were hunted by the boy.

When they were already in that place a long time, the girl grew to be big. There were no people in that place. A bird came one day with a child, and left it there by their house.

The bird said, "So have I done to all the people."

After that a crocodile came to that place. The boy was just going to kill it, but it said, "I am a crocodile; I am not to be killed; I am your friend."

Then the boy went with the crocodile to the house of the crocodile, in a deep hole under the water.

The crocodile had many cattle and (much) millet. He gave the boy ten cows and ten baskets of millet.

The crocodile said to the boy, "You must send your sister for the purpose of being married to me."

The boy made a fold to keep his cattle in; his sister made a garden and planted millet. The crocodile sent more cattle. The boy made a very big fold, and it was full of cattle.

At this time there came a bird.

The bird said, "Your sister has performed the custom, and as for you, you should enter manhood."

The crocodile gave one of his daughters to be the wife of the young man. The young woman went to the village of the crocodile, she went to be a bride.

They said to her, "Whom do you choose to be your husband?"

The girl replied. "I choose Crocodile."

Her husband said to her, "Lick my face."

She did so. The crocodile cast off its skin, and arose a man of great strength and fine appearance.

He said, "The enemies of my father's house did that; you, my wife, are stronger than they."

After this there was a great famine, and the mother of those people came to their village. She did not recognize her children, but they knew her and gave her food. She went away, and then their father came. He did not recognize them either, but they knew him. They asked him what he wanted. He told them that his village was devoured by famine. They gave him food, and he went away.

He returned again.

The young man said, "You thought we would die when you hung us in the tree."

He was astonished, and said, "Are you indeed my child?"

Crocodile then gave them (the parents) three baskets of corn, and told them to go and build on the mountains. He (the man) did so and died there on the mountains.





# **THE MIDDLE EAST**



# ARMENIA

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## THE WICKED STEPMOTHER

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Seklimian, A. G. "The Wicked Stepmother, An Armenian Folktale." *The Journal of American Folklore* 10 (1897): 135–142.

**Date:** 1897

**Original Source:** Armenian

**National Origin:** Armenia

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Located between Turkey, Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Iran, Armenia is a former republic of the Soviet Union. Situated on the borders of Europe and Southwest Asia, this mountainous Middle Eastern nation has been a literal and cultural crossroads between the East and the West for millennia. The following extremely complex **ordinary tale** appears to owe more to the Indo-European folktale corpus than to the other traditions that have enriched Armenian folklore. The narrative incorporates **variants** of several of the Aarne-Thompson **tale types**—for example, the tale begins with "The Son of the Hunter" (AT 513C). Armenian (and other Middle Eastern) storytellers often end tales with the **formulaic** device of fruit falling from heaven as in "My Son Ali" (page 176). The kind of fruit and the number vary according to the pleasure of the narrator.

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Once upon a time there was a hunter, who was a widower and had a son from his former wife. He married another wife, but soon was mortally sick. On his deathbed, he said to his new wife, "Wife, I am dying, and I know that when my son grows up he will follow my profession. Take care, do not let him go to the Black Mountains to hunt."

After the death of the hunter, the son growing up began to follow his father's profession and became a hunter. One day his stepmother said, "Son, your father, when dying, said that after you grow up, if you follow his profession, you should not go to the Black Mountains to hunt."

But the lad, paying no attention to what his father had advised him, one day took his bow and arrow, mounted his horse, and hastened to the Black Mountains to hunt. So soon as he reached there, Lo! A giant made his appearance on the back of his horse of lightning, and exclaimed, "How now? Have you never heard my name, that you have dared to come and hunt on my ground?" And he threw three terrible maces at the lad, who very cleverly avoided them, hiding himself under the belly of his horse.

Now it was his turn: he drew his bow and arrow, took aim, and shot the giant, who was nailed to the ground. He at once mounted the giant's horse of lightning, who, galloping, soon brought him to a magnificent palace, gilded all over with gold and decorated with precious jewels.

Lo! A maiden as beautiful as the sun appeared in the window, saying, "Human being, the snake upon its belly and the bird with its wings could not come here; how could you venture to come?"

"Your love brought me hither, fair creature," answered the lad, who had already fallen in love with the charming maiden.

"But the giant will come and tear you into pieces," said the maiden, who also had fallen in love with the lad.

"I have killed him, and there lies his carcass!" answered the lad.

The door of the palace was opened, and the lad was received by the maiden, who told him that she was the daughter of a prince, and that the giant had stolen her and kept her in that palace, where she had forty beautiful handmaids serving her.

"And as you have killed the giant," she added, "I, who am a virgin, shall be your wife, and all these maidens will serve us." And they accepted one another as husband and wife.

Opening the treasures of the giant, they found innumerable jewels, gold, silver, and all kinds of wealth. The lad thought such a magnificent palace, with so many treasures worthy of a prince, and the most beautiful wife in the world, were things that he could hardly have dreamed of, and he decided to live there, going to hunt every day as usual.

One day, however, he came home sighing, "Ah! Alas, alas!"

"How now? What is the matter?" said the beautiful bride. "Am I and my forty handmaids not enough to please you? Why did you sigh?"

"You are sweet, my love," said the lad; "but my mother also is sweet. You have your place in my heart, but my mother also has her place. I remembered her; therefore I sighed."

"Well," said the young bride, "take a horse-load of gold to your mother; let her live in abundance and be happy."

“No,” said the lad; “let me go and bring her here.”

“Very well, go then,” said the young bride.

The lad went to his stepmother, and, telling her all what he had done, brought her to the palace of the Black Mountains. Here she was the mother-in-law of the fair bride, and therefore the superior of the whole palace. Both the bride and the maidens had to submit to her.

The lad used to go out for hunting. The stepmother, being well versed in witchcraft and medicine, went secretly and administered some remedy to the corpse of the giant, so that he was soon healed. Falling in love with the giant, she took him to the palace and hid him in a cellar, where secretly she paid him daily visits, as she was afraid of her stepson. Wishing, however, to make her co-quetry freely, the witch one day said to the giant, “Giant, you must advise me a way where I may send my son on an errand, and from where he may never come back.”

Upon the advice of the giant she entered her room, and, putting under her bed pieces of very thin and dry Oriental bread, lay down upon the bed and pretended sickness. In the evening the lad returned from hunting, and, hearing that his stepmother was ill, hastened to her side and asked, “What is the matter, mother?”

“O son!” exclaimed the witch, with a sickly voice, “I am very sick; I shall die!” and, as she turned from one side to the other, the dry bread began to crackle. “Hark,” exclaimed the witch, how my bones are cracking!”

“What is the remedy, mother? What can I do for you?” asked the lad.

“O my son,” said the witch, “there is only one remedy for my sickness, and that is the Melon of Life. I shall never be healed if I do not eat one of that fruit which you could bring for me.”

“All right, mother,” said the lad; “I will fetch you the Melon of Life.”

He at once started on the expedition, and, after a long journey, was guest in the house of an old woman, who inquired where he was going.

When she heard of the errand she said to the lad, “Son, you are deceived; the expedition is a fatal one; do not go.”

But, as the lad insisted, the old woman said, “Well, then, let me advise you: on your way you will soon meet with a mansion which is the abode of forty giants, who in daytime go out hunting. But you will find their mother kneading dough. If you are agile enough to run and suck the nipples of the open breast of that giantess without being seen by her, you are safe; else she will make a mouthful of you and devour you.”

The lad went, and found as foretold by the old woman. He was clever enough to suck the nipples of the giantess without being seen by her.

“A plague on her who advised you!” exclaimed the angry giantess, “else I would make a good morsel of you. But now, having sucked of my breast, you are like one of my own sons. Let me hide you in a box, lest the forty giants should come in the evening, and, finding you here, devour you.”

And she shut the lad in a box. In the evening the forty giants came, and, smelling a human being, said, "O mother! All the year long we hunt beasts and fowls, which we bring home to eat together; and now we smell a human being, whom no doubt you have devoured today. Have you not preserved for us at least a few bones which we might chew?"

"It is you," answered the dame, "that are coming from mountains and plains, where no doubt you have found human beings, and the smell comes out of your own mouths. I have eaten no human being."

"No, mother, you have," exclaimed the giants.

"How if my nephew, the son of my human sister, has come here to pay me a visit?" answered the giantess.

"O mother!" exclaimed the giants, "show us our human cousin; we will not hurt him, but talk with him."

The giantess took the lad out of the box, and brought him to the giants, who were very much pleased to see a human being so small, but so beautiful and manly. Holding him up like a toy, the giants handed him to one another to gratify their curiosity by looking at him.

"Mother, what has our cousin come for?" inquired the giants.

"He has come," answered the giantess, "to pick a Melon of Life, and carry to his mother, who is sick. You must go and get the Melon of Life for him."

"Not we!" exclaimed the forty giants; "It is above our ability."

The youngest of the forty brothers, however, who was lame, said to the lad "Cousin, I will go with you and get the Melon of Life for you. You must only take with you a jug, a comb, and a razor."

On the following day the lad took what was necessary and followed the lame giant, who soon brought him to the garden of the Melon of Life, which was guarded by fifty giants. The guards being asleep, the lad and his companion entered the garden without being perceived, and, picking the melon, began to run.

But they were just crossing the hedges when the lame leg of the giant was caught by the fence, and, in his haste to release it, he shook the hedges, which crackled like thunder; and, lo! all the fifty giants awoke, crying, "Thieves! Human beings! A good prey for us!" and began to pursue the lad and his lame companion.

"Throw the jug behind you, cousin!" exclaimed the lame giant.

The lad did so, and, Lo! Plains and mountains behind them were covered by an immense sea, which the fifty giants had to cross in order to reach them. By this means they gained quite a distance till the fifty crossed the sea.

"Now, cousin, throw the comb behind you!" exclaimed the giant.

The lad did so, and, to an extensive jungle between them and the fifty giants. They gained another great distance before the giants finished crossing the jungle.

"Throw the razor now, cousin!" exclaimed the giant.

The lad did so, and, to all the country between them and the fifty was covered with pieces of glass sharp like razors. Before the fifty could cross the distance, the thirty-nine giants came to the rescue of the two and took them safely to their borders.

The lad took leave of his adopted aunt and cousins, and, taking the Melon of Life with him, returned home. On his way, however, he was again the guest of the old woman, who, seeing him come safely, asked if he had succeeded in bringing the precious fruit.

“Yes, I have brought it, auntie,” answered the lad, and told her his tale.

In the middle of the night, when the lad was sound asleep, the old woman got out the Melon of Life from the lad’s saddlebags and put a common melon in its place.

In the morning, the lad brought the melon to his stepmother, who ate it and exclaimed, “Oh, happy! I am healed!”

The lad once more hunts, while the witch and the giant devise new methods to destroy him. This time it is the milk of the Fairy Lioness which is to be obtained.

As before, the youth proceeds on the expedition and becomes the guest of the old woman, who at first dissuades him, but finally gives him advice. He is to shoot the lioness in the forehead. This action will perform the part of a surgical operation by relieving the beast from a pustule, and the gratitude of the animal will thus be secured.

The lad obtains the milk, but steals the cubs of the lioness and is pursued. He is saved by his clever response to her censure. He had wanted the cubs as a keepsake. The milk is presented, but the witch replaces it with goat’s milk.

The stepmother blames the giant, whom she had asked to send the youth on a journey whence he would never return, and the giant advises that the youth be asked to procure the Water of Life.

The stepmother again pretends sickness, and asks the help of the hero to seek the Water of Life. The lad mounts his horse and takes with him the two cubs, which by this time have grown into young lions.

As in previous journeys, he comes to his hostess, who warns him, “This is the most dangerous expedition that ever human being has undertaken, and no one has ever returned from the way you intend to go. Be advised, go back; your mother is surely false.”

“Let come what may, I will go,” said the lad, and, taking the two lions with him, started for the fountain of the Water of Life.

He came to the fountain and found the water oozing in with the thickness of a hair. As soon as he placed his jug under it, a sound sleep overpowered his senses, and he remained there benumbed for seven days and nights. Soon innumerable large scorpions began to attack the sleeping hero, but the lions destroyed all of them. Then thousands of terrible serpents made their appearance and assaulted the lad, hissing with their forked tongues. The lions, after a



bloody fight, destroyed them also. Soon a whole army of voracious beasts surrounded the fountain in search of the lad. The lions, after a sanguinary strife, succeeded in destroying them also.

At the end of the seven days and nights the lad awoke, and to his great horror saw that he was surrounded by a high wall, which the lions had built of the carcasses of the beasts and serpents they had killed. The two faithful guards were now sitting at both sides of their master and watching his every motion. The lad, seeing them stained with blood from head to foot, understood how much he owed them for the preservation of his life. He then washed them clean with the Water of Life, and taking the jug, which by that time was filled, went to his hostess.

“Did you bring the Water of Life?” asked the old dame.

“Yes, auntie, I did,” answered the lad, presenting her the jug full of water.

“It was not you that succeeded,” returned the old woman, “but Heaven and your faithful lions preserved your life.”

During the night, as the lad was sleeping, the old woman poured the Water of Life in another vase, and filled the jug with common water, which the lad in the morning took to his stepmother, who, drinking it, said, “Oh, happy! I am healed!”

The following day the lad again went hunting. The witch said to the giant, “Can you not devise some means to destroy my stepson? By Heaven, I will destroy you this time if you do not advise me how to destroy him.”

“Your stepson is brave,” answered the giant; “he is an unique hero, and no one can kill him but yourself.”

“How? How?” exclaimed the witch with great joy; “tell me and I will do it.”

“Do you not remember the three red hairs among his black hairs on his head? So soon as they are picked, your son dies.”

On the following day the witch said to the lad, “Come, son, lay your head in my lap and take a nap.”

The lad did so and soon slept. The witch immediately took hold of the three red hairs and picked them out. A spasm or two, and the hero died.

“Now, giant,” said the witch, “take that sword and chop this corpse into small pieces.”

“Not I,” answered the giant; “my hand will not rise to chop such a hero.”

“You coward!” exclaimed the witch, and, taking the sword herself, chopped the corpse into small pieces, put these in a sack, and threw them over the garden wall. One of the little fingers, however, fell in the garden.

The lions apprehended that their master was killed, and his chopped body was in the bag. They immediately took hold of the bag and carried it to the old woman, the hostess of the hero. Opening the bag, she got out the body, and, putting every part to its proper place, made a whole; only the little finger was missing.

She explained to the lions what was missing, and they at once went, and, smelling their master’s finger in the garden, found and brought it to the old

woman, who put it in its place. Now she brought the Milk of the Fairy Lioness, which she had secretly preserved, and poured it over the body. Immediately all the broken bones, muscles, and sinews came together, and, the members being united, the body became as sound and delicate as that of a newborn babe. Then she brought the Melon of Life and put it before his nostrils. So soon as the lad smelled it, he sneezed seven times. Then she poured the Water of Life down his throat. At once the lad opened his eyes and jumped up saying, "Oh, what a sound sleep was this that overpowered my senses!"

"Sleep!" exclaimed the kind woman. "Yes, a sleep out of which you would have never awaked had not Providence preserved you." And she told him what had happened.

"Now, my good hostess," said the lad, "you have done me a kindness next to God, a kindness that I can never reward. May Heaven reward you!"

He brought her from his treasures a horse-load of gold and a horse-load of silver, saying, "These are for you; spend as much as you like and pray for me so long as you live."

The lad came to his palace and found that his beautiful bride was imprisoned in a dark cellar, where she was left to starve; while the witch, his stepmother, was in excess of merriment with the giant and half a dozen younglings around her.

They were all horror-struck to see the hero enter it, and the giant was about to make his exit from a secret door in the wall, when the lad seized hold of him, saying, "How now, coward? Are you running? Stop and solve me this puzzle: who are those ugly younglings that are infecting the very air of my palace?"

"They are my children out of yonder woman, your mother," answered the giant.

"Mother? I have no mother!" exclaimed the lad. "You increase so soon, do you? Now we are going to have a great merriment. Go and bring me from the yonder mountain wood enough to build a large pile."

The giant obeyed, and soon a large pile of wood was built in the courtyard of the palace. The lad struck a flint and lighted the wood. Soon the whole pile was on fire burning like a furnace.

"Now, giant," said the lad, "take hold of these bastards, and throw them into the fire one by one."

The giant obeyed, and all the younglings were burned on the pile.

"Bring now yonder witch, and throw her into the fire!" ordered the lad. She also shared the fate of her bastard children.

"Now shall I throw you also?" asked the lad of the giant.

"Hero!" exclaimed the giant, "I honor you; I will obey you."

"Well, then," said the lad, "I will not kill you. Come, pass under my sword and swear obedience to me."

The giant kissed the sword, and, passing under it, became the bondman of the lad.

The lad then released his beautiful bride from her dark prison. They celebrated anew their nuptials for forty days and forty nights, and enjoyed a happy life thereafter.

Thus they attained their wishes. May Heaven grant that you may attain your wishes!

Three apples fell from heaven: one for me, one for the storyteller, and one for him who entertained the company.

## MY SON ALI

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Bergen, Fanny D. "Borrowing Trouble." *Journal of American Folklore* 11 (1898): 55–59.

**Date:** 1898

**Source:** Armenian

**National Origin:** Armenia

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The Armenian tale which follows, although it was collected in Western Massachusetts, preserves the form and content of the original Middle Eastern version of the narrative. Although these stories are told in the United States as true, and the incidents are generally supposed to have happened long ago in the same neighborhood, this is a traditional narrative device for localizing and **validating** the advice passed along during performance. The **formulaic** closing describing fruit falling into the hands of the performer and audience members appears not only in other Armenian tales (see "The Wicked Stepmother," page 169), but also in Turkish narratives (see "The Fish Peri," page 264).

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Once upon a time there was a girl whose name was Fatima, who lived with her mother and brother, for her father was dead. Not far from the house there flowed a river. Twice each day, early in the morning and at evening, Fatima took a large copper vessel, and went to the river to bring fresh drinking water to the house. Early one beautiful morning she went as usual to bring her kettle of fresh water. She sat down under a great mulberry tree which overhung the river. It was full of ripe fruit which hung far above her head. As she sat there enjoying the beautiful early morning and looking up into the tree laden with fine fruit which she, being a girl, could not reach, since she could not climb the tree, she fell a-thinking.

She thought how some day perhaps she would be married and perhaps would have a little son and his name would be Ali, and after a time he would

grow to be eight years old, and that then he could go to the river to bring fresh water in the morning. Then she thought how, when Ali had come to the mulberry tree, he would climb up into the tree to pluck the delicious berries, and how at last the poor little boy would fall from the tree into the river and be drowned.

Then Fatima sprang up crying, "Oh! Ali! Ali! My son! My son Ali!" and she ran home crying aloud, "My son Ali, my son Ali is dead!"

As she ran along the street the people came out calling to her and asking what was the matter. She did not stop, but ran on crying, "Ali! Ali! My son Ali! My son Ali is dead!" until she reached her own home.

Her mother, seeing the water vessel empty, and hearing her daughter crying aloud, said, "What is the matter? Why are you weeping? Why have you brought no freshwater this morning?"

Then the girl told her mother how she had sat under the mulberry tree, and had thought that perhaps some day she would be married and would have a little son and his name would be Ali, and when he had come to be eight years old he would go to draw the water for the family, and he would see the ripe mulberries hanging from the tree and would climb the tree to gather them, and he would fall into the river and be drowned, and again she burst out, "Oh! Ali! My son Ali! My son Ali is dead!"

Then the mother also burst out crying, and the two sat there all day lamenting and weeping over the poor, drowned Ali.

Late in the afternoon there came to the door begging bread a Chingana woman (gypsy). When she heard the great outcry and saw the two women weeping she asked, "What is the matter?"

The mother told her the story, how her daughter had gone to draw water from the river, had sat down under the mulberry tree, and all that she had imagined, how she came home crying, and how ever since they had been grieving over the lost Ali.

The gypsy said, "I can tell you about your son, for you know my people can not only read the past and the future, but can see into the other world and tell what is going on there."

"Oh," cried Fatima, springing up. "Can you give me some word of my son? Where is he? How is he? Is he happy? Is he well? How old is he?" And she stopped crying, and danced, laughing, about the room in expectation of hearing about her dear lost Ali.

Then the cunning old Chingana said, "I see your son. He is now about twelve years old. He is not well. He is very poor and hungry. If any one should give him one piece of bread, he would be so glad that he would jump ten times for joy. He is lying down, faint and weak, wanting food; but if you will give me food I will carry it to him, and soon he will be well and strong."

Then the mother and daughter made themselves very busy preparing food to send by the Chingana woman to little Ali. Fatima hurried out to the shop to

buy nuts and fruit. The mother brought some saddlebags, which they packed with bread and all kinds of delicacies. They also put in clothes that they thought a twelve-year-old boy could wear.

By the time that all was ready the saddlebags were so heavy that the Chingana said she could not carry them. She was very cunning, and as she had entered the house she had seen a fine horse standing in its stall at the side of the house. This horse belonged to Fatima's brother. The old woman said, "Have you not a horse that you could lend me to ride upon to carry the saddlebags to your Ali, for he is suffering, and I should hasten to bear your presents to him?"

"Yes, yes," cried Fatima and her mother. "We have a horse," and they hurried to lead forth the horse to the front of the house. The saddlebags were placed on the horse, and the old woman mounted and rode away.

# BEDOUIN

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## MOUNTAIN OF THE BELL

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Bolton, H. C. "Arab Legend of a Buried Monastery" *Journal of American Folklore* 2 (1889): 227.

**Date:** 1889

**Source:** Bedouin

**National Origin:** South Sinai (Egypt)

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Historically, most Bedouins inhabited the desert areas of the Arabian Peninsula, Negev (Israel), and the Sinai Peninsula on the borders of Egypt and Israel, and pursued a nomadic lifestyle and tribal social organization. The majority were nomadic pastoralists, but some pursued other occupations, as the following **legend** demonstrates. In recent centuries, most Bedouins have been followers of Islam, but Christianity and Judaism have also influenced the culture's narrative repertoire.

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**A** Bedouin fisherman, going to work one day, met an old man, who saluted him and conducted him into the bowels of the mountain. There, to his surprise, he found a monastery, gardens of date palms bearing fruit, and good water. The monks received him kindly, gave him food, and when they dismissed him made him swear not to disclose the secret of the monastery. The Bedouin went to his village, Tor, on the Gulf of Suez, near by, and related his discovery. The village people went with him to the spot, but found only a sandbank; and they wanted to kill the man who had deceived

them. But the sound of the nagous, or wooden gong used by the priests to call the monks to prayer, is still heard issuing from beneath the bank of sand.

Another Arab declared that the nagous is heard three times a day, morning, noon, and evening, at the hours of prayer; he crossed himself when the sound was unusually loud.

# ISRAEL

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## GIANT OF THE FLOOD

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Landa, Gertrude. *Jewish Fairy Tales and Legends*. New York: Bloch Publishing Company, Inc., 1919, 173–177.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Hebrew

**National Origin:** Israel

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The contemporary nation of Israel, established in 1948, is located on the Mediterranean Sea and borders the nations of Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria. Historical Israel encompassed areas occupied by the modern states of Israel, Palestine, and Jordan. Often labeled the Holy Land, the region is sacred to three major religions: Christianity, Islam, and Judaism. While recognizing the importance of a variety of other Christian, Muslim, and indigenous cultures in this region, the following section emphasizes Hebrew traditional tales. The section devoted to Palestine (page 238) adopts a broader and more modern focus. “Giant of the Flood” offers an account of the biblical deluge narrative that represents a traditional extrapolation of the events detailed in the *Book of Genesis*. The giant king Og is mentioned in various texts such as the apocryphal *Book of Jasher* and the biblical *Book of Deuteronomy*.

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Just before the world was drowned all the animals gathered in front of the Ark and Father Noah carefully inspected them.  
“All ye that lie down shall enter and be saved from the deluge that is about to destroy the world,” he said. “Ye that stand cannot enter.”



Then the various creatures began to march forward into the Ark. Father Noah watched them closely. He seemed troubled.

“I wonder,” he said to himself, “how I shall obtain a unicorn, and how I shall get it into the Ark.”

“I can bring thee a unicorn, Father Noah,” he heard in a voice of thunder, and turning round he saw the giant, Og. “But thou must agree to save me, too, from the flood.”

“Begone,” cried Noah. “Thou art a demon, not a human being. I can have no dealings with thee.”

“Pity me,” whined the giant. “See how my figure is shrinking. Once I was so tall that I could drink water from the clouds and toast fish at the sun. I fear not that I shall be drowned, but that all the food will be destroyed and that I shall perish of hunger.”

Noah, however, only smiled; but he grew serious again when Og brought a unicorn. It was as big as a mountain, although the giant said it was the smallest he could find. It lay down in front of the Ark and Noah saw by that action that he must save it. For some time he was puzzled what to do, but at last a bright idea struck him. He attached the huge beast to the Ark by a rope fastened to its horn so that it could swim alongside and be fed.

Og seated himself on a mountain near at hand and watched the rain pouring down. Faster and faster it fell in torrents until the rivers overflowed and the waters began to rise rapidly on the land and sweep all things away. Father Noah stood gloomily before the door of the Ark until the water reached his neck. Then it swept him inside. The door closed with a bang, and the Ark rose gallantly on the flood and began to move along. The unicorn swam alongside, and as it passed Og, the giant jumped on to its back. “See, Father Noah,” he cried, with a huge chuckle, “you will have to save me after all. I will snatch all the food you put through the window for the unicorn.”

Noah saw that it was useless to argue with Og, who might, indeed, sink the Ark with his tremendous strength.

“I will make a bargain with thee,” he shouted from a window. “I will feed thee, but thou must promise to be a servant to my descendants.”

Og was very hungry, so he accepted the conditions and devoured his first breakfast.

The rain continued to fall in great big sheets that shut out the light of day. Inside the Ark, however, all was bright and cheerful, for Noah had collected the most precious of the stones of the earth and had used them for the windows. Their radiance illumined the whole of the three stories in the Ark. Some of the animals were troublesome and Noah got no sleep at all. The lion had a bad attack of fever. In a corner a bird slept the whole of the time. This was the phoenix.

“Wake up,” said Noah, one day. “It is feeding time.”

“Thank you,” returned the bird. “I saw thou wert busy, Father Noah, so I would not trouble thee.”

“Thou art a good bird,” said Noah, much touched, “therefore thou shalt never die.”

One day the rain ceased, the clouds rolled away and the sun shone brilliantly again. How strange the world looked! It was like a vast ocean. Nothing but water could be seen anywhere, and only one or two of the highest mountain tops peeped above the flood. All the world was drowned, and Noah gazed on the desolate scene from one of the windows with tears in his eyes. Og, riding gaily on the unicorn behind the Ark, was quite happy.

“Ha, ha!” he laughed gleefully. “I shall be able to eat and drink just as much as I like now and shall never be troubled by those tiny little creatures, the mortals.”

“Be not so sure,” said Noah. “Those tiny mortals shall be thy masters and shall outlive thee and the whole race of giants and demons.”

The giant did not relish this prospect. He knew that whatever Noah prophesied would come true, and he was so sad that he ate no food for two days and began to grow smaller and thinner. He became more and more unhappy as day by day the water subsided and the mountains began to appear. At last the Ark rested on Mount Ararat, and Og’s long ride came to an end.

“I will soon leave thee, Father Noah,” he said. “I shall wander round the world to see what is left of it.”

“Thou canst not go until I permit thee,” said Noah. “Hast thou forgotten our compact so soon? Thou must be my servant. I have work for thee.”

Giants are not fond of work, and Og, who was the father of all the giants, was particularly lazy. He cared only to eat and sleep, but he knew he was in Noah’s power, and he shed bitter tears when he saw the land appear again.

“Stop,” commanded Noah. “Dost thou wish to drown the world once more with thy big tears?”

So Og sat on a mountain and rocked from side to side, weeping silently to himself. He watched the animals leave the Ark and had to do all the hard work when Noah’s children built houses. Daily he complained that he was shrinking to the size of the mortals, for Noah said there was not too much food.

One day Noah said to him, “Come with me, Og. I am going around the world. I am commanded to plant fruit and flowers to make the earth beautiful. I need thy help.”

For many days they wandered all over the earth, and Og was compelled to carry the heavy bag of seeds. The last thing Noah planted was the grape vine.

“What is this—food, or drink?” asked Og.

“Both,” replied Noah. “It can be eaten, or its juice made into wine,” and as he planted it, he blessed the grape. “Be thou,” he said, “a plant pleasing to the eye, bear fruit that will be food for the hungry and a health-giving drink to the thirsty and sick.” Og grunted.

“I will offer up sacrifice to this wonderful fruit,” he said. “May I not do so now that our labors are over?”

Noah agreed, and the giant brought a sheep, a lion, a pig and a monkey. First, he slaughtered the sheep, then the lion.

“When a man shall taste but a few drops of the wine,” he said, “he shall be as harmless as a sheep. When he takes a little more he shall be as strong as a lion.”

Then Og began to dance around the plant, and he killed the pig and the monkey. Noah was very much surprised.

“I am giving thy descendants two extra blessings,” said Og, chuckling.

He rolled over and over on the ground in great glee and then said, “When a man shall drink too much of the juice of the wine, then shall he become a beast like the pig, and if then he still continues to drink, he shall behave foolishly like a monkey.”

And that is why, unto this day, too much wine makes a man silly.

Og himself often drank too much, and many years afterward, when he was a servant to the patriarch Abraham, the latter scolded him until he became so frightened that he dropped a tooth. Abraham made an ivory chair for himself from this tooth. Afterwards Og became King of Bashan, but he forgot his compact with Noah and instead of helping the Israelites to obtain Canaan he opposed them.

“I will kill them all with one blow,” he declared.

Exerting all his enormous strength he uprooted a mountain, and raising it high above his head he prepared to drop it on the camp of the Israelites and crush it.

But a wonderful thing happened. The mountain was full of grasshoppers and ants who had bored millions of tiny holes in it. When King Og raised the great mass it crumbled in his hands and fell over his head and round his neck like a collar. He tried to pull it off, but his teeth became entangled in the mass. As he danced about in rage and pain, Moses, the leader of the Israelites, approached him.

Moses was a tiny man compared with Og. He was only ten ells high, and he carried with him a sword of the same length. With a mighty effort he jumped ten ells into the air, and raising the sword, he managed to strike the giant on the ankle and wound him mortally.

Thus, after many years, did the terrible giant of the flood perish for breaking his word to Father Noah.

## **THE CREATION OF THE WORLD**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Ginzberg, Louis. *The Legends of the Jews, Volume I, Bible Times and Characters from the Creation to Jacob*, trans. Herietta Szold. Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1909, 3–46.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** The Haggada

**National Origin:** Israel

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The following segment of the creation narrative was drawn from the Haggada. According to Louis Ginzberg, these stories are derived from both sacred texts and oral traditions. “Folklore, **fairy tales, legends**, and all forms of story telling akin to these are comprehended, in the terminology of the post-biblical literature of the Jews, under the inclusive description Haggadah” (Ginzberg ix). The tone and content of these renderings of Jewish lore tend to be more formal and didactic than retellings such as “Giant of the Flood” (page 181).

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**I**n the beginning, two thousand years before the heaven and the earth, seven things were created: the Torah written with black fire on white fire, and lying in the lap of God; the Divine Throne, erected in the heaven which later was over the heads of the Hayyot; Paradise on the right side of God, Hell on the left side; the Celestial Sanctuary directly in front of God, having a jewel on its altar graven with the Name of the Messiah, and a Voice that cries aloud, “Return, ye children of men.”

When God resolved upon the creation of the world, He took counsel with the Torah. Her advice was this, “O Lord, a king without an army and without courtiers and attendants hardly deserves the name of king, for none is nigh to express the homage due to him.” The answer pleased God exceedingly. Thus did He teach all earthly kings, by His Divine example, to undertake naught without first consulting advisers.

## The Fifth Day

On the fifth day of creation God took fire and water, and out of these two elements He made the fishes of the sea. The animals in the water are much more numerous than those on land. For every species on land, excepting only the weasel, there is a corresponding species in the water, and, besides, there are many found only in the water.

The ruler over the sea-animals is leviathan. With all the other fishes he was made on the fifth day. Originally he was created male and female like all the other animals. But when it appeared that a pair of these monsters might annihilate the whole earth with their united strength, God killed the female. So enormous is leviathan that to quench his thirst he needs all the water that flows from the Jordan into the sea. His food consists of the fish which go between his jaws of their own accord. When he is hungry, a hot breath blows from his nostrils, and it makes the waters of the great sea seething hot. Formidable though

behemot, the other monster, is, he feels insecure until he is certain that leviathan has satisfied his thirst. The only thing that can keep him in check is the stickleback, a little fish which was created for the purpose, and of which he stands in great awe. But leviathan is more than merely large and strong; he is wonderfully made besides. His fins radiate brilliant light, the very sun is obscured by it, and also his eyes shed such splendor that frequently the sea is illuminated suddenly by it. No wonder that this marvelous beast is the plaything of God, in whom He takes His pastime.

There is but one thing that makes leviathan repulsive, his foul smell: which is so strong that if it penetrated thither, it would render Paradise itself an impossible abode.

The real purpose of leviathan is to be served up as a dainty to the pious in the world to come. The female was put into brine as soon as she was killed, to be preserved against the time when her flesh will be needed. The male is destined to offer a delectable sight to all beholders before he is consumed. When his last hour arrives, God will summon the angels to enter into combat with the monster. But no sooner will leviathan cast his glance at them than they will flee in fear and dismay from the field of battle. They will return to the charge with swords, but in vain, for his scales can turn back steel like straw. They will be equally unsuccessful when they attempt to kill him by throwing darts and sling-stones; such missiles will rebound without leaving the least impression on his body. Disheartened, the angels will give up the combat, and God will command leviathan and behemot to enter into a duel with each other. The issue will be that both will drop dead, behemot slaughtered by a blow of leviathan's fins, and leviathan killed by a lash of behemot's tail. From the skin of leviathan God will construct tents to shelter companies of the pious while they enjoy the dishes made of his flesh. The amount assigned to each of the pious will be in proportion to his deserts, and none will envy or begrudge the other his better share. What is left of leviathan's skin will be stretched out over Jerusalem as a canopy, and the light streaming from it will illumine the whole world, and what is left of his flesh after the pious have appeased their appetite, will be distributed among the rest of men, to carry on traffic therewith.

On the same day with the fishes, the birds were created, for these two kinds of animals are closely related to each other. Fish are fashioned out of water, and birds out of marshy ground saturated with water.

As leviathan is the king of fishes, so the ziz is appointed to rule over the birds. His name comes from the variety of tastes his flesh has; it tastes like this, zeh, and like that, zeh. The ziz is as monstrous of size as leviathan himself. His ankles rest on the earth, and his head reaches to the very sky.

It once happened that travelers on a vessel noticed a bird. As he stood in the water, it merely covered his feet, and his head knocked against the sky. The onlookers thought the water could not have any depth at that point, and they prepared to take a bath there. A heavenly voice warned them, "Alight not here!

Once a carpenter's axe slipped from his hand at this spot, and it took it seven years to touch bottom." The bird the travelers saw was none other than the ziz. His wings are so huge that unfurled they darken the sun. They protect the earth against the storms of the south; without their aid the earth would not be able to resist the winds blowing thence. Once an egg of the ziz fell to the ground and broke. The fluid from it flooded sixty cities, and the shock crushed three hundred cedars. Fortunately such accidents do not occur frequently. As a rule the bird lets her eggs slide gently into her nest. This one mishap was due to the fact that the egg was rotten, and the bird cast it away carelessly. The ziz has another name, Renanin, because he is the celestial singer. On account of his relation to the heavenly regions he is also called Sekwi, the seer, and, besides, he is called "son of the nest," because his fledgling birds break away from the shell without being hatched by the mother bird; they spring directly from the nest, as it were. Like leviathan, so ziz is a delicacy to be served to the pious at the end of time, to compensate them for the privations which abstaining from the unclean fowls imposed upon them.

## The Sixth Day

As the fish were formed out of water, and the birds out of boggy earth well mixed with water, so the mammals were formed out of solid earth, and as leviathan is the most notable representative of the fish kind, and ziz of the bird kind, so behemot is the most notable representative of the mammal kind. Behemot matches leviathan in strength, and he had to be prevented, like leviathan, from multiplying and increasing, else the world could not have continued to exist; after God had created him male and female, He at once deprived him of the desire to propagate his kind. He is so monstrous that he requires the produce of a thousand mountains for his daily food. All the water that flows through the bed of the Jordan in a year suffices him exactly for one gulp. It therefore was necessary to give him one stream entirely for his own use, a stream flowing forth from Paradise, called Yubal. Behemot, too, is destined to be served to the pious as an appetizing dainty, but before they enjoy his flesh, they will be permitted to view the mortal combat between leviathan and behemot, as a reward for having denied themselves the pleasures of the circus and its gladiatorial contests.

Leviathan, ziz, and behemot are not the only monsters; there are many others, and marvelous ones, like the reem, a giant animal, of which only one couple, male and female, is in existence. Had there been more, the world could hardly have maintained itself against them. The act of copulation occurs but once in seventy years between them, for God has so ordered it that the male and female reem are at opposite ends of the earth, the one in the east, the other in the west. The act of copulation results in the death of the male. He is bitten by the female and dies of the bite. The female becomes pregnant and remains in this state for no less than twelve years. At the end of this long period she gives birth to twins, a male and a female. The year preceding her delivery she is not

able to move. She would die of hunger, were it not that her own spittle flowing copiously from her mouth waters and fructifies the earth near her, and causes it to bring forth enough for her maintenance. For a whole year the animal can but roll from side to side, until finally her belly bursts, and the twins issue forth. Their appearance is thus the signal for the death of the mother reem. She makes room for the new generation, which in turn is destined to suffer the same fate as the generation that went before. Immediately after birth, the one goes eastward and the other westward, to meet only after the lapse of seventy years, propagate themselves, and perish. A traveler who once saw a reem one day old described its height to be four parasangs, and the length of its head one parasang and a half. Its horns measure one hundred ells, and their height is a great deal more.

One of the most remarkable creatures is the “man of the mountain,” Adne Sadeh, or, briefly, Adam. His form is exactly that of a human being, but he is fastened to the ground by means of a navel-string, upon which his life depends. The cord once snapped, he dies. This animal keeps himself alive with what is produced by the soil around about him as far as his tether permits him to crawl. No creature may venture to approach within the radius of his cord, for he seizes and demolishes whatever comes in his reach. To kill him, one may not go near to him, the navel-string must be severed from a distance by means of a dart, and then he dies amid groans and moans. Once upon a time a traveler happened in the region where this animal is found. He overheard his host consult his wife as to what to do to honor their guest, and resolve to serve “our man,” as he said. Thinking he had fallen among cannibals, the stranger ran as fast as his feet could carry him from his entertainer, who sought vainly to restrain him. Afterward, he found out that there had been no intention of regaling him with human flesh, but only with the flesh of the strange animal called “man.” As the “man of the mountain” is fixed to the ground by his navel-string, so the barnacle-goose is grown to a tree by its bill. It is hard to say whether it is an animal and must be slaughtered to be fit for food, or whether it is a plant and no ritual ceremony is necessary before eating it.

Among the birds the phoenix is the most wonderful. When Eve gave all the animals some of the fruit of the tree of knowledge, the phoenix was the only bird that refused to eat thereof, and he was rewarded with eternal life. When he has lived a thousand years, his body shrinks, and the feathers drop from it, until he is as small as an egg. This is the nucleus of the new bird.

The phoenix is also called “the guardian of the terrestrial sphere.” He runs with the sun on his circuit, and he spreads out his wings and catches up the fiery rays of the sun. If he were not there to intercept them, neither man nor any other animate being would keep alive. On his right wing the following words are inscribed in huge letters, about four thousand stadia high: “Neither the earth produces me, nor the heavens, but only the wings of fire.” His food consists of the manna of heaven and the dew of the earth. His excrement is a worm, whose excrement in turn is the cinnamon used by kings and princes. Enoch, who saw

the phoenix birds when he was translated, describes them as flying creatures, wonderful and strange in appearance, with the feet and tails of lions, and the heads of crocodiles; their appearance is of a purple color like the rainbow; their size nine hundred measures. Their wings are like those of angels, each having twelve, and they attend the chariot of the sun and go with him, bringing heat and dew as they are ordered by God. In the morning when the sun starts on his daily course, the phoenixes and the chalkidri sing, and every bird flaps its wings, rejoicing the Giver of light, and they sing a song at the command of the Lord. Among reptiles the salamander and the shamir are the most marvelous. The salamander originates from a fire of myrtle wood which has been kept burning for seven years steadily by means of magic arts. Not bigger than a mouse, it yet is invested with peculiar properties. One who smears himself with its blood is invulnerable, and the web woven by it is a talisman against fire. The people who lived at the deluge boasted that, were a fire flood to come, they would protect themselves with the blood of the salamander.

King Hezekiah owes his life to the salamander. His wicked father, King Ahaz, had delivered him to the fires of Moloch, and he would have been burnt, had his mother not painted him with the blood of the salamander, so that the fire could do him no harm.

The shamir was made at twilight on the sixth day of creation together with other extraordinary things. It is about as large as a barley corn, and it possesses the remarkable property of cutting the hardest of diamonds. For this reason it was used for the stones in the breastplate worn by the high priest. First the names of the twelve tribes were traced with ink on the stones to be set into the breastplate, then the shamir was passed over the lines, and thus they were graven. The wonderful circumstance was that the friction wore no particles from the stones. The shamir was also used for hewing into shape the stones from which the Temple was built, because the law prohibited iron tools to be used for the work in the Temple. The shamir may not be put in an iron vessel for safekeeping, nor in any metal vessel, it would burst such a receptacle asunder. It is kept wrapped up in a woolen cloth, and this in turn is placed in a lead basket filled with barley bran. The shamir was guarded in Paradise until Solomon needed it. He sent the eagle thither to fetch the worm. With the destruction of the Temple the shamir vanished. A similar fate overtook the tahash, which had been created only that its skin might be used for the Tabernacle. Once the Tabernacle was completed, the tahash disappeared. It had a horn on its forehead, was gaily colored like the turkey-cock, and belonged to the class of clean animals. Among the fishes there are also wonderful creatures, the sea-goats and the dolphins, not to mention leviathan. A sea-faring man once saw a sea-goat on whose horns the words were inscribed, "I am a little sea-animal, yet I traversed three hundred parasangs to offer myself as food to the leviathan." The dolphins are half man and half fish; they even have sexual intercourse with human beings; therefore they are called also "sons of the sea," for in a sense they represent the human kind in the waters.



Though every species in the animal world was created during the last two days of the six of creation, yet many characteristics of certain animals appeared later. Cats and mice, foes now, were friends originally. Their later enmity had a distinct cause. On one occasion the mouse appeared before God and spoke, "I and the cat are partners, but now we have nothing to eat." The Lord answered, "Thou art intriguing against thy companion, only that thou mayest devour her. As a punishment, she shall devour thee."

Thereupon the mouse, "O Lord of the world, wherein have I done wrong?"

God replied, "O thou unclean reptile, thou shouldst have been warned by the example of the moon, who lost a part of her light, because she spake ill of the sun, and what she lost was given to her opponent. The evil intentions thou didst harbor against thy companion shall be punished in the same way. Instead of thy devouring her, she shall devour thee."

The mouse, "O Lord of the world! Shall my whole kind be destroyed?"

God, "I will take care that a remnant of thee is spared."

In her rage the mouse bit the cat, and the cat in turn threw herself upon the mouse, and hacked into her with her teeth until she lay dead. Since that moment the mouse stands in such awe of the cat that she does not even attempt to defend herself against her enemy's attacks, and always keeps herself in hiding. Similarly dogs and cats maintained a friendly relation to each other, and only later on became enemies. A dog and a cat were partners, and they shared with each other whatever they had. It once happened that neither could find anything to eat for three days. Thereupon the dog proposed that they dissolve their partnership. The cat should go to Adam, in whose house there would surely be enough for her to eat, while the dog should seek his fortune elsewhere. Before they separated, they took an oath never to go to the same master. The cat took up her abode with Adam, and she found sufficient mice in his house to satisfy her appetite. Seeing how useful she was in driving away and extirpating mice, Adam treated her most kindly. The dog, on the other hand, saw bad times. The first night after their separation he spent in the cave of the wolf, who had granted him a night's lodging. At night the dog caught the sound of steps, and he reported it to his host, who bade him repulse the intruders. They were wild animals. Little lacked and the dog would have lost his life. Dismayed, the dog fled from the house of the wolf, and took refuge with the monkey. But he would not grant him even a single night's lodging; and the fugitive was forced to appeal to the hospitality of the sheep. Again the dog heard steps in the middle of the night. Obeying the bidding of his host, he arose to chase away the marauders, who turned out to be wolves. The barking of the dog apprised the wolves of the presence of sheep, so that the dog innocently caused the sheep's death. Now he had lost his last friend. Night after night he begged for shelter, without ever finding a home. Finally, he decided to repair to the house of Adam, who also granted him refuge for one night. When wild animals approached the house under cover of darkness, the dog began to bark, Adam

awoke, and with his bow and arrow he drove them away. Recognizing the dog's usefulness, he bade him remain with him always. But as soon as the cat espied the dog in Adam's house, she began to quarrel with him, and reproach him with having broken his oath to her. Adam did his best to pacify the cat. He told her he had himself invited the dog to make his home there, and he assured her she would in no way be the loser by the dog's presence; he wanted both to stay with him. But it was impossible to appease the cat. The dog promised her not to touch anything intended for her. She insisted that she could not live in one and the same house with a thief like the dog. Bickerings between the dog and the cat became the order of the day. Finally the dog could stand it no longer, and he left Adam's house, and betook himself to Seth's. By Seth he was welcomed kindly, and from Seth's house, he continued to make efforts at reconciliation with the cat in vain. Yes, the enmity between the first dog and the first cat was transmitted to all their descendants until this very day.

Even the physical peculiarities of certain animals were not original features with them, but owed their existence to something that occurred subsequent to the days of creation. The mouse at first had quite a different mouth from its present mouth. In Noah's ark, in which all animals, to ensure the preservation of every kind, lived together peaceably, the pair of mice were once sitting next to the cat. Suddenly the latter remembered that her father was in the habit of devouring mice, and thinking there was no harm in following his example, she jumped at the mouse, who vainly looked for a hole into which to slip out of sight. Then a miracle happened; a hole appeared where none had been before, and the mouse sought refuge in it. The cat pursued the mouse, and though she could not follow her into the hole, she could insert her paw and try to pull the mouse out of her covert. Quickly the mouse opened her mouth in the hope that the paw would go into it, and the cat would be prevented from fastening her claws in her flesh. But as the cavity of the mouth was not big enough, the cat succeeded in clawing the cheeks of the mouse. Not that this helped her much, it merely widened the mouth of the mouse, and her prey after all escaped the cat. After her happy escape, the mouse betook herself to Noah and said to him, "O pious man, be good enough to sew up my cheek where my enemy, the cat, has torn a rent in it." Noah bade her fetch a hair out of the tail of the swine, and with this he repaired the damage. Thence the little seam-like line next to the mouth of every mouse to this very day.

The raven is another animal that changed its appearance during its sojourn in the ark. When Noah desired to send him forth to find out about the state of the waters, he hid under the wings of the eagle. Noah found him, however, and said to him, "Go and see whether the waters have diminished."

The raven pleaded, "Hast thou none other among all the birds to send on this errand?"

Noah, "My power extends no further than over thee and the dove."

But the raven was not satisfied. He said to Noah with great insolence, "Thou sendest me forth only that I may meet my death, and thou wishest my death that my wife may be at thy service."

Thereupon Noah cursed the raven thus, "May thy mouth, which has spoken evil against me be accursed, and thy intercourse with thy wife be only through it." All the animals in the ark said Amen. And this is the reason why a mass of spittle runs from the mouth of the male raven into the mouth of the female during the act of copulation, and only thus the female is impregnated. Altogether the raven is an unattractive animal. He is unkind toward his own young so long as their bodies are not covered with black feathers, though as a rule ravens love one another. God therefore takes the young ravens under His special protection. From their own excrement maggots come forth, which serve as their food during the three days that elapse after their birth, until their white feathers turn black and their parents recognize them as their offspring and care for them.

The raven has himself to blame also for the awkward hop in his gait. He observed the graceful step of the dove, and envious of her tried to emulate it. The outcome was that he almost broke his bones without in the least succeeding in making himself resemble the dove, not to mention that he brought the scorn of the other animals down upon himself. His failure excited their ridicule. Then he decided to return to his own original gait, but in the interval he had unlearned it, and he could walk neither the one way nor the other properly. His step had become a hop betwixt and between. Thus we see how true it is, that he who is dissatisfied with his small portion loses the little he has in striving for more and better things.

The steer is also one of the animals that have suffered a change in the course of time. Originally his face was entirely overgrown with hair, but now there is none on his nose, and that is because Joshua kissed him on his nose during the siege of Jericho. Joshua was an exceedingly heavy man. Horses, donkeys, and mules, none could bear him, they all broke down under his weight. What they could not do, the steer accomplished. On his back Joshua rode to the siege of Jericho, and in gratitude he bestowed a kiss upon his nose.

The serpent, too, is other than it was at first. Before the fall of man it was the cleverest of all animals created, and in form it resembled man closely. It stood upright and was of extraordinary size. Afterward, it lost the mental advantages it had possessed as compared with other animals, and it degenerated physically, too; it was deprived of its feet, so that it could not pursue other animals and kill them. The mole and the frog had to be made harmless in similar ways; the former has no eyes, else it were irresistible, and the frog has no teeth, else no animal in the water were sure of its life.

While the cunning of the serpent wrought its own undoing, the cunning of the fox stood him in good stead in many an embarrassing situation. After Adam had committed the sin of disobedience, God delivered the whole of the animal world into the power of the Angel of Death, and He ordered him to cast one

pair of each kind into the water. He and leviathan together thus have dominion over all that has life. When the Angel of Death was in the act of executing the Divine command upon the fox, he began to weep bitterly. The Angel of Death asked him the reason of his tears, and the fox replied that he was mourning the sad fate of his friend. At the same time he pointed to the figure of a fox in the sea, which was nothing but his own reflection. The Angel of Death, persuaded that a representative of the fox family had been cast into the water, let him go free. The fox told his trick to the cat, and she in turn played it on the Angel of Death. So it happened that neither cats nor foxes are represented in the water, while all other animals are.

When leviathan passed the animals in review, and missing the fox was informed of the sly way in which he had eluded his authority, he dispatched great and powerful fish on the errand of enticing the truant into the water. The fox walking along the shore espied the large number of fish, and he exclaimed, "How happy he who may always satisfy his hunger with the flesh of such as these." The fish told him, if he would but follow them, his appetite could easily be appeased. At the same time they informed him that a great honor awaited him. Leviathan, they said, was at death's door, and he had commissioned them to install the fox as his successor. They were ready to carry him on their backs, so that he had no need to fear the water, and thus they would convey him to the throne, which stood upon a huge rock. The fox yielded to these persuasions and descended into the water. Presently an uncomfortable feeling took possession of him. He began to suspect that the tables were turned; he was being made game of instead of making game of others as usual. He urged the fish to tell him the truth, and they admitted that they had been sent out to secure his person for leviathan, who wanted his heart, that he might become as knowing as the fox, whose wisdom he had heard many extol. The fox said reproachfully, "Why did you not tell me the truth at once? Then I could have brought my heart along with me for King Leviathan, who would have showered honors upon me. As it is, you will surely suffer punishment for bringing me without my heart. The foxes, you see," he continued, "do not carry their hearts around with them. They keep them in a safe place, and when they have need of them, they fetch them thence." The fish quickly swam to shore, and landed the fox, so that he might go for his heart. No sooner did he feel dry land under his feet than he began to jump and shout, and when they urged him to go in search of his heart, and follow them, he said, "O ye fools, could I have followed you into the water, if I had not had my heart with me? Or exists there a creature able to go abroad without his heart?"

The fish replied, "Come, come, thou art fooling us."

Whereupon the fox, "O ye fools, if I could play a trick on the Angel of Death, how much easier was it to make game of you?" So they had to return, their errand undone, and leviathan could not but confirm the taunting judgment of the fox, "In very truth, the fox is wise of heart, and ye are fools."

## All Things Praise the Lord

“Whatever God created has value.” Even the animals and the insects that seem useless and noxious at first sight have a vocation to fulfill. The snail trailing a moist streak after it as it crawls, and so using up its vitality, serves as a remedy for boils. The sting of a hornet is healed by the housefly crushed and applied to the wound. The gnat, feeble creature, taking in food but never secreting it, is a specific against the poison of a viper, and this venomous reptile itself cures eruptions, while the lizard is the antidote to the scorpion. Not only do all creatures serve man, and contribute to his comfort, but also God “teacheth us through the beasts of the earth, and maketh us wise through the fowls of heaven.” He endowed many animals with admirable moral qualities as a pattern for man. If the Torah had not been revealed to us, we might have learnt regard for the decencies of life from the cat, who covers her excrement with earth; regard for the property of others from the ants, who never encroach upon one another’s stores; and regard for decorous conduct from the cock, who, when he desires to unite with the hen, promises to buy her a cloak long enough to reach to the ground, and when the hen reminds him of his promise, he shakes his comb and says, “May I be deprived of my comb, if I do not buy it when I have the means.” The grasshopper also has a lesson to teach to man. All the summer through it sings, until its belly bursts, and death claims it. Though it knows the fate that awaits it, yet it sings on. So man should do his duty toward God, no matter what the consequences. The stork should be taken as a model in two respects. He guards the purity of his family life zealously, and toward his fellows he is compassionate and merciful. Even the frog can be the teacher of man. By the side of the water there lives a species of animals which subsist off aquatic creatures alone. When the frog notices that one of them is hungry, he goes to it of his own accord, and offers himself as food, thus fulfilling the injunction, “If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink.”

The whole of creation was called into existence by God unto His glory, and each creature has its own hymn of praise wherewith to extol the Creator. Heaven and earth, Paradise and hell, desert and field, rivers and seas—all have their own way of paying homage to God. The hymn of the earth is, “From the uttermost part of the earth have we heard songs, glory to the Righteous.” The sea exclaims, “Above the voices of many waters, the mighty breakers of the sea, the Lord on high is mighty.”

Also the celestial bodies and the elements proclaim the praise of their Creator—the sun, moon, and stars, the clouds and the winds, lightning and dew. The sun says, “The sun and moon stood still in their habitation, at the light of Thine arrows as they went, at the shining of Thy glittering spear”; and the stars sing, “Thou art the Lord, even Thou alone; Thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth and all things that are thereon, the seas and all that is in them, and Thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshipeth Thee.”

Every plant, furthermore, has a song of praise. The fruitful tree sings, “Then shall all the trees of the wood sing for joy, before the Lord, for He cometh; for He cometh to judge the earth”; and the ears of grain on the field sing, “The pastures are covered with flocks; the valleys also are covered over with corn; they shout for joy, they also sing.”

Great among singers of praise are the birds, and greatest among them is the cock. When God at midnight goes to the pious in Paradise, all the trees therein break out into adoration, and their songs awaken the cock, who begins in turn to praise God. Seven times he crows, each time reciting a verse. The first verse is: “Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in. Who is the King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle.” The second verse: “Lift up your heads, O ye gates; yea, lift them up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord of hosts, He is the King of glory.” The third: “Arise, ye righteous, and occupy yourselves with the Torah, that your reward may be abundant in the world hereafter.” The fourth: “I have waited for Thy salvation, O Lord!” The fifth: “How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? When wilt thou arise out of thy sleep?” The sixth: “Love not sleep, lest thou come to poverty; open thine eyes, and thou shalt be satisfied with bread.” And the seventh verse sung by the cock runs: “It is time to work for the Lord, for they have made void Thy law.”

The song of the vulture is: “I will hiss for them, and gather them; for I have redeemed them, and they shall increase as they have increased”—the same verse with which the bird will in time to come announce the advent of the Messiah, the only difference being, that when he heralds the Messiah he will sit upon the ground and sing his verse, while at all other times he is seated elsewhere when he sings it.

Nor do the other animals praise God less than the birds. Even the beasts of prey give forth adoration. The lion says, “The Lord shall go forth as a mighty man; He shall stir up jealousy like a man of war; He shall cry, yea, He shall shout aloud; He shall do mightily against his enemies.”

And the fox exhorts unto justice with the words, “Woe unto him that buildeth his house by unrighteousness, and his chambers by injustice; that useth his neighbor’s service without wages, and giveth him not his hire.”

Yea, the dumb fishes know how to proclaim the praise of their Lord. “The voice of the Lord is upon the waters,” they say, “the God of glory thundereth, even the Lord upon many waters”; while the frog exclaims, “Blessed be the name of the glory of His kingdom forever and ever.”

Contemptible though they are, even the reptiles give praise unto their Creator. The mouse extols God with the words, “Howbeit Thou art just in all that is come upon me; for Thou hast dealt truly, but I have done wickedly.” And the cat sings, “Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord. Praise ye the Lord.”

## THE FALL OF MAN AND THE PUNISHMENT OF THE SERPENT

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Ginzberg, Louis. *The Legends of the Jews, Volume I, Bible Times and Characters from the Creation to Jacob*, trans. Herietta Szold. Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1909, 71–78.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** The Haggada

**National Origin:** Israel

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The following narrative of human loss of innocence and the punishment of the agents of that fall from grace is drawn from Louis Ginzberg's retelling of tales from the Haggada (see "The Creation of the World," page 184, for a discussion of the Haggada). This **myth** serves to gloss the more familiar narrative from the biblical Book of Genesis while depicting the serpent as the supreme **trickster**.

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**A**mong the animals the serpent was notable. Of all of them he had the most excellent qualities, in some of which he resembled man. Like man he stood upright upon two feet, and in height he was equal to the camel. Had it not been for the fall of man, which brought misfortune to them, too, one pair of serpents would have sufficed to perform all the work man has to do, and, besides, they would have supplied him with silver, gold, gems, and pearls. As a matter of fact, it was the very ability of the serpent that led to the ruin of man and his own ruin. His superior mental gifts caused him to become an infidel. It likewise explains his envy of man, especially of his conjugal relations. Envy made him meditate ways and means of bringing about the death of Adam. He was too well acquainted with the character of the man to attempt to exercise tricks of persuasion upon him, and he approached the woman, knowing that women are beguiled easily. The conversation with Eve was cunningly planned, she could not but be caught in a trap. The serpent began, "Is it true that God hath said, Ye shall not eat of every tree in the garden?"

"We may," rejoined Eve, "eat of the fruit of all the trees in the garden, except that which is in the midst of the garden, and that we may not even touch, lest we be stricken with death." She spoke thus, because in his zeal to guard her against the transgressing of the Divine command, Adam had forbidden Eve to touch the tree, though God had mentioned only the eating of the fruit. It remains a truth, what the proverb says, "Better a wall ten hands high that stands, than a wall a hundred ells high that cannot stand." It was Adam's

exaggeration that afforded the serpent the possibility of persuading Eve to taste of the forbidden fruit.

The serpent pushed Eve against the tree, and said, “Thou seest that touching the tree has not caused thy death. As little will it hurt thee to eat the fruit of the tree. Naught but malevolence has prompted the prohibition, for as soon as ye eat thereof, ye shall be as God. As He creates and destroys worlds, so will ye have the power to create and destroy. As He doth slay and revive, so will ye have the power to slay and revive. He Himself ate first of the fruit of the tree, and then He created the world. Therefore doth He forbid you to eat thereof, lest you create other worlds. Everyone knows that ‘artisans of the same guild hate one another.’ Furthermore, have ye not observed that every creature hath dominion over the creature fashioned before itself? The heavens were made on the first day, and they are kept in place by the firmament made on the second day. The firmament, in turn, is ruled by the plants, the creation of the third day, for they take up all the water of the firmament. The sun and the other celestial bodies, which were created on the fourth day, have power over the world of plants. They can ripen their fruits and flourish only through their influence. The creation of the fifth day, the animal world, rules over the celestial spheres. Witness the ziz, which can darken the sun with its pinions. But ye are masters of the whole of creation, because ye were the last to be created. Hasten now and eat of the fruit of the tree in the midst of the garden, and become independent of God, lest He bring forth still other creatures to bear rule over you.”

To give due weight to these words, the serpent began to shake the tree violently and bring down its fruit. He ate thereof, saying, “As I do not die of eating the fruit, so wilt thou not die.”

Now Eve could not but say to herself, “All that my master”—so she called Adam—“commanded me is but lies,” and she determined to follow the advice of the serpent. Yet she could not bring herself to disobey the command of God utterly. She made a compromise with her conscience. First she ate only the outside skin of the fruit, and then, seeing that death did not fell her, she ate the fruit itself. Scarce had she finished, when she saw the Angel of Death before her. Expecting her end to come immediately, she resolved to make Adam eat of the forbidden fruit, too, lest he espouse another wife after her death. It required tears and lamentations on her part to prevail upon Adam to take the baleful step. Not yet satisfied, she gave of the fruit to all other living beings, that they, too, might be subject to death. All ate, and they all are mortal, with the exception of the bird malham, who refused the fruit, with the words, “Is it not enough that ye have sinned against God, and have brought death to others? Must ye still come to me and seek to persuade me into disobeying God’s command, that I may eat and die thereof? I will not do your bidding.”

A heavenly voice was heard then to say to Adam and Eve, “To you was the command given. Ye did not heed it; ye did transgress it, and ye did seek to persuade the bird malham. He was steadfast, and he feared Me, although I gave



him no command. Therefore he shall never taste of death, neither he nor his descendants—they all shall live forever in Paradise.”

Adam spoke to Eve, “Didst thou give me of the tree of which I forbade thee to eat? Thou didst give me thereof, for my eyes are opened, and the teeth in my mouth are set on edge.”

Eve made answer, “As my teeth were set on edge, so may the teeth of all living beings be set on edge.” The first result was that Adam and Eve became naked. Before, their bodies had been overlaid with a horny skin, and enveloped with the cloud of glory. No sooner had they violated the command given them than the cloud of glory and the horny skin dropped from them, and they stood there in their nakedness, and ashamed. Adam tried to gather leaves from the trees to cover part of their bodies, but he heard one tree after the other say, “There is the thief that deceived his Creator. Nay, the foot of pride shall not come against me, nor the hand of the wicked touch me. Hence, and take no leaves from me!” Only the fig tree granted him permission to take of its leaves. That was because the fig was the forbidden fruit itself. Adam had the same experience as that prince who seduced one of the maid-servants in the palace. When the king, his father, chased him out, he vainly sought a refuge with the other maid-servants, but only she who had caused his disgrace would grant him assistance.

## The Punishment

As long as Adam stood naked, casting about for means of escape from his embarrassment, God did not appear unto him, for one should not “strive to see a man in the hour of his disgrace.” He waited until Adam and Eve had covered themselves with fig leaves. But even before God spoke to him, Adam knew what was impending. He heard the angels announce, “God betaketh Himself unto those that dwell in Paradise.” He heard more, too. He heard what the angels were saying to one another about his fall, and what they were saying to God. In astonishment the angels exclaimed, “What! He still walks about in Paradise? He is not yet dead?”

Whereupon God, “I said to him, ‘In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die!’ Now, ye know not what manner of day I meant—one of My days of a thousand years, or one of your days. I will give him one of My days. He shall have nine hundred and thirty years to live, and seventy to leave to his descendants.”

When Adam and Eve heard God approaching, they hid among the trees—which would not have been possible before the fall. Before he committed his trespass, Adam’s height was from the heavens to the earth, but afterward it was reduced to one hundred ells. Another consequence of his sin was the fear Adam felt when he heard the voice of God: before his fall it had not disquieted him in the least. Hence it was that when Adam said, “I heard Thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid,” God replied, “Aforetime thou wert not afraid, and now thou art afraid?”

God refrained from reproaches at first. Standing at the gate of Paradise, He but asked, "Where art thou, Adam?" Thus did God desire to teach man a rule of polite behavior, never to enter the house of another without announcing himself. It cannot be denied, the words "Where art thou?" were pregnant with meaning. They were intended to bring home to Adam the vast difference between his latter and his former state—between his supernatural size then and his shrunken size now; between the lordship of God over him then and the lordship of the serpent over him now. At the same time, God wanted to give Adam the opportunity of repenting of his sin, and he would have received Divine forgiveness for it. But so far from repenting of it, Adam slandered God, and uttered blasphemies against Him. When God asked him, "Hast thou eaten of the tree whereof I commanded thee thou shouldst not eat?" he did not confess his sin, but excused himself with the words, "O Lord of the world! As long as I was alone, I did not fall into sin, but as soon as this woman came to me, she tempted me."

God replied, "I gave her unto thee as a help, and thou art ungrateful when thou accusest her, saying, 'She gave me of the tree.' Thou shouldst not have obeyed her, for thou art the head, and not she." God, who knows all things, had foreseen exactly this, and He had not created Eve until Adam had asked Him for a helpmate, so that he might not have apparently good reason for reproaching God with having created woman.

As Adam tried to shift the blame for his misdeed from himself, so also Eve. She, like her husband, did not confess her transgression and pray for pardon, which would have been granted to her. Gracious as God is, He did not pronounce the doom upon Adam and Eve until they showed themselves stiff-necked. Not so with the serpent. God inflicted the curse upon the serpent without hearing his defense; for the serpent is a villain, and the wicked are good debaters. If God had questioned him, the serpent would have answered, "Thou didst give them a command, and I did contradict it. Why did they obey me, and not Thee?" Therefore God did not enter into an argument with the serpent, but straightway decreed the following ten punishments: The mouth of the serpent was closed, and his power of speech taken away; his hands and feet were hacked off; the earth was given him as food; he must suffer great pain in sloughing his skin; enmity is to exist between him and man; if he eats the choicest viands, or drinks the sweetest beverages, they all change into dust in his mouth; the pregnancy of the female serpent lasts seven years; men shall seek to kill him as soon as they catch sight of him; even in the future world, where all beings will be blessed, he will not escape the punishment decreed for him; he will vanish from out of the Holy Land if Israel walks in the ways of God.

Furthermore, God spake to the serpent, "I created thee to be king over all animals, cattle and the beasts of the field alike; but thou wast not satisfied. Therefore thou shalt be cursed above all cattle and above every beast of the field. I created thee of upright posture; but thou wast not satisfied. Therefore

thou shalt go upon thy belly. I created thee to eat the same food as man; but thou wast not satisfied. Therefore thou shalt eat dust all the days of thy life. Thou didst seek to cause the death of Adam in order to espouse his wife. Therefore I will put enmity between thee and the woman.” How true it is—he who lusts after what is not his due, not only does he not attain his desire, but he also loses what he has!

As angels had been present when the doom was pronounced upon the serpent—for God had convoked a Sanhedrin of seventy-one angels when He sat in judgment upon him—so the execution of the decree against him was entrusted to angels. They descended from heaven and chopped off his hands and feet. His suffering was so great that his agonized cries could be heard from one end of the world to the other.

# KURD

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## SUTO AND TATO

**Tradition Bearer:** Mullah Said

**Source:** Nikitine, B., and Major E. B. Soane. "The Tale of Suto and Tato: Kurdish Text with Translation and Notes." *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies, University of London* 3 (1923): 70–84.

**Date:** ca. 1916

**Original Source:** Kurdish

**National Origin:** Iran (Kurdistan)

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The Kurds historically inhabited a mountainous area of western Armenia, northern Iraq, northwestern Iran, northeastern Syria, and southeastern Turkey, an area referred to as Kurdistan. Commentary by authors B. Nikitine and E. B. Soane suggest that the following **legend** was collected in the area at which the borders of Turkey and Iran meet. Traditionally Kurds practiced Islam and led a nomadic, pastoral life herding goats and sheep. The nationalism that emerged following World War I impinged on Kurdish tradition and ultimately resulted in attempts to repress their culture in favor of assimilation by the nations through which they ranged. Agha in this context is a civil title, equivalent in many ways to "chief."

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Suto is Agha of the Duskani tribe, from the village of Horamar and of the clan of Mala Miri. Tato is Agha of the Rekani tribe, of the village of Razga, and the clan of Mala Mikail Agha. The Rekani, from early times till now, have been continuously under the hands of the Horamar Aghas, and in the time of Suto Agha they fell even more completely under their dominance. Suto, with his sons, his brothers, and the elders of his clan visited many persecutions and impositions upon the Rekani, and rendered them so desperate that the

power of forbearance no longer remained to them. Tato, yet a youth, was a man of much courage, the like of whom had never been seen among the Rekani Aghas, and now his pride could no longer brook the misrule of the Horamari. He said to his brothers, Temo, Hadi, and Resul (all of whom were older than he), "I cannot submit like you, I will not make a Jew of myself in Suto's hands, death is pleasanter than life thus; with God's help I shall terminate Suto's powers whether I die or live."

His brothers and relations replied, "We shall run counter to any plan you may consider advisable; but we shall be annihilated, for we are not strong enough to cope with the Horamari."

Tato replied, "And if we be annihilated, there is no loss. If we prevail, we have profited in name and honor till Judgment Day, and if vanquished we die and are at rest. Whatever comes to pass I am resigned."

So they thus perfected their agreement to a feud with the Horamari.

One day it so happened that Haio, Suto's brother, in accordance with his custom, visited the Rekani villages and commenced harrying and plundering. Tato and Tamo accompanied by ten of their men approached him and said, "Go out from amongst our people! From this day on we do not consent to your coming or going in Rekani."

Haio said, "Nevertheless, we are [here], and we do not regard you as of any importance."

When Haio spoke thus Tato presented his Martini [rifle], discharged a cartridge, and killed him on the spot. Some of Haio's followers were also killed, and others got away to Nerva, Suto's village, the distance between Nerva and Razga being less than two hours. The following day Suto collected all the tribesmen of Duskan and Horamar, and said, "Now will I go at once and annihilate the clan of Mikail Agha Rekani, and will seize all the Rekani land as revenge for Haio." All said, "We are ready, whatever you order, we shall execute. Certainly the revenge of the Agha's brother is a duty upon all of us (literally, on all our heads), and even without your orders it is incumbent upon us day and night to strive for Haio's revenge."

So Suto with his force came upon Razga village and opened the fight. Tato's men were few, and could not fight in the open, so took cover in Tato's fort, and from there engaged Suto's forces. They became surrounded, and Suto's men were pressing the attack. At the portal of the fort Tato was seated at an embrasure over the door and killed four or five at every rush, throwing them back. Suto said, "This will not do, we must approach the fort with a chirpa [a movable fence, shield or blockade]." They cut some trees from Razga village, and dismembered them, constructed a chirpa and advanced towards the fort, and about the fourth or fifth hour of the night they got the chirpa up to it, and from its top a few men got upon the roof of the fort, and Tato's men became hard pressed. But Tato said, "Fear nothing, a man is for such a day as this, to seize, to kill, that is the manly way. Wait, and now will I scatter them."

He soaked four or five quilts in kerosene, spread them on poles, thrust them in the chirpa, and fired them. The eaves of the fort were all stone, and did not catch fire. When the flames of the chirpa rose, all sides of the fort were illuminated. Tato and his men fired several volleys upon Suto's force, and in that time finished off twenty-four people. Once again Suto's men were forced back, the chirpa availed not. He called out to Tato, "I go to prepare destruction for you, this time I will make a chirpa of stone. Then you cannot fire it." Tafo answered him, and called out, "I have debauched thy father! Your wooden chirpa did not avail, and before you can bring a stone one to the fort a long time will pass. Perhaps by then God will find me some means."

They commenced the construction of a stone chirpa, but it was not so easy as the wooden one. During this time information reached the Government of Amadia that for the last twelve days Suto had been besieging Tato's fort, and he with his men was beleaguered.

The Qaim Maqam [deputy or subgovernor] of Amadia then sent a gendarme officer with twenty gendarmes to Razga to remove Suto's force from the attack on Tato by whatever means be possible. The officer and gendarmes reached Razga and saw a great concourse about it. They reasoned that the affair could not be hurried, it would only be possible with stratagem and cunning. Since many men had come to their death; with [but] twenty gendarmes fighting, the affair would not be resolved, and to consent to do so, moreover, would be far from sense.

The officer addressed Suto I have come specially to you to say that I do not desire that your clap should be destroyed, as you are a well-born and respectable Agha. It is now several days since, that you have brought your force against the Rekani, and are fighting. The noise of it has reached the Vilayet [province] of Mosul, and the Wali [provincial governor] has informed to Qaim Maqam of Amadia that he has heard such a rumor, and ordered him to make searching inquiries, and if it is correct to let him know quickly, when he will inform the Wali of Van that he may send royal troops from Van against the tribe of Suto. Also from Mosul two battalions with two guns will come to discipline Suto and protect Tato.

"Since things are thus, the saving of your position is, that in one hour you disband your force, when we shall reply to the Wali of Mosul that nothing of importance has occurred, that some men of Suto and Tato had quarreled behind the village about the matter of some vineyard theft for two or three hours, and had now separated with two or three men wounded. Then you will not be responsible. So, I have told you. Consent, as you like; or dissent, as you like."

When the officer thus spoke, all the people said to Suto, "We will not destroy our homes, conflict with the Government is too much for us. If it is tribal warfare we are all ready to give ourselves to killing for you. But against the Government is not possible for us."

In the end Suto consented, and retired his force.

The officer took much money from him, and also placed a heavy obligation upon him, inasmuch as he had arranged his affairs with ease. He also said to Tato, "To save your position it is [best] that you should transport your household and family and your relatives to the headquarters of the Amadia cannon; inform the Vilayet and the Sublime Porte [Sultan's Court] at Constantinople. Catalogue your grievances and injuries before the necessary departments, and perhaps the Government may give you its protection. Otherwise you will not be able to defend yourselves against the pressure of the Aghas of Horamar. We also will all bear witness for you." In the end he made Tato also acquiescent and grateful, and took all his family and following with him to Amadia. Also he profited by much money from him. For there is a popular proverb amongst the Kurds: "Turks are vultures, their pleasure is in being full of carrion."

When Tato with all his people went to Amadia the lands of Rekani were left without a guardian. Shaikh [Sheik] Muhammad Sadiq was also a great vulture, and the Rekani lands were equally a very fat and pleasing carcass. The avidity of the noble Shaikh became most over-powering, and he took thought to himself how he could easily bring the lands of Rekani under his own hand. He sent a confidential letter, by the hand of two or three respectable and intelligent men, together with some money to the Qaim Maqam of Amadia [saying], "I beg of you to so arrange that Tato should need me, and come here, that I may say to him that I will get his business arranged. You on your side, hinder it somewhat."

When the letter reached the Qaim Maqam it pleased him very much, and he acted in accordance with the Shaikh's aims, saying to Tato, "I have thought of a surer and easier way for you. Although here also your affairs may be arranged, the Mosul Vilayet delays matters, and before a result eventuates one becomes most disgusted. The Van Vilayet puts things in hand more quickly, and in that Vilayet, everything is in the hands of Shaikh Muhammad Sadiq, [who] does as he likes. I say if you and your brothers and some of the notables of the Rekani tribe go to Neri before Shaikh Muhammad Sadiq, your affairs will be sooner arranged. [That] both tribally and officially the Shaikh be partner and protector is better for you, and then Suto's back will break." In fine, he convinced Tato, who was grateful to the Qaim Maqam for showing him such a course. So Tato with his brothers and the notables came to Neri, and the game entered the nets of the Shaikh.

When he came before Shaikh Muhammad Sadiq, the latter showed him much honor and graciousness. He was more soft-tongued than a Pawai, and soothed Tato's heart by all means possible. He said, "Sell me the site of Razga Fort, I will then entirely demolish it and build it again larger and stronger. I will place twenty of my own men with you, and will give your men a hundred Martini and Mauser rifles, and will also procure a special order from Government for your protection. And in exchange for this the elders of the Rekani shall give me one tenth of their harvests each year."

Tato replied, "Whatever the Shaikh order, I consent."

In the end their pact was thus resolved, and Tato deceived. Sura Chaush [*chaush*, sergeant] with twenty chosen men was sent with Tato among the Rekani. They entirely razed Razga fort, and sent masons, who commenced rebuilding it. The lower stories were approaching completion when Suto came to the conclusion that if Razga fort be completed in this style and the Shaikh support the Rekani, Tato's strength would reach such a degree that he could no longer oppose him, and in the end there would be great distress for the Agha of Horamar. Also the caravan road from Horamar towards Mosul, Akra, and Amadia passes through the Rekani.

Suto therefore summoned all the Duskani and Horamari, and said to them, "You all know to what extent Tato Rekani is my enemy."

They replied, "Yes, Agha, we know well."

He said, "You all know how masterful and rapacious is Shaikh Muhammad Sadiq?"

They replied, "Yes, Agha."

He said, "You know that if the Razga fort be finished upon those foundations and the Shaikh combine with Tato, the lands of the Duskani and Horamari will be entrapped, and we shall be forced to submit to Tato, or else not live."

They all said together, "Yes, Agha, we know it is thus, and more."

Suto said to his people, "Good, since you all confirm this, why do you not plan how to prevent them, for now we are placed between death and life, and death is the nearer. Enough, either you make a plan, and I will fall in with your ideas, or I will think it over, and you will act in accordance with what I say."

They replied, "So long as the person of our Agha is present, no one is the possessor of an opinion. Whatever the Agha decide, our duty is obedience."

Suto said, "Since you are so submissive, let it be agreed that I sacrifice myself to your saving. First," he said, "My people! You know that I did humble myself to Shaikh Muhammad Sadiq enough that I give him one of your villages for him to show gratitude and for my honor to be vastly greater than that of Tato."

They all said, "We believe it. It is even as the Agha says."

Suto said, "Good, whatever I do is for your sakes, and not for myself. My idea is this. Let us attack Razga and kill Sura Chaush and the Shaikh's men, and not allow Razga fort to be completed. How do you think that would do?"

They said: "We are steadfast in the Agha's opinion, for whenever the Razga fort be finished we shall be destroyed, so that war is the better course for us, when, if we are to be destroyed, it will be with honor and good fame, not with meanness and dishonor."

So at dawn nine hundred men of the Duski and Horamari attacked Razga. That day Tato and his men had gone to Amadia to fetch their families to Razga, and only Sura Chaush with twenty men was there. The fort was not yet



finished. For an hour they fought, and Suto's force surrounded them on all sides. Sura and his men retired to a house, but it was not suitable for defense. Suto's people came right up to the walls of the house, and though from the lattice Sura killed two or three of Suto's men, it was of no avail. They fired the house at every corner, and Sura with twelve men were faced with burning. They fought to the utmost, and did not surrender their arms, but seven men asked for mercy and emerged. Suto said to those seven, "Give up your arms, and go before the Shaikh himself, and tell him not to think again of the lands of Rekan. So long as a lad of the Mala Miri is left, no one can with impunity trespass upon the clan of the Rekan."

Those seven servants came [to the Shaikh] stripped, without arms, miserable, shamefaced. Everyone remained aghast, and said, "What state is this?" They described their misfortunes in full, and when they had told the tale of their condition to Shaikh Muhammad Sadiq he was enraged to the utmost degree. For two reasons: one was that the wheat and rice of the Rekan had not fallen into his hands, and the other that great loss and dishonor had come to him. The Shaikh fell to thoughts of vengeance for this affair. He collected his chief men and consulted with them, "What course can you see?" he said.

A few replied, "Let us collect a large force from the tribes and attack and annihilate them all." Some said, "The course is that full details of his actions be laid before the Valis of Van and Mosul, and that through Government he come to judgment, and that by the hand of Government he come to chastisement." And others said, "It is well that the Shaikh show favor to Abdurrahim Agha. He is of the Mafi, and between them and the Mala Miri is ever enmity. Then he and Tato would unite, and when enemies thus appeared from outside and inside, he (Suto) would be hard pressed."

Others yet said, "Let us raid their villages and hold up their caravan roads, nor allow them rest till we fully achieve our revenge." In short, each one gave some opinion.

I, the humble Mulla [Islamic teacher] Said, was not at the conference, but at the school teaching the students. A servant came and summoned me to the Shaikh. I went into his presence and he asked me, "What do you think is the best method of revenging Sura Chaush and his men?"

I replied, "I am a mulla and am young; of matters of policy I know nothing. I have not, much, nay, even hardly, mixed in mundane affairs. Here, all present are intelligent, important, and experienced. They necessarily know better than I."

The Shaikh said, "It is as you say, but I desire that you also give your opinion, whether good or bad, for they have all expounded their own ideas."

I asked, "Of all their opinions, which has appeared to your reverence the most acceptable?"

The Shaikh replied, "As yet I am saying nothing till you also say what is your opinion."

I said, "I beg that I may know the opinions of the others, and if they agree with mine I will confirm them, and if not in agreement, then to the degree of my defective wits I also will lay some proposal before you."

The Shaikh repeated the opinions of the conference in detail, and said, "These are they, their ideas, let me see now what you will say."

I replied, "The idea of the tribal force without the knowledge or cooperation of Government is bad, headstrong actions are eventually the cause of damage and remorse. Raiding and caravan-plundering also are but the work of brigands. They are not worthy of the honor and repute of a great one like you, the spiritual head of the humble. Friendliness toward Abdurrahim Agha is indeed good, but in that case, when Suto is disposed of, it is unlikely to profit our cause, and even if it do so will take a long time. Representation of his conduct to the Walis and his being brought to justice by Government is certainly necessary, but the first consideration is that possibly so much alone may not be enough and will not cure our ills. At most, Government will imprison him and after a time will take a deal of money from him and release him, when he will become still stronger and our affairs yet more deranged. I consider best thus: First, representation of his conduct to Government; next, the procuring of an official order and the stationing of ten gendarmes for the repair of Razga fort, and the testimony of Tato that the village and fort of Razga have been sold by him to Shaikh Muhammad Sadiq. Then, that Government give permission to Shaikh Muhammad Sadiq to protect the village and install at Razga his own armed men therefore. Then, whatever incident occurs, no fault is on the Shaikh, it is on Suto. Very good presents should be sent to the Qaim Maqams of Giaver and Amadia to gratify them, so that they will write well of the Shaikh and evil of Suto. Four hundred men, one hundred Shem-dinan, one hundred Girdi, one hundred Herki, one hundred Muzuri, who regard themselves as your adherents, should be sent with Tato to Razga while the fort is being finished and the gendarmes and masons are yet on it. Every night the men should attack one Duskani village. Then our revenge will be both tribal and governmental, and the aim of the Shaikh, which is to possess the Rekani, will be achieved and all four tribes will become enemies of Suto. And then neither he nor his descendants can ever be at rest from those four tribes."

When I outlined this plan, the Shaikh was so pleased, and laughed so much, that a hen with all its feathers might have flown into his mouth.

He said "Bravo! Mulla Said. Your idea pleases my mind better than any other, and I shall work according to your scheme." The members of the conference also agreed that my ideas were more practicable and profitable than any others. The Shaikh continued, "And, since your plan is better than all the others, I should like you to take the trouble to go to Razga and be with my people yourself till the castle be finished. Without your consent, no one shall do anything."

Then I represented that such was not my duty, but the Shaikh became more persistent. In the end four hundred men and ten gendarmes were collected, as I had suggested, and were handed over to me.

I petitioned the Shaikh to allow Shuhab ed Din, his nephew, Mulla Musa, his secretary, and Qatas Agha, his steward, all three, to come as well. The Shaikh asked, "What are they for? They are not necessary when you are there, what need of anyone else?"

I replied, "A heavy beam needs many backs to sustain it, for a single one would break under it; this is a great undertaking, and very exacting, and if one has to cope with all its demands, confusion will result, and the work suffer. Since Shuhab ed Din is your nephew his influence and value are greater; it is necessary that he come as commander of the fighting men. Mulla Musa is necessary for letter writing and advice upon affairs, and Qatas Agha for the men's rations and collection of the harvests. If I have to do all these my reason will become deranged and unable to cope with the real difficulties." Once more all the members of the meeting confirmed what I had said.

The Shaikh also agreed, and again commended me, and sent us.

At night we arrived at Mazra and Begoz, and the following day reached the gorge of Herki. The next night we went to Deri, and that same night sent fifty selected men to the hill above Peramizi, which is at the boundaries of the Rekani, Herki, and Duskani, because if that hill be taken no one could get to the Rekani. We rose with the dawn and pressed forward for one stage, nor rested till we reached Razga, and when we arrived there but half an hour was left to sunset. At once I sent one hundred men, twenty-five from each tribe, on to the hillock before Nerva, Suto's village. I gave them instructions that no one should fire a rifle nor attack till morning, when I would come myself. If that night Suto rose and escaped, good; if not, they should surround the village and not allow anyone to emerge. That night Suto's spies were among the Rekani and warned him that this time such a force had come to Razga, both tribal and government, that he can no longer remain at Nerva.

So that night he arose and went to Horamar. With the dawn those of us who had remained at Razga reached the others who had gone to the hillock before Nerva, and together surrounded and fired a volley on the village, and no sound came from it. By degrees the men sneaked up to it and saw it was deserted and no one in it. We also went to it, and I said to Tato, "This time it is your turn, take your revenge, Tato." His men set fire to the forts of Nerva, and the whole village burned. It being time of ripening grapes the force went into the vineyards and brought loads of grapes to Razga. The masons resumed work on the fort. The day after, we left one hundred men there, and three hundred with Ahmed Beg Barasuri (who was one of Shaikh Muhammad Sadiq's chaushes) we sent against Biri and Chi villages. They plundered them thoroughly, and brought back all the sheep and mules to Razga.

I then sent a letter to the Shaikh that "Thanks to the shadow of the protection of your exalted ancestors, the raiders of the Shaikh (may our souls be his sacrifice) reached Razga with all ease. One after the other successes and victories, with attainment of all desires, had been won from the enemy, and the details are thus and thus."

The Shaikh was most delighted, and congratulated us upon our victories. He wrote, "At present my constant hope is in the perfection of understanding and wisdom and courage of such as you. Than those gratifying victories are yet greater-God be with you. Amen. Sadiq."

Let us resume the tale of Suto's plight. When he went to Horamar he sent Mulla Hasan Shuki, who was his clerk, and Qazi of Duskan and Horamar, to Tahir Agha Giaveri, and when the latter reached Tahir Agha he said, "Suto Agha has sent me to you. You are an Asad Aghai, the head of all the Duskani tribe, and you are in touch with government at Giaver. Friendship is for such a day. Now what are we to think? And what are we to do?"

Tahir Agha, a man of experience, said to Mulla Hasan, "I have to think somewhat. At present for Suto, except to pacify Shaikh Muhammad Sadiq, there is no course left, as his quarrel with Tato and Shaikh Muhammad Sadiq's men, and the killing of Sura Chaush and twelve men, is well known everywhere. The Government is a supporter of the Shaikh. Therefore, now it is necessary to pacify the Shaikh."

Mulla Hasan said, "Yes, it is as you say. I also think the same, but I do not know where lies the way to the pacification of the Shaikh."

Tahir Agha replied, "It is certainly difficult, but, if it be possible for you to go to Razga to Mulla Said, ask him if it can be done; he may tell you some way."

Mulla Hasan left Tahir Agha with the intention of coming to me, and arrived at the village of Hishi in Rekani, a Christian village which is an hour distant from Razga, and remained there the night. In the early morning we saw a Christian man come before me from there who said he wished to see me alone. When he saw me he said, "Suto's clerk is sitting in my house and says he would much like to come before you and give you his news, but does not dare on account of outposts who might kill him."

I then sent ten men with the Christian, and said to them, "Go and bring Mulla Hasan in safety here, if a hair of his head fall, I will make of you all a target for Martinis." So the men went and fetched him, and he remained two nights with us, and we discussed everything. I said to him, "If the Shaikh accept Suto and forgive him for the killing, do you promise that he will go before the Shaikh?"

He said, "Yes, but on condition that Suto be certain of his own life."

I said, "Good, go to Suto and explain all to him and get his promise, and by the time you return I shall have communicated with the Shaikh and obtained his decision." We sent Mulla Hasan back to Suto and I commenced correspondence with the Shaikh. Since I knew the habit of Turkish officials, how their word and deed were never in agreement, and that except for the cooking of the roast of their own ends they have no care, I knew that in a short time they would again bring Suto to distress, and even take large sums of money from the Shaikh, and afterwards, step by step, favor Suto, and in turn take money from

him. They destroy no man for another's sake. I therefore deemed it suitable thus, that the Shaikh accept Suto, for as yet he had not lost his grip of affairs. Finally, I wrote to the Shaikh in this sense and set forth the details of Mulla Hasan's coming and going and our conversations together, and sent the letter. The Shaikh sent me reply, "Whatever be the means of protecting my name and honor in these affairs, you are my agent and attorney. In future you need not refer to me. Such as you think right, so do, beloved, w'as salam."

The day after arrival of that reply, Mulla Hasan returned to Razga and said, "If you are certain of the Shaikh, I am certain of Suto, that he will not disregard my advice."

I said, "Since it is so, and we are both agents, I consider Suto's best course thus, to take Tahir Agha and Ali Effendi Pailam with him and go to Neri to the tomb of Savid Taha, when the Shaikh may forgive him. If Suto do not thus, you know he is culpable before Government and will come to destruction."

Mulla Hasan said, "If you know that it will be well thus, I will do so." I reassured him and he departed, and, having spoke to Suto in this sense, the latter consented and went with Tahir Agha and Ali Effendi to Neri. The Shaikh was most gratified, for his desire was ever to get fine flour from between two hard mill-stones. It was not for grief over Sura Chaush: he wanted money. He said to Suto, "For the sakes of Tahir Agha and Ali Effendi [that is, Lord Ali], and for the sake of the honor of my grandfather's grave, I have forgiven you for killing and seizing and exiling. But the orphans of Sura Chaush are poor, and the dependants of his men are helpless. The blood money of each is one hundred liras. Give one thousand three hundred liras, and depart with well wishing to your own house."

Suto having agreed, two gendarmes and eight men were handed over to him to go among the Duski and Horamari to collect thirteen hundred liras for the Shaikh and bring it. In the end he apportioned more than three thousand among the Duski and Horamari, and collected it. Thirteen hundred was given to the Shaikh, and he took the residue for himself. When Suto thought it over, he realized that if Tato became a Shaikh's man, and the Shaikh's servants be continuously with Tato, his own condition would become uncertain and his profits diminish, so he said to himself that it would be well to make such plans regarding Tato as to destroy him by pretense of friendship.

After a year, when all the lands of the Rekani had fallen into the Shaikh's hands with their harvests (not a donkey's ear reached Tato), Suto knew that there was a chance to humiliate Tato. He sent Mulla Hasan to him, having told him, "What is past is past, may he and I make a compact and from now hence become friends, and, as formerly, do one another no harm. Shaikh Muhammad Sadiq is a dragon, and will eventually devour both of us. It is now a year he (Tato) sees what profit has come to him. To the Shaikh's servants there is no difference between him and a [common] Kurmanj. Now that the Shaikh

destroys us, it is better that we make peace. If he believe not, I will give him my daughter in marriage that he really believe that I wish peace from my heart.” Mulla Hasan accordingly went to Tato and spoke to him after this fashion. It entirely won him, and he consented. Suto gave him his daughter. One day Tato, seizing an opportunity, took all their arms from the Shaikh’s men, and turned them out disarmed. They came to the Shaikh, who was extremely chagrined, but to no good, for Suto and Tato were now entirely reconciled, and together went to the Shaikh of Barzan, who was also an enemy of Shaikh Muhammad Sadiq, and became his adherents. Two years passed thus, and Tato was entirely at peace.

Thereafter Shaikh Muhammad Sadiq died, and the Shaikh of Barzan rebelled against the Turkish Government. By degrees Suto’s plans were maturing. He knew that there remained now no sanctuary for Tato, and he considered, “It is well to make him out guilty before Government, so that when no course be left to him I may destroy him.” He sent to Tato, who each year used to pay certain money to Government on account of sheep tax, a message saying, “What necessity is there for this? All the Duskani tribe pay less than half. This year, at the time of sheep-count, send the Rekam animals to us till the officials go, then take the herds back.” Tato did accordingly. Suto secretly advised the Qaim Magam of Amadia that “Tato acts in this manner, and however much I admonish him he heeds not, I know not what to do; for fear of Government I do not dare punish him, otherwise for me to punish, him is easier than to swallow a draught of water.”

The Qaim Maqam of Amadia sent Suto a most grateful reply to the effect that he was authorized to punish any person who in any iota practiced deception on the Most High Islamic State, and Suto felt secure.

One day he feigned illness, fell into his bed, and sent word to all his friends and relatives that he was near to dying and asking all to come that they be present at his death. Mulla Hasan was seated by his pillow, and with him was reading the Yasin chapter. All his relatives were collected and were weeping for him. Tato, who was his son-in-law, was also sent for to come and bring Suto’s daughter with him, for, “the Agha is at the point of death, in case they should not see one another alive.”

Tato, with his wife and brother Tamo and four or five servants, went to Nerva, Suto’s village. When they arrived they saw everyone weeping for the Agha, and the brothers joined in the lamentations. Tato cried “Agha! Agha! Lift thine eyes a little! May we all be thy sacrifice! Would that once again you might arise from this sickness even be I not left on this earth.”

Suto raised his eyes a little, sighed, and said, “Tato, I am dying. Thank God, my men have seen me once more. Death is God’s ordinance, and it is the way of all of us.” He continued, “Usman, Teli, serve Tato well. So! I die. Tata is your elder brother. Fall not out with him, as formerly.”

All said, “Yes, whatever the Agha orders, we obey with heart and soul.”

That night a separate apartment was given Tato and Tamo. At the time of sleeping Suto called Usman and Teli and now said to them, "I am well, my idea is thus." They departed lightly and took as many men as necessary to the apartment of Tato and Tamo, killed both in their sleep, and disarmed their servants. Suto arose and said "Thank God, I have finished my enemy and taken my revenge in safety."

# PALESTINE (ISLAMIC)

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## THE SURETY

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Hanauer, James Edward. *Folklore of the Holy Land: Moslem, Christian and Jewish*. London: Duckworth and Company, 1907, 171–176.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Muslim

**National Origin:** Palestine

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In the early twentieth century when the following six tales were collected, the label “Palestine” was applied to the region extending from Gaza on the Mediterranean Sea south to approximately the middle of contemporary Lebanon. On the west was the Mediterranean, and on the east was the Syrian Desert. Sites sacred to Christians, Jews, and Muslims are encompassed within these boundaries, thus leading to the designation of the area as the Holy Land. Except for a relatively brief period (eleventh to thirteenth centuries) when Christian Crusaders established the Kingdom of Jerusalem, the area was under Muslim control from the seventh century C.E. until the founding of the state of Israel in the mid-twentieth century. The following tales represent this Islamic heritage. Caliph Omar ibn el Khattâb (580–644 C.E.) was one of the companions of Muhammad, and his second successor after the Prophet’s death.

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A herd of camels happened to be passing an orchard, the owner of which was seated upon the “sinsileh” or rough stone fence. One of the animals, a very fine male, caught hold of the overhanging bough of a fruit tree and broke it off with his teeth. Hereupon the owner of the orchard snatched up a stone and threw it at the camel. The aim was unexpectedly true,



and the beast fell dead. Its owner, stung to fury by the loss of his property, snatched up the same stone and threw it with as deadly accuracy at the owner of the orchard, who, struck on the temple, was instantly killed.

Horror-struck at his rash act, and realizing what the consequences would be, the frightened camel-herd leapt on to the swiftest of his beasts, and leaving the rest to shift for themselves, fled as fast as he could. He was, however, promptly followed by the sons of the slain man, and forced to return with them to the scene of the tragedy, which happened to be close to the camp of the Caliph Omar ibn el Khattâb.

The sons of the dead orchard-owner demanded the life of the man who had slain their father, and, though the latter explained that he had not done the deed with malice aforethought, but under the impulse of sudden provocation, yet, as he had no witnesses to prove that he was speaking the truth, and as the sons of the dead man would not hear of a pecuniary compensation, the Caliph ordered the man-slayer to be beheaded.

Now, in those times it was customary for the execution of a criminal to take place almost immediately after he had been condemned to die. The mode of procedure was as follows: a skin or hide called "nuta 'a" was spread in the monarch's presence, and the person to be beheaded was made to kneel upon this hide with his hands bound behind him. The "jelâd" or executioner, standing behind him with a drawn sword, then cried aloud, "O Commander of the Faithful, is it indeed your decision that Fulân be caused to forsake this world?" If the Caliph answered, "yes," then the executioner asked the same question the second time, and if it were answered in the affirmative, he asked it once again for the third and last time, and immediately afterwards, unless the potentate instantly revoked the fatal order, he struck off the prisoner's head.

Now, on the occasion of which we are speaking, the condemned, finding that his life was irretrievably forfeited, earnestly besought the Caliph to grant him three days' respite that he might go to his distant tent and arrange his family affairs. He swore that at the expiration of that term he would return and pay the penalty of the law. The Caliph told him that he must find a surety to die in his stead in case he should break his word. The poor man looked around him in despair upon the crowd of utter strangers. The "nuta 'a" was brought and the executioner advanced to bind his hands.

In despair he cried out, "Has the race of the manly perished?"

Receiving no answer, he repeated the question with yet greater emphasis, whereupon the noble Abu Dhûr, who was one of the "Sohaba" or companions of the Prophet, stepped forward and asked the Caliph's permission to become his surety. The monarch granted his request, but warned him that his own life would be sacrificed in case the man did not return within the time stipulated. Abu Dhûr having agreed to this, the condemned was set free. He started off at a run and was soon out of sight.

The three days had passed, and as the man-slayer had not returned and nobody believed that he would do so, the Caliph, yielding to the dead man's relatives, gave orders that Abu Dhûr should pay the forfeit. The hide was brought and Abu Dhûr, his hands tied behind him, knelt upon it amid the lamentations and tears of his numerous friends and relatives. Twice, in a voice that was heard above the noise of the assembly, had the executioner asked the ruler of Islâm if it was indeed his will that the noble man should quit this world. Twice had the monarch grimly answered "yes" when, just as the fatal question was to be put for the third and last time, some one cried out, "For Allah's sake, stop! For here comes some one running!"

At a sign from the Caliph the executioner remained silent, and, to every one's astonishment, the man who three days previously had been condemned to die ran up out of breath and, with the words, "Praise be to Allah" sank exhausted to the ground.

"Fool," said the Caliph to him, "why didst thou return? Hadst thou stayed away, the surety would have died in thy stead and thou wouldst have been free."

"I returned," replied the man, "in order to prove that not only the race of the virtuous has not yet died out but also that of the truthful."

"Then why didst thou go away at all?" asked the monarch.

"In order," said the man, who was now kneeling with bound hands upon the hide from which Abu Dhûr had arisen, "in order to prove that the race of the trustworthy has not yet perished."

"Explain thyself," said the Commander of the Faithful.

"Some time ago," said the man, "a poor widow came to me and entrusted some articles of value to my keeping. Having to leave our camp on business, I took the things into the desert and hid them under a great rock in a spot which no one but myself could find, and there they were when I was condemned to die. Had my life not been spared for a few days, I should have died with a heavy heart, as the knowledge of the hiding-place would have perished with me; the woman would have been irretrievably injured; and my children would have heard her curse my memory without being able to clear it. Now, however, that I have arranged my household affairs and have restored her property to the woman, I can die with a light heart."

On hearing this Omar turned to Abu Dhûr and asked, "Is this man any friend or relative of thine?"

"Wallahi!" replied Abu Dhûr, "I assure thee, O Emîr [commander] el Mûminin, that I never set eyes on him till three days since."

"Then, why wast thou such a fool as to risk thy life in his stead, for had he not returned, I was determined that thou shouldst die in his place."

"I did so in order to prove that the race of the manly and virtuous had not yet died out," replied Abu Dhûr.

On receiving this answer the Caliph was silent for a while; then, turning to the kneeling man, he said, "I pardon thee, thou canst go."

“Why so? O Commander of the Faithful!” asked an aged and privileged sheikh [skeik].

“Because,” answered Omar, “as it has been proved that the races of the manly, the virtuous, the truthful, and the trustworthy have not yet perished; it only remains for me to demonstrate that the races of the clement and the generous are also still alive, and I therefore not only pardon the man, but shall pay the ‘diyeh’ (blood money) out of my own private means.”

## **BENEVOLENCE**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Hanauer, James Edward. *Folklore of the Holy Land: Moslem, Christian and Jewish*. London: Duckworth and Company, 1907, 164–167.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Muslim

**National Origin:** Palestine

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The wazir (usually spelled “vizier”) is a high-ranking minister whose customary role was religious or political advisor. The sheykh el Islâm is an Islamic scholar. Derwishes (dervishes) are Sufis, members of a mystic and often ascetic branch of Islam.

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A certain Sultan once had a dispute with his wazîr as to what constitutes true kindness. He said that it might be found among the poorest of the people, while the wazir maintained that it was impossible to show kindness, or to feel it, unless one were well-to-do. When the Sultan thought enough had been said, he summoned the sheykh el Islâm, and ordered a record of the debate and of the arguments on both sides to be made and deposited in the public archives.

Some time afterwards the Sultan, one afternoon sent secretly for the sheykh, and the two disguised themselves as derwishes and went out to settle the question. In the city they found much to interest them, but nothing bearing on the problem which they wished to solve.

By the time they reached the outskirts of the town the sun was setting, and as they advanced into the country it grew dark apace. They were glad to behold a light shining in a field beside the road, and went towards it. It came from a little mud-roofed hut, the abode of a poor goatherd. The man himself was out at work, but his wife and mother bade the strangers welcome in his absence. A few minutes later he came home, bringing with him four goats which were all his substance. The children, running out, told him guests had arrived, and he at

once came in and saluted them. Having assured them that his house was theirs, he asked to be excused for a minute, and going to the owners of the flock he tended, begged two loaves of wheaten bread, as he could not set coarse dhurrah bread (bread made from sorghum) before his guests. The two loaves with some eggs, curds, and olives, made a tempting meal.

“But pardon us,” said the Sultan, “we are under a vow not to eat anything but bread and kidneys for a year and a day.” Without a word, the host went out, killed his four goats, and broiled their kidneys.

But the Sultan, when they were set before him, said, “We have a vow to eat nothing until after midnight. We will take this with us, and eat it when our vow has expired. And now, I grieve to say, we must be going.” The goatherd and his family begged them to stay till morning, but in vain.

When the masqueraders were once more alone on the highway, the Sultan said, “Now let us try the wazir!” They reached his house, from which streamed light and music; he was entertaining.

The humble request of two derwishes for food and lodging was promptly refused; and when they still persisted, the wazir was heard shouting, “Drive away those dogs, and thrash them soundly. That will teach them to plague their betters.” The order was so well obeyed that the twain escaped with their bare lives. Bruised and bleeding they reached the palace about midnight.

When they had put off their disguise, the Sultan sent privately for a dumb physician to tend their wounds. He then called together his council of ministers, and, having described the whereabouts of the goatherd’s dwelling, told them all to go and stand near it, but without disturbing the inmates. “When the lord of that house comes out in the morning,” greet him with the utmost respect, and say that I request the favor of a visit from him. Escort him hither honorably and, between you, bring the bodies of four goats which you will find near his door.”

The goatherd feared for his life, in the morning, when he found his hut the center of a crowd of courtiers and soldiers. Nor was his alarm diminished by the respectfulness of their manner towards him as they invited him to the Sultan’s palace, nor by their inexplicable conduct in picking up the dead goats and carrying them as honored corpses.

When the procession reached the palace, the Sultan made the goatherd sit beside him and ordered the record of his dispute with the wazir to be read aloud for all to hear. The recital ended, the Sultan told the story of his adventures on the previous evening. Then turning to the wazir, he said, “You have betrayed your own cause! No one in this realm is in a better position than you to show kindness to his fellowmen! Yet you show nothing but cruelty! You are no longer my wazir, and your wealth shall be confiscated. But this goatherd who begged better bread than he himself could afford to eat, for the greediest and most ill-mannered guests that ever came to man’s house, and who sacrificed his whole substance rather than disappoint them—he shall be my friend and sit beside me.” Thus was kindness rewarded, and churlishness dishonored.

## JUDGMENTS OF KARAKASH

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Hanauer, James Edward. *Folklore of the Holy Land: Moslem, Christian and Jewish*. London: Duckworth and Company, 1907, 120–124.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Muslim

**National Origin:** Palestine

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Demonstrating an important way in which folk humor can prove to be a tool for social criticism, the following comic tale (AT 1534A) parodies the pretensions of both the legal system and its representatives.

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A weaver, closing his shop for the night, left a long needle sticking in his work on the loom. A thief got in with a false key, and, as he was stumbling about in the dark, the needle put out one of his eyes. He went out again, and locked the door behind him.

Next morning, he told his story to Karakash, the impartial judge, who at once sent for the weaver, and eyeing him sternly, asked, “Did you leave a packing-needle in the cloth on your loom when you shut your shop last night?”

“Yes.”

“Well, this poor thief has lost his eye through your carelessness; he was going to rob your shop; he stumbled, and the needle pierced his eye. Am I not Karakash, the impartial judge? This poor thief has lost an eye through your fault; so you shall lose an eye in like manner.”

“But, my lord,” said the weaver, “he came to rob me; he had no right there.”

“We are not concerned with what this robber came to do, but with what he did. Was your shop-door broken open or damaged this morning; or was anything missing?”

“No.”

“He has done you no harm then, and you do but add insult to injury by throwing up his way of life against him. Justice demands that you lose an eye.”

The weaver offered money to the robber, to the Kadi [judge], but in vain; the impartial judge would not be moved. At last, a bright thought struck him, and he said, “An eye for an eye is justice, O my lord the Kadi; yet in this case it is not quite fair on me. You are the impartial judge, and I submit to you that I, being a married man with children, shall suffer more damage in the loss of an eye than this poor robber, who has no one dependent on him. How could I go on weaving with but one eye? But I have a good neighbor, a gunsmith, who is a single man. Let one of his eyes be put out. What does he want with two eyes, for looking along gun-barrels?”

The impartial judge, struck with the justice of these arguments, sent for the gunsmith, and had his eye put out.

A carpenter was fitting the doors and lattice-work to a house newly built, when a stone over a window fell and broke one of his legs. He complained to Karakash, the impartial judge, who called the lord of the house, and charged him with culpable negligence. "It is not my fault, but the builder's," pleaded the lord of the house; so the builder was sent for.

The builder said that it was not his fault, because at the moment he was laying that particular stone a girl passed by in a dress of so bright a red that he could not see what he was doing.

The impartial judge caused search to be made for that girl. She was found, and brought before him.

"O veiled one," he said, "the red dress which you wore on such a day has cost this carpenter a broken leg, and so you must pay the damages."

"It was not my fault, but the draper's," said the girl. "Because when I went to buy stuff for a dress, he had none but that particular bright red."

The draper was forthwith summoned. He said it was not his fault, because the English manufacturer had sent him only this bright red material, though he had ordered others.

"What! You dog!" cried Karakash, "Do you deal with the heathen?" and he ordered the draper to be hanged from the lintel of his own door. The servants of justice took him and were going to hang him, but he was a tall man and the door of his house was low; so they returned to the Kadi, who inquired, "Is the dog dead?"

They replied, "He is tall, and the door of his house is very low. He will not hang there."

"Then hang the first short man you can find," said Karakash.

A certain rich old miser was subject to fainting fits, which tantalized two nephews who desired his death; for, though constantly falling down lifeless, he always got up again. Unable to bear the strain any longer, they took him in one of his fits and prepared him for burial.

They called in the professional layer-out, who took off the miser's clothes which, by ancient custom, were his perquisite, bound up his jaws, performed the usual ablutions upon the body, stuffed the nostrils, ears and other apertures with cotton wool against the entrance of demons, sprinkled the wool with a mixture of water, pounded camphor, and dried and pounded leaves of the lotus tree, and also with rosewater; bound the feet together by a bandage round the ankles, and disposed the hands upon the breast.

All this took time, and before the operator had quite finished, the miser revived; but he was so frightened at what was going on, that he fainted again; and his nephews were able to get the funeral procession under way.

They had performed half the road to the cemetery when the miser was again brought to life by the jolting of the bier, caused by the constant change of the bearers, who incessantly pressed forward to relieve one another in the meritorious act of carrying a true believer to the grave.

Lifting the loose lid, he sat up, and roared for help. To his relief he saw Karakash, the impartial judge, coming down the path the procession was mounting, and appealed to him by name.

The judge at once stopped the procession, and, confronting the nephews, asked, "Is your uncle dead or alive?"

"Quite dead, my lord."

He turned to the hired mourners. "Is this corpse dead or alive?"

"Quite dead, my lord," came the answer from a hundred throats.

"But you can see for yourself that I am alive!" cried the miser wildly.

Karakash looked him sternly in the eyes. "Allah forbid," said he, "that I should allow the evidence of my poor senses, and your bare word, to weigh against this crowd of witnesses. Am I not the impartial judge? Proceed with the funeral!" At this the old man once more fainted away, and in that state was peacefully buried.

## **THE FISHERMAN AND THE JINN**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Lang, Andrew. *The Arabian Nights Entertainments*. London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1898, 23–28.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Unavailable

**National Origin:** Palestine

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The following tales drawn from the classic anthology of Arab folktales best known as *One Thousand and One Nights* have been derived from a variety of cultural traditions. Following the precedent set by *The Greenwood Encyclopedia of World Folklore and Folklife*, they are presented under the heading of "Palestine" in this collection. The various tales of *The Thousand and One Nights*, however, are linked together by the **framing** device of the Persian ruler Shahryar, who driven homicidal by his wife's infidelity, takes a new wife each night and in the morning has each executed. He then weds Scheherazade, who saves her life by beginning a series of linked tales which extend for 1,001 nights. While the frame plot of Shahryar and Scheherazade utilizes Persian characters, this does not denote a Persian origin for the work. The tales themselves are derived from a variety of cultural source. Their individual origins notwithstanding, they have taken on a distinctly Arabic and Muslim character. The following tale of "The Fisherman and the Jinn" resonates with the frame plot by virtue of the protagonists saving his life by means of a clever trick. For a discussion of the jinn, see "The Jinns" (page 24).

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Sire, there was once upon a time a fisherman so old and so poor that he could scarcely manage to support his wife and three children. He went every day to fish very early, and each day he made a rule not to throw his nets more than four times. He started out one morning by moonlight and came to the seashore. He undressed and threw his nets, and as he was drawing them towards the bank he felt a great weight. He thought he had caught a large fish, and he felt very pleased. But a moment afterwards, seeing that instead of a fish he only had in his nets the carcass of an ass, he was much disappointed.

Vexed with having such a bad haul, when he had mended his nets, which the carcass of the ass had broken in several places, he threw them a second time. In drawing them in he again felt a great weight, so that he thought they were full of fish. But he only found a large basket full of rubbish. He was much annoyed.

“O Fortune,” he cried, “do not trifle thus with me, a poor fisherman, who can hardly support his family!”

So saying, he threw away the rubbish, and after having washed his nets clean of the dirt, he threw them for the third time. But he only drew in stones, shells, and mud. He was almost in despair.

Then he threw his nets for the fourth time. When he thought he had a fish he drew them in with a great deal of trouble. There was no fish however, but he found a yellow pot, which by its weight seemed full of something, and he noticed that it was fastened and sealed with lead, with the impression of a seal. He was delighted. “I will sell it to the founder [metal worker],” he said; “with the money I shall get for it I shall buy a measure of wheat.”

He examined the jar on all sides; he shook it to see if it would rattle. But he heard nothing, and so, judging from the impression of the seal and the lid, he thought there must be something precious inside. To find out, he took his knife, and with a little trouble he opened it. He turned it upside down, but nothing came out, which surprised him very much. He set it in front of him, and whilst he was looking at it attentively, such a thick smoke came out that he had to step back a pace or two. This smoke rose up to the clouds, and stretching over the sea and the shore, formed a thick mist, which caused the fisherman much astonishment. When all the smoke was out of the jar it gathered itself together, and became a thick mass in which appeared a genius, twice as large as the largest giant. When he saw such a terrible-looking monster, the fisherman would like to have run away, but he trembled so with fright that he could not move a step.

“Great king of the genii [jinn],” cried the monster, “I will never again disobey you!”

At these words the fisherman took courage. “What is this you are saying, great genius [jinn]? Tell me your history and how you came to be shut up in that vase.”

At this, the genius looked at the fisherman haughtily. “Speak to me more civilly,” he said, “before I kill you.”



“Alas! Why should you kill me?” cried the fisherman. “I have just freed you; have you already forgotten that?”

“No,” answered the genius; “but that will not prevent me from killing you; and I am only going to grant you one favor, and that is to choose the manner of your death.”

“But what have I done to you?” asked the fisherman.

“I cannot treat you in any other way,” said the genius, “and if you would know why, listen to my story.

“I rebelled against the king of the genii. To punish me, he shut me up in this vase of copper, and he put on the leaden cover his seal, which is enchantment enough to prevent my coming out. Then he had the vase thrown into the sea. During the first period of my captivity I vowed that if anyone should free me before a hundred years were passed, I would make him rich even after his death. But that century passed, and no one freed me. In the second century I vowed that I would give all the treasures in the world to my deliverer; but he never came.

“In the third, I promised to make him a king, to be always near him, and to grant him three wishes every day; but that century passed away as the other two had done, and I remained in the same plight. At last I grew angry at being captive for so long, and I vowed that if anyone would release me I would kill him at once, and would only allow him to choose in what manner he should die. So you see, as you have freed me today, choose in what way you will die.”

The fisherman was very unhappy. “What an unlucky man I am to have freed you! I implore you to spare my life.”

“I have told you,” said the genius, “that it is impossible. Choose quickly; you are wasting time.”

The fisherman began to devise a plot.

“Since I must die,” he said, “before I choose the manner of my death, I conjure you on your honor to tell me if you really were in that vase?”

“Yes, I was” answered the genius.

“I really cannot believe it,” said the fisherman. “That vase could not contain one of your feet even, and how could your whole body go in? I cannot believe it unless I see you do the thing.”

Then the genius began to change himself into smoke, which, as before, spread over the sea and the shore, and which, then collecting itself together, began to go back into the vase slowly and evenly till there was nothing left outside. Then a voice came from the vase which said to the fisherman, “Well, unbelieving fisherman, here I am in the vase; do you believe me now?”

The fisherman instead of answering took the lid of lead and shut it down quickly on the vase.

“Now, O genius,” he cried, “ask pardon of me, and choose by what death you will die! But no, it will be better if I throw you into the sea whence I drew you out, and I will build a house on the shore to warn fishermen who come to

cast their nets here, against fishing up such a wicked genius as you are, who vows to kill the man who frees you.”

At these words the genius did all he could to get out, but he could not, because of the enchantment of the lid.

## THE LITTLE HUNCHBACK

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Lang, Andrew. *The Arabian Nights Entertainments*. London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1898, 187–195.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Unavailable

**National Origin:** Palestinian

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The following narrative (“The Corpse Killed Five Times,” AT 1537) suggests the relationships that prevailed among the various religious factions in the Arabic Middle East. Muslim, Jew, and Christian did not operate in perfect harmony as seen by the fact that non-Muslims are to a certain extent legal second-class citizens and by the characters’ willingness to pass blame for the hunchback’s death along to a series of religious “others.” Ultimately, however, morality prevails after a series of comic misunderstandings. Kashgar is located in what is now the far-western portion of the People’s Republic of China and, as an oasis, has long been an important stop on Asian trade routes.

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In the kingdom of Kashgar, which is, as everybody knows, situated on the frontiers of Great Tartary, there lived long ago a tailor and his wife who loved each other very much. One day, when the tailor was hard at work, a little hunchback came and sat at the entrance of the shop, and began to sing and play his tambourine. The tailor was amused with the antics of the fellow and thought he would take him home to divert his wife. The hunchback having agreed to his proposal, the tailor closed his shop and they set off together.

When they reached the house they found the table ready laid for supper, and in a very few minutes all three were sitting before a beautiful fish which the tailor’s wife had cooked with her own hands. But unluckily, the hunchback happened to swallow a large bone, and, in spite of all the tailor and his wife could do to help him, died of suffocation in an instant. Besides being very sorry for the poor man, the tailor and his wife were very much frightened on their own account, for if the police came to hear of it the worthy couple ran the risk of being thrown into prison for willful murder. In order to prevent this dreadful

calamity they both set about inventing some plan which would throw suspicion on someone else, and at last they made up their minds that they could do no better than select a Jewish doctor who lived close by as the author of the crime. So the tailor picked up the hunchback by his head while his wife took his feet and carried him to the doctor's house. Then they knocked at the door, which opened straight on to a steep staircase. A servant soon appeared, feeling her way down the dark staircase and inquired what they wanted.

"Tell your master," said the tailor, "that we have brought a very sick man for him to cure; and," he added, holding out some money, "give him this in advance, so that he may not feel he is wasting his time." The servant remounted the stairs to give the message to the doctor, and the moment she was out of sight the tailor and his wife carried the body swiftly after her, propped it up at the top of the staircase, and ran home as fast as their legs could carry them.

Now the doctor was so delighted at the news of a patient (for he was young, and had not many of them), that he was transported with joy.

"Get a light," he called to the servant, "and follow me as fast as you can!" and rushing out of his room he ran towards the staircase. There he nearly fell over the body of the hunchback, and without knowing what it was gave it such a kick that it rolled right to the bottom, and very nearly dragged the doctor after it. "A light! A light!" he cried again, and when it was brought and he saw what he had done he was almost beside himself with terror.

"Holy Moses!" he exclaimed, "why did I not wait for the light? I have killed the sick man whom they brought me; and if the sacred Ass of Esdras does not come to my aid I am lost! It will not be long before I am led to jail as a murderer."

Agitated though he was, and with reason, the doctor did not forget to shut the house door, lest some passersby might chance to see what had happened. He then took up the corpse and carried it into his wife's room, nearly driving her crazy with fright.

"It is all over with us!" she wailed, "if we cannot find some means of getting the body out of the house. Once let the sun rise and we can hide it no longer! How were you driven to commit such a terrible crime?"

"Never mind that," returned the doctor, "the thing is to find a way out of it."

For a long while the doctor and his wife continued to turn over in their minds a way of escape, but could not find any that seemed good enough. At last the doctor gave it up altogether and resigned himself to bear the penalty of his misfortune.

But his wife, who had twice his brains, suddenly exclaimed, "I have thought of something! Let us carry the body on the roof of the house and lower it down the chimney of our neighbor the Mussulman [Muslim]." Now this Mussulman was employed by the Sultan, and furnished his table with oil and butter. Part of his house was occupied by a great storeroom, where rats and mice held high revel.

The doctor jumped at his wife's plan, and they took up the hunchback, and passing cords under his armpits they let him down into the purveyor's bedroom so gently that he really seemed to be leaning against the wall. When they felt he was touching the ground they drew up the cords and left him.

Scarcely had they got back to their own house when the purveyor entered his room. He had spent the evening at a wedding feast, and had a lantern in his hand. In the dim light it cast he was astonished to see a man standing in his chimney, but being naturally courageous he seized a stick and made straight for the supposed thief. "Ah!" he cried, "so it is you, and not the rats and mice, who steal my butter. I'll take care that you don't want to come back!"

So saying he struck him several hard blows. The corpse fell on the floor, but the man only redoubled his blows, till at length it occurred to him it was odd that the thief should lie so still and make no resistance. Then, finding he was quite dead, a cold fear took possession of him. "Wretch that I am," said he, "I have murdered a man. Ah, my revenge has gone too far. Without the help of Allah I am undone! Cursed be the goods which have led me to my ruin." And already he felt the rope round his neck.

But when he had got over the first shock he began to think of some way out of the difficulty, and seizing the hunchback in his arms he carried him out into the street, and leaning him against the wall of a shop he stole back to his own house, without once looking behind him.

A few minutes before the sun rose, a rich Christian merchant, who supplied the palace with all sorts of necessaries, left his house, after a night of feasting, to go to the bath. Though he was very drunk, he was yet sober enough to know that the dawn was at hand, and that all good Mussulmen would shortly be going to prayer. So he hastened his steps lest he should meet some one on his way to the mosque, who, seeing his condition, would send him to prison as a drunkard. In his haste he jostled against the hunchback, who fell heavily upon him, and the merchant, thinking he was being attacked by a thief, knocked him down with one blow of his fist. He then called loudly for help, beating the fallen man all the while.

The chief policeman of the quarter came running up, and found a Christian ill-treating a Mussulman. "What are you doing?" he asked indignantly.

"He tried to rob me," replied the merchant, "and very nearly choked me."

"Well, you have had your revenge," said the man, catching hold of his arm. "Come, be off with you!"

As he spoke he held out his hand to the hunchback to help him up, but the hunchback never moved. "Oho!" he went on, looking closer, "so this is the way a Christian has the impudence to treat a Mussulman!" and seizing the merchant in a firm grasp he took him to the inspector of police, who threw him into prison till the judge should be out of bed and ready to attend to his case. All this brought the merchant to his senses, but the more he thought of it the less he could understand how the hunchback could have died merely from the blows he had received.

The merchant was still pondering on this subject when he was summoned before the chief of police and questioned about his crime, which he could not deny. As the hunchback was one of the Sultan's private jesters, the chief of police resolved to defer sentence of death until he had consulted his master. He went to the palace to demand an audience, and told his story to the Sultan, who only answered, "There is no pardon for a Christian who kills a Mussulman. Do your duty."

So the chief of police ordered a gallows to be erected, and sent criers to proclaim in every street in the city that a Christian was to be hanged that day for having killed a Mussulman.

When all was ready the merchant was brought from prison and led to the foot of the gallows. The executioner knotted the cord firmly round the unfortunate man's neck and was just about to swing him into the air, when the Sultan's purveyor dashed through the crowd, and cried, panting, to the hangman,

"Stop, stop, don't be in such a hurry. It was not he who did the murder, it was I."

The chief of police, who was present to see that everything was in order, put several questions to the purveyor, who told him the whole story of the death of the hunchback, and how he had carried the body to the place where it had been found by the Christian merchant.

"You are going," he said to the chief of police, "to kill an innocent man, for it is impossible that he should have murdered a creature who was dead already. It is bad enough for me to have slain a Mussulman without having it on my conscience that a Christian who is guiltless should suffer through my fault."

Now the purveyor's speech had been made in a loud voice, and was heard by all the crowd, and even if he had wished it, the chief of police could not have escaped setting the merchant free.

"Loose the cords from the Christian's neck," he commanded, turning to the executioner, "and hang this man in his place, seeing that by his own confession he is the murderer."

The hangman did as he was bid, and was tying the cord firmly, when he was stopped by the voice of the Jewish doctor beseeching him to pause, for he had something very important to say. When he had fought his way through the crowd and reached the chief of police,

"Worshipful sir," he began, "this Mussulman whom you desire to hang is unworthy of death; I alone am guilty. Last night a man and a woman who were strangers to me knocked at my door, bringing with them a patient for me to cure. The servant opened it, but having no light was hardly able to make out their faces, though she readily agreed to wake me and to hand me the fee for my services. While she was telling me her story they seem to have carried the sick man to the top of the staircase and then left him there. I jumped up in a hurry without waiting for a lantern, and in the darkness I fell against something, which tumbled headlong down the stairs and never stopped till it reached the

bottom. When I examined the body I found it was quite dead, and the corpse was that of a hunchback Mussulman. Terrified at what we had done, my wife and I took the body on the roof and let it down the chimney of our neighbor the purveyor, whom you were just about to hang. The purveyor, finding him in his room, naturally thought he was a thief, and struck him such a blow that the man fell down and lay motionless on the floor. Stooping to examine him, and finding him stone dead, the purveyor supposed that the man had died from the blow he had received; but of course this was a mistake, as you will see from my account, and I only am the murderer; and although I am innocent of any wish to commit a crime, I must suffer for it all the same, or else have the blood of two Mussulmen on my conscience. Therefore send away this man, I pray you, and let me take his place, as it is I who am guilty.”

On hearing the declaration of the Jewish doctor, the chief of police commanded that he should be led to the gallows, and the Sultan’s purveyor go free. The cord was placed round the Jew’s neck, and his feet had already ceased to touch the ground when the voice of the tailor was heard beseeching the executioner to pause one moment and to listen to what he had to say.

“Oh, my lord,” he cried, turning to the chief of police, “how nearly have you caused the death of three innocent people! But if you will only have the patience to listen to my tale, you shall know who is the real culprit. If some one has to suffer, it must be me! Yesterday, at dusk, I was working in my shop with a light heart when the little hunchback, who was more than half drunk, came and sat in the doorway. He sang me several songs, and then I invited him to finish the evening at my house. He accepted my invitation, and we went away together. At supper I helped him to a slice of fish, but in eating it a bone stuck in his throat, and in spite of all we could do he died in a few minutes. We felt deeply sorry for his death, but fearing lest we should be held responsible, we carried the corpse to the house of the Jewish doctor. I knocked, and desired the servant to beg her master to come down as fast as possible and see a sick man whom we had brought for him to cure; and in order to hasten his movements I placed a piece of money in her hand as the doctor’s fee. Directly she had disappeared I dragged the body to the top of the stairs, and then hurried away with my wife back to our house. In descending the stairs the doctor accidentally knocked over the corpse, and finding him dead believed that he himself was the murderer. But now you know the truth set him free, and let me die in his stead.”

The chief of police and the crowd of spectators were lost in astonishment at the strange events to which the death of the hunchback had given rise.

“Loosen the Jewish doctor,” said he to the hangman, “and string up the tailor instead, since he has made confession of his crime. Really, one cannot deny that this is a very singular story, and it deserves to be written in letters of gold.”

The executioner speedily untied the knots which confined the doctor, and was passing the cord round the neck of the tailor, when the Sultan of Kashgar,

who had missed his jester, happened to make inquiry of his officers as to what had become of him.

“Sire,” replied they, “the hunchback having drunk more than was good for him, escaped from the palace and was seen wandering about the town, where this morning he was found dead. A man was arrested for having caused his death, and held in custody till a gallows was erected. At the moment that he was about to suffer punishment, first one man arrived, and then another, each accusing themselves of the murder, and this went on for a long time, and at the present instant the chief of police is engaged in questioning a man who declares that he alone is the true assassin.”

The Sultan of Kashgar no sooner heard these words than he ordered an usher to go to the chief of police and to bring all the persons concerned in the hunchback’s death, together with the corpse, that he wished to see once again. The usher hastened on his errand, but was only just in time, for the tailor was positively swinging in the air, when his voice fell upon the silence of the crowd, commanding the hangman to cut down the body. The hangman, recognizing the usher as one of the king’s servants, cut down the tailor, and the usher, seeing the man was safe, sought the chief of police and gave him the Sultan’s message. Accordingly, the chief of police at once set out for the palace, taking with him the tailor, the doctor, the purveyor, and the merchant, who bore the dead hunchback on their shoulders.

When the procession reached the palace the chief of police prostrated himself at the feet of the Sultan, and related all that he knew of the matter. The Sultan was so much struck by the circumstances that he ordered his private historian to write down an exact account of what had passed, so that in the years to come the miraculous escape of the four men who had thought themselves murderers might never be forgotten.

The Sultan asked everybody concerned in the hunchback’s affair to tell him their stories. Among others was a prating barber, whose tale of one of his brothers follows.

## **THE STORY OF THE VIZIR WHO WAS PUNISHED**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Lang, Andrew. *The Arabian Nights Entertainments*. London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1898, 34–53.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Unavailable

**National Origin:** Palestinian

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The following folktale illustrates the linking of multiple tales in the **frame** story of Shahryar and Scheherazade. The following tale is a segment of a much longer series of tales exchanged as the result of an

encounter between a fisherman and a jinn (see “The Fisherman and the Jinn,” page 220) in which various characters relate folktales to gain the advantage.

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The vizir [vizier, advisor] began his story.

There was once upon a time a king who had a son who was very fond of hunting. He often allowed him to indulge in this pastime, but he had ordered his grand-vizir [grand-vizier, chief advisor] always to go with him, and never to lose sight of him. One day the huntsman roused a stag, and the prince, thinking that the vizir was behind, gave chase, and rode so hard that he found himself alone. He stopped, and having lost sight of it, he turned to rejoin the vizir, who had not been careful enough to follow him. But he lost his way. Whilst he was trying to find it, he saw on the side of the road a beautiful lady who was crying bitterly. He drew his horse’s rein, and asked her who she was and what she was doing in this place, and if she needed help. “I am the daughter of an Indian king,” she answered, “and whilst riding in the country I fell asleep and tumbled off. My horse has run away, and I do not know what has become of him.”

The young prince had pity on her, and offered to take her behind him, which he did. As they passed by a ruined building the lady dismounted and went in. The prince also dismounted and followed her. To his great surprise, he heard her saying to some one inside, “Rejoice my children; I am bringing you a nice fat youth.”

And other voices replied, “Where is he, mamma, that we may eat him at once, as we are very hungry?”

The prince at once saw the danger he was in. He now knew that the lady who said she was the daughter of an Indian king was an ogress, who lived in desolate places, and who by a thousand wiles surprised and devoured passersby. He was terrified, and threw himself on his horse.

The pretended princess appeared at this moment, and seeing that she had lost her prey, she said to him, “Do not be afraid. What do you want?”

“I am lost,” he answered, “and I am looking for the road.”

“Keep straight on,” said the ogress, “and you will find it.”

The prince could hardly believe his ears and rode off as hard as he could. He found his way and arrived safe and sound at his father’s house, where he told him of the danger he had run because of the grand-vizir’s carelessness. The king was very angry and had him strangled immediately.

“Sire,” went on the vizir to the Greek king, “to return to the physician, Douban. If you do not take care, you will repent of having trusted him [as the king repented trusting his grand-vizir]. Who knows what this remedy, with which he has cured you, may not in time have a bad effect on you?”



The Greek king was naturally very weak, and did not perceive the wicked intention of his vizir, nor was he firm enough to keep to his first resolution.

“Well, vizir,” he said, “you are right. Perhaps he did come to take my life. He might do it by the mere smell of one of his drugs. I must see what can be done.”

“The best means, sire, to put your life in security, is to send for him at once, and to cut off his head directly he comes,” said the vizir.

“I really think,” replied the king, “that will be the best way.”

He then ordered one of his ministers to fetch the physician, who came at once.

“I have had you sent for,” said the king, “in order to free myself from you by taking your life.”

The physician was beyond measure astonished when he heard he was to die. “What crimes have I committed, your majesty?”

“I have learnt,” replied the king, “that you are a spy, and intend to kill me. But I will be first, and kill you. Strike,” he added to an executioner who was by, “and rid me of this assassin.”

At this cruel order the physician threw himself on his knees. “Spare my life,” he cried, “and yours will be spared.”

The fisherman stopped here to say to the genius, “You see what passed between the Greek king and the physician has just passed between us two. The Greek king,” he went on, “had no mercy on him, and the executioner bound his eyes.”

All those present begged for his life, but in vain.

The physician on his knees, and bound, said to the king, “At least let me put my affairs in order, and leave my books to persons who will make good use of them. There is one which I should like to present to your majesty. It is very precious, and ought to be kept carefully in your treasury. It contains many curious things the chief being that when you cut off my head, if your majesty will turn to the sixth leaf, and read the third line of the left-hand page, my head will answer all the questions you like to ask it.”

The king, eager to see such a wonderful thing, put off his execution to the next day, and sent him under a strong guard to his house. There the physician put his affairs in order, and the next day there was a great crowd assembled in the hall to see his death, and the doings after it. The physician went up to the foot of the throne with a large book in his hand. He carried a basin, on which he spread the covering of the book, and presenting it to the king, said, “Sire, take this book, and when my head is cut off, let it be placed in the basin on the covering of this book; as soon as it is there, the blood will cease to flow. Then open the book, and my head will answer your questions. But, sire, I implore your mercy, for I am innocent.”

“Your prayers are useless, and if it were only to hear your head speak when you are dead, you should die.”

So saying, he took the book from the physician's hands, and ordered the executioner to do his duty.

The head was so cleverly cut off that it fell into the basin, and directly the blood ceased to flow. Then, to the great astonishment of the king, the eyes opened, and the head said, "Your majesty, open the book."

The king did so, and finding that the first leaf stuck against the second, he put his finger in his mouth, to turn it more easily. He did the same thing till he reached the sixth page, and not seeing any writing on it, "Physician," he said, "there is no writing."

"Turn over a few more pages," answered the head. The king went on turning, still putting his finger in his mouth, till the poison in which each page was dipped took effect. His sight failed him, and he fell at the foot of his throne.

When the physician's head saw that the poison had taken effect, and that the king had only a few more minutes to live, "Tyrant," it cried, "see how cruelty and injustice are punished."

Scarcely had it uttered these words than the king died, and the head lost also the little life that had remained in it.

That is the end of the story of the Greek king, and now let us return to the fisherman and the genius.

"If the Greek king," said the fisherman, "had spared the physician, he would not have thus died. The same thing applies to you. Now I am going to throw you into the sea."

"My friend," said the genius, "do not do such a cruel thing. Do not treat me as Imma treated Ateca."

"What did Imma do to Ateca?" asked the fisherman.

"Do you think I can tell you while I am shut up in here?" replied the genius. "Let me out, and I will make you rich."

The hope of being no longer poor made the fisherman give way.

"If you will give me your promise to do this, I will open the lid. I do not think you will dare to break your word."

The genius promised, and the fisherman lifted the lid. He came out at once in smoke, and then, having resumed his proper form, the first thing he did was to kick the vase into the sea. This frightened the fisherman, but the genius laughed and said, "Do not be afraid; I only did it to frighten you, and to show you that I intend to keep my word; take your nets and follow me."

He began to walk in front of the fisherman, who followed him with some misgivings. They passed in front of the town, and went up a mountain and then down into a great plain, where there was a large lake lying between four hills.

When they reached the lake the genius said to the fisherman, "Throw your nets and catch fish."

The fisherman did as he was told, hoping for a good catch, as he saw plenty of fish. What was his astonishment at seeing that there were four quite different kinds, some white, some red, some blue, and some yellow. He caught four, one

of each color. As he had never seen any like them he admired them very much, and he was very pleased to think how much money he would get for them.

“Take these fish and carry them to the Sultan, who will give you more money for them than you have ever had in your life. You can come every day to fish in this lake, but be careful not to throw your nets more than once every day, otherwise some harm will happen to you. If you follow my advice carefully you will find it good.”

Saying these words, he struck his foot against the ground, which opened, and when he had disappeared, it closed immediately.

The fisherman resolved to obey the genius exactly, so he did not cast his nets a second time, but walked into the town to sell his fish at the palace.

When the Sultan saw the fish he was much astonished. He looked at them one after the other, and when he had admired them long enough, “Take these fish,” he said to his first vizir, “and given them to the clever cook the Emperor of the Greeks sent me. I think they must be as good as they are beautiful.”

The vizir took them himself to the cook, saying, “Here are four fish that have been brought to the Sultan. He wants you to cook them.”

Then he went back to the Sultan, who told him to give the fisherman four hundred gold pieces. The fisherman, who had never before possessed such a large sum of money at once, could hardly believe his good fortune. He at once relieved the needs of his family, and made good use of it.

But now we must return to the kitchen, which we shall find in great confusion. The cook, when she had cleaned the fish, put them in a pan with some oil to fry them. When she thought them cooked enough on one side she turned them on the other. But scarcely had she done so when the walls of the kitchen opened, and there came out a young and beautiful damsel. She was dressed in an Egyptian dress of flowered satin, and she wore earrings, and a necklace of white pearls, and bracelets of gold set with rubies, and she held a wand of myrtle in her hand.

She went up to the pan, to the great astonishment of the cook, who stood motionless at the sight of her. She struck one of the fish with her rod, “Fish, fish,” said she, “are you doing your duty?” The fish answered nothing, and then she repeated her question, whereupon they all raised their heads together and answered very distinctly, “Yes, yes. If you reckon, we reckon. If you pay your debts, we pay ours. If you fly, we conquer, and we are content.”

When they had spoken the girl upset the pan, and entered the opening in the wall, which at once closed, and appeared the same as before.

When the cook had recovered from her fright she lifted up the fish which had fallen into the ashes, but she found them as black as cinders, and not fit to serve up to the Sultan. She began to cry.

“Alas! What shall I say to the Sultan? He will be so angry with me, and I know he will not believe me!”

Whilst she was crying the grand-vizir came in and asked if the fish were ready. She told him all that had happened, and he was much surprised. He sent

at once for the fisherman, and when he came said to him, "Fisherman, bring me four more fish like you have brought already, for an accident has happened to them so that they cannot be served up to the Sultan."

The fisherman did not say what the genius had told him, but he excused himself from bringing them that day on account of the length of the way, and he promised to bring them next day.

In the night he went to the lake, cast his nets, and on drawing them in found four fish, which were like the others, each of a different color.

He went back at once and carried them to the grand-vizir as he had promised.

He then took them to the kitchen and shut himself up with the cook, who began to cook them as she had done the four others on the previous day. When she was about to turn them on the other side, the wall opened, the damsel appeared, addressed the same words to the fish, received the same answer, and then overturned the pan and disappeared.

The grand-vizir was filled with astonishment. "I shall tell the Sultan all that has happened," said he. And he did so.

The Sultan was very much astounded, and wished to see this marvel for himself. So he sent for the fisherman, and asked him to procure four more fish. The fisherman asked for three days, which were granted, and he then cast his nets in the lake, and again caught four different colored fish. The sultan was delighted to see he had got them, and gave him again four hundred gold pieces.

As soon as the Sultan had the fish he had them carried to his room with all that was needed to cook them.

Then he shut himself up with the grand-vizir, who began to prepare them and cook them. When they were done on one side he turned them over on the other. Then the wall of the room opened, but instead of the maiden a black slave came out. He was enormously tall, and carried a large green stick with which he touched the fish, saying in a terrible voice, "Fish, fish, are you doing your duty?"

To these words the fish lifting up their heads replied, "Yes, yes. If you reckon, we reckon. If you pay your debts, we pay ours. If you fly, we conquer, and are content."

The black slave overturned the pan in the middle of the room, and the fish were turned to cinders. Then he stepped proudly back into the wall, which closed round him.

"After having seen this," said the Sultan, "I cannot rest. These fish signify some mystery I must clear up."

He sent for the fisherman. "Fisherman," he said, "the fish you have brought us have caused me some anxiety. Where did you get them from?"

"Sire," he answered, "I got them from a lake which lies in the middle of four hills beyond yonder mountains."

"Do you know this lake?" asked the Sultan of the grand-vizir.

“No; though I have hunted many times round that mountain, I have never heard of it,” said the vizir.

As the fisherman said it was only three hours’ journey away, the sultan ordered his whole court to mount and ride thither, and the fisherman led them.

They climbed the mountain, and then, on the other side, saw the lake as the fisherman had described. The water was so clear that they could see the four kinds of fish swimming about in it. They looked at them for some time, and then the Sultan ordered them to make a camp by the edge of the water.

When night came the Sultan called his vizir, and said to him, “I have resolved to clear up this mystery. I am going out alone, and do you stay here in my tent, and when my ministers come tomorrow, say I am not well, and cannot see them. Do this each day till I return.”

The grand-vizir tried to persuade the Sultan not to go, but in vain. The Sultan took off his state robe and put on his sword, and when he saw all was quiet in the camp he set forth alone.

He climbed one of the hills, and then crossed the great plain, till, just as the sun rose, he beheld far in front of him a large building. When he came near to it he saw it was a splendid palace of beautiful black polished marble, covered with steel as smooth as a mirror.

He went to the gate, which stood half open, and went in, as nobody came when he knocked. He passed through a magnificent courtyard and still saw no one, though he called aloud several times.

He entered large halls where the carpets were of silk, the lounges and sofas covered with tapestry from Mecca, and the hangings of the most beautiful Indian stuffs of gold and silver. Then he found himself in a splendid room, with a fountain supported by golden lions. The water out of the lions’ mouths turned into diamonds and pearls, and the leaping water almost touched a most beautifully painted dome. The palace was surrounded on three sides by magnificent gardens, little lakes, and woods. Birds sang in the trees, which were netted over to keep them always there.

Still the Sultan saw no one, till he heard a plaintive cry, and a voice which said, “Oh that I could die, for I am too unhappy to wish to live any longer!”

The Sultan looked round to discover who it was who thus bemoaned his fate, and at last saw a handsome young man, richly clothed, who was sitting on a throne raised slightly from the ground. His face was very sad.

The sultan approached him and bowed to him. The young man bent his head very low, but did not rise.

“Sire,” he said to the Sultan, “I cannot rise and do you the reverence that I am sure should be paid to your rank.”

“Sir,” answered the Sultan, “I am sure you have a good reason for not doing so, and having heard your cry of distress, I am come to offer you my help. Whose is this palace, and why is it thus empty?”

Instead of answering the young man lifted up his robe, and showed the Sultan that, from the waist downwards, he was a block of black marble.

The Sultan was horrified, and begged the young man to tell him his story.

“Willingly I will tell you my sad history,” said the young man.

## The Story of the Young King of the Black Isles

You must know, sire, that my father was Mahmoud, the king of this country, the Black Isles, so called from the four little mountains which were once islands, while the capital was the place where now the great lake lies. My story will tell you how these changes came about.

My father died when he was sixty-six, and I succeeded him. I married my cousin, whom I loved tenderly, and I thought she loved me too.

But one afternoon, when I was half asleep, and was being fanned by two of her maids, I heard one say to the other, “What a pity it is that our mistress no longer loves our master! I believe she would like to kill him if she could, for she is an enchantress.”

I soon found by watching that they were right, and when I mortally wounded a favorite slave of hers for a great crime, she begged that she might build a palace in the garden, where she wept and bewailed him for two years.

At last I begged her to cease grieving for him, for although he could not speak or move, by her enchantments she just kept him alive. She turned upon me in a rage, and said over me some magic words, and I instantly became as you see me now, half man and half marble.

Then this wicked enchantress changed the capital, which was a very populous and flourishing city, into the lake and desert plain you saw. The fish of four colors which are in it are the different races who lived in the town; the four hills are the four islands which give the name to my kingdom. All this the enchantress told me to add to my troubles. And this is not all. Every day she comes and beats me with a whip of buffalo hide.

When the young king had finished his sad story he burst once more into tears, and the Sultan was much moved.

“Tell me,” he cried, “where is this wicked woman, and where is the miserable object of her affection, whom she just manages to keep alive?”

“Where she lives I do not know,” answered the unhappy prince, “but she goes every day at sunrise to see if the slave can yet speak to her, after she has beaten me.”

“Unfortunate king,” said the Sultan, “I will do what I can to avenge you.”

So he consulted with the young king over the best way to bring this about, and they agreed their plan should be put in effect the next day. The Sultan then rested, and the young king gave himself up to happy hopes of release. The next day the Sultan arose, and then went to the palace in the garden where the black slave was. He drew his sword and destroyed the little life that remained in him, and then threw the body down a well. He then lay down on the couch where the slave had been, and waited for the enchantress.

She went first to the young king, whom she beat with a hundred blows.

Then she came to the room where she thought her wounded slave was, but where the Sultan really lay.

She came near his couch and said, "Are you better today, my dear slave? Speak but one word to me."

"How can I be better," answered the Sultan, imitating the language of the Ethiopians, "when I can never sleep for the cries and groans of your husband?"

"What joy to hear you speak!" answered the queen. "Do you wish him to regain his proper shape?"

"Yes," said the Sultan; "hasten to set him at liberty, so that I may no longer hear his cries."

The queen at once went out and took a cup of water, and said over it some words that made it boil as if it were on the fire. Then she threw it over the prince, who at once regained his own form. He was filled with joy, but the enchantress said, "Hasten away from this place and never come back, lest I kill you."

So he hid himself to see the end of the Sultan's plan.

The enchantress went back to the Palace of Tears and said, "Now I have done what you wished."

"What you have done," said the Sultan, "is not enough to cure me. Every day at midnight all the people whom you have changed into fish lift their heads out of the lake and cry for vengeance. Go quickly, and give them their proper shape."

The enchantress hurried away and said some words over the lake.

The fish then became men, women, and children, and the houses and shops were once more filled. The Sultan's suite, who had encamped by the lake, were not a little astonished to see themselves in the middle of a large and beautiful town.

As soon as she had disenchanted it the queen went back to the palace.

"Are you quite well now?" she said.

"Come near," said the Sultan. "Nearer still."

She obeyed. Then he sprang up, and with one blow of his sword he cut her in two.

Then he went and found the prince.

"Rejoice," he said, "your cruel enemy is dead."

The prince thanked him again and again.

"And now," said the Sultan. "I will go back to my capital, which I am glad to find is so near yours."

"So near mine!" said the King of the Black Isles. "Do you know it is a whole year's journey from here? You came here in a few hours because it was enchanted. But I will accompany you on your journey."

"It will give me much pleasure if you will escort me," said the Sultan, "and as I have no children, I will make you my heir."

The Sultan and the prince set out together, the Sultan laden with rich presents from the King of the Black Isles.

The day after he reached his capital the Sultan assembled his court and told them all that had befallen him, and told them how he intended to adopt the young king as his heir.

Then he gave each man presents in proportion to his rank.

As for the fisherman, as he was the first cause of the deliverance of the young prince, the Sultan gave him much money, and made him and his family happy for the rest of their days.



# PALESTINE (JEWISH)

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## THE RABBI KOLONIMOS

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Hanauer, James Edward. *Folklore of the Holy Land: Moslem, Christian and Jewish*. London: Duckworth and Company, 1907, 99–101.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Source:** Jewish

**National Origin:** Palestine

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Jews who trace their immediate historical origins to Southwest Asia or Africa have been variously labeled as the Mizrahim (“Easterners”) or as the Sephardim (see “The Weight before the Door” page 14). The following four narratives represent this Middle Eastern tradition of Judaism. The **legend** of “The Rabbi Kolonimos” is set in the period of domination by the Turkish Ottoman Empire. The central figure in the narrative relies on his knowledge of the Kabbala, a system of Jewish religious philosophy that can be utilized for magical purposes, including the communication with the dead as seen in the following story. The tetragrammaton (letters representing the esoteric name of God) plays a central role in the tale. It is represented by the Hebrew letters YHVH and often rendered as Jehovah. It is not to be uttered for fear of profaning the sacred name of God. The use of the Kabbala for magical purposes (referred to as the practical Kabbala) is forbidden. Therefore, Rabbi Kolonimos voluntarily sacrifices himself for the Jewish community.

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In the early part of the eighteenth century the learned Rabbinnical writer Kolonimos was head of the small and greatly oppressed Jewish community at Jerusalem.

One Sabbath day, the Rabbi was at his devotions at the Jews' wailing-place, when the "Shamash" or verger [lay assistant] of the Synagogue came, breathless with haste and fear, to tell him that the town was in an uproar, and that the Mohammedans were threatening to exterminate the Jews, because a Moslem boy had been found slain in the Jewish Quarter. He had not finished his tale when a party of Moslems came up and began to beat the Rabbi, dragging him off towards the serai [palace]. The Pasha [provincial governor], at sight of him, pointed to the body of the murdered lad, which had also been brought before him, and sternly told the Rabbi that unless he could produce the actual murderer, all the Jews would be massacred.

The Rabbi said he could detect the guilty party, if pen and paper, together with a bowl of water were given to him. When this had been done, the Rabbi wrote on the paper the tetra-grammaton, or unpronounceable name of the Most High, together with certain passages from Scripture and from Kabbalistic writings. He then washed the document in the water, repeating certain magic formula all the time. The next thing he did was to apply the wet paper to the dead lad's lips and forehead, the result being that the murdered boy immediately sat up, and, after gazing about him for a moment, sprang to his feet, seized one of the bystanders by the throat, and exclaimed, "This man, and no other, is guilty of my blood." Then he sank to the floor, a corpse as before. The man, thus charged with the crime, a Mohammedan, confessed and was led away to punishment.

The Rabbi was at once released; but remembering how by writing and using magical arts he had not only profaned the Sabbath but also been guilty of a heinous sin, even though compelled thereto for the preservation of his flock, he spent the rest of his days doing penance.

Nor was that enough. On his deathbed, he gave orders that he should not be buried honorably, but that his friends should take his body to the brow of the hill overlooking the Kedron, just opposite the traditional monument of Zechariah the prophet, and throw it down in the same way that the carcasses of horses and asses are to this day cast down the same slope. Where it stopped rolling, there it might be buried; but no monument must be erected over the grave, and, for a century after his death, every Jew passing the spot must cast a stone on it, as was the custom in the case of malefactors.

His friends carried out his instructions till the body was buried, but could not bear to leave his grave without some memorial. They therefore placed a great stone upon it, but the very next morning it was found broken and the same thing happened every time it was replaced. They saw that he would not be disobeyed. It thus became customary, as Kolonimos had desired that it should, for Jewish passers-by to cast a stone upon his grave; and also to repeat prayers there.

## HELP FROM ELIJAH

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Hanauer, James Edward. *Folklore of the Holy Land: Moslem, Christian and Jewish*. London: Duckworth and Company, 1907, 57–58.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Source:** Jewish

**National Origin:** Palestine

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Elijah appears in religious texts not only as a prophet, but as avenger, miracle worker and harbinger of the messiah. As a result, he has been transposed into folk tradition in roles derived from sacred narratives.

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Elijah frequently appears in Jewish legends as the Protector of Israel, always ready to instruct, to comfort, or to heal—sometimes condescending to cure so slight a complaint as a toothache, at others going so far as to bear false witness in order to deliver Rabbis from danger and difficulty.

The modern Jewish inhabitants of Palestine devoutly believe in his intervention in times of difficulty. Thus, among the Spanish Jewish synagogues at Jerusalem, there is shown a little subterranean chamber, called the “Synagogue of Elijah the prophet,” from the following story:

One Sabbath, some four centuries ago, when there were only a very few Jews in the city, there were not men enough to form a “minyan” or legal congregational quorum. It was found impossible to get together more than nine, ten being the minimum number needed. It was therefore announced that the customary service could not be held, and those present were about to depart, when suddenly a reverend-looking old man appeared, donned his “talith” or prayer-shawl, and took his place among them. When the service was over, “the First in Zion,” as the chief Rabbi of the Jewish community at Jerusalem is entitled, on leaving the place of worship, looked for the stranger, intending to ask him to the Sabbath meal, but he could nowhere be found. It was thought this mysterious stranger could have been no other than the famous Tishbite.

## THE RABBI EXTRACTS A CONFESSION

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Hanauer, James Edward. *Folklore of the Holy Land: Moslem, Christian and Jewish*. London: Duckworth and Company, 1907, 101–102.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Source:** Jewish

**National Origin:** Palestine

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This narrative, passed along by an acquaintance of author James Hanauer, should be classified as a **legend**. The Jewish protagonist uses his wits in a manner closely resembling the **trickster** figure to extract an admission of guilt from a thief. The tale also attests to the fact that in early twentieth-century Palestine social relations between Jews and Muslims were cordial.

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A few years ago an acquaintance of my own happened to be at the house of one of the principal Rabbis in Jerusalem, when a Mohammedan of very good repute came to ask the Rabbi for advice and help. He told how a certain Jew, whom he named, had come to his place of business an hour or so previously, when he was alone, for a few minutes. Soon afterwards he had missed a valuable ring that was lying on the desk in front of him when the Jew entered. No one had been in since. He could produce neither proof nor witness against the Jew in question, but felt sure he had taken the ring.

Having questioned the Moslem straightly, the Rabbi saw that he spoke truth, and bade him wait while he sent for the culprit. The Jew came without knowing why he had been sent for. Before he had time to utter a word of salutation, the Rabbi addressed him in Hebrew, in tones of excited pleading, "I beg you, for the sake of all that is Holy, to deny that you know anything about the ring which this Gentile accuses you of having stolen!"

"That," said the rascal, quite thrown off his guard, "that is exactly what I meant to do."

"Very well," said the Rabbi sternly, "as you have virtually confessed before all these witnesses that you have the ring, hand it over to its owner immediately, and be thankful if he takes no steps to have you punished."

The thief gave back the ring and went unpunished.

## **THE PRINCESS WITH GOLDEN HAIR**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Gaster, M. "Fairy Tales from Inedited Hebrew MSS. of the Ninth and Twelfth Centuries." *Folklore* 7 (1896): 232–240.

**Date:** ca. 1200

**Source:** Jewish

**National Origin:** Palestine

Folklorist M. Gaster maintains that although the following tale was contained in a manuscript copied in the thirteenth century C.E., the narratives in this manuscript are much older, perhaps as old as the fifth century C.E. Best classified as an **ordinary folktale**, this narrative is actually an amalgamation of two distinct plots. As Gaster notes, the tale is reminiscent of both “Cupid and Psyche” (AT 425A) and Emmanuel Cosquin’s “La belle aux cheveux d’or” (Cosquin 1886, No. 73). “The grateful animals and the water of life and death are the prominent incidents in the second half, whilst the first belongs to a totally different cycle of deathbed promises. The father requests his son to do a certain thing and the strict fulfillment of this command brings the reward with it” (Gaster 227). Gaster is convinced, however, that the tale is of Palestinian origin.

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There was once a pious old man, who was exceedingly rich. He had but one son, whose name was Jochanan. This Jochanan had a beautiful and pious wife. When his father was about to die he called his son and exhorted him to occupy himself with God’s precepts and to continually perform acts of charity. He bequeathed to him all his wealth, saying, “When the days of thy mourning are over, go into the street and remain there until thou seest a man come to sell his wares in the market. The first man who comes, buy from him his wares and take them home, and take good care of them.” The old man soon died and was duly buried.

After his son had observed thirty days of mourning he remembered his father’s wish, and accordingly went forthwith into the street, where he sat until he saw a man carrying a magnificent cup (or bowl). Jochanan asked him whether he was willing to sell the cup he was carrying. He answered, “Yes.”

“How much do you want for it?”

“One hundred pieces of gold,” said the man.

“Let me have it for sixty pieces,” said Jochanan. The man refused and passed on. Jochanan remembering his pious father’s wish, called after the man and said, “Give me the cup, and here are the hundred pieces of gold which thou hast asked.” The man replied, “If thou wilt give me two hundred pieces of gold I will give thee the cup; but if not I must go on my way.” Jochanan then said, “I will not give thee more than the one hundred pieces which thou askedst.” He went away. Jochanan then thought that he must purchase the article in order to carry out his father’s wish. He thereupon called after him again, and said, “Here, take the two hundred pieces which you asked.” The man replied, “If you are satisfied to give me one thousand pieces in current money, I will give you the cup; but if not I must go.” Jochanan, then seeing that every time the man, when recalled, charged more, bought it perforce in compliance with his father’s last

wish. He took it home, paid the one thousand pieces, and put it aside. He sometimes tried to open it, but was not able. When one Passover Evening they (he and his wife) were about to celebrate the first evening he asked his wife to bring the cup he bought and place it upon the table in honor of the festival. The pious woman did as requested. Jochanan was this time able to open it, and found a smaller cup (box) within the larger.

On opening it he found a small scorpion. They were both amazed at the sight. Jochanan took it out and gave it some food. It crawled round his neck, embracing and kissing him. When it was satisfied it entered the smaller cup, which Jochanan closed and placed in the larger one as it was before. Jochanan then said to his wife, "My father did not request me to do this for nothing. We shall feed this scorpion and bring it up, to know what the end of it will be." They fed it every day, so that it grew and was not able to enter the smaller cup. It was therefore placed in the larger one; but it grew in such immense proportions that a separate place had to be made for it. Jochanan's wealth decreased very much through this; because the scorpion ate whatever they possessed, until it grew to such an immense size as not to be able to enter any house or court yard, and continued to grow until it was like a huge mountain. When Jochanan had nothing more in his possession to give it to eat, he wept and said to his wife, "What shall we do in order to provide it with food; we have nothing left; it has devoured everything we had." His wife suggested that he should sell his robe, and she would do the same tomorrow, to give it food.

They did so. When they had nothing else left Jochanan prostrated himself before it to God and said, "Thou knowest, O Lord, that I have given my all in order to perform the wish of my father, and am left with absolutely nothing. Reveal to me what is the use of this scorpion (dragon) which I have reared, and what will the end be?"

The scorpion thereupon opened its mouth and said, "God has heard thy prayer, and has given me permission to speak to thee. I know that thou hast done whatever thou couldst for me, and hast not refrained from giving me everything in thy possession to enjoy. Now therefore, make any request thou pleasest and I will comply with it."

Jochanan answered and said, "Teach me then all the languages of the world." He did so; and Jochanan was able to understand the language of animals, birds and beasts, and all the languages of the world. The scorpion further said, "Let thy pious wife, who took so much trouble for me, and who was so zealous to serve me, let her ask anything she wishes and I will grant it."

She said, "Oh my Lord, provide me with sufficient to maintain myself, my husband, and my household."

"Follow me," he said, "and bring wagons, horses, and asses, and what animals you can with you, and I will load you with silver and gold, with precious stones and pearls." They followed him until he brought them to a forest, the name of which was Ilai. Into the depth of this forest they penetrated. The

scorpion began to whistle, and there forthwith presented themselves before him all the wild beasts of the world, serpents, scorpions, and etc. Every one of which brought a present of silver and gold, precious stones and pearls, and cast them before him, just as people bring presents to a king.

And the scorpion said to Jochanan and his wife, "Go and fill your sacks and wagons, fill whatever you possess, so that you may have abundance of everything." They did so. Jochanan then said to the scorpion, "Be not angry with me if I ask thee to tell me who thou art and from whence thou hast come."

It replied, "I am the son of Adam. I am getting smaller during a period of one thousand years, and during the next one thousand years I gradually grow. I was not included in the command: 'On the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die'."

Jochanan then said, "Since thou art the son of Adam, do thou bless me."

He said, "May God deliver thee from the evils which will come upon thee."

Jochanan in amazement asked, "What are these evils which are to come upon me?" But he gave no reply, and departed peacefully; and Jochanan returned to his house a very rich and wise man, and there was not a man whose wisdom was as great as his.

The king, having heard of his profound wisdom, sent for him to ask him to solve difficulties on very many subjects, and found him to be exceedingly clever and well versed in everything. The king therefore loved him more than all the other wise men. Now this king had not married. One day his counselors came to him and said, "It cannot be pleasant to thee to live in this state, without any heir to succeed to the throne after thee. For when thou art dead the kingdom will remain without an heir and will fall to a stranger, because thou wilt not have a son to succeed thee. Therefore let a beautiful girl be sought for the king in all the provinces of the kingdom, or thee to take to wife." But the king refused to listen to them. They, however, came a second and a third and a fourth time, until he said, "Well, since you really wish me to marry, give me three days' time, and I will then reply whether it is right to marry or not." They did so. On the second day, while he was sitting in his courtyard in deep meditation, a raven perched upon him and brought between its legs a very beautiful golden hair, which fell upon the king. On the third day he brought this hair to his counselors, and said, "You wish me to marry. Well, if you can bring that woman to whom this hair belongs I shall be pleased to marry her; but if not, I will execute you."

"Give us," they said, "three days' time to know what to do." He gave it to them. They thereupon counseled together and found that there was not any man in existence able to do this, except Jochanan; for he was skilled in all languages, and his equal was not to be found in all the land. On the third day they came to the king, and said, "There is a certain wise man in thy kingdom named Jochanan, who knows all the languages of the world. He is the only man who is able to do what you ask." The king thereupon sent for him. In the meantime it

happened that a certain bird flew over Jochanan's house of learning and, crying, said, "May God deliver thee, Jochanan, from the evils about to come upon thee." When Jochanan heard this, he was much alarmed, for the scorpion had blessed him with the very same words. The servants of the king then came to Jochanan, and said, "Arise, come unto the king; for he has sent for thee." Jochanan trembled very greatly. He rose, went to the king, and prostrated himself before him. The king then said to him, "I have heard that thou art very wise, and of great understanding, knowing all the languages of the world. Now, I wish to take a woman to wife, for the law of the kingdom forbids a king to remain unmarried and without children. Therefore go and bring this very woman to whom this hair, which a raven brought to me, belongs; for I know that this hair belongs to a woman. Her I desire."

Jochanan replied, "There is not a king, prince, governor, or ruler, who has ever made such a request as thou hast made, to seek a woman to whom the hair which thou hast in thy hand belongs."

The king said, "If thou wilt not bring her to me, I will cut off thy head and those of thy people."

"If so," replied Jochanan, "then grant me three years' time to seek her and bring her to thee." He granted it to him. Jochanan immediately went to his house, called his wife and family, and told them the whole matter. Then he, his wife, sons, and daughters wept on account of his sorrow. He, however, with the consent of his wife and family, went in the direction of the forest of Ilai for he said, "I may peradventure meet the scorpion whom I reared and brought up." He took with him three loaves of bread and ten pieces of gold. He penetrated the depth of the forest and met a huge dog, the like of which he had never before seen. The animals of that forest were unlike any others, and of immense stature. This dog, who was crying and howling, said, "God has created me so large and so different from any other dog that I am not able to find sufficient food for my want, for 'a handful will not satisfy the lion.' If I were as small as other dogs I could maintain myself with very little. Hast thou created me to die of hunger?"

Jochanan said, "God has not created thee to die through hunger, for his mercies extend to all his creatures. Take one of these loaves which I have, and eat."

It did so, and said, "May God deliver thee from all manner of troubles which are about to befall thee. May he grant me, that I be able to reward thee as a return for the food which I eat, as a return for this kindness which thou hast done to me." Jochanan went further, and came upon an immense raven, the like of which he had never seen. It cried and said the same thing as the dog. Jochanan gave it another of his loaves. The raven blessed him for it in exactly the same manner as the dog. Jochanan went on his way, and on coming out of the forest saw a river before him. He thereupon went and sat down by the river side and there ate the remaining loaf which he had, and drank some water. Just



opposite him he saw a fisherman, who said to him, "Wouldst thou like to buy the fish I have caught?"

He replied, "Yes."

"Wilt thou give me for them the ten pieces of gold which thou hast in thy bag?"

Jochanan was amazed, and said, "Who told thee that there are ten pieces of gold in my bag?"

"Nobody," replied the fisherman, "except God." Jochanan took them and gave them to him. When he opened the net he found in it but one very beautiful large fish, which was worth one hundred gold pieces. When the fisherman saw that the fish was so immense he was angered to death at the bargain which Jochanan had made, and cast the fish before him (Jochanan). It spread itself before Jochanan, and said to him, "My lord, thou knowest that I am too large for thee to carry, and even if thou wishest to eat me thou wilt have ample with but a little piece of me. Do therefore what is upright and good, and cast me into the river from which I have come, and with the help of God I will pay thee back the sum which thou hast given for me. May God be with thee and deliver thee from the evils which are about to come upon thee, and may he grant me to reward thee for the kindness which thou hast shown to me." At these words Jochanan cast the fish into the river.

The fisherman, seeing it, was very angry and said, "Why didst thou cast the fish back into the river? Thou hast acted foolishly, for it was worth one hundred pieces of gold."

Jochanan replied, "I did this on account of what is written: 'And his mercies are upon all his creatures.'" He rose, and while walking by the river side saw on the other side of the river a large handsome town situated upon the river. Outside the town there stood two women. One was the queen of that place, the prettiest woman in the whole country. The other woman was her handmaid. The queen said to her handmaid, "See this poor man on the other side of the river; he is coming after me and wishes to take me with him to wed me to a king whose wickedness is unparalleled. He has never seen me, nor has he heard from me; but a raven took one of the hairs of my head and brought it to him. He thereupon sent this good man after me. I shall have to go with him if he is able to do three things which I shall ask him. Do thou go and tell the boatman to bring him to me." The boatman did so, and brought him before the queen. Jochanan stood before her, and made obeisance to her. She replied by saying, "Blessed art thou who comest. Whence comest thou, and whither dost thou go?"

He replied, "I have come from a distant land to seek a woman the hair of whose head is like this hair which I carry with me."

"Stay with us one month," she said, "and we shall give thee what thou seekest." He stayed with her.

At the expiration of the month Jochanan came to the queen and said to her, "Tell me whether I shall be able to find what I seek in thy kingdom."

“Yes,” she said, “I who stand before thee am the very woman whom thou seekest, and here is the proof: my hair is the same as the hair which thou carriest. Know, now, that I will go with thee; but first thou must perform three things for me if thou wishest me to go with thee.”

Jochanan then said, “Do not impede me. If I do not bring thee to the king within four months, know that the remainder of my people must perish.”

She thereupon said, “I possess two pitchers; and I wish thee to bring me one full of the water of Hell, and the other full of the water of the Garden of Eden.”

Jochanan thereupon wept and said, “Who is able to do this?”

She said, “If thou art not able to do this, I will not go with thee.”

“If this is so, then bring me the two pitchers and I will do what I can.”

When they were brought to him, he went immediately across the river and traveled until he came to the forest of Ilai. There he sat down, and weeping in bitterness of his soul prayed, and said, “May it please thee, O God, to send the raven to which I gave of my bread, and which promised to repay me in some way or another.”

The raven came and perched upon him, and said, “I am here to do thy bidding.”

He then took the pitchers and hung them upon the raven’s neck, and said, “Bring me one of these (pitchers) full of the water of the Garden of Eden, and the other full of the water of Hell.

“I will do what thou biddest,” said the raven. It departed on its journey. It came and, immersing a pitcher in the river of Hell, filled it with the water of that river; but the water was boiling hot, so that one could not put his finger into it without scalding himself, and had it not been that the mercy of God was upon it the raven would have been burnt. From thence it went to the river which flows in the midst of the Garden of Eden and filled the other pitcher with its water. The raven then dipped itself in the water (of that river) and washed its body, after which its flesh was healed of the wounds and bruises which it had received from the waters of Hell. It then took up the pitchers, went to Jochanan, and said to him, “Behold, my lord, I have done as thou hast commanded me.”

Jochanan then took the pitchers and went to the queen. He said, “Behold, my lady, the pitchers full of the water of the Garden of Eden and Hell, as thou hast bidden.” When the queen took them she looked at the waters and recognized that the water of Hell was very hot and had a very bad odor, while the water of the Garden of Eden was very cold and its smell was that of sweet spices. The queen was thereupon exceedingly rejoiced, and said, “There is yet another request which thou must perform for me. Twenty-five years ago my father died and gave me the ring from his finger. It contained a very precious stone, the like of which is not to be found in the whole world. One day I went out for a walk by the riverside, and the ring fell from my hand into the river. My servants sought for it, placed a dredge in the water, and carried the water to another

place, and yet could not find it. If thou canst bring it to me, I will go with thee without delay.”

Jochanan said, “How can one possibly find a thing which has been lost in this river now twenty-five years ago?”

She replied, “If thou wilt not bring it to me, I will not go with thee.” Jochanan then went by the riverside until he came to the spot where he cast the fish which he once bought. There he sat down and wept. While he was still speaking and praying, the fish appeared, and said, “O my lord, I am ready to fulfill thy wish. I know what thou seekest, and God knows that it is not in my possession; but I know, and am able to recognize that fish which took it and in whose possession it is still, but I must first arraign it (the fish) in judgment before Leviathan, to whom I must relate the whole case.” That fish went to Leviathan, and said, “There is a certain good man by the riverside,” and he related to him the whole story.

Leviathan then said, “Go after that fish and ask it whether it knows where that ring is, and I will intercede on thy behalf to return it to the owner.” It went after that fish and brought it to Leviathan, who said to him, “Thou possessest a certain ring, which thou hast taken and found at such and such a time. Restore it to this fish, and it will carry it to the pious man who is standing at the brink of the river. All his people are bowed down with sorrow on account of this ring.” This fish then handed it to the other one, and so it was brought to Jochanan. But when the fish spat it out from its mouth on the ground, a huge swine snatched it, swallowed it, and departed. Jochanan wept in the bitterness of his soul and, crying, exclaimed, “Woe onto me, woe unto me.”

The fish was also exceedingly angered at it, and said to Jochanan, “I have not the power to do anything more in this matter; but may God grant thee the request of thy heart and bring thee forth from thy trouble to freedom.” The fish then departed and went on its way.

Jochanan then said, “O Lord, may it please thee to bring the dog to me, so that I and it may go out together to seek that swine, if it is possible to find it.” While he was thus speaking the very dog came up barking, and it said, “Beloved, I have already performed thy request and thy desire; for I met the swine that took the ring from thee. I killed it, tore its inwards, and took its entrails out of its body. They are now lying on the ground. Come, and I will lead thee to the place, and thou shalt open the entrails and find it within.” Jochanan went there and found the swine dead. He opened the entrails and found the ring within. He took it out and went on his way greatly rejoicing. The dog also departed. Jochanan came to the queen and gave her the ring. When she saw it she took it and kissed it, and was exceedingly glad. Jochanan then said, “Since God has prospered the way whither he has sent me; let us now go away together to my native place and country; for I have performed whatever thou hast asked of me. Do therefore what is right, and let us not tarry.”

She replied, “Since this thing cometh from God I cannot refuse thee, but will go with thee to whatever place thou wishest to take me.” They then arose,

went together, and came to the palace of the king, who had sent in quest of her. When the king heard of their coming he went out to meet them, he and his horsemen with him, and brought them to his palace. When they arrived at his palace, Jochanan heard that his wife had died, that his sons were taken captive, that they had lost whatever remained to them; for the counselors who envied him had plundered all his property and taken them captive. When Jochanan heard this, he was exceedingly grieved for his wife and his sons, and wept and cried on account of them.

When they (his sons) heard that their father had returned they were exceedingly rejoiced. They came to him and related to him all the trouble which happened to them. He then freed them, and they remained with him. He was beloved and favored by the king because he had brought him a most beautiful woman; one so beautiful was not to be found in the whole kingdom. The king thereupon desired to wed her at once, and to lead her to the wedding canopy; but she answered and said, "It is not customary in my country as soon as one speaks to a woman to marry her immediately. Grant me twelve months' time."

The king replied, "I will fulfill all thy requests and entreaties; do what seemeth good in thine eyes." Now Jochanan was much beloved and favored by the king and queen, so that the king took the ring from his finger and, presenting it to him, appointed him controller of all his household and the ruler of everything which he possessed. On account of this the counselors envied him, and said to each other, "Unless we take counsel together to slay this man, he will now requite us for all the evil which we have done to him and his sons." So one day they lay in wait for him, smote him, and tore him to pieces limb from limb. When the news reached the king's palace that Jochanan was slain, and that his murderers had torn him to pieces, the king and queen were exceedingly grieved. And the queen said, "Take me to the place where his (scattered) limbs are lying." They took her to the place. She then took each limb and joined them together just as they were in the beginning. She then took her ring, and on touching the wounds with the stone the bones and sinews became joined together, by virtue of the power of the stone which the ring contained. After this she took some of the water from the Garden of Eden and washed his flesh, so that it became healed, and had the appearance of the flesh of a young boy. She then lay upon him, and placed her mouth against his mouth, and kissed him. She then prayed to God, and He restored his soul, so that he came to life again, rose up, and walked upon his feet.

When they saw that she was able to restore the dead to life they marveled exceedingly. The king said, "If this is so, let us go and wage war against the neighboring nations, and if I am killed in battle she will be able to restore me to life." The king accordingly set out with his princes and servants against another king's country. They were arrayed in a long line of battle. But the king, his princes, and his servants were killed. The counselors then came to the queen and said to her, "Come and restore to life the king, his princes, and servants, for

they have fallen by the sword.” She went to the place (of the slain) together with Jochanan and did to them first the same that she had done to Jochanan; but she took instead water from Hell and sprinkled it upon them, when they were all immediately burnt to ashes. She then said, “Behold the wonders of God; for mine is not the wisdom nor the knowledge to kill and restore to life; but it is God who slays and revives the dead, who wounds and heals, who humbleth and who exalteth. It was not pleasing to him to restore to life these wicked men as he restored to life this good man. I am not able to do anything more.” They therefore returned to their homes, and the kingdom remained without a king. They then cast their eyes upon Jochanan and accordingly made him king over them; for all those who sought his life were now dead. Moreover they gave him the beautiful woman to wife. They lived together in peace, tranquility, and comfort for many years, and begat both sons and daughters. On account of this it is said, “Cast thy bread upon the water, for in time to come thou wilt find it again” (Ecclesiastes 11:1).

# SYRIA

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## OUTWITTING THE KING

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Wilson, Howard Barrett. "Notes of Syrian Folk-Lore Collected in Boston." *Journal of American Folklore* 16 (1903): 142–144.

**Date:** 1903

**Original Source:** Syrian

**National Origin:** Syria

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The following **ordinary folktale** was collected in the Syrian immigrant community of Boston, known during the early twentieth century as "Little Syria." The population at the time the tale was collected was about 1,000 people distributed over a district of approximately half a square mile. This tale is only one of the many oral and customary traditions that were preserved within the community. In such contexts, original tales often are carefully preserved as links to the performer's and audience's ethnic roots. Thus, the tale merits inclusion in this collection. The narrative provides vicarious satisfaction by the manner in which, through clever perseverance, the protagonist prevails over the cruel and arbitrary ruler of the title. The narrative features the well-known Middle Eastern **trickster** Abu'n-Nuwâ's (see the Egyptian version of this character in "Abu-Nowâs," page 9).

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**I**n the times of the Califate there lived in Bagdad a great poet, named Abu'n-Nuwâ's. One cold and stormy evening, as a body of friends were sitting about the king discussing matters, the king, desiring to make a little merriment, said, "I will give thousands of pounds to him who will sit naked on the roof of the palace all night."

Abu'n-Nuwâ's said, "I'll do it," and straightway removed his clothes, and because he was poor and in need of the money, went up and sat on the roof all night. He suffered much. The wind the whole night long bit his flesh, but the remembrance of the promised gold encouraged him, so that he endured minute by minute. In the morning he was badly frozen and could not move.

At last the king sent one of his bodyguard to see what had happened to the poet. He brought Abu'n-Nuwâ's down nearly dead, and they worked over him a long time before he opened his eyes. After he had clothed himself he waited impatiently for the reward, but the king, before giving him the gold, asked, "What did you see in the night, Abu'n-Nuwâ's?"

He replied that he had seen nothing all night, and described to the king the bitter cold and the rain. He said, however, that in the early gray of the morning he had seen far, far away a tiny light, but that that was all he had seen.

The king was angered and said, "I shall not give you anything, for you have warmed yourself by that light."

Abu'n-Nuwâ's pleaded, but to no purpose, for the king wished to make fun of the poet. It was hard for Abu'n-Nuwâ's, after suffering such pain, to be deprived of the reward, and he determined that some day he would get revenge, and even perchance the reward too.

A whole year passed, and the king had forgotten all about the affair. One day Abu'n-Nuwâ's came, and invited the king to take dinner with him out in his country garden. The king accepted, for he thought it would be very pleasant to honor the poet, and also he was interested to hear his poetry.

In the early morning of the appointed day the king and the queen, accompanied by their knights and pages, went to the garden of Abu'n-Nuwâ's, expecting to be feasted on the most delicious food and the choicest wine. They sat down under the trees, and Abu'n-Nuwâ's sang and played for them. There was an abundance of poetry and music there, but nothing to eat or drink. Yet no one ventured to mention refreshments, each thinking that the next moment they would be invited to the repast.

Nothing, however, was prepared. Again and again Abu'n-Nuwâ's sang and played, and all his maidens and slaves, also, danced and sang. Of that the king had enough, for it was growing late in the afternoon, and he could endure his hunger no longer. Accordingly he called Abu'n-Nuwâ's to him, and said, "O wicked one that brought us here, and filled us with music and poetry, but wished us to die of hunger!" Abu'n-Nuwâ's bowed humbly, and replied, "Your Majesty, the food is not cooked yet, but is on the fire." After an hour the king asked the same question with more bitterness, and Abu'n-Nuwâ's again replied, "Your Majesty, the food is still on the fire." Then the king, and all his retinue, was very angry, and was about to kill Abu'n-Nuwâ's. But Abu'n-Nuwâ's said, "Come, Most High King, and let me show thee that the pots are on the fire." He then led the way to another part of the garden, and there, indeed, were the pots

hanging from the highest branches of a tree. On the ground beneath them there was a blazing fire, but no heat could reach the pots, only smoke.

Then the king was very angry. “O wicked slave, most ignorant one,” cried he, “do you suppose that the food will be cooked when the fire is so very far from it?”

“Your Majesty,” replied Abu’n-Nuwâ’s, “if pots cannot be boiled, nor even warmed by such a great fire as this, how could I, naked, on such a very cold night, be warmed by seeing a tiny light miles and miles away?”

The king laughed, and laughed, and laughed. Then Abu’n-Nuwâ’s immediately ordered tables to be made ready, and a fine feast was spread, for everything had been prepared beforehand, and hidden away. They all ate and drank in merriment, and the king gave the thousands of pounds he had formerly promised to the poet, and made no more fun of him, for Abu’n-Nuwâ’s was too clever for the king.

## THE SONG OF THE COFFEE POT

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Wilson, Howard Barrett. “Notes of Syrian Folk-Lore Collected in Boston.” *Journal of American Folklore* 16 (1903): 144–147.

**Date:** 1903

**Original Source:** Syrian

**National Origin:** Syria

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Like the **ordinary folktale** “Outwitting the King” the following folktale comes from the “Little Syria” section of Boston. Folklorist Howard Barrett Wilson distinguishes between narratives such as “Outwitting the King” and “Song of the Coffee Pot.” He writes, “The second class comprises stories of quite a different type, which are, I think, although not quite identical with, nevertheless closely akin to what we term ‘allegory.’ That is to say, A makes a remark which seems preposterous to B, for, as A intended, B does not understand the figurative or allegorical use of A’s words.” The tale celebrates the social power of wit and underscores the fact that intelligence knows no class distinctions.

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One day while the king and his premier were discussing matters, the king asked him what it was that the coffee pot said as it simmers on the fire. This was the first time the premier had ever heard such a question as that, and he was unable to give an answer. It irritated him, for he had never thought that any one could answer such a question. But the king was



determined to know and insisted on his discovering what the real words which the simmering coffee pot says are. But the premier was unable to find out what they are.

Then the king grew angry, and threatened to kill the premier if, at the expiration of three days, he could not tell him the words of the simmering coffee pot. The poor premier did his best to find out, and asked every one, but all was in vain, for no one could enlighten him. What was worse, some of those he asked laughed at him, and thought that he was crazy.

It was the afternoon of the second day, and still he had been unable to solve the mystery. In despair he gave up all hope of finding any one in the world who knew what the simmering coffee pot says, and, to seek relief and change for his troubled mind, departed from the city he knew not whither.

As he was walking along in the country he met a peasant who was returning home from the city, and he asked him where he was going. The peasant told him that he was from a village which was located about an hour's walk from the city. So the premier thought that he would accompany him to that village, not knowing in his perplexity what else to do.

After they had walked together for a few minutes, the premier asked the peasant if he did not think that it would be a good plan for them to take turns, each letting the other ride on his shoulders for a short distance in order that they might neither become very tired on the way.

The old peasant was amazed to hear such a question, and said, "My son, how do you expect me to let you ride on my shoulders while I am so feeble and advanced in years?" Of course the premier did not mean by his suggestion what the peasant understood, and consequently, discovering that the peasant did not understand what he meant, they walked on together in silence for nearly half the distance.

The premier really meant by his suggestion that they should take turns telling stories and that thus the way would not seem so long and tiresome as it would if they walked in silence.

After a short time they came across a cornfield, and again the premier initiated the conversation by asking if the owner of the field had already eaten the corn or not.

The peasant was again amazed at the question of his companion, for it was evident to any one that the cornfield was at its best, and merely replied, "My son, I do not understand what you mean by a question like that, for it is not difficult for any one to see that this cornfield has not been harvested yet. Why, then, do you ask me if it has been eaten or not?"

The premier did not allow himself to become angry at this reply, for he had perceived from the first that the peasant was not one of those who could understand his allegorical language. The premier meant by his question whether the owner of the cornfield had borrowed the money for the seed, in which case, soon after the harvest was over, after paying off the debt he had contracted for

the seed in the spring, he would have nothing left to eat; or whether he owned the crop without debt.

They walked on, and when very near the village a funeral passed them. Again the premier asked his companion whether the man was really dead.

At this question the peasant was nearly beside himself he was so angry, and said, "How in the world can you doubt of the death of this man, for you see they are taking his body to the cemetery to bury, and therefore it is foolish to ask such a question as that."

The meaning of the premier was again mistaken. He meant that if the dead man had any sons, he was not really dead, for they would still keep his name alive.

By this time they had entered the village, where they were obliged to separate. The custom in those days was that a stranger who had no place to which he could go should go to the mosque, and spend his time there. But as the place was entirely unknown to the premier, he asked the peasant if he would not kindly show him the way thither. He accordingly went with the premier and showed him the way.

Then he departed, and when he had reached his home he was so astounded, and his mind was so full of the incidents that had happened, that he told his family about the queer man he had met, and how strangely he had talked. In his family, however, there was a daughter and, fortunately for the premier, she could understand the true meaning of his words. So after her father had related what he had heard, she told him that it would be very kind of him if he would take some supper to the stranger. She took seven loaves of bread, and a large bowl of soup and gave them to her father, telling him to give them to the stranger with her respects, and to say to him, "Our moon is full, and our week has seven days."

But the old man, being very hungry on account of his journey to the city, could not resist taking a few sips of the broth, and one of the loaves of bread, thinking that it would never be discovered that he had done so. When he handed the food to the stranger, he gave him his daughter's message as she had directed.

But the stranger, immediately detecting the theft, said, "No. Give your daughter my respects and tell her that your moon is not quite full, and that your week has but six, instead of seven, days."

The peasant took back the message of the stranger to his daughter, and she, at once understanding what had been done, was somewhat provoked at her father for having done so. He, in turn, was greatly amazed when she told him what he had done, and could not possibly conceive how she had found out that he had taken some of the stranger's supper, for he was quite certain that no one had seen him eat it.

The next morning the girl desired very much to see the stranger who had so aroused her curiosity by her father's report of him. So baking their bread on a

large, somewhat rounded shield-like slab of iron, beneath which is the fire, she sent her father to invite him home.

On the previous evening the premier had perceived that this peasant girl was such a person as he wanted to find, and so he was very glad to accept her invitation, and went home with the old man. It was the custom in those times for such people (that is, those who spoke in allegories) when they met, to use allegorical language, making their remarks as difficult of comprehension as possible. Accordingly the stranger and the girl competed with one another, each asking the other the most difficult questions imaginable. The premier could see, to his great surprise, that this peasant girl was one of the cleverest persons he had ever met.

After they had both enjoyed themselves in competition the premier was discovered to be no common person, but a nobleman disguised as a poor man so as to try to conceal his identity. He, on finding the girl so clever, had hoped for relief from his difficulty, and now that he perceived himself discovered by her, he told her the whole story of the sorry plight he was in on account of the king's anger because he could not tell what the simmering coffee pot says. But she greatly soothed his troubled mind, and encouraged him by telling him that it is the easiest thing in the world to answer. The premier was very much surprised, for in all his life and in all his studying he had never heard of such a thing, and none of his companions had either. As he was so anxious to hear what the coffee pot says as it simmers on the fire the girl told him, and this is what she said:

My stream glides down the sunny glade  
Brings life to flower, and grass, and tree.  
But thus my kindness is repaid;  
They feed the blaze to torture me.

The premier, rejoicing, went back to his city, and told the king that he had found out the words which the coffee pot sings as it simmers on the fire.

# TURKEY

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## FEAR

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Kúnoz, Ignáz. *Forty-four Turkish Fairy Tales*. London: Gordon G. Harrap & Company, 1913, 12–18.

**Date:** 1913

**Original Source:** Turkish

**National Origin:** Turkey

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The following **ordinary folktale** is a **variant** of the internationally distributed “The Youth Who Wanted to Learn What Fear Is” (AT 326). The tale is found not only in the Middle East, Africa, and Europe, but in African American and Native American traditions as well.

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Once a very long time ago there was a woman who had a son. Sitting both together one evening, the mother said to her son, “Go, my child, and shut the door, for I have fear.”

“What is fear?” the boy asked his mother.

“When one is afraid,” was the answer.

“What then can this thing fear be?” pondered the son, “I will go and find it.” So he set out, and came to a mountain where he saw forty robbers who lighted a fire and then seated them selves around it. The youth went up and greeted them, whereon one of the robbers addressed him, “No bird dares to fly here, no caravan passes this place: how then dost thou dare to venture?”

“I am seeking fear; show it to me.”

“Fear is here, where we are,” said the robber.

“Where?” inquired the youth.

Then the robber commanded, "Take this kettle, this flour, fat, and sugar; go into that cemetery yonder and make helwa (Turkish version of a common Middle Eastern confection also known as halvah) therewith."

"It is well," replied the youth, and went.

In the cemetery he lit a fire and began to make the helwa. As he was doing so a hand reached out of the grave, and a voice said, "Do I get nothing?"

Striking the hand with the spoon, he answered mockingly, "Naturally I should feed the dead before the living." The hand vanished, and having finished cooking the helwa the youth went back to the robbers.

"Hast found it?" they asked him.

"No," replied he. "All I saw was a hand which appeared and demanded helwa; but I struck it with the spoon and saw no more of it."

The robbers were astonished. Then another of them remarked, "Not far from here is a lonely building; there you can, no doubt, find fear."

He went to the house, and entering, saw on a raised platform a swing in which was a child weeping; in the room a girl was running hither and thither. The maiden approached him and said, "Let me get upon your shoulders; the child is crying and I must quiet it." He consented, and the girl mounted. While thus occupied with the child, she began gradually to press the youth's neck with her feet until he was in danger of strangulation. Presently, with a jerk that threw him down, the girl jumped from his shoulders and disappeared. As she went a bracelet fell from her arm to the floor.

Picking it up, the youth left the house. As he passed along the road, a Jew, seeing the bracelet, accosted him. "That is mine," he said.

"No, it is mine," was the rejoinder.

"Oh, no, it is my property," retorted the Jew.

"Then let us go to the Cadi," said the youth. "If he awards it to thee, it shall be thine; if, however, he awards it to me, it remains in my possession."

So accordingly they went, and the Cadi said, "The bracelet shall be his who proves his case." Neither, however, was able to do this, and finally the judge ordered that the bracelet should be impounded till one of the claimants should produce its fellow, when it would be given up to him. The Jew and the youth then parted.

On reaching the coast, the boy saw a ship tossing to and fro out at sea, and heard fearful cries proceeding from it. He called out from the shore, "Have you found fear?" and was answered with the cry, "Oh, woe, we are sinking!" Quickly divesting him self of his clothes, he sprang into the water and swam toward the vessel. Those on board said, "Someone is casting our ship to and fro, we are afraid." The youth, binding a rope round his body, dived to the bottom of the sea. There he discovered that the Daughter of the Sea (Deniz Kyzy; that is, a mermaid) was shaking the vessel. He fell upon her, flogged her soundly, and drove her away. Then, appearing at the surface, he asked, "Is this fear?" Without awaiting an answer he swam back to the shore, dressed himself, and went his way.

Now as he walked along he saw a garden, in front of which was a fountain. He resolved to enter the garden and rest a little. Three pigeons disported themselves around the fountain. They dived down into the water, and as they came up again and shook themselves each was transformed into a maiden. They then laid a table, with drinking glasses. When the first carried a glass to her lips the others inquired, "To whose health drinkest thou?"

She answered, "To that of the youth who, in making helwa, was not dismayed when a hand was stretched out to him from a grave."

As the second maiden drank, the others again asked, "To whose health drinkest thou?"

And the answer was, "To the youth on whose shoulders I stood, and who showed no fear though I nearly strangled him."

Hereupon the third took up her glass. "Of whom art thou thinking?" questioned the others.

"In the sea, as I tossed a ship to and fro," the maiden replied, "a youth came and flogged me so soundly that I nearly died. I drink his health."

Hardly had the speaker finished when the youth himself appeared and said, "I am that youth." All three maidens hastened to embrace him, and he proceeded, "At the Cadi's I have a bracelet that fell from the arm of one of you. A Jew would have deprived me of it but I refused to give it up. I am now seeking its fellow."

The maidens took him to a cave where a number of stately halls that opened before him overwhelmed him with astonishment. Each was filled with gold and costly objects. The maidens here gave him the second bracelet, with which he went directly to the Cadi and received the first, returning without loss of time to the cave. "You part from us no more," said the maidens.

"That would be very nice," replied the youth, "but until I have found fear I can have no rest." Saying this he tore himself away, though they begged him earnestly to remain.

Presently he arrived at a spot where there was an immense crowd of people. "What is the matter?" the youth inquired, and was informed that the Shah of the country was no more. A pigeon was to be set free, and he on whose head the bird should alight would be declared heir to the throne. The youth stood among the curious sightseers. The pigeon was loosed, wheeled about in the air, and eventually descended on the youth's head. He was at once hailed as Shah; but as he was unwilling to accept the dignity a second pigeon was sent up. This also rested on the youth's head. The same thing happened a third time. "Thou art our Shah!" shouted the people.

"But I am seeking fear; I will not be your Shah," replied he, resisting the efforts of the crowd to carry him off to the palace. His words were repeated to the widow of the late ruler, who said, "Let him accept the dignity for tonight at least; tomorrow I will show him fear." The youth consented, though he received the not very comforting intelligence that whoever was Shah one day was on the following morning a corpse. Passing through the palace, he came to a room

in which he observed that his coffin was being made and water heated. Nevertheless, he lay down calmly to sleep in this chamber; but when the slaves departed he arose, took up the coffin, set it against the wall, lit a fire round it and reduced it to ashes. This done, he lay down again and slept soundly.

When morning broke, slaves entered to carry away the new Shah's corpse; but they rejoiced at beholding him in perfect health, and hurried to the Sultana with the glad tidings. She thereupon called the cook and commanded, "When you lay the supper tonight, put a live sparrow in the soupdish."

Evening came. The young Shah and the Sultana sat down to supper, and as the dish was brought in the Sultana said, "Lift the lid of the dish."

"No," answered the youth; "I do not wish for soup."

"But please lift it," repeated the Sultana persuasively. Now as the youth stretched out his hand and lifted the lid, a bird flew out. The incident was so unexpected that it gave him a momentary shock of fear. "Seest thou!" cried the Sultana. "That is fear."

"Is it so?" asked the youth.

"Thou wast indeed afraid," replied the Sultana.

Then the marriage feast was ordered, and it lasted forty days and forty nights. The young Shah had his mother brought to his palace and they lived happily ever after.

## **THE BROTHER AND SISTER**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Kúnoz, Ignáz. *Forty-four Turkish Fairy Tales*. London: Gordon G. Harrap & Company, 1913, 3–11.

**Date:** 1913

**Original Source:** Turkish

**National Origin:** Turkey

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"The Brother and Sister" is a **variant** of "Little Brother and Little Sister" (AT 450). The initial episode of siblings forced from their homes because of their own extravagance is substituted for the more common **motif** of expulsion by a cruel stepmother. Casting an Arab woman as the villainous substituted bride (Motif K2212.1) in this **ordinary folktale** suggests the enduring tensions between Turks and Arabs.

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Once upon a time, there was an old Padishah who had a son and a daughter. In due time he died and his son reigned in his stead, and it was not long before the young man dissipated the whole fortune bequeathed by his father.

One day he said to his sister, "My dear, we have spent all our fortune. If it should become known that we have no money we should have to leave this neighborhood, as we could never look anyone in the face. We had better go away quietly now, before it is too late." So they gathered their belongings together, and left the palace secretly in the night. They journeyed they knew not whither until they reached a great plain of apparently limitless dimensions. Almost overcome by the heat of the day and ready to succumb to fatigue they presently espied a pool. "Sister," said the brother to the maid, "I can make no further step without a drink of water."

"But brother," she answered, "who knows whether it is water or not? As we have endured so long, surely we can hold out a little longer, when perhaps we shall find water."

But the brother objected. "No, I go no further; I must drink if I am to live." There upon the sister fetched a draught, which the young man drank greedily; and scarcely had he done so than he was transformed into a stag.

The maid lamented bitterly. What should she do now? What was done was done, and they resumed their journey. They wandered on over the great plain until they came to a large spring by a tall tree; here they decided to rest. "Sister," said the stag, "climb the tree; I will go and endeavor to find food." The maid accordingly climbed the tree, and the stag went foraging in the vicinity. Soon he caught a hare, which the sister prepared for their meal. In this way the two lived from day to day until several weeks had passed by.

Now it chanced that the Padishah's horses were accustomed to be watered from the spring by the tree. In the evening slaves brought them, and while they were quenching their thirst in a trough, the animals saw the reflection of the maid on the clear surface of the water, and timidly drew back. The slaves thinking that the water was perhaps not clean, emptied the trough and refilled it. Still the horses shrank back and refused to drink, and at length the slaves related this unaccountable incident to the Padishah.

"Perhaps the water is muddy," suggested the potentate.

"Oh no," answered the slaves, "for we have emptied the trough and refilled it with fresh water."

"Go back," said the Padishah, "and look around; probably there is something in the neighborhood that frightens them." So they went again, and drawing near they caught sight of the maid in the top of the tree. Immediately they went back to their master with the news of their discovery. The Padishah, deeply interested, hurried to the spot, and, looking up into the tree, saw a maiden beautiful as the full moon, whom to see was to desire. "Are you a spirit or a fairy?" called out the Padishah to her.

"Neither spirit nor fairy, but a child born of man," answered the maid.

In vain the Padishah besought her to come down; she had not sufficient courage to do so and the Padishah, aroused to anger, gave orders to fell the tree. The slaves took hatchets and hacked and split the tree on every side, and it was



almost ready to fall when night came down upon them and they were compelled to postpone their task. They had hardly disappeared when the stag came out of the forest, and seeing the state of the tree, he questioned his sister as to what had transpired.

“You did well,” said the stag when he had heard the story. “Do not come down under any circumstances.” Then going to the tree, the stag licked it, and lo! The trunk became thicker than it was before.

Next morning the stag went into the forest again, and when the Padishah’s people came, great was their surprise to see that not only was the tree whole but that it was even thicker than before. Nevertheless they resumed their work, and had about half completed their task when night once more suspended the operations. To be brief, when the slaves had gone home the stag came again and licked the tree, with the same result as before, only that the trunk was thicker than ever. Scarcely had the stag gone away next morning than the Padishah came again with his woodcutters, and seeing that the tree was whole and sound he decided to seek other means to accomplish his purpose. He went therefore to an old woman who followed the calling of a witch and related the story, promising her much treasure if she would entice the maiden down from the tree.

The witch willingly undertook the task, and carrying to the spring an iron tripod, a kettle, and other things, she placed the tripod on the ground with the kettle on the top of it, but bottom upward. Then drawing water from the spring, pretending to be blind, she poured the water not in the vessel but outside it. The maiden seeing this and believing the woman to be really blind, called to her from the tree, “Mother, you have set the kettle upside down and the water is falling on the ground.”

“Oh my dear,” began the old creature, “where are you? I cannot see you. I have brought dirty clothes to wash. For the love of Allah, come and place the kettle aright, so that I can get on with my washing.” But fortunately the maiden remembered the stag’s warning and remained where she was.

Next day the witch came again, stumbled under the tree, lit a fire, and brought forth meal. Instead of the meal, however, she began to place ashes in the sieve. “Poor blind woman!” called the maiden from the tree, “You are not putting meal but ashes into your sieve.”

“I am blind, my dear,” said the witch fretfully, “I cannot see; come down and help me.” Once again, however, her ruse was unsuccessful and the maiden could not be induced to disregard her brother’s warning.

On the third day the witch came once more to the tree, this time bringing a lamb to slaughter. But as she took up the knife she attempted to press the handle instead of the blade into the animal’s throat. The maiden, unable to endure the torture of the poor creature, forgot everything else and came down to put it out of its misery. She soon repented of her rashness, for hardly had she set foot upon the ground than the Padishah, who was hidden behind the tree, pounced upon her and carried her off to his palace.

The maiden found such favor in the eyes of the Padishah that he desired ardently to marry her at once, but she refused to consent until her brother, the stag, was brought to her. Slaves were therefore dispatched to find the stag and they soon brought him to the palace. This done, the twain never left each other's side; they slept together and arose together. When the marriage was celebrated, the stag still would not quit his sister, and when at night they retired, he struck her lightly with his forefeet saying, "This is the brother-in-law's bone; this is the sister's bone."

Time comes and goes, storytime more quickly, and with lovers the most quickly of all. Ours would have lived altogether happily but for a black slave-woman in the palace who was overcome with jealousy because the Padishah had chosen the maiden from the tree instead of herself. This woman awaited an opportunity for revenge which was not long in coming. In the vicinity of the palace was a beautiful garden, in the midst of which was a large pond. Here the Sultan's wife was accustomed to come for pastime; in her hand a golden drinking-cup, on her feet silver shoes. One day as she stood by the pond the slave darted from her hiding-place and plunged her mistress head first into the water, to be swallowed by a large fish which swam in the pond.

The black woman returned to the palace as though nothing had happened, and donning her mistress's robes she put herself in her place. When night came the Padishah inquired of his supposed wife what had happened that her face was so changed. "I have been walking in the garden and have become sunburnt," she answered. The Padishah, nothing doubting, drew her to his side and spoke words of consolation; but the stag came in, and recognizing the deception, stroked the pair gently with his forefeet saying, "This is the brother-in-law's bone; this is the sister's bone."

The slave was now fearful lest she might be exposed by the stag, so she set herself to contrive a means to get rid of him.

Next day she feigned illness, and by money and fine words persuaded the physicians to tell the Padishah that his consort was dangerously ill and only by eating a stag's heart could she hope for recovery. The Padishah went to his supposed wife and asked her whether it would not grieve her if her brother, the stag, were slaughtered. "What am I to do?" sighed she; "if I die evil will befall him. It is better he should be killed; then I shall not die, and he will be delivered from his animal form." The Padishah thereupon gave orders to sharpen the knife and heat water in the boiler.

The poor stag perceived the hurrying to and fro, and understood full well its dire significance. He fled to the pond in the garden and called three times to his sister:

The knife is being sharpened,  
The water in the boiler is heated;  
My sister, hasten and help!

Thrice he was answered from the interior of the fish:

Here am I in the fish's stomach,  
In my hand a golden drinking-cup,  
On my feet silver shoes,  
In my lap a little Padishah!

For a son had been born to the Sultan's wife even while she lay in the fish's stomach.

The Padishah, with some followers intent on the capture of the stag, came up in time to overhear the conversation at the pond. To draw out the water was the work of a few minutes; the fish was seized, its belly slit, and behold! There lay the Sultan's true consort, a golden drinking-cup in her hand, silver shoes on her feet, and her little son in her arms. Transported with joy the monarch returned to the palace and related the occurrence to his suite.

Meanwhile the stag, by chance licking up some of the blood of the fish, was changed again into human form. He rejoined his sister, and judge of the additional happiness which she felt at seeing her beloved brother again in his natural shape.

The Padishah now commanded the Arabian slave-woman to be brought before him, and demanded of her whether she preferred forty swords or forty horses. She answered, "Swords to cut the throats of my enemies; for myself forty horses, that I may ride." Thereupon was the vile woman bound to the tails of forty horses, which setting off at a gallop tore her to pieces.

Then the Padishah and his consort celebrated their marriage a second time. The Stag-Prince also found a wife among the ladies of the court; and for forty days and forty nights there were rare festivities in honor of the double wedding. As they ate, drank, and accomplished their object; let us also eat, drink, and accomplish that which we have set out to do.

## **THE FISH PERI**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Kúnoz, Ignáz. *Forty-four Turkish Fairy Tales*. London: Gordon G. Harrap & Company, 1913, 64–69.

**Date:** 1913

**Original Source:** Turkish

**National Origin:** Turkey

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In Persian and Turkish sources, peris are fallen angels. They are often beautiful, but originally this attractive surface disguised an evil nature. As seen in this tale, later folklore made them benevolent rather than

malevolent. The following tale conforms to “The Man Persecuted Because of His Beautiful Wife” (AT 465). Unlike most cases of the wife who assumes the guise of an animal by donning its skin, the shape-shifter here is portrayed as admirable instead of deceitful.

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There was once a fisherman of the name of Mahomet, who made a living by catching fish and selling them. One day, being seriously ill and having no hope of recovery, he requested that, after his death, his wife should never reveal to their son that their livelihood had been derived from the sale of fish.

The fisherman died; and time passed away until the son reached an age when he should begin to think about an occupation. He tried many things, but in none did he succeed. Soon afterwards his mother also died, and the boy found himself alone in the world and destitute, without food or money. One day he ascended to the lumber-room of the house, hoping to find there something he might be able to sell.

During his search he discovered his father’s old fishing net. The sight of it convinced the youth that his father had been a fisherman; so he took the net and went to the sea. A modest success attended his efforts, for he caught two fish, one of which he sold, purchasing bread and coal with the money. The remaining fish he cooked over the coal he had bought, and having eaten it, he resolved that he would follow the occupation of a fisherman.

It happened one day that he caught a fish so fine that it grieved him either to sell it or to eat it. So he took it home, dug a well, and put the fish therein. He went supperless to bed, and being hungry he got up early next morning to catch more fish.

When he came home in the evening we may imagine his astonishment at finding that his house had been swept and put in order during his absence. Thinking, however, that he owed it to his neighbors’ kindness, he prayed for them and called down Allah’s blessing upon them.

Next morning he rose as usual, cheered himself with a sight of the fish in the well, and went to his daily work. On returning in the evening he found that again everything in the house had been made beautifully clean and tidy. After amusing himself for some time by watching the fish, he went to a coffeehouse where he tried to think who it could be that had put his house in order. His reflective mood was noticed by one of his companions, who asked what he was thinking about. When the youth had told the story his companion inquired where the key was kept, and who remained at home during the fisherman’s absence. The youth informed him that he carried the key with him, and that there was no living creature about except the fish. The companion then advised him to remain at home next day and watch in secret.

The youth accordingly went home, and next morning instead of going out, merely made a pretence of doing so. He opened the door and closed it again,

then hid himself in the house. All at once he saw the fish jump out of the well and shake itself, when behold! It became a beautiful maiden. The youth quickly seized the fish's skin, which it had shed, and cast it into the fire. "You should not have done that," said the maiden reprovingly, "but as it cannot now be helped, it does not matter."

Being thus set free, the maiden consented to become the youth's wife, and preparations were made for the wedding. All who saw the maiden were bewildered by her beauty and said she was worthy to become the bride of a Padishah. This news reaching the ears of the Padishah, he ordered her to be brought before him. When he saw her he fell in love with her instantly, and determined to marry her.

Therefore he sent for the youth, and said to him, "If in forty days you can build me a palace of gold and diamonds in the middle of the sea, I will not deprive you of the girl; but if you fail, I shall take her away." The youth went home very sadly and wept.

"Why do you weep?" asked the maiden. He told her what the Padishah had commanded, but she said cheerfully, "Do not weep; we shall manage it. Go to the spot where you caught me as a fish and cast in a stone. An Arab will appear and utter the words 'your command?' Tell him the lady sends her compliments and requests a cushion. He will give you one take it, and cast it into the sea where the Padishah wishes his palace built. Then return home."

The youth followed all these instructions, and next day, when they looked toward the place where the cushion had been thrown into the sea, they saw a palace even more beautiful than that the Padishah had described. Rejoicing, they hastened to tell the monarch that his palace was an accomplished fact.

Now the Padishah demanded a bridge of crystal. Again the youth went as a third test, the Padishah now demanded that the youth should prepare such a feast that every one in the land might eat thereof and yet something should remain over. The young fisherman went home, and while he was absorbed in thought the maiden inquired what was the matter. On hearing of the new command she advised, "Go to the Arab and ask him for the coffeemill, but take care not to turn it on the way." The youth obtained the coffeemill from the Arab without any difficulty. In bringing it home he began quite unconsciously to turn it, and seven or eight plates of food fell out. Picking them up, he proceeded homewards.

On the appointed day every one in the land, in accordance with the Padishah's invitation, repaired to the fisherman's house to take part in the feast. Each guest ate as much as he wanted, and yet in the end a considerable portion of food remained over.

Still obdurate, the Padishah ordered the youth to produce a mule from an egg. The youth described to the maiden his latest task, and she told him to fetch three eggs from the Arab and bring them home without breaking them. He obtained the eggs, but on his way back dropped one and broke it. Out of the egg

sprang a great mule, which after running to and fro finally plunged into the sea and was seen no more.

The youth arrived home safely with the two remaining eggs. "Where is the third?" asked the maiden. "It is broken," replied the youth.

"You ought to have been more careful," said the maiden, "but as it is done it can't be helped." The youth carried the eggs to the Padishah, and asked permission to mount upon a bench. This being granted, he stood on the bench and threw up the egg. Instantly a mule sprang forth and fell upon the Padishah, who sought in vain to flee. The youth rescued the monarch from his danger, and the mule then ran away and plunged into the sea.

In despair at his inability to find an impossible task for the youth, the Padishah now demanded an infant not more than a day old, who could both speak and walk. Still undaunted, the maiden counseled the youth to go to the Arab with her compliments, and inform him that she wished to see his baby nephew. The youth accordingly summoned the Arab, and delivered the message. The Arab answered, "He is but an hour old: his mother may not wish to spare him. However, wait a bit, and I will do my best."

To be brief, the Arab went away and soon reappeared with a newly born infant. No sooner did it see the fisherman than it ran up to him and exclaimed, "We are going to Auntie's, are we not?" The youth took the child home, and immediately it saw the maiden, with the word "Auntie!" it embraced her. On this the youth took the child to the Padishah.

When the child was brought into the presence of the monarch, it stepped up to him, struck him on the face, and thus addressed him, "How is it possible to build a palace of gold and diamonds in forty days? To rear a crystal bridge also in the same time? For one man to feed all the people in the land? For a mule to be produced from an egg?" At every sentence the child struck him a fresh blow, until finally the Padishah cried to the youth that he might keep the maiden himself if only he would deliver him from the terrible infant. The youth then carried the child home. He wedded the maiden, and the rejoicings lasted forty days and forty nights.

Three apples fell from the sky: one belongs to me, another to Husni, the third to the storyteller. Which belongs to me?

## **THE BLACK DRAGON AND THE RED DRAGON**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Kúnoz, Ignáz. *Forty-four Turkish Fairy Tales*. London: Gordon G. Harrap & Company, 1913, 116–126.

**Date:** 1913

**Original Source:** Turkish

**National Origin:** Turkey

The following very elaborate narrative elaborates on the workings of supernatural beings ranging from dragons to jinn (called here peris, dews, and even Arabs). In keeping with many Asian traditions, the dragons of this tale are benign, providing helpful advice and magical objects to the Padishah (emperor). The jinns, however, are the source of misfortune to both humans and the superhuman characters that populate this tale. Contrast this to the nature of the jinn in “The Fish Peri” (page 264).

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There was once a Padishah who had the misfortune to have all his children stolen as soon as they reached their seventh year. Grief at this terrible affliction caused him almost to lose his reason, “Forty children have been born to me,” said he, “each seeming more beautiful than the one which preceded it, so that I never tired of regarding them. O that one at least had been spared to me! Better that I should have had none than that each should have caused me so much grief.”

He brooded continually over the loss of his children, and at length, unable to endure it longer, he left his palace at night and wandered no one knew whither. When morning broke he was already a good distance from his capital. Presently he reached a spring, and was about to take an abdest [Islamic Purification by washing the hands before prayer] to say the prayer namaz, when he observed what appeared like a black cloud in the sky, moving towards him.

When it came quite near he saw that it was a flight of forty birds, which, twittering and cooing, alighted at the spring. Alarmed, the Padishah hid himself. As they drank at the spring one of the birds said, “Mother’s milk was never our kismet [destiny]. We must perforce drink mountain water. Neither father nor mother care for us.”

Then said another, “Even if they think about us, they cannot know where we are.” At these words they flew away.

The Padishah murmured to himself, “Poor things! Even such small creatures, it seems, grieve over the absence of their parents.”

When he had taken his abdest and said his prayers the day had fully dawned and the nightingales filled the air with their delightful songs. Having traveled all night, he could not keep his eyes open longer from fatigue, and he fell into a slumber while his mind was still occupied with thoughts of his lost children. In a dream he saw a dervish approaching him. The Padishah offered him a place at his side and made the newcomer the confidante of his sorrow.

Now the dervish knew what had befallen the Padishah’s children, and said, “My Shah, grieve not; though thou seest not thy children, thy children see thee. The birds that came to the spring while thou wast praying were thy children. They were stolen by the peris, and their abode is at a year’s distance from here. They can, if they will, fly not only here but even into thy palace, but they fear

the peris. When thou departest from here, drink like the doves from the spring, and Allah will restore to thee thy children.”

The Padishah woke up from his sleep and, reflecting a little, he remembered the words of the dervish in his dream, and he decided to bend his steps towards the spring. What a sight his eyes beheld there! Blood was flowing from the spring. Alarmed, he wondered whether he were sleeping or waking. Presently the sun appeared above the horizon and he was convinced it was no dream. Closing his eyes and repressing his aversion, he drank from the bloody spring as though it were pure water; then, turning to the right, he hastened on his way.

All at once he saw in the distance what seemed like a great army drawn up in battle array. Not knowing whether they were enemies or friends, he hesitated about proceeding, but at length resolved to go forward and take his chance. On approaching the army he was surprised to find it was composed of dragons of all sizes, the smallest, however, being as large as a camel. “Woe is me!” he groaned; “who knows but what I thought a dream was sorcery! What shall I do now? If I go forward I shall certainly be cut to pieces, and I cannot go back without being seen.” He prayed to Allah for deliverance from this danger which threatened him.

It happened, however, that these were only newly born dragons, the oldest being but a few days old. None of them had their eyes open, Thus they were wandering about blindly, unable to find their home, though keeping together by instinct.

This discovery was very reassuring for the Padishah, who gave the dragons a wide berth and so continued his way without molestation

Night came on, and as he wended his way among the mountains the sound of a terrible howling smote his ears. It was the dragon-mother calling her lost children. The Padishah was seized with fear as the dragon, seeing him, exclaimed, “At last I have thee; my young ones have fared ill at thy hands; thou shalt not escape—thou who hast slain a thousand of my offspring.” The Padishah answered tremblingly that he had indeed seen the young dragons, but had done them no harm; not being a hunter, he had no thought of harming anyone. “If thou speakest the truth,” returned the dragon-mother, “tell me in what direction my children have gone.” The Padishah accordingly explained where he had seen them, whereupon the old dragon changed him into a tobacco-box, which she stuck in her girdle. Thus she carried him with her on her search for the missing young ones, and after a while she found them quite safe and sound.

The dragon-mother drove her children home before her, the Padishah still as a tobacco-box in her girdle. By and by they came across the four walls of a fortress standing in the midst of the desert. Taking a whip from her girdle the dragon struck the walls a mighty blow, on which they fell down and a larger dragon came forth from the ruins. The walls now destroyed had enclosed a fine serai, which they entered. The female dragon, having changed the Padishah again to his original form, took him into one of the apartments of the palace



and thus addressed him, "Child of men, why camest thou hither? I see thou hadst no evil intention."

When the Padishah had related his story, the dragon observed, "The matter can easily be rectified. All thy children are in the Hyacinth Kiosk. The place is a good distance away, and if thou goest alone thou wilt hardly succeed in reaching it. After crossing the mountain thou wilt come to a desert where my brother lives; his children are bigger than mine and know the place well. Go to him, present my compliments, and ask him to escort thee to the Hyacinth Kiosk." The dragon now took leave of the Padishah, who set off on his journey.

It was a long time ere he had crossed the mountain and come in sight of the desert. After traversing the latter for some time he saw a serai much larger than the one he had left. At the gate stood a dragon twice as large as the other, at a thousand paces distant its eyes seemed to be closed, but from the narrow opening between the upper and lower lids came a ray of flame sufficient to scorch any human being that might come within reach of it. When the Padishah saw this he thought to himself, "My last hour is surely come." At the top of his voice he shouted to the dragon his sister's greeting. Hearing the words the great beast opened his eyes and as he did so, it seemed as though the whole region was enveloped in flames. The Padishah, unable to endure the sight, ran back. To the dragon he seemed no larger than a flea, and consequently not worth troubling about.

The Padishah returned to the dragon-mother and related his terrifying experience. Said she, "I forgot to tell you that I am called the Black Dragon, my brother, the Red Dragon. Go back and say that the Black Dragon sends greeting. As my name is known to no one, my brother will recognize that I have sent you. Then he will turn his back towards you, and you can approach him without danger; but beware of getting in front of him, or you will become a victim of the fiery glances of his eyes."

Now the Padishah set out to return to the Red Dragon, and when he had reached the spot he cried with a loud voice, "Thy sister, the Black Dragon, sends thee greeting!" On this the beast turned his back towards him. Approaching the dragon, the Padishah made known his wish to go to the Hyacinth Kiosk. The dragon took a whip from his girdle and smote the earth with it so mightily that the mountain seemed rent in twain. In a little while the Padishah saw approaching a rather large dragon, and as he came near he felt the heat that glowed from his great eyes. This dragon also turned his back toward the Padishah. "My son, if thou wouldst enter the Hyacinth Kiosk," said the Red Dragon, "cry before thou enterest, 'The Red Dragon has sent me!'" On this an Arab will appear: this is the very peri that has robbed thee of thy children. When he asks what thou wilt, tell him that the great dragon demands possession of the largest of the stolen children. If he refuses, ask for the smallest. If again he refuses, tell him the Red Dragon demands himself. Say no more, but return here in peace."

The Padishah now mounted the back of the dragon which the Red Dragon had summoned and set off. Seeing the Hyacinth Kiosk in the distance the Padishah shouted, "Greeting from the Red Dragon!" So mighty was the shout that earth and sky seemed to be shaken. Immediately a swarthy Arab with fan shaped lips appeared, grasping an enormous club in his hand. Stepping out into the open air, he inquired what was the matter.

"The Red Dragon," said the Padishah, "demands the largest of the stolen children."

"The largest is ill," answered the peri.

"Then send the smallest to him," rejoined the Padishah.

"He has gone to fetch water," replied the Arab.

"If that is so," continued the Padishah, "the Red Dragon demands thyself."

"I am going into the kiosk," said the Arab, and disappeared. The Padishah returned to the Red Dragon, to whom he related how he had fulfilled his mission.

Meanwhile the Arab came forth, in each hand a great club, wooden shoes three yards long on his feet, and on his head a cap as high as a minaret.

Seeing him, the Red Dragon said, "So-ho! My dear Hyacinther; thou hast the children of this Padishah; be good enough to deliver them up."

"I have a request to make," replied the Arab, "and if the Padishah will grant it I will gladly give him his children back again. Ten years ago I stole the son of a certain Padishah, and when he was twelve years old he was stolen away from me by a Dew-woman named Porsuk. Every day she sends the boy to the spring for water, gives him an ashcake to eat, and compels him to drink a glass of human blood. If I can but regain possession of this youth, I desire nothing more, for never in the whole world have I seen such a handsome lad. This Porsuk has a son who loves me, and evil has been done me because I will not adopt him in place of the stolen boy. I am aware that the children of this Padishah are brave and handsome, and I stole them to mitigate my sufferings. Let him but fulfill my wish, and I will fulfill thine."

Having uttered this speech the Arab went away.

The Red Dragon reflected a little, then spoke as follows, "My son, fear not. This Porsuk is not particularly valiant, though skilled in sorcery. She cannot be vanquished by magic; but it is her custom on one day in the year to work no magic, therefore on that day she may be overcome. One month must thou wait, during which I will discover the exact day and inform thee thereof,"

The Padishah agreeing to this, the Red Dragon dispatched his sons to discover the precise day on which the Dew worked no magic. As soon as they returned with the desired information it was duly imparted to the Padishah, with the additional fact that on that day the Dew always slept. "When thou arrivest," the Red Dragon counseled the Padishah, "the youth she retains will come to fetch water from the spring. Take his cap off his head and set it on thine own: thus he will be unable to stir from the spot, and thou canst do what thou wilt with him."

The Red Dragon then sent for his sons, instructing them to escort the Padishah to the Porsuk-Dew's spring, wait there until he had accomplished his object, and then accompany both back in safety. Arrived at the spring, all hid themselves until the youth came for water. While he was filling his bottle the Padishah sprang forth suddenly, whisked off the youth's cap, set it on his own head, and instantly disappeared into his hiding-place. The youth looked around, and seeing no one, could not think what had happened. Then the young dragons swooped down upon him, captured him, and with the Padishah led him a prisoner to the Red Dragon.

Striking the earth with his whip, the Red Dragon brought the Hyacinth Arab on the scene, and as soon as he caught sight of the boy he sprang towards him, embraced and kissed him, expressing his deep gratitude to the friends who had restored him.

Now he in his turn clapped his hands and stamped his feet on the ground and immediately forty birds flew up twittering merrily. Taking a flask from his girdle, the Arab sprinkled them with the liquid it contained, and lo! The birds were transformed into forty lovely maidens and handsome youths, who drew up in line and stood at attention. "Now, my Shah," said the Arab, "behold thy children! Take them and be happy, and pardon me the suffering I have caused thee."

Had anyone begged the Padishah's costliest treasure at that moment it would have been given him, so overwhelmed with joy was the monarch at recovering his children. He freely pardoned the Hyacinth Arab and would even have rewarded him had there been anything he desired.

The Padishah now bade good-bye to the Red Dragon. At the moment of parting the Red Dragon pulled out a hair from behind his ear and, giving it to the Padishah, said:

"Take this, and when in trouble of any sort break it in two and I will hasten to thy aid."

Thus the Padishah and his children set out, and in due course arrived at the abode of the Black Dragon. She also took a hair from behind her ear and presented it to the Padishah with the following advice, "Marry thy children at once, and if on their wedding day thou wilt fumigate them with this hair, they will be for ever delivered from the power of the Porsuk-Dew."

The Padishah expressed his thanks, bade the Black Dragon a hearty good-bye, and all proceeded on their way.

During the journey the Padishah entertained his children by relating his adventures, and then he listened to those of his sons and daughters. Suddenly a fearful storm arose. None of the party knew what their fate would be, yet all waited in trembling expectancy. At length one of the maidens exclaimed, "Dear father and Shah, I have heard the Arab say that whenever the Porsuk-Dew passes she is accompanied by a storm such as this. I believe it is she who is now

passing, and no other.” Collecting his courage, the Padishah drew forth the hair of the Red Dragon and broke it in two. The Porsuk Dew at once fell down from the sky with a crash, and at the same moment the Red Dragon came up swinging and cracking his whip. The Dew was found to have broken her arms and smashed her nose, so that she was quite incapable of inflicting further mischief.

The Padishah was exceedingly afraid lest he should lose one of his children again, but the Red Dragon reassured him. “Fear not, my Shah,” said he; “take this whip.” The Padishah accepted it, and as he cracked it he felt the sensation of being lifted into the air.

Descending to earth again, he found himself just outside the gates of his own capital city. “Now thou art quite safe,” said the Red Dragon as he disappeared. At sight of the domes and minarets and familiar walls of their birthplace they all cast themselves on their knees and wept for joy. Since the Padishah had left his palace continual lamentation and gloom had reigned supreme, and now all the pashas and beys came out joyfully to meet their returning master and his children. The Sultana went down the whole line embracing and kissing her beautiful sons and daughters, and the delighted Padishah ordered seven days and seven nights of merrymaking in honor of the glad event.

These festivities were scarcely over when wives for the Padishah’s sons and husbands for his daughters were sought and found, and then commenced forty days and forty nights of revelry in celebration of the grand wedding.

Unfortunately, on the wedding day the Padishah forgot to fumigate them all with the Black Dragon’s hair, with the result that as soon as the ceremony was over rain began to fall in a deluging torrent, and the wind blew so fiercely that nothing could withstand it. At first the Padishah thought it was merely a great storm, but later he remembered the Porsuk-Dew, and cried out in his fear. Hearing the clamor, the inmates of the serai, including the newly wedded princes and princesses, came in to see what was the matter. The frightened Padishah gave the Black Dragon’s hair to the Vezir and commanded him to burn it immediately. No one understood the order, and all thought the Padishah must have lost his wits; nevertheless his wish was obeyed and the hair burnt. Immediately a fearful howling was heard in the garden outside, and the Porsuk-Dew cried with a loud voice, “Thou hast burnt me, O Padishah! Henceforth in thy garden shall no blade of grass grow.” Next morning it was seen that every tree and flower in the garden was scorched, as though a conflagration had raged over the scene.

The Padishah, however, did not allow this loss to trouble him; he had his children again with him, and that joy eclipsed any ordinary misfortunes that might befall him. He explained everything to his suite, who could hardly believe what they heard, it was all so astonishing. No further danger was to be feared, and thus the Padishah and his family, with their husbands and wives, lived happily together until their lives’ end.

## THE STORM FIEND

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Kúnoz, Ignáz. *Forty-four Turkish Fairy Tales*. London: Gordon G. Harrap & Company, 1913, 102–116.

**Date:** 1913

**Original Source:** Turkish

**National Origin:** Turkey

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The opening two sentences of this tale constitute a **formulaic** opening similar to the “Once upon a time ...” of English language tradition. This **ordinary folktale** is multiepisodic as are the other Turkish folktales in this collection, and it incorporates widely distributed **tale types** (for example, “Three Animals as Brothers-in-Law,” AT 552A) and **motifs** (for example, “Quest for Lost Sister,” H1385.6).

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**T**wo cats made a spring, the frog flew with wings, aunt flea fell down, and the rocks fell on her. The cock was an imam, the cow a barber, the goslings danced; all this happened at the time when a Padishah was old.

This old Padishah had three sons and three daughters. One day he was taken ill, and in spite of all the hodjas (scholar) and physicians that surrounded him his condition failed to improve. He sent for all his sons and spoke thus to them, “When I am dead that one of you shall be Padishah who keeps watch by my grave for three nights. As for my daughters, give them in marriage to the first who ask for them.” He died and was buried with all the pomp and ceremony suitable to his high station.

In order that the kingdom might not remain long without a Padishah, the eldest son went to his father’s grave, spread his carpet and prayed thereon till midnight, and then patiently waited for the dawn. But suddenly a fearful noise broke upon the darkness; the youth, appalled, took to his heels and ran home without stopping.

The next night the second son went to the tomb, and sat there till midnight; but as before a fearful noise arose, and he ran back home as fast as his legs could carry him.

Now came the turn of the youngest. He took up his handschar (scimitar), put it in his girdle, and went to the cemetery. About midnight arose such a tremendous noise that the heavens and the earth appeared to be shaken thereby. The youth proceeded in the direction of the sound, and came into the presence of an immense dragon. Drawing his handschar he plunged it into the dragon with all his might.

The monster had hardly sufficient strength left to cry out, “If thou art the right man stab me once more.”

“Not I,” answered the Prince. The dragon accordingly expired. The Prince wished to cut off his ears and his nose, but he could not see in the darkness, and as he was groping about he noticed a light in the distance. He walked in the direction of the light, and as he approached it he saw an old man in a corner. This man had two balls of twine in his hand, a black one and a white one. The black he was winding up, and the white he allowed to roll on the ground.

“What art thou doing, father?” asked the Prince.

“It is my occupation, my son; I wind up the night and set the day rolling.”

The Prince rejoined, “My occupation is more difficult than thine, father.” Saying this he bound the old man so that he could no longer let loose the day, and went on to seek a light. Presently he arrived at a castle under whose walls he found forty men holding a council.

“What are you about?” asked the Prince.

“We want to get into the castle to rob it,” was the answer, “but we know not how to accomplish it.”

“I will help you,” said the Prince, “if you will give me a light.” The robbers promised quite willingly. He took nails, knocked them in the wall from the ground up to the roof, climbed up thereby, and called down that each man should come up singly. As they ascended one by one the youth at the top struck off their heads and threw their bodies into the courtyard until he had destroyed all the forty thieves. This done he entered the castle, in the courtyard whereof was a magnificent palace. Opening the door he saw a snake coiled round a column by the side of the staircase. He thrust it through with his sword, but quite forgot to draw the weapon, so that it was left sticking in the creature’s body. Mounting the stairs he entered a chamber, where he found a beautiful maiden asleep. Closing the door, he looked into another chamber and found another maiden more beautiful than the first. Closing this door also, he went to a third chamber, which was completely covered with metals; here a beautiful maiden was sleeping: one so charming that he fell a thousand times in love with her.

He now closed this door also, climbed the castle wall and descended the other side by means of the nails. Then he went straight to the old greybeard whom he had bound.

“My son,” cried the elderly man before the youth came up to him, “why have you been so long away? My ribs are aching from my long bondage.” The youth set him free and the old man now let the white ball roll farther. The youth returned to the dragon, cut off his ears and nose and put them in his pocket. He now returned home to the palace, where in the meantime his eldest brother had been made Padishah. Of his adventure he said nothing, but let things take their course. Some time afterwards a lion came to the palace and appeared before the Padishah, who asked him what he wanted. “To marry your eldest sister,” answered the lion, “I cannot give her to a beast,” said the Padishah, and the lion would have been sent away if the youngest Prince had not observed, “Our father laid it upon us that she was to be given to him who should first ask for her.”

On this he took the maiden by the hand and delivered her to the lion, who went away with her.

Next day came a tiger and demanded the Padishah's second sister. The two elder brothers were unwilling to give her to him, but the youngest challenged them to fulfill their father's wish, and the maiden was accordingly given to the tiger.

On the third day a bird flew into the palace and requested the youngest Princess. The Padishah and his brother again would not consent, but the youngest insisted, and in the end the bird flew off with the maiden. The bird was the Padishah of the Peris, the emerald anka (giant mythical bird said to be large enough to carry off an elephant).

We will now return to the castle.

Here also dwelt a Padishah who had three daughters. Going out early in the morning he perceived that some one had been in the palace. He passed into the courtyard, and near the staircase espied the huge snake, cut in two by the sword. Proceeding farther he saw the forty corpses. "No enemy can have done this, but a friend," he mused; "he has delivered us from the robbers and the snake. This sword belongs to our good friend, but where is he?" He took counsel on the matter with his advisor.

"We can only find out," said the Vizir, "if we prepare a great feast and invite everybody to partake of it. We must watch all our guests very closely, and whoever carries the sheath belonging to the sword is our friend." So the Padishah gave orders for the feast to be prepared and everybody invited thereto.

The feasting lasted forty days and forty nights, and one day the advisor said, "Everybody has come to the feast except the three Princes." Accordingly they were sent for, and when they came it was noticed that the youngest had the sheath belonging to the sword. Immediately the Padishah sent for him, and said, "You have rendered me a valuable service; what may I give you in recompense?"

"Nothing less," answered the Prince, "than your youngest daughter."

"Woe is me! My son, would you had not asked for her!" sighed the Padishah; "my crown, my kingdom are yours, but ask not for this maiden!"

"If you will give me the maiden I will accept her," answered the Prince "otherwise I want nothing."

"My son," implored the Padishah, in great sorrow, "I will give you my eldest daughter, I will give my second daughter, but I dare not part from my youngest daughter. The Storm Fiend demanded her in marriage, and as I would not give her to him I have been compelled to secure her in a metal chamber, so that this Dew cannot get near her. This Storm Fiend is so powerful that no cannon can injure him; no eye can perceive him; like the wind he appears, and like the wind he disappears."

In vain the Padishah urged the youth to dismiss the youngest Princess from his mind, and thereby keep himself out of danger; the Prince would not listen. Seeing that his reasoning was useless and at length growing weary of the matter,

the Padishah withdrew his objections and the marriage took place. The two brothers married the two other maidens and went back to their own country, while the youngest remained, in order to protect his wife from the evil machinations of the Dew.

Thus the Prince lived happily with his beautiful wife for some time. One day he said to her, "My dear one, it is long since I went from your side; I would like to go hunting for one brief hour."

"Oh woe! My king," answered she, "I know only too well that if once you leave me you will never see me again."

But at length she yielded. He took his weapons and went into the forest. The Storm Fiend now had the opportunity he had long awaited. He was afraid of the brave Prince and dared not take the Princess from his side; but no sooner had the Prince left the palace than the Storm Fiend entered and carried off the girl.

Shortly afterwards the Prince returned home and missed his wife. He hastened to the Padishah, but the Dew had stolen his wife and she was nowhere to be found. He wept and lamented bitterly, casting himself to the earth. Then he arose, mounted his steed, and went forth resolved to rescue his wife or die in the attempt.

He wandered without resting for days and weeks, his sore affliction spurring him ever onwards. At length he descried a palace, but so faintly that he could scarcely be said to see it. This was the palace of his eldest sister. The Princess was looking out of the window and wondering at the sight of a human being in her locality, where no bird ever flew or caravan came. She recognized her brother, and when they met so great was their joy that they could not speak for kissing and embracing.

In the evening the Princess said to the Prince, "Soon my husband the lion will be here; although he treats me well, he is after all a beast and may do you harm." So she hid her brother.

When the lion came home the Princess and he sat together and conversed, and she asked the lion what he would do if one of her brothers should come there. "If the eldest came," answered her husband, "I would kill him at a blow; if the second came, him also would I kill; but if the youngest came, I would take him in my arms and lull him to sleep."

"That one has arrived," answered his wife.

"Then bring him here quickly, that I may see him," cried the lion; and when the Prince stood before them, the lion knew not what to do for very joy. He inquired whence he came and whither he went. The youth now related what had happened to him and said he was going to find the Storm Fiend.

"I know him only by name," said the lion, "but I counsel you to have nothing to do with him, for you can do no good." But the Prince was restless; he would remain only one night, and on the following morning he mounted his horse and set out. The lion accompanied him a short distance to put him on the right road, then they both went different ways.



The Prince traveled onward, until he came to another palace, which belonged to his second sister. She espied a man coming along the road, and no sooner recognized her brother than she ran out to meet him and led him into the palace. The hours sped happily until towards evening the Princess observed, "My tiger-husband will soon be here; I will hide you so that no harm befall you." So she hid her brother.

In the evening the tiger came home and his wife asked him what he would do if by chance one of her brothers should come to see them.

"The two eldest I would kill," said the tiger, "but if the youngest came I would rock him to sleep on my knees." So the Princess fetched the Prince her brother, and the tiger manifested great joy at seeing him.

The youth related the story of his bereavement and asked the tiger if he knew the Storm Fiend.

"By name only," answered the tiger; and he also besought the youth to renounce so dangerous a quest. But at daybreak the Prince set forth again. The tiger put him on the right road, and they parted company.

Crossing a desert, he saw something looming dark in the distance. Wondering what it might be, he proceeded ahead and by and by perceived that it was a palace, the home of his youngest sister. The Princess glanced through the window, and uttered a joyful cry, "Oh, my brother!" His arrival gave great happiness; he rejoiced to have seen all three of his sisters, but he thought of his wife and his heart was heavy with grief.

Towards evening the Princess said to her brother, "My bird-husband will be here soon; I will hide you until I have ascertained how he is disposed to receive you." So she hid her brother.

With loud-flapping wings the anka flew in, and he had hardly rested before his wife asked him what he would do if one of her brothers should visit them.

"The two eldest," said the bird, "I should take in my beak, fly with them up to the sky and drop them to the earth; but the youngest I would take on my wings and let him go to sleep."

At this the Princess called in her brother.

"My dear child," exclaimed the bird, "how come you here? Had you no fear on the road?"

The youth told his grief and requested the anka to take him to the Storm Fiend.

"That is not so easily done," answered the bird; "but if you should encounter him, you would gain so little thereby that it were better to remain with us and relinquish your purpose."

"No," said the resolute Prince, "either I deliver my wife or I perish in the attempt."

Seeing he could not be turned from his purpose, the anka described the way to the palace of the Storm Fiend, "Just now he sleeps and you can take away

your wife," he said; "but if he awakes and sees you, all is over. You cannot see him, for no eye can behold him, no sword can harm him, so beware."

Next day the youth set out and soon came in sight of an immense palace which had neither doors nor chimneys. This was the home of the Storm Fiend. His wife was sitting by the window, and on seeing him she sprang down crying, "Woe, my Sultan!" The Prince embraced her, and of his joy and her tears there was no end until the Princess remembered the cruel Dew. "He fell asleep three days ago," said she. "Let us hasten away from here before his forty days' sleep is ended." She also mounted a horse and they sped quickly away. They had not traveled far, however, before the fortieth day expired and the Storm Fiend awoke. He went to the Princess's chamber and called to her to open the door, that he might see her face for an instant. Receiving no answer he suspected evil, and forcing open the door found the Princess was not there.

"So, Prince Mahomet, you have been here and carried off the Sultan's daughter! But wait a while, I'll soon catch you both!"

Saying these words he calmly sat down, drank coffee and smoked his pipe, then he got up and hurried after them.

Without stopping to rest the Prince and Princess galloped onward, but presently the latter felt the wind raised by the Dew and said, "Oh, my king, woe is me, the Storm Fiend is here!"

The invisible monster fell upon them, seized the youth, broke his arms and legs, and smashed his head and his bones, leaving not a single member whole.

"As you have killed him, allow me at least to collect his bones and put them in a sack," the Princess tearfully implored the fiend. "I may perhaps find some one to bury them." The Dew offering no objection, the Princess put the Prince's bones in a sack. Then she kissed his horse on the eyes, bound the sack on his back, and whispered in his ear, "My horse, take these bones to the right place."

The Dew carried the Princess back to his palace, but the power of her beauty was so great that the fiend was like a prisoner in her hands. She refused to allow the monster in her presence; he dared show himself only before the door of her chamber.

In the meantime the horse galloped away with the youth's bones and stopped before the palace of the youngest sister, where he neighed so loudly that the Princess came out to see what was the matter. On seeing the sack and her brother's bones she began to weep bitterly and cast herself violently to the earth as though she would break her own bones. She could hardly contain herself until the return of her husband the anka.

With loud flapping of wings the bird-Padishah, the emerald anka, came home, and when he saw the poor Prince's broken bones he called his subjects—all the birds of the world—together and asked, "Which of you was ever in the Garden of Eden?"

"An old owl was there once," was the answer, "but now he is so aged and infirm that he can scarcely move."

The anka dispatched a bird with orders to bring the owl. So the bird flew away and presently returned with the old owl on his back.

“Eh, father, were you ever in the Garden of Eden?” inquired the Padishah.

“Yes, my son,” hooted the ancient one, “but it was a long, long time ago, before I was twelve years old. I have never been there since.”

“As you have been there once,” said the anka, “go there a second time and bring me a small phial of water.”

The owl protested that he could not go, the way was so very long and he had hardly any strength left; but his excuses were in vain. The Padishah set him on the back of a bird, and so they flew to the Garden of Eden, procured the water and returned to the nest. He put the parts of the broken body in their proper places, and sprinkled them with the water of Paradise. The youth began to yawn as though he were just awaking from sleep. He looked around and asked the anka where he was and where his wife was.

“Did I not tell you,” said the anka, “that the Storm Fiend would catch you? He broke your bones, which we found in a sack. Now let him alone, or next time he will not even leave your bones in a sack.”

But the Prince was unwilling to abandon his purpose, and once more set out to find his wife.

“If you must have her at any cost,” advised the anka, “go first and ask your wife to find out what is the Dew’s talisman. If you can discover that, the power of the Storm Fiend can be destroyed.”

So the Prince, mounting his steed once more, hastened to the palace of the fiend, and as he was asleep the Prince was able to speak to his wife. In great joy the Princess promised to discover the Dew’s talisman, saying that she would even use flattery if no other means served. The Prince hid himself in a neighboring mountain to await the result.

When the Storm Fiend awoke from sleep at the end of forty days, he went to the Princess’s apartment, and knocked at the door. “Get out of my sight!” cried the maiden from within, “you sleep for forty days, while I am left alone and wearied of my life.”

The Dew was happy that she had even deigned to speak to him, and asked her joyfully what he could give her to drive away her melancholy. “What can you give me?” retorted the Princess. “You are only wind yourself! Perhaps, however, you have a talisman with which I might amuse myself?”

“Oh, lady,” answered the Dew, “my talisman is in a far-off country, and it is very difficult to reach. If only there were another such man as your Mahomet, he might possibly succeed.”

The Princess was now curious about the talisman, and flattered the Dew so much that at length he divulged his secret. He begged her to sit by his side a little. The maiden granted him this favor, and thereby got possession of the history of the Storm Fiend’s talisman, “On the surface of the seventh sea,” began the Dew, “there is a large island; on this island is an ox grazing; in the ox’s stomach

is a golden cage; in the cage is a white dove. That little white dove is my talisman.”

“But how can one get to this island?” asked the Sultan’s daughter.

“In this way,” said the Dew, “opposite the palace of the emerald anka is a high mountain; on the top of this mountain is a spring. From this spring forty sea-horses drink once a day. If anyone can be found clever enough to kick one of these horses while it is drinking, he can saddle and mount it, and it will take him wherever he wishes to go.”

“Of what use is this talisman to me,” asked the maiden, “if I cannot once get near it?” She drove the Dew out of her chamber and hastened to her husband with the news. The Prince quickly mounted his steed, went back to the palace of his youngest sister, and related the affair to the anka.

Early next day the anka called five birds. “Take the Prince to the spring on the mountain,” he bade them, “and wait there till the magic seahorses appear. While they are drinking catch one of them, strike it, saddle it, and put the Prince upon its back before it has time to take its head out of the water.”

The anka’s subjects picked up the Prince and carried him to the spring. As soon as the horses arrived the birds did exactly as the anka had ordered them. The Prince found himself on the back of the steed, whose first words were, “What is your command, my dear master?”

“On the surface of the seventh sea there is an island. I wish to go there,” said Mahomet.

With “Shut your eyes!” the Prince flew through space; with “Open your eyes!” he found himself on the shore of the island.

Alighting from his horse and putting the bridle in his pocket, he went in search of the ox. Strolling about the island he met a Jew, who asked him how he had got there.

I have been shipwrecked,” answered the Prince; “the ship went down, and it was only with great difficulty that I managed to swim here.”

“As for me,” said the Jew, “I am in the service of the Storm Fiend, who has an ox here, which I guard day and night. Would you like to be my servant? All you have to do is to fill this trough with water every day.”

The Prince availed himself of the opportunity and was eager to get a glimpse of the ox. The Jew took him to the stall, and as soon as Mahomet was alone with the animal, he slit its stomach, took out the golden cage, and went with all speed to the shore. Pulling the bridle out of his pocket, he struck the waves therewith and his horse immediately appeared and carried him to the Storm Fiend’s palace.

The Prince lifted his wife up beside him and ordered, “To the emerald anka.”

They arrived at the anka’s palace just as the Dew awoke from his sleep. Seeing that the Princess was gone, he hastened after them. The Sultan’s daughter felt the wind of the Dew, and knew that he had nearly overtaken them. At this

crisis the magic horse cried out to them to cut off the head of the dove which was in the cage. They had just enough time to do it; a moment more and it would have been too late! The wind suddenly ceased, for the fiend was now destroyed.

Full of joy they entered the palace of the anka, released the magic horse and left it to rest. Next day they went to the second sister, and on the third day to the third sister. The Prince now made the pleasing discovery that his lion brother-in-law was king of the lions and his tiger brother-in-law king of the tigers.

Finally they came to the Princess's own home. Their wedding was celebrated afresh for forty days and forty nights, after which they went to the Prince's kingdom. There he showed the dragon's ears and nose, and as he had fulfilled his father's wish he was elected Padishah. Afterwards Mahomet and his wife lived and reigned together in happiness until the end of their days.

## THE DRAGON PRINCE AND THE STEPMOTHER

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Kúnoz, Ignáz. *Forty-four Turkish Fairy Tales*. London: Gordon G. Harrap & Company, 1913, 188–197.

**Date:** 1913

**Original Source:** Turkish

**National Origin:** Turkey

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The persecuted stepdaughter, the handsome prince in the guise of a monster, and the quest for a lost love are among the familiar folktale themes found in the following narrative. The peris appear again as agents of evil.

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There was once a Padishah who had no children. When out walking one day he saw a dragon accompanied by five or six young ones.

“Oh, my Allah!” he complained, “Thou hast blessed this creature with so much offspring. Would that this dragon had one less, and that Thou hadst given me one child!” He continued his walk until it began to get dark, and then returned to the serai. Time passed, until one night the Sultan's wife was taken seriously ill. In all haste messengers were dispatched here and there in search of skilled nurses.

There was no difficulty about securing one, but the woman, as soon as she arrived at the sickbed, fell down dead. Immediately another nurse was sent for,

who also died as soon as she arrived, In short, all those who approached were instantly seized with a mysterious malady which had a fatal termination.

In the royal palace was a servant who had a stepdaughter whom she hated. This event, the woman thought, presented a good opportunity to get the stepdaughter out of the way. Hearing that all the nurses were dead, she went immediately to the Padishah and said, "My Lord and Shah, I have a daughter who is skilled in nursing. If thou wilt permit her to come, the Sultana may perchance be cured."

Accordingly the Padishah ordered a carriage to be sent to fetch the stepdaughter. But the girl was quite ignorant of nursing, and asked her father whatever she should do. Her father answered, "Fear not, my daughter. On thy way to the palace, stop awhile at thy mother's grave and offer up a prayer, for Allah always helps those that are in need. Afterwards go in confidence to the serai."

The maiden entered the carriage, drove to her mother's grave, and shed scalding tears in her grief and despair. While calling on the Creator to aid her, a voice was heard proceeding from the grave, "As soon as thou arrivest before the Padishah, ask for a kettle of milk; then canst thou reach the Sultana."

The maiden now reentered the carriage, arrived at the palace, and asked for a kettle of milk, with which she entered the chamber of the Sultana. She returned shortly with the news that a Prince had been born, whose form, however, was that of a dragon. The monarch was not particularly pleased, but contented himself with the knowledge that he now had an heir. To celebrate the auspicious occasion lambs were sacrificed and slaves given their freedom.

The time soon arrived when the young dragon must commence his instruction. Hodjas were summoned, who however, one after another, were killed by the dragon before they had a chance to commence their lesson. In this way there was hardly a hodja left in the land. Hearing this, the stepmother went again to the Padishah and said, "My Lord and Shah, the maiden who assisted at the birth of the dragon can also impart the desired instruction."

The Padishah accordingly ordered the maiden to be fetched. Before coming to the royal palace, however, she visited her mother's grave. While she was praying for divine protection and deliverance, her mother reached out her hand from the grave and offered her a staff, saying, "Take this staff, my daughter, and should the dragon attack thee, thou hast only to show him this staff and he will retreat."

So the maiden took the staff and went to the serai. When she approached the Shahzada to commence the instruction, he attempted to bite her, but at sight of the staff he refrained from his intention. After a time her efforts to instruct the Shahzada showed such satisfactory results that the Padishah rewarded the maiden with a pile of gold, and permitted her to go home.

Years passed away, and the Dragon Prince was now old enough to get married. The Padishah pondered the matter, grieved considerably, and finally came to the conclusion that there was nothing for it but to seek a wife for his heir. A bride was eventually found and the marriage took place, but on the wedding-night the

dragon devoured his bride. The same fate overtook a second bride; in short, every maiden that was given him to wife was forthwith killed and eaten.

Now the stepmother went to the Padishah and said, "My King and Shah, the maiden that assisted at the birth of the Prince, and who has since instructed him, can also make him a good wife." The Padishah rejoiced at the suggestion, and immediately sent for the maiden. Before obeying the royal summons the maiden once more poured out her sorrow at her mother's grave.

The voice of the dead was heard from the tomb, "My daughter, take the skin of a hedgehog and make a mask thereof. When thou goest to the dragon he will seek to harm thee and the prickles will wound him. He will then say, 'Take off the mask,' answer, 'I will take off the mask if thou wilt take off thy clothing.' When he has taken off his clothes, seize them and cast them in the fire. On that he will lose his dragon form and appear as a human being."

In due course the maiden arrived at the palace and was ushered into the private apartment of the Dragon Prince, where the marriage ceremony took place. As soon as they were alone the Dragon essayed to attack his bride, but the prickly mask prevented him. "Take off thy mask," he snapped.

"I will only take off the mask if thou wilt take off thy clothes," she answered with as much courage as she could command. Without hesitation the Dragon undressed; as the last article of attire was discarded, the maiden threw them all in the fire and lo! Instead of a horrid Dragon a handsome youth stood before her. They fell into each other's arms and embraced and kissed unceasingly.

When the slaves entered the apartment next morning they found the newly wedded pair in the best health and joy. They hastened to carry the joyful news to the Padishah, who ordered a grand feast in honor of the occasion. The maiden who had happily delivered the Prince from the magic spell was received by every one in the palace with the highest honor and respect.

Some time after these events, war was declared between our Padishah and the Padishah of a neighboring country. The King himself desired to take part in the campaign, but the Shahzada begged his father to allow him to go instead. As he persisted in his request, in spite of discouragement, the Padishah finally yielded and the Prince went to the war.

While he was absent in camp the cruel stepmother considered what steps she should take to destroy the Shahzada's wife. She wrote a letter in the Prince's name to the Padishah in which he requested his father to put his wife away.

When the Padishah received the letter the Prince's wife was present, and as soon as she was acquainted with the purport of the missive she said, "Knowing that the Shahzada no longer loves me, there is nothing for me to do but to leave this palace."

The Padishah endeavored to calm her, assuring her that in his belief the letter was the work of some secret enemy; but it was of no avail, she could not be turned from her purpose. "I will go," she said, "for my husband has certainly found some one more beautiful than I, or he would not have written such a letter."

With these words she quitted the palace in tears. Wandering through wood and field, up hill and down dale, across land and sea, she came one day to a spring where she saw a coffin in which a beautiful youth lay dead,

“What can be the meaning of this?” she asked herself, and while absorbed in reflection and trembling with fear the darkness came on. She sought and found a hiding-place in the neighborhood of the spring, and about midnight she saw forty doves flying towards the spot. Watching them, she saw them all alight on the crest of the water and shake themselves, on which they immediately changed into maidens and proceeded to the coffin. One of them took a wand, and touching the dead youth three times with it, he rose up as though from sleep. All night long they played together with him, and when morning dawned the youth lay down again in the coffin, the maiden touched him three times with the wand, and he was dead; then all the maidens went back to the spring, shook themselves, and resuming the form of doves, flew off.

All this the Prince’s wife saw from her hiding-place. As no one was to be seen, she stole to the coffin, picked up the wand which the fairies had left behind, touched the dead youth three times with it, and he woke up immediately.

Seeing the maiden he asked, “Who art thou?”

“Who art thou, and what were the maidens who visited thee during the night?” returned she.

Then said the youth, “They are forty peris who stole me away in my childhood.”

The restored youth and the forlorn maiden swore eternal friendship and resolved to marry one another. He loved her on account of her fidelity, and for some time they lived very happily together. Then the youth began to look pale and anxious, until one day he said, “Hitherto the forty peris have ignored you, but if they should hear of our marriage they will come and kill us. It would be best for you to go away from here to my mother. There you may live in safety, and we shall see what favor Allah will grant us.” So with a heavy heart the maiden set out for the dwelling of the youth’s mother.

Knocking at the door, she begged admittance and shelter in Allah’s name, telling her story, and saying further that she had been driven from home and had not a friend in the world. The youth’s mother, who had lived in continual grief for her son, took pity on the maiden and received her into the house. That same night a son was born to her.

Some days afterwards, the youth appeared in the form of a bird at the window of her chamber, and inquired, “How art thou, and how is the child?”

The woman answered, “We are both well.” The young man’s mother, chancing to overhear the dialogue, asked the woman who the bird really was. The young woman now told her all she knew and what had happened. “Oh, that is my son indeed!” exclaimed the mother, beside herself with joy.

From this moment she loved the young woman and could not do enough for her; she had better clothing made for her, and surrounded her with all



possible care and attention. "My dear daughter," said she one day, "if this bird should come again and ask what the child is doing, tell him it is angry with its father because he does not come to see it. If then he should enter the room ask him in what way he can obtain deliverance from the power of the peris."

Next day the bird appeared again, and when he made the usual inquiries the woman answered, "The child is angry with you."

"Why?" asked the young man. "Because you have never seen it," answered the young woman.

"Very well, open the window and let me come in," said the bird. The window was accordingly opened. The youth put off his bird form and stepped into the room.

While he was fondling the child the old woman said to him, "My son, is there no means of delivering thee from the forty peris?"

"Yes," answered the youth, "there is a means that is easy and yet difficult." He then explained that, to accomplish the desired purpose, his bird-form must be thrown into a hot oven; the peris would know of it, and crying "Our Shah is burning!" would cast themselves into the oven to rescue him; if, on this, the oven door could be shut fast, the peris would all be burnt up and then he would be free from their spell.

The maiden accordingly gave the servants instructions to get the oven ready; and no sooner had she thrown in the youth's bird-form than the forty peris came crying "Our Shah is burning!" and flew straight into the oven. The door was quickly shut and fastened up, and thus the forty peris all perished. The youth was now free, and there was much embracing and kissing and weeping and laughing for joy.

While the young woman and the young man now spent their days in peace, the Prince, the rightful husband of the young woman, came home from the war, and his first words were, "Where is my wife?" The Padishah informed him that she had left home on account of the letter he had sent.

In his despair the Prince resolved to set out at once in search of her.

Carrying a knapsack light in weight but heavy in value, he wandered for six months, up mountains, through valleys, across fields, drinking coffee, smoking his chibouque [a long Turkish pipe], and picking flowers, until one day he arrived at the spring where his wife had stopped. He noticed that all around it was burnt up, as though there had been a recent conflagration.

From thence he wandered into the town where his wife was living. He entered a coffeehouse, and while he was resting the proprietor accosted him, inquiring whence he came and whither he was going. The Prince said he was seeking his wife, who had run away from him. On this the coffeehouse keeper related that there was a young man living in that town who had been delivered from the power of the peris by a very beautiful young woman. "Perhaps that is thy wife," suggested the coffeehouse keeper.

He had scarcely finished speaking when the young man referred to entered the coffeehouse. The Shahzada turned to him and inquired after his wife. The man related all that had happened, which was sufficient to convince the Prince that the woman was indeed his wife. Now said he to the young man, “Go home and tell thy wife that I am here, and ask her also which of us she prefers—thee or me. Thou hast but to mention that I am her first husband, Black-eyed Snake” (that was the Prince’s name when he was in dragon-form).

The young man accordingly went back home and told his wife of the occurrence, and when he put the question, “Whom wilt thou have—me or thy first husband?”

She answered, “By thee I have two roses, but Black-eyed Snake possesses my heart.” So saying she flew as on the wings of the wind to her first husband. They rejoiced at finding each other again, and set off on their return journey.

As soon as they arrived at the palace the Prince inquired who was the cause of all the suffering they had both endured, and it was found to be the work of the stepmother. Called into the presence of the Prince the woman was given her choice of forty mules or forty sticks. “Forty sticks are for my enemies,” answered the woman; “for myself I prefer forty mules.” Accordingly she was tied to the tails of forty mules and torn limb from limb.

The reunited pair now celebrated their wedding anew, and they lived the rest of their lives in unalloyed bliss.

## KARA MUSTAPHA THE HERO

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Kúnoz, Ignáz. *Forty-four Turkish Fairy Tales*. London: Gordon G. Harrap & Company, 1913, 50–57.

**Date:** 1913

**Original Source:** Turkish

**National Origin:** Turkey

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“Kara Mustapha the Hero” is a Turkish **variant** of the folktale commonly labeled “The Brave Tailor” (AT 1640) in English language tradition. As in the British and Anglo-American versions, the protagonist uses his wit to dominate his monstrous adversaries, and thereby gain fame as a hero. See “The Lion and the Unicorn” (Volume 4, page 232) for an Appalachian version of the tale.

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**T**here was once a woman who had a husband who was so timid that he never dared to go out alone. On one occasion the woman was invited to a party, and as she was about to set out her husband implored her to

make haste back, as he would be forced to remain in the house until her return. She promised to do so; and had hardly been with her friends half an hour when she got up to take leave. "Why must you go home so soon?" asked her hosts. She answered that her husband was at home waiting for her. "Why does he wait?" they asked.

"He dare not go out without me," was the reply. "That is strange," observed the women, and prevailed upon her to remain a little longer. They advised her that next time she went out with her husband after dark, she should slip away from him, and leave him alone in the darkness. By that means he would be cured.

The woman followed this advice, and on the first opportunity that offered, she left her husband alone in the darkness. The man cried out in his terror until at last he fell asleep where he waited. At daybreak he awoke, and went angrily into the house.

Among his possessions was a rusty old knife bequeathed him by his father. He took it up and while cleaning it uttered a resolution not to live with his wife any more. He accordingly set out and came to a place where honey had been spilt, on which a swarm of flies were regaling themselves. Drawing his knife across the sticky mass, he found that he had killed sixty of the flies. He drew it across a second time and counted seventy victims. Immediately he went to a cutler and ordered him to engrave on the knife: "At a single stroke Kara Mustafa, the great hero, has killed sixty, and at the second stroke seventy." The inscription finished, the knife was returned to its owner, who went his way.

Presently he came to a wilderness, and when night fell he lay down and slept, sticking his knife into the earth. Now in this locality dwelt forty Dews, one of whom took an early walk every morning. The Dew saw the sleeping man and the knife, and as he read the inscription upon the latter he was seized with terror. Seeing that Mustafa was now waking up, the Dew, with a view to appeasing this redoubtable person, begged him to join his brothers' company. "Who are you?" asked the hero.

"We are Dews to the number of forty, and if you will deign to join us we shall be forty one."

"I am willing," said Mustafa; "go and tell the others."

Hearing this, the Dew hastened to his fellows and said, "My brothers, a hero desires to join us. His immense strength may be gathered from the inscription on his knife: 'At a single stroke Kara Mustafa, the great hero, has killed sixty, and at the second stroke seventy.' Let us put everything in order, for he will be here directly."

But the Dews hastened to meet Mustafa, who when he saw them felt his courage sink. However, he managed to address them. "God greet you, comrades!" he exclaimed. The Dews modestly returned his greeting and offered him a place among them. By and by he inquired, "Is there among you any fellow like me?" The Dews assured him that there was not. Thus satisfied, Mustafa proceeded, "Because, if so, let him step forth and try his strength with me."

“Where shall his equal be found?” exclaimed the Dews, as they walked home.

The Dews were obliged to carry their water from a long distance, and this duty was performed in turn by each of their number. Being of gigantic stature and strength, they were of course able to carry a quantity impossible for a mere mortal. On the following day one of the Dews accosted Mustafa, “It is your turn to fetch the water, and we are sorry to say the well is far away.” Being afraid of the hero, the Dews naturally addressed him somewhat apologetically. Mustafa reflected, and then asked for a rope. It was given him, and he proceeded with it to the well. The Dews, full of curiosity to know what he intended to do with the rope, looked on from a distance, and saw him attach it to the stonework of the well. Astonished, they ran up and shouted to him to know what he was about. “Oh,” he answered, “I am only going to put the well on my back and bring it home, so that none of us need go so far for water again!” They begged him for Allah’s sake to desist, and he promised to do so on the understanding that they would not trouble him again with the duty of water-carrying.

A few days afterwards it was Mustafa’s turn to fetch wood from the forest. Again he asked for the rope, and went. The Dews hid them selves and watched him. On the edge of the forest they saw him drive a peg into the ground and fix the rope, which he then drew round the trees. By chance the wind rose and shook the trees to and fro. “What are you doing, Mustafa?” shouted one of the Dews.

“Oh, I am only going to take home the forest all at once instead of piece-meal, to save trouble.”

“Don’t shake the trees!” cried all the Dews. “You will destroy the whole forest. We would rather fetch the wood ourselves.”

The Dews were now more afraid of Mustafa than ever, and they called a council to deliberate on the best means of getting rid of their formidable associate. It was eventually decided to pour boiling water upon him during the night while he slept, and thus kill him. Fortunately for himself, however, he overheard the conversation, and prepared accordingly. When evening came he went to bed as usual. The Dews heated the water and poured it through the roof of his dwelling. But Mustafa had laid a bolster in the place where he should have been; on the bolster he had placed his fez, and he had drawn up the bedcover. Then he betook himself to a corner of the room, where he lay down and slept soundly out of harm’s way. When morning broke the Dews came in the belief that he was dead, and knocked at the door. “Who’s there?” came a voice from the inside. The astonished and affrighted Dews called to him to get up, as it was already nearly midday. “It was very hot last night,” he observed; “I lay bathed in perspiration.” The astonishment of the Dews that boiling water had no further effect upon him than to make him perspire may be imagined.

The Dews next resolved to drop forty iron balls upon Mustafa while he slept: those would surely kill him. This plan also our hero overheard. When

bedtime came he entered his room and arranged the bolster as before, putting his fez upon it and drawing up the cover, after which he retired to his corner to await developments. The Dews mounted the roof, and lifting some of the tiles, looked down upon what appeared to be their sleeping companion. "Look, there is his chest; there is his head," they whispered, and thud came the balls one after the other.

Next morning the Dews went to Mustafa's house and knocked at the door. This time no answer came, and they began to congratulate them selves that the hero would trouble them no more. But as a measure of precaution they knocked again and also uttered loud shouts. Then they found their rejoicing had been premature, for Mustafa's voice was heard, "I couldn't sleep last night for the mice gamboling over me; let me rest a little longer." The Dews were now nearly crazy. What manner of man was this, who thought heavy iron balls were mice?

Few days afterwards the Dews said to Mustafa, "In the adjoining country we have a Dew-brother: will you fight a duel with him?" Mustafa inquired whether the Dew were a strong fellow. "Very," was the reply. "Then he may come." In saying this, however, our hero was ready to die of fright. When the gigantic Dew appeared on the scene, he proposed to preface the duel by a wrestling bout. This being agreed to, they repaired to the field. The Dew caught Mustafa by the throat and held him in such a mighty grasp that his eyes started from their sockets. "What are you staring at?" demanded the Dew, as he relaxed his grip on Mustafa's neck.

"I was looking to see how high I should have to throw you so that all your limbs would be broken by your fall," answered our hero in well-simulated contempt. Hearing this, all the Dews fell upon their knees before him and begged him to spare their brother. Mustafa accordingly graciously pardoned his adversary; and the Dews further entreated him to accept a large number of gold-pieces and go home. Secretly rejoicing, he accepted the proffered money and expressed his willingness to go. Taking a cordial farewell of them all, he set out in the company of a Dew, who had been deputed to act as his escort.

When he arrived in sight of his home Mustafa saw his wife looking out of the window; and as her gaze rested upon him she cried, "Here comes my coward of a husband with a Dew!" Mustafa made a sign to her, behind the Dew's back, to say nothing, and then began to run toward the house. "Where are you going in such a hurry?" demanded the Dew.

"Into the house to get a bow and arrow to shoot you," was the answer of the flying hero. On hearing this, the Dew made off back again to rejoin his brothers.

Mustafa had hardly had time to rest in his home when news was brought of a fierce bear that was playing havoc in the district.

The inhabitants went to the vali [governor] and begged him to order the hero to slay the depredator. "He has already encountered forty Dews," they said. "It is a pity that the bear should kill so many poor people."

The vali sent for Mustafa and informed him that it was unseemly that the people should be terrorized by a bear while the province held such a valorous

man as himself. Then spake Mustafa, “Show me the place where the bear is, and let forty horsemen go with me.” His request was granted. Mustafa went into the stable took a handful of small pebbles, and flung them among the horses. The creatures all with the exception of one began to rear. This Mustafa himself took. When the horsemen saw what he did, they remarked to the vali that the man was mad and they were not disposed to help him to hunt the bear. The vali advised them, “As soon as you hear the bear, go away and leave him to it, to do what he will.” So the cavalcade set out, and when presently they came to the bear’s hiding-place the mounted escort left our hero in the lurch and rode back. Mustafa spurred his steed, but the animal would not move, and the bear came at him with ungainly strides. Seeing a tree close at hand, our hero sprang on to the back of his horse, clutched at the overhanging branches, and pulled himself up. The bear came underneath the tree and was preparing to ascend when Mustafa, letting go his hold, alighted on its back, and boxed bruin’s ears so severely that he set off in the direction the horsemen had taken. Catching sight of them, he yelled, “Kara Mustafa, the hero, is coming!” Whereon they all wheeled round, and, understanding the situation, dispatched the bear with their lances.

After this the fame of Kara Mustafa spread far and wide. The vali conferred upon him various marks of honor, and he enjoyed the respect of his neighbors to his long life’s end.

## THE WICKED SPARROW

**Tradition Bearer:** W. Shanavonian

**Source:** Shanavonian, W., and Mary Mason Poynter. “A Folk-Tale from Asia Minor.” *Folklore* 27 (1916): 311–313.

**Date:** 1916

**Original Source:** Turkish

**National Origin:** Turkey

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In the following **animal tale**, a sparrow is cast in the role of and exploitive **trickster**. Using guile and abusive language the bird, in spite of its diminutive size, intimidates humans into giving him his way. At last his gloating brings him to a bad end. The nonsense phrase, “There was or there was not a sparrow ...” and the **formulaic** Middle Eastern closing serve as markers to identify the tale as comic fiction.

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**T**here was or there was not a sparrow that went out for a walk. After he had gone up hill and down dale a thorn ran into his foot. Then he returned to town and went to the baker and begged him to take out the thorn. The baker graciously did so, and threw the thorn into his oven.

But the sparrow after a time returned to the baker and said, "Baker, I want my thorn back."

The baker replied, "But I have thrown it into the oven!"

"Yes," said the sparrow, "but nevertheless I want it back, or let me have a loaf of bread instead; my thorn or a loaf!"

And the sparrow used such language as children should never hear, and grown people should never repeat. The baker, in order to avoid any further trouble with the impudent sparrow, gave him the bread, with which he disappeared.

He went up hill and down dale until he came to a place where there was a flock of sheep and a number of shepherds who were just going to have their breakfast. But as the poor fellows had no bread they were throwing a quantity of earth into their milk. The sparrow asked them, "Brother shepherds, why are you throwing earth into your milk?"

And they said, "Because we have no bread."

Then the sparrow said, "Here, take my bread, and may it be sweet unto you!"

The shepherds thanked him, took the bread, brought fresh milk and enjoyed their breakfast. Then the sparrow went away, up hill and down dale, but soon he returned to the shepherds and said, "Brother shepherds, I want my bread back!"

"But," they said, "you gave us your bread and said, 'may it be sweet unto you,' and we thanked you for it and have enjoyed it with our breakfast. We have eaten it, how can we give it back to you?"

Then the sparrow used such language as children should never hear, and grown people should never repeat. And he said, "I want my bread or I'll take a lamb; my bread or a lamb!"

Then the shepherds in order to be rid of the troublesome sparrow gave him the lamb which he demanded. On he went, up hill and down dale, until he came to a village which he saw was in a great state of animation. The villagers were wearing their best dress as if it were a day in Bairam, or an Easter Sunday. When he heard the music and saw young people dancing and waving their handkerchiefs he understood that there was a wedding. As he approached he saw that near the bridegroom's house some butchers were on the point of slaying a huge shepherd dog.

The sparrow asked them, "Brother butchers, why do you slay that dog?" and they told him, "As there are no sheep or cattle in this neighborhood we had to slay this dog for the wedding feast."

And he said to them, "Take this lamb for the wedding feast, and may it be sweet unto you!"

While the sparrow went his way up hill and down dale, the lamb was nicely roasted and the guests enjoyed the feast. The wedding dinner was, however, hardly over when the sparrow came back and said, "I want my lamb!"

"But," he was told, "kind sparrow, your lamb was roasted and enjoyed by the guests, so nothing of it remains. Wait for a few days and we will give you a better lamb. Now go away and leave us in peace."

The sparrow answered, "I will not go away, I will not leave you in peace, I want my own lamb and no other; and if you cannot give me back my lamb I shall take the bride instead; my lamb or the bride!"

The bride and bridegroom wept most bitterly, but their tears could not move the heart of the wicked sparrow. He insisted on having his lamb or the bride. Then the sparrow threatened them and used such language as children should never hear, and grown people never repeat, until the bridegroom's family decided, in order to avoid any further difficulty with the sparrow, to give him the bride. And they did so.

The sparrow took the bride and went away, up hill and down dale, until one day he met a man riding on a donkey and singing gaily to the accompaniment of his tambourine. The sparrow stopped the man and said, "Friend, may you have prosperity! I want your tambourine!" And the man answered, "My tambourine is too precious to be given away like that!" So the sparrow said, "Take this beautiful bride and give me the tambourine instead," and the man took the bride in exchange for the tambourine. Then the sparrow, with his newly acquired tambourine, went up hill and down dale until he came to the banks of a river where there were willow trees. And he flew to the topmost branch of a willow tree and playing his tambourine began to sing:

Oh! What a clever bird am I!  
 I gave away the thorn and I took the bread,  
 I gave away the bread and I took the lamb,  
 I gave away the lamb and I took the bride,  
 I gave away the bride and I took this beautiful tambourine—  
 Oh, what a clever bird am I!

And all of a sudden this wicked sparrow lost his balance, fell into the river and was seen no more.

Three apples fell from heaven; one for the storyteller; one for him to whom you have just listened; and one for him who has just spent his breath.





# **AUSTRALIA AND OCEANIA**

## ***Australia***



# AUSTRALIA

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## THE GREAT FIRE BIRD

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Dunlop, W., and T. V. Holmes. "Australian Folklore Stories" *The Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 28 (1899): 25–27.

**Date:** ca. 1850

**Original Source:** Aboriginal Australian

**National Origin:** Australia

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Australia, the smallest continent, lies in the Indian and Pacific Oceans. Considerable cultural consistency prevails across the Aboriginal groups (the first indigenous human population), but each of the indigenous societies was compelled to adapt to the specific environments in which they settled and to avail themselves of the particular resources provided by the various ecological niches. In general, however, the Aboriginal population of Australia developed a hunting and gathering subsistence base. Some groups relied more heavily on gathering plant foods. Others claimed territory that provided greater opportunities for hunting, and those who lived in coastal environments turned to fishing as well. As is the case with hunters and gatherers in general, these communities were nomadic, following food resources during the seasonal subsistence cycles that defined their year. The "Great Fire Bird" is a **myth** explaining how humans first obtained fire. Through the act of acquiring fire for humans, the Mina (or, mynah) bird plays the role of **culture hero**.

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**L**ong, long before my father was born, there was a bird in a high hill. The hill was very high up, almost in the sky, and the bird lived there very comfortably. In the coldest day he was happy, for he had a large

fire; when he was hungry he roasted his meat at the fire, and when he had eaten plenty he lay down and slept beside the fire. But this great strong bird was very ill-natured, he would not give any fire to the poor blacks who lived near him and who never had had any fire. They were shivering with cold; the rain wet them and they could not dry themselves, and the hail fell amongst their children and did not melt; the poor little creatures were so cold. They saw the bright fire shining upon the top of the high hill, and they said that the great bird had stretched upward and taken a bit of the sun to warm himself. So they gathered the whole people together and went to the foot of the hill and begged for a little bit of the beautiful sun, that they might warm themselves as the great bird did. But he laughed at them and mocked them, and told them to get the sun from the sky. Then he threw down a large piece of kangaroo nicely roasted, and told them to eat that and learn what his little sun did for him.

They had always eaten their meat raw before, and at first they did not like the roasted meat, but in a little time they agreed that it had much more taste, and that it was much easier to tear in pieces, and did not hurt their teeth so much; besides, it was the way in which the great and wonderful bird liked his meat, so it must be the best. What then were they to do to get their meat made like this new delicacy? Even the pain of the cold and the complainings of the lubras [aboriginal women] and children were almost forgotten in their anxiety to have this newly awakened desire gratified. With eager voices they renewed their petition for a bit of the sun; a little bit, only the smallest scrap. The great bird laughed, and tauntingly asked them if they wished to have themselves roasted like the kangaroo. They only called the lubras to join in beseeching for sun to warm them and to make the bloody meat brown and good. The clamor became so great at last that all the birds and beasts were alarmed and gathered at the foot of the hill to see what was the cause of it. The great bird looked down upon them, mocking their ignorance, but still refused to give them any part of his fire. At last the Mina bird, the most cunning of all the earthly birds, whispered to the old men to go away and say no more about it and she would find a way of getting fire for them. So the crowd willingly separated to wait for the fulfillment of her promise. At that time blacks did not live in nice earthen my-mys [also, miamia, a shelter usually consisting of a frame of tree limbs covered with bark, leaves, or grass] they had not learned how to make them. They lay down under a thick tree in winter, and beside a sunny bank in summer, and only gathered grass or soft branches to lie upon. Thus, at the time I speak of, the whole tribe sullenly betook themselves to their sheltered retreats, and strove to gain heat by creeping close together, covering their naked bodies with leaves and grass. Though great and powerful, the bird of the high hill was as much obliged to have food as the lowest and most ignorant blackman, so, after throwing all the meat he had to the petitioners, he began to remember

that he would require some more for his own eating; and having watched the retiring multitude hide themselves in the bush, he wondered for a few minutes what could have so suddenly stilled their entreaties and quieted their anxiety. Then, stretching his large wings, which were like two black clouds, he soared away that he might look for some emu or kangaroo, kill it and carry its flesh home to his rock. This is what the Mina bird expected, and no sooner was the rock left vacant, than he and all his tribe flew to it, each with a small piece of the bark of the gum tree in his bill. They gazed at the unknown ornaments and conveniences with which the Fire Bird's marvelous abode was filled, but did not dare to delay long enough to enable them to describe what they had seen, though often in after years requested to do so. To steal a portion of the fire was their object, and for this purpose they had brought the pieces of bark. In these each placed a bit of live cinder and away they flew with their prizes to the place where their friends the blacks lay. But how can I tell you what followed? At first the black men looked with wonder at what they still believed to be pieces of the sun. Then some of the boldest lifted a piece in their hands. When they felt themselves burned they threw the fire from them in terror; this falling among the dried grass and branches which composed their beds, kindled a flame which was soon communicated to the bush around them. Fear and confusion took hold of the miserable beings, they knew not what they had to dread or how to escape. Some fled one way some another, but the fire followed them and seemed a living creature running along in a mysterious manner to punish them for meddling with the property of the great bird. At first, horror prevented them from observing anything, presently they saw that whatever the fire touched died away, became black, and was, as they supposed, eaten up by this new beast which had neither feet nor mouth, yet walked and ate. The flames rose higher and then the great bird appeared hovering over them and laughing loudly at their dismay. "Men," cried he, "now you will know how you like to be roasted, and I shall get plenty roasted kangaroo without the trouble of catching them." The fire spread far and wide, many of the black people were burned to death, principally children. Some of the strong men and women, running from the fire, came to a river and swam across it; the fire could not follow them so they escaped. These watched the burning and then the extinction of the flame. Presently there remained nothing but a red cinder here and there, looking bright in the darkness, for night had come to add to the horrors of their situation. Next morning they dared not venture to go near their mysterious enemy, but some days after, seeing all quiet, they re-crossed the river, and by degrees approached nearer and nearer until at last they found some fire under a burned tree. After many trials and much fright they managed to make themselves aware of the properties and use of fire so as to warm their cold bodies and roast their prey.

And this is how the blacks first got fire.

## KUYIMOKUNA

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Howitt, Mary E. B., and Otto Siebert. "Some Native Legends from Central Australia." *Folklore* 13 (1902): 405–406.

**Date:** ca. 1902

**Original Source:** Aboriginal Australian

**National Origin:** Australia

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In the traditions of the Dieri of the South Australian Desert, the Mura-mura, one of whom is featured in the following **myth**, are anthropomorphic beings who act as creators and **culture heroes**. They are said to have given human beings their present shape, named the animals, and instituted ceremonies. In the narrative below, a Mura-mura establishes the form of a supernatural attack (labeled pointing) in which a bone is pointed at a victim to cause death. Finally, the Mura-mura's premonition is explained by the fact that, according to Dieri concepts of physical and psychological correspondences, the liver is the seat of the emotions. This may be compared to the European concept of the heart.

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**A** Mura-mura was once out by himself hunting in time of great drought, but could find no food. There was no game to be found, and as he sought for it in vain the Mura-mura. Kuyimokuna, a clever boy, came to him and asked what he was looking for.

"Kapiri and Woma," was the reply.

"Follow me," said the boy, walking forward; and all at once he said "Dig there." The man dug deep into the earth and found a woma (carpet-snake), and in like manner the boy showed him other places where woma were hidden. Thus he helped the elder Mura-mura on several days, till the others of his people envied him when they saw him return laden with game each night; so they asked him where he had got it. He told them to come with him, and his boy would show them where to find woma and kapiri (iguana). This they did, and the boy led them hither and thither to dig.

While they were doing this the boy became thirsty and drank out of their water-bag, forgetting to shut it up again, so that the water ran out. The people were all very angry at this and agreed to kill the boy, and did so when his friend and guardian was not there.

Now this man felt in his liver that something was wrong with the boy. He could not sleep all night, and in the morning he set about following their tracks, till he came to where his friend lay dead. He wept bitterly for his boy. Then he separated the flesh from the bones, divided these from

each other, and with them separately he killed all the people who had killed his friend.

This is how the Dieri got the custom of killing by “pointing the bone.”

## MANDRA-MANKANA, ALSO CALLED BAKUTA-TERKANA-TARANA OR KANTAYULKANA

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Howitt, A. W., and Otto Siebert. “Legends of the Dieri and Kindred Tribes of Central Australia.” *The Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 34 (1904): 103–105.

**Date:** ca. 1900

**Original Source:** Aboriginal Australian

**National Origin:** Australia

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The name of the Mura-mura in the following **myth** means roughly “behind in front of the belly.” He acts in the role of creator of plant foods to create an opportunity to satisfy his need for revenge. Mandra-mankana as **culture hero** creates the totemic clans named for various animal and plant species. These clans give order and structure to Dieri economic and social life.

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**M**andra-mankana once came to the neighborhood of Pando. Two girls who saw him jeered at him, because his back was just the same as his front. He told their mother, who was his *noa* (that is, they were from a kin group with which marriage would be culturally acceptable) to send her two daughters to his camp the following night.

When she told them of his demand, they ridiculed him, but yet they went there, and lay down one on each side of the sleeping old man. Then they heaped up a ridge of sand on either side of him, so that he thought his girls were there. But these had meanwhile crept away out of the sand and lay down to sleep in the camp of their mother.

When the Elder woke in the night he rose upright, and saw that he was quite alone, and that the girls had cheated him. Hence his name of Bakuta-terkana-tarana (He who rises up to no avail). He went forth thinking of revenge.

Through his songs he caused plants to grow, some with bitter and some with pleasant tasting fruit. The two girls found these plants and ate first of the bitter and then of the good fruit. Delighted with the latter they sprang from one bush to the other. Thus after a time they came to a tanyu bush laden with its red and yellow fruit, where lurked Mandra-mankana in concealment, to



destroy them. As they came near to him he threw his boomerang at one and broke her ankle, and then rushing up he killed her by a blow on her head. The other sister ran away to save herself, but he followed her and killed her also. He then cut off the breasts of the dead girls and carried them with him as he went further.

Coming to a camp where some young boys were amusing themselves in a plain by throwing boomerangs, he hid himself behind some bushes, and watched them at their play. Then one of the boys threw his boomerang so far that it fell near the old man. The boy sought for it and was about to take it when the *pinnaru* [clan elder] seized him by the hand. He was frightened, but Mandramankana calmed him by giving him a lizard [to eat], and he soon became friendly with him, and promised at his request to make a new song, and called to all the people to come and hear it. They assembled, even the sick and the women with child.

The boy began to sing and the *pinnaru* came out of the bushes, painted and decked with feathers, and carrying the breasts of the girls hanging on his chest. He danced to the onlookers, in the front ranks of whom two young men, the *noas* of the girls, were sitting. These immediately recognized the breasts of their *noas*, and when the *pinnaru* retired dancing, they stuck their *kandris* [boomerang with a sharpened ends] in the ground before them. When he again danced near to them, each seized his *kandri* and struck him so that both his legs were broken. Then they split his head open, and at the same time all the people fell upon him and even the children struck him. Then they buried him and laying his bag at the head of the grave they went elsewhere.

One day a crow perched itself on the grave of Mandramankana. Three times it knocked with its beak on the wood which was lying on the grave, and cried "Ka! Ka! Ka!"

Then the dead man woke up and came out of the grave, and looked round, but no one was to be seen. Then he looked for footprints and found that the people had all gone in the same direction, but by three different ways. While the strong and hale ones had gone, some to the right and some to the left, hunting as they went alone, the old and the sick had gone straight on between the two other tracks. These he followed till he came to the neighborhood of their new camp, and he concealed himself in the bushes near where they were busy in the creek, driving the fish together to catch them.

They had pulled up bushes and grass and were driving the fish before them with these in heaps. Mandramankana kept himself concealed in the water, and opening his mouth, he sucked in and swallowed the water, fish, grass and men. Some few who were at a distance, observing that their comrades and nearly all those who were fishing, had disappeared, and looking round to see where they had gone to, saw with alarm that the monster in the water had surrounded them with his arms. Only a few of them escaped by jumping over them. The Mura-mura Zanta-yul-kana ("Grass-swallower Mura-mura"), looking

after them, gave to each, as he ran, his *murdu* name [that is, the name of its clan totem].

Those who ran to the north were the kanangara, seed of the manyura; karabana, bat; maiaru, marsupial rat; palyara, small marsupial rat; katatara, budjerigar [parakeet]; ntalura, cormorant; karawora, eaglehawk; warukati, emu; kaulka, crow; padi, a grub called by the whites witchety; karku, red ochre; woma, carpet snake; pitcheri, *Duboisia Hopwoodii*.

Those who ran to the southeast were the Chukuro, kangaroo; kintala, dingo; kani, jew lizard; kaperi, lace lizard, commonly called iguana; kolcnla, marsupial rat; punta, small marsupial mouse; learabana, marsupial mouse; puralku, pelican; kuraura, rain; malbarit, a crane; tundu-bulyeru, water rat; piramoku, native cat; kaladiri, a frog; tidnamara, a frog; wilyaru, curlew; watari, kangaroo rat.

Those who ran to the southward were the markara, native perch; kirhabara, eel; yikaura, dasyurus; nyarumba, box eucalyptus (*E. microtheca?*); kanunga, bush wallaby; kapita, rabbit bandicoot.

The Mura-mura now came out of the water, and vomited so that he threw out all his teeth, which are to be seen at Manatandrani. Having done this he went a little further and sat down and died.

This place is pointed out by the Dieri on the Cooper north of Pando, and the body of the Mura-mura is to be seen there also, turned into stone in the form of a great rock.

## THE WALLAROO AND THE WILLY-WAGTAIL

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Mathews, R. H. "The Wallaroo and the Willy-Wagtail: A Queensland Folk-Tale." *Folklore* 20 (1909): 214–216.

**Date:** ca. 1909

**Original Source:** Aboriginal Australia

**National Origin:** Australia

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In the following tale the characteristics of **animal tale** and **myth** are combined. The wallaroo plays the **trickster** role in order to feed upon his fellow creatures by exploiting their kindness. His ploy of feigning illness to achieve his own ends is typical of **trickster**. The narrative further explains the origin of physical characteristics of species and social practices of humans in a mythic fashion. A wallaroo is a large mountain kangaroo, and a padamelon, or paddy-melon, is a small bush marsupial. The willy-wagtail is a small, extremely aggressive Australian bird about the size of a finch. The Dyerwine and Bunda are two of the four subclasses into which the local tribes are divided.

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An old wallaroo, who was too infirm to hunt, used to have his camp at the butt of a big tree growing on a rocky ridge. He had a habit of sitting and lashing the ground with his great tail.

One day a padamelon, who belonged to the Dyerwine section, was passing near the place, and, hearing this beating upon the ground, shouted out "Ha-a!" and the wallaroo answered in the same way, but in a very plaintive tone, as if he were very sick. The padamelon came up to him, and inquired what was the matter, and the wallaroo replied that he was too ill to do any hunting himself, but that his mates had gone down to the river to catch some fish for him, as he was very hungry.

The padamelon said, "I'll go and find your friends, and try to bring you some food," and started off.

When he got about twenty yards away, the wallaroo called after him, "You had better take my boomerang with you in case you may see some game as you go along."

The padamelon said, "All right, throw it here," and stood where he was. This was the opportunity the wallaroo was watching for, so he threw the boomerang with all his force, and with good aim, and killed the padamelon. He then made a hole in the ground in which he roasted his game, and had a great feast, greasing himself from head to foot with the padamelon's kidney fat.

As the padamelon did not return to the camp of his own people in a day or two's time, one of his nephews, an iguana, said, "I must go and see if I can find my uncle; something must have happened to him." So away he went, following his uncle's tracks, till by and by he heard heavy thumping on the ground, and on getting within speaking distance he called out the same as his uncle had done, and the wallaroo answered him in the same doleful accents that he had used to his first victim, and kept on beating his tail on the ground as if he were in great distress.

The iguana, being a kind-hearted fellow, came up and asked him the cause of his grief, and the wallaroo repeated the same story that he had told his uncle, with the same result. When the iguana had gone a little distance, the wallaroo repeated the offer of the boomerang, and the iguana, on standing still to catch it, was killed and eaten in the same way that his uncle had been disposed of.

Several different animals went in search of the padamelon at various times, but none of them ever returned to their own camp, and their friends held a council to determine what should be done.

The willy-wagtail, who was a medicine-man and a very clever fellow, volunteered to go out and endeavor to ascertain the fate of his comrades. He belonged to the section Bunda, and was one of the nephews of the padamelon, and resolved to avenge his death, and that of his fellows.

At daylight next morning he started off, and about the middle of the day his attention was arrested by the heavy thuds of the wallaroo's tail upon the ground. He approached the spot warily, because his suspicions had been aroused

by the strange disappearance of the other members of his tribe, and inquired of the wallaroo what was the matter with him, and was answered in the usual sorrowful tone, and the same delusive story was reiterated.

The willy-wagtail volunteered to go and find the fishermen, and, when he got the usual distance away, the wallaroo proffered the use of his boomerang. The willy-wagtail, suspecting foul play, said, "Throw it to me, and I'll catch it," but kept a vigilant eye upon the thrower. Being very quick and active, he leapt to one side, and the boomerang went past him. The wallaroo threw some nulla nullas [type of throwing stick] and two or three spears, but the willy-wagtail jumped out of the way of every one.

When the wallaroo had exhausted his stock of weapons, the willy-wagtail picked up the boomerang from where it had fallen, and threw it with all his force, striking the wallaroo a mortal blow, and splitting his chest open, which accounts for the streak of white fur on the breasts of all wallaroos ever since. He then roasted his enemy in the same hole which had been used in cooking his victims. While he was being cooked, the willy-wagtail kept beating two sticks together and singing, "You are the fellow who killed and ate my people! You will not do it any more!"

After he had dined heartily on the choicest parts of the wallaroo, and anointed his body with the fat, he proceeded to the river, where he saw the people whom the wallaroo had said were fishing there, and inquired if they had seen anything of the padamelon and other friends who were missing.

They replied, "No! That old rogue the wallaroo must have killed and eaten them. He is no friend of ours." The willy-wagtail told them how he had killed and roasted their common enemy, and they were pleased to hear it. After that he returned to his own people, who were all very glad to learn that he had avenged the death of their friends, and he became a chief man in the tribe, and had four young wives.

All the old men assembled in council, and decided that in future no man should go alone, either hunting game, or to search for missing friends, or on a hostile expedition, but that two or more should always proceed together, a custom which has been followed to the present time.

## DINEWAN THE EMU, AND GOOMBLEGUBBON THE BUSTARD

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Parker, K. Langloh. *Australian Legendary Tales*. London: David Nutt, 1897, 1–5.

**Date:** ca. 1895

**Original Source:** Australian

**National Origin:** Australia

As in the previous narrative, “The Wallaroo and the Willy-Wagtail” (page 303), the following tale combines explanations of origins with a moral. This combination is typical of **animal tales**.

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**D**inewan the emu, being the largest bird, was acknowledged as king by the other birds. The Gooblebubbons, the bustards, were jealous of the Dinewans. Particularly was Gooblebubbon, the mother, jealous of the Dinewan mother. She would watch with envy the high flight of the Dinewans, and their swift running. And she always fancied that the Dinewan mother flaunted her superiority in her face, for whenever Dinewan alighted near Gooblebubbon, after a long, high flight, she would flap her big wings and begin booing in her pride, not the loud booing of the male bird, but a little, triumphant, satisfied booing noise of her own, which never failed to irritate Gooblebubbon when she heard it.

Gooblebubbon used to wonder how she could put an end to Dinewan’s supremacy. She decided that she would only be able to do so by injuring her wings and checking her power of flight. But the question that troubled her was how to effect this end. She knew she would gain nothing by having a quarrel with Dinewan and fighting her, for no Gooblebubbon would stand any chance against a Dinewan. There was evidently nothing to be gained by an open fight. She would have to effect her end by cunning.

One day, when Gooblebubbon saw in the distance Dinewan coming towards her, she squatted down and doubled in her wings in such a way as to look as if she had none. After Dinewan had been talking to her for some time, Gooblebubbon said, “Why do you not imitate me and do without wings? Every bird flies. The Dinewans, to be the king of birds, should do without wings. When all the birds see that I can do without wings, they will think I am the cleverest bird and they will make a Gooblebubbon king.”

“But you have wings,” said Dinewan.

“No, I have no wings.” And indeed she looked as if her words were true, so well were her wings hidden, as she squatted in the grass. Dinewan went away after awhile, and thought much of what she had heard. She talked it all over with her mate, who was as disturbed as she was. They made up their minds that it would never do to let the Gooblebubbons reign in their stead, even if they had to lose their wings to save their kingship.

At length they decided on the sacrifice of their wings. The Dinewan mother showed the example by persuading her mate to cut off hers with a combo or stone tomahawk, and then she did the same to his. As soon as the operations were over, the Dinewan mother lost no time in letting Gooblebubbon know what they had done. She ran swiftly down to the plain on which she had left Gooblebubbon, and, finding her still squatting there, she said, “See, I have followed your example. I have now no wings. They are cut off.”

“Ha! ha! ha!” laughed Goomblegubbon, jumping up and dancing round with joy at the success of her plot. As she danced round, she spread out her wings, flapped them, and said, “I have taken you in, old stumpy wings. I have my wings yet. You are fine birds, you Dinewans, to be chosen kings, when you are so easily taken in. Ha! ha! ha!” And, laughing derisively, Goomblegubbon flapped her wings right in front of Dinewan, who rushed towards her to chastise her treachery. But Goomblegubbon flew away, and, alas! the now wingless Dinewan could not follow her.

Brooding over her wrongs, Dinewan walked away, vowing she would be revenged. But how? That was the question which she and her mate failed to answer for some time. At length the Dinewan mother thought of a plan and prepared at once to execute it. She hid all her young Dinewans but two, under a big salt bush. Then she walked off to Goomblegubbons’ plain with the two young ones following her. As she walked off the ridge, where her home was, on to the plain, she saw Goomblegubbon out feeding with her twelve young ones.

After exchanging a few remarks in a friendly manner with Goomblegubbon, she said to her, “Why do you not imitate me and only have two children? Twelve are too many to feed. If you keep so many they will never grow big birds like the Dinewans. The food that would make big birds of two would only starve twelve.”

Goomblegubbon said nothing, but she thought it might be so. It was impossible to deny that the young Dinewans were much bigger than the young Goomblegubbons, and, discontentedly, Goomblegubbon walked away, wondering whether the smallness of her young ones was owing to the number of them being so much greater than that of the Dinewans. It would be grand, she thought, to grow as big as the Dinewans. But she remembered the trick she had played on Dinewan, and she thought that perhaps she was being fooled in her turn. She looked back to where the Dinewans fed, and as she saw how much bigger the two young ones were than any of hers, once more mad envy of Dinewan possessed her. She determined she would not be outdone. Rather would she kill all her young ones but two.

She said, “The Dinewans shall not be the king birds of the plains. The Goomblegubbons shall replace them. They shall grow as big as the Dinewans, and shall keep their wings and fly, which now the Dinewans cannot do.” And straightway Goomblegubbon killed all her young ones but two. Then back she came to where the Dinewans were still feeding.

When Dinewan saw her coming and noticed she had only two young ones with her, she called out, “Where are all your young ones?”

Goomblegubbon answered, “I have killed them, and have only two left. Those will have plenty to eat now, and will soon grow as big as your young ones.”

“You cruel mother to kill your children. You greedy mother. Why, I have twelve children and I find food for them all. I would not kill one for anything,

not even if by so doing I could get back my wings. There is plenty for all. Look at the emu bush how it covers itself with berries to feed my big family. See how the grasshoppers come hopping round, so that we can catch them and fatten on them.”

“But you have only two children.”

“I have twelve. I will go and bring them to show you.” Dinewan ran off to her salt bush where she had hidden her ten young ones. Soon she was to be seen coming back. Running with her neck stretched forward, her head thrown back with pride, and the feathers of her boobootella [the large bunch of tail feathers on an emu] swinging as she ran, booming out the while her queer throat noise, the Dinewan song of joy, the pretty, soft-looking little ones with their zebra-striped skins, running beside her whistling their baby Dinewan note.

When Dinewan reached the place where Goomblegubbon was, she stopped her booing and said in a solemn tone, “Now you see my words are true, I have twelve young ones, as I said. You can gaze at my loved ones and think of your poor murdered children. And while you do so I will tell you the fate of your descendants for ever. By trickery and deceit you lost the Dinewans their wings, and now for evermore, as long as a Dinewan has no wings, so long shall a Goomblegubbon lay only two eggs and have only two young ones. We are quits now. You have your wings and I my children.”

And ever since that time a Dinewan, or emu, has had no wings, and a Goomblegubbon, or bustard of the plains, has laid only two eggs in a season.

## THE MURA-MURA DARANA

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Howitt, A. W., and Otto Siebert. “Legends of the Dieri and Kindred Tribes of Central Australia.” *The Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 34 (1904): 125–126.

**Date:** ca. 1900

**Original Source:** Aboriginal Australian

**National Origin:** Australia

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The following narrative explains the origin of a churinga (sacred object) that is smeared with fat to bring rain. The heaviest rains in the region in which the tale is told come from the north.

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This is one of those [Dieri narratives] which relate to the production of rain, and the Muramura Darana is one of the most highly considered of the Mura-muras at Pando (Lake Hope).

When no rain had fallen for a long time, and the land was desert and waste, Darana produced rain by singing continually, while looking towards the north. The rain fell and the water rose steadily till it was up to his knees, then to his hips, and finally to his neck. He waded through the waters to the sources of the river, where he fixed his *kandri* (boomerang with pointed ends) in the ground, and the rain ceased.

Then vegetation grew luxuriantly, and the *muluru* (witchety grubs) settled themselves in it in enormous numbers. The Mura-mura drove them together by his songs, dried them and packed them in bags, and hung these on the trees. Being invited by a friendly Mura-mura to visit him and eat *paua* (mollusks) he went with all his following, among whom were a number of cripples, who traveled along on their knees, elbows and ankles.

Two youths, however, the Dara-ulu (desert dwellers) remained behind, and seeing the bundles hanging on trees, threw their boomerangs at them. He who stood on the right hand hit his mark, and the dust from the dried muluru flew far and wide and obscured the sun, while the bags shone brightly to a great distance.

The Murainuras seeing this as they traveled, turned back in haste, those with feet running on the surface, while those without traveled underground. Arriving at their home they strangled the Dara-ulu, who were at once restored to life by the old Mura-mura Darana, to be again strangled by the unanimous decision of the people. Their bodies were then rolled up, and it was decided that the first child born should be the guardian of the Dara.

The Dieri show two heart-shaped stones, which are carefully wrapped up in feathers and fat, as the Dara-ulu, to scratch which would, they say, cause the whole people to suffer perpetual hunger, and never to be satisfied however much they might eat. If these stones were broken, the sky would redden, the dust which formerly rose up from the dried muluru would spread itself from the westward, and men, when they saw it cover the whole earth, would die of terror.

The Dara-ulu are believed to be the senders of rain, and in the rain-making ceremonies these stones, which represent them, are smeared with fat, and the Dara song is sung.

## **THE BUNYIP**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Dunlop, W., and T. V. Holmes. "Australian Folklore Stories." *The Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 28 (1899): 22–25.

**Date:** ca. 1850

**Original Source:** Australian

**National Origin:** Australia



The Bunyip is a creature described in Australian Aboriginal tradition as a malevolent creature that inhabits stagnant bodies of water, especially billabongs (pools attached to creeks). Although the descriptions of Bunyips vary, their most common features are tusks, flippers, and a tail that resembles a horse's. In the following supernatural **legend**, the creature displays magical powers of transformation as well as physical strength.

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On a bright sunny day, after all the rain had passed, a party of young men went out from the camp to look for food to supply the *lubras* (women) and children. They had their spears in their hands and amused themselves as they went through the honeysuckles and green flats by throwing their spears. The air rang with the loud young voices and cheerful mellow laugh unchecked by any fear. The country was all their own, or there were too many of them to dread an attack. There was not supposed to be any dangerous animal near; they talked of their skill in the chase, of throwing the spear or boomerang, and of how far they must walk before they might expect to see the game they sought.

Presently they reached the banks of a sort of water-course, at that time a succession of dark looking pools, each surrounded by a broad fringe of high, green plants. Next to the open water grew the bulrush, the roots of which are good as food, and of these roots they proposed to gather a basket full. So a large basket woven of rushes was produced, and they were preparing to collect the soft white roots, when one of the party said he had his fishing tackle with him, and that they might leave gathering roots to the *lubras* and catch eels and black fish, and not make themselves a laughing stock to the old men by doing the women's work. All the party agreed with him, and some of them directly began to search for bait, whilst the rest seated themselves, and arranged their fishing lines, made from the inner bark of the Wattle or Mimosa tree, with hooks formed from bones of the Kangaroo. Bait was soon procured and they strung the poor worms on the hooks. One of them, however, had put a piece of raw meat into his basket, and without speaking of it to his companions, he cut a bit of it off with his stone tomahawk, and with that he baited his hook.

For some time the fish seemed all gone from the pool, or too wary to be caught. Each looked anxiously at his untouched line, or glanced at the already descending sun, until it seemed that night would find them without the expected supply of food.

The youth who had made use of the raw flesh at last saw his line disappear. He grasped it more tightly, and to his surprise felt it almost dragged from him, by a force much greater than he could at all account for. He called to the others, and with much labor and hearts palpitating with dread, they succeeded

in drawing to the land a creature somewhat between a calf and a seal, but with a long and broad tail. It struggled and made a sort of complaining cry, at which its mother rose from her den in the high bank on the opposite side of the pool, and to their horror they saw that they had caught the young one of a dreaded and dreadful Bunyip. She looked at them with rage and seemed to hesitate in what manner to release her child.

Most of the young men in stifled voices begged the successful fisher to release his captive. But he was the same who had mocked at the thought of gathering roots; he was of a bold, fearless disposition, and he had promised that he would carry home to his betrothed maiden enough to make her father's camp merry for three clays. He held the Bunyip calf tightly, declaring that the children of the camp should have it to play with, and that he would be the first to bring home a Bunyip calf to his lubra. He dragged the strange looking creature on to land, and when he heard a yell or roar of distress and anger from the mother, he raised his spear and brandished it at her, while he continued to drag the young one after him.

The mother seemed indifferent to his threats, but made beseeching signs for the release of her child. These the youth made light of, and he by degrees infused part of his own courage into the breasts of his companions, so that they joined him in striving to convey his prey to their common home. It was lifted by them on to his shoulders, and he carried it off in triumph. But his triumph was short.

He heard a low rushing sound, and on looking back he saw the pool he had left slowly rising above its banks, flooding the place on which he had stood, and following the steps of the young men. The sun still shone brightly upon Mount Shadwell, the sweet-toned magpie sang merrily all around, forbidding the idea of rain. Indeed, not a drop had fallen for many days, and Mustons Creek was not subject to sudden rises, yet there were its waters already covering grass usually high above the highest flood.

"Run, run," called every voice, and run the unfortunate youths did. The boldest held the young Bunyip firmly on his shoulders and fled swiftly towards his home, nor looked back until he reached a high ridge far above the valley he had left. Then, what a sight met his view! All was a sea of dark water, The low honeysuckles were covered, the light woods with their thick foliage only for a moment ruffled the surface of the rising waves, and the gum trees that were on that bank seemed like low rushes.

But flight might yet save them, and on they went, their active limbs almost sinking beneath them. They approached the place where they had first seen the light, a low cell as it were, formed of earth, the old home of their fathers.

The old men of the tribe stood at the entrance, the children played around, the old lubras sat in groups on the dry grass listening to and telling their simple gossip. The young women stole a glance at the flying youths, who, as they drew near, showed the agony of terror and exhaustion. All hurried to meet them, old

and young crowded to learn what had happened, what danger threatened them. The young men sank to the ground unable to utter a word. Fear stopped the questions from the other party, but when the young Bunyip fell, and the elders saw their dreaded, mysterious, never-named enemy before their door, all the stories of the great power and awful malevolence attributed to his kind rose before them, and they knew without a word spoken that they were lost.

Then a cry arose, "the water, the water!" and the slowly creeping flood appeared. On, on, on, it came. Those that were dearest to each other rushed together in the vain hope of yielding mutual assistance. Mothers clasped their children, husbands their wives, and the young betrothed ones, who a few hours before would not even have touched each others' hands, frantically clung together in the hope that they might swim through the water, and save themselves for the happiness they had looked forward to from their earliest years.

The unfortunate procurer of all this danger was one of the first to brave it. He clasped his betrothed to his breast, and stood calmly waiting the coming of the destroyer. His eye roamed over the neighboring country. There was no hill which he could hope to reach, but he whispered, "My love, no one can climb like me, come, we shall soon be on that high tree and no water can reach us there."

While he spoke the water had reached his feet; he looked down, and they were no longer feet. Claws had taken the place of the finely formed toes, and he beheld a bird's foot instead of his own. He glanced to see if the one he loved had marked the change, and he saw a large black bird standing by his side.

In despair he looked round; all his people were gone, great awkward black birds had taken their place. He tried to cover his face with his hands, but they were become the ends of long black wings: he wished to complain of the dark dream that was upon him, but his voice died away in a sound between a moan and a croak. The water had become deep, and he found himself raised upon it, swimming upon its surface, with a long neck rising from what he believed to be his broad shoulders, but a glance into the still smooth water showed him a large black swan, he was man no longer. He, his beloved, their whole tribe, were now only a flock of black swans, and never again did they regain their human form.

We suppose that they are still different from other birds, for at night when they fly over our heads we hear them talk to each other, and if we walk when it is almost dark near the lakes where they live we hear plainly the sound of women talking and laughing. They do not speak our language, so we cannot tell if they talk of their early misfortunes, but several persons have been drowned by walking into the lakes in search of people they thought they heard.

The mother Bunyip took back her child, and has been seen by many at the same bank, for the water soon receded to its own channel. She is sure to eat any one to whom she once shows herself, and few like to walk near the place where she lives. Her house is under the pool below its deepest waters and is supposed to be very large and beautiful, but no human being has ever seen it.

## THE BORAH OF BYAMEE

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Parker, K. Langloh. *Australian Legendary Tales*. London: David Nutt, 1897, 94–105.

**Date:** ca. 1895

**Original Source:** Aboriginal Australian

**National Origin:** Australia

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The ceremony of the boy's initiation into manhood is called by some Australian Aboriginal groups the borah. The following supernatural **legend** describing the extraordinary circumstances surrounding one of these events and the role of the legendary holy man Byamee in the proceedings provide additional important information concerning the life-ways of these hunter-gatherer societies. For example, the betrothal to much older men of young women, girls, or even unborn daughters was not unusual in Australian Aboriginal cultures. Women were often the most important foragers for the band and, as such, were a valuable commodity to be bartered among the wealthy elder men for political influence. The "circular piece of wood at the end of a string" alluded to in the narrative is a bullroarer, a traditional Australian noisemaker; this device was commonly used to simulate the supernaturals in initiation ceremonies.

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**W**ord had been passed from tribe to tribe, telling, how that the season was good, there must be a great gathering of the tribes. And the place fixed for the gathering was Googoorewon. The old men whispered that it should be the occasion for a borah, but this the women must not know. Old Byamee, who was a great Wirreenun [holy man], said he would take his two sons, Ghindahindahmoe and Boomahoomahnowee, to the gathering of the tribes, for the time had come when they should be made young men, that they might be free to marry wives, eat emu flesh, and learn to be warriors.

As tribe after tribe arrived at Googoorewon, each took up a position at one of the various points of the ridges, surrounding the clear open space where the corroborees [dances] were to be. The Wähn, crows, had one point; the Dummerh, pigeons, another; the Mahthi, dogs, another, and so on; Byamee and his tribe, Byahmul the black swans tribe, Oooboon, the blue tongued lizard, and many other chiefs and their tribes, each had their camp on a different point. When all had arrived there were hundreds and hundreds assembled, and many and varied were the nightly corroborees, each tribe trying to excel the other in the fancifulness of their painted get-up, and the novelty of their newest song

and dance. By day there was much hunting and feasting, by night much dancing and singing; pledges of friendship exchanged, a dillibag for a boomerang, and so on; young daughters given to old warriors, old women given to young men, unborn girls promised to old men, babies in arms promised to grown men; many and diverse were the compacts entered into, and always were the Wirreenun, or doctors of the tribes consulted.

After some days the Wirreenun told the men of the tribes that they were going to hold a borah. But on no account must the women know. Day by day they must all go forth as if to hunt and then prepare in secret the borah ground. Out went the man each day. They cleared a very large circle quite clear, then they built an earthen dam round this circle, and cleared a pathway leading into the thick bush from the circle, and built a dam on either side of this pathway.

When all these preparations were finished, they had, as usual, a corroboree at night. After this had been going on for some time, one of the old Wirreenun walked right away from the crowd as if he were sulky. He went to his camp, to where he was followed by another Wirreenun, and presently the two old fellows began fighting. Suddenly, when the attention of the blacks was fixed on this fight, there came a strange, whizzing, whirring noise from the scrub round. The women and children shrank together, for the sudden, uncanny noise frightened them. And they knew that it was made by the spirits who were coming to assist at the initiation of the boys into young manhood. The noise really sounded, if you had not the dread of spirits in your mind, just as if someone had a circular piece of wood at the end of a string and were whirling it round and round.

As the noise went on, the women said, in an awestricken tone, "Gurraymy," that is "borah devil," and clutched their children tighter to them.

The boys said "Gayandy," and their eyes extended with fear. "Gayandy" meant borah devil too, but the women must not even use the same word as the boys and men to express the borah spirit, for all concerning the mysteries of borah are sacred from the ears, eyes, or tongues of women.

The next day a shift was made of the camps. They were moved to inside the big ring that the black fellows had made. This move was attended with a certain amount of ceremony. In the afternoon, before the move had taken place, all the black fellows left their camps and went away into the scrub. Then just about sundown they were all to be seen walking in single file out of the scrub, along the path which they had previously banked on each side. Every man had a fire stick in one hand and a green switch in the other. When these men reached the middle of the enclosed ring was the time for the young people and women to leave the old camps, and move into the borah ring.

Inside this ring they made their camps, had their suppers and corroboreed, as on previous evenings, up to a certain stage. Before, on this occasion, that stage arrived, Byamee, who was greatest of the Wirreenun present, had shown his power in a remarkable way. For some days the Mahthi had been behaving with a great want of respect for the wise men of the tribes. Instead of treating

their sayings and doings with the silent awe the Wirreenun expect, they had kept up an incessant chatter and laughter amongst themselves, playing and shouting as if the tribes were not contemplating the solemnization of their most sacred rites. Frequently the Wirreenun sternly bade them be silent. But admonitions were useless, gaily chattered and laughed the Mahthi.

At length Byamee, mightiest and most famous of the Wirreenun, rose, strode over to the camp of Mahthi, and said fiercely to them, "I, Byamee, whom all the tribes hold in honor, have thrice bade you Mahthi cease your chatter and laughter. But you heeded me not. To my voice were added the voices of the Wirreenun of other tribes. But you heeded not. Think you the Wirreenun will make any of your tribe young men when you heed not their words? No, I tell you. From this day forth no Mahthi shall speak again as men speak. You wish to make noise, to be a noisy tribe and a disturber of men; a tribe who cannot keep quiet when strangers are in the camp; a tribe who understand not sacred things. So be it. You shall, and your descendants, for ever make a noise, but it shall not be the noise of speech, or the noise of laughter. It shall be the noise of barking and the noise of howling. And from this day if ever a Mahthi speaks, woe to those who hear him, for even as they hear shall they be turned to stone."

And as the Mahthi opened their mouths, and tried to laugh and speak derisive words, they found, even as Byamee said, so were they. They could but bark and howl; the powers of speech and laughter had they lost. And as they realized their loss, into their eyes came a look of yearning and dumb entreaty which will be seen in the eyes of their descendants forever. A feeling of wonder and awe fell on the various camps as they watched Byamee march back to his tribe.

When Byamee was seated again in his camp, he asked the women why they were not grinding doonburr.

And the women said, "Gone are our dayoorls [stone for grinding grass seed], and we know not where."

"You lie," said Byamee.

"You have lent them to the Dummerh, who came so often to borrow, though I bade you not lend."

"No, Byamee, we lent them not."

"Go to the camp of the Dummerh, and ask for your dayoorl."

The women, with the fear of the fate of the Mahthi did they disobey, went, though well they knew they had not lent the dayoorl. As they went they asked at each camp if the tribe there would lend them a dayoorl, but at each camp they were given the same answer, namely, that the dayoorls were gone and none knew where. The Dummerh had asked to borrow them, and in each instance been refused, yet had the stones gone.

As the women went on they heard a strange noise, as of the cry of spirits, a sound like a smothered "Oom, oom, oom, oom." The cry sounded high in the air through the tops of trees, then low on the ground through the grasses, until it seemed as if the spirits were everywhere.

The women clutched tighter their fire sticks, and said, "Let us go back. The Wondah [ghosts, spirits] are about." And swiftly they sped towards their camp, hearing ever in the air the "Oom, oom, oom" of the spirits.

They told Byamee that all the tribes had lost their dayoorls, and that the spirits were about, and even as they spoke came the sound of "Oom, oom, oom, oom," at the back of their own camp.

The women crouched together, but Byamee flashed a fire stick whence came the sound, and as the light flashed on the place he saw no one, but stranger than all, he saw two dayoorls moving along, and yet could see no one moving them, and as the dayoorls moved swiftly away, louder and louder rose the sound of "Oom, oom, oom, oom," until the air seemed full of invisible spirits. Then Byamee knew that indeed the Wondah were about, and he too clutched his fire stick and went back into his camp.

In the morning it was seen that not only were all the dayoorls gone, but the camp of the Dummerh was empty and they too had gone. When no one would lend the Dummerh dayoorls, they had said, "Then we can grind no doonburr [grass seed] unless the Wondah bring us stones."

And scarcely were the words said before they saw a dayoorl moving towards them. At first they thought it was their own skill which enabled them only to express a wish to have it realized. But as dayoorl after dayoorl glided into their camp, and, passing through there, moved on, and as they moved was the sound of "Oom, oom, oom, oom," to be heard everywhere they knew it was the Wondah at work. And it was borne in upon them that where the dayoorl went they must go, or they would anger the spirits who had brought them through their camp.

They gathered up their belongings and followed in the track of the dayoorls, which had cut a pathway from Googoorewon to Girrahween, down which in high floods is now a water-course. From Girrahween, on the dayoorls went to Dirangibirrah, and after them the Dummerh. Dirangibirrah is between Brewarrina and Widda Murtee, and there the dayoorls piled themselves up into a mountain, and there for the future had the blacks to go when they wanted good dayoorls. And the Dummerh were changed into pigeons, with a cry like the spirits of "Oom, oom, oom."

Another strange thing happened at this big borah. A tribe, called Ooboan, were camped at some distance from the other tribes. When any stranger went to their camp, it was noticed that the chief of the Ooboan would come out and flash a light on him, which killed him instantly. And no one knew what this light was, that carried death in its gleam. At last, Wähn the crow, said, "I will take my biggest booreen [boomerang] and go and see what this means. You others, do not follow me too closely, for though I have planned how to save myself from the deadly gleam, I might not be able to save you."

Wähn walked into the camp of the Ooboan, and as their chief turned to flash the light on him, he put up his booreen and completely shaded himself

from it, and called aloud in a deep voice, "Wäh, wäh, wäh, wäh" which so startled Ooboan that he dropped his light, and said, "What is the matter? You startled me. I did not know who you were and might have hurt you, though I had no wish to, for the Wähn are my friends."

"I cannot stop now," said the Wähn, "I must go back to my camp. I have forgotten something I wanted to show you. I'll be back soon." And so saying, swiftly ran Wähn back to where he had left his boondee [war club], then back he came almost before Ooboan realized that he had gone. Back he came, and stealing up behind Ooboan dealt him a blow with his boondee that avenged amply the victims of the deadly light, by stretching the chief of the Ooboan a corpse on the ground at his feet. Then crying triumphantly, "Wäh, wäh, wäh," back to his camp went Wähn and told what he had done.

This night, when the Borah corroboree began, all the women relations of the boys to be made young men, corroboreed all night. Towards the end of the night all the young women were ordered into bough humpies, which had been previously made all round the edge of the embankment surrounding the ring. The old women stayed on.

The men who were to have charge of the boys to be made young men, were told now to be ready to seize hold each of his special charge, to carry him off down the beaten track to the scrub. When every man had, at a signal, taken his charge on his shoulder, they all started dancing round the ring. Then the old women were told to come and say good-bye to the boys, after which they were ordered to join the young women in the humpies [temporary shelters, usually made of branches]. About five men watched them into the humpies, then pulled the boughs down on the top of them that they might see nothing further.

When the women were safely imprisoned beneath the boughs, the men carrying the boys swiftly disappeared down the track into the scrub. When they were out of sight the five black fellows came and pulled the boughs away and released the women, who went now to their camps. But however curious these women were as to what rites attended the boys' initiation into manhood, they knew no questions would elicit any information. In some months' time they might see their boys return minus, perhaps, a front tooth, and with some extra scarifications on their bodies, but beyond that, and a knowledge of the fact that they had not been allowed to look on the face of woman since their disappearance into the scrub, they were never enlightened.

The next day the tribes made ready to travel to the place of the little borah, which would be held in about four days' time, at about ten or twelve miles distance from the scene of the big borah.

At the place of the little borah a ring of grass is made instead of one of earth. The tribes all travel together there, camp, and have a corroboree. The young women are sent to bed early, and the old women stay until the time when the boys bade farewell to them at the big borah, at which hour the boys are brought into the little borah and allowed to say a last good-bye to the old



women. Then they are taken away by the men who have charge of them together. They stay together for a short time, then probably separate, each man with his one boy going in a different direction. The man keeps strict charge of the boy for at least six months, during which time he may not even look at his own mother. At the end of about six months he may come back to his tribe, but the effect of his isolation is that he is too wild and frightened to speak even to his mother, from whom he runs away if she approaches him, until by degrees the strangeness wears off.

But at this borah of Byamee the tribes were not destined to meet the boys at the little borah. Just as they were gathering up their goods for a start, into the camp staggered Millindooloonubbah, the widow, crying, "You all left me, widow that I was, with my large family of children, to travel alone. How could the little feet of my children keep up to you? Can my back bear more than one goolay [carrier]? Have I more than two arms and one back? Then how could I come swiftly with so many children? Yet none of you stayed to help me. And as you went from each water hole you drank all the water. When, tired and thirsty, I reached a water hole and my children cried for a drink, what did I find to give them? Mud, only mud. Then thirsty and worn, my children crying and their mother helpless to comfort them; on we came to the next hole. What did we see, as we strained our eyes to find water? Mud, only mud. As we reached hole after hole and found only mud, one by one my children laid down and died; died for want of a drink, which Millindooloonubbah their mother could not give them."

As she spoke, swiftly went a woman to her with a wirree [small curved piece of bark used as a dipper] of water. "Too late, too late," she said. "Why should a mother live when her children are dead?" And she lay back with a groan. But as she felt the water cool her parched lips and soften her swollen tongue, she made a final effort, rose to her feet, and waving her hands round the camps of the tribes, cried aloud, "You were in such haste to get here. You shall stay here. Googoolguyyah. Googoolguyyah. Turn into trees. Turn into trees."

Then back she fell, dead. And as she fell, the tribes that were standing round the edge of the ring, preparatory to gathering their goods and going, and that her hand pointed to as it waved round, turned into trees. There they now stand. The tribes in the background were changed each according to the name they were known by, into that bird or beast of the same name. The barking Mahthi into dogs; the Byahmul into black swans: the Wähns into crows, and so on. And there at the place of the big borah, you can see the trees standing tall and gaunt, sad-looking in their somber hues, waving with a sad wailing their branches towards the lake which covers now the place where the borah was held. And it bears the name of Googoorewon, the place of trees, and round the edge of it is still to be seen the remains of the borah ring of earth. And it is known as a great place of meeting for the birds that bear the names of the tribes of old. The Byahmuls sail proudly about; the pelicans, their water rivals in point

of size and beauty; the ducks, and many others too numerous to mention. The Ooboön, or blue-tongued lizards, glide in and out through the grass. Now and then is heard the “Oom, oom, oom,” of the dummerh, and occasionally a cry from the bird Millindooloonubbah of “Googoolguyyah, googoolguyyah.” And in answer comes the wailing of the gloomy-looking balah trees, and then a rustling shirr through the bibbil branches, until at last every tree gives forth its voice and makes sad the margin of the lake with echoes of the past.

But the men and boys who were at the place of the little borah escaped the metamorphosis. They waited long for the arrival of the tribes who never came.

At last Byamee said, “Surely mighty enemies have slain our friends, and not one escapes to tell us of their fate. Even now these enemies may be upon our track; let us go into a far country.”

And swiftly they went to Noondoo. Hurrying along with them, a dog of Byamee’s, which would fain have lain by the roadside rather than have traveled so swiftly, but Byamee would not leave her and hurried her on. When they reached the springs of Noondoo, the dog sneaked away into a thick scrub, and there were born her litter of pups. But such pups as surely man never looked at before. The bodies of dogs, and the heads of pigs, and the fierceness and strength of devils. And gone is the life of a man who meets in a scrub of Noondoo an earmoonän, for surely will it slay him. Not even did Byamee ever dare to go near the breed of his old dog. And Byamee, the mighty Wirreenun, lives for ever. But no man must look upon his face, lest surely will he die. So alone in a thick scrub, on one of the Noondoo ridges, lives this old man, Byamee, the mightiest of Wirreenun.

## **KADIWONKURU: A LEGEND OF THE YAUROKYA**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Howitt, Mary E. B., and Otto Siebert. “Some Native Legends from Central Australia.” *Folklore* 13 (1902): 409–411.

**Date:** ca. 1902

**Original Source:** Australia

**National Origin:** Australia

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The Mura-mura’s name Kadiwonkuru comes from kadiwaru (lizard). He was later given the name Makatakaba (fire) after he burned up the Wonkanguru and Ngarabana in their camps. Paua is food made from the seed of various plants. Nardoo is an aquatic fern of inland Australia. The wolkadra is an amulet (most commonly identified as a churinga) that may be concealed in the armpit to hide it from the uninitiated. Both the Kutchi and the Worana are malevolent beings from Central Australian folklore.

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The wife of an almost blind Mura-mura named Makatakaba, who lived at Wityigurawimpa, went with her two daughters to collect nardoo for food. The two girls played about while their mother worked busily; and when she had gathered a quantity she dug a hole in the ground, poured the seeds in, and stirring them up let the wind blow the husks away. To prevent the good seed from being blown away she built up a breakwind of boughs.

Next morning the three went out again for seed. The mother was busy as before collecting it, and the children played about, when they suddenly saw a great fire, of which they told their father when they returned to camp. When he heard of it he stood up, and lifting a child to each of his shoulders, asked them to point out the direction in which they had seen the fire. He said to the elder, "Can you see the fire?" and she answered, "Yes, father, I can see it quite plainly."

Then the old Mura-mura opened his eyes, and he who had been quite blind until then could see the smoke of the fire lying on the horizon like a great rain cloud. His wife made him some paua from the nardoo, which he ate, and then lay down to sleep.

In the early morning he took a fire-stick, threw his bag over his shoulder, got ready to start, and said to his children, "I have a long journey before me, but you must not trouble about that"; and to his wife he said, "Take care of the children, so that no one may do them any harm." Then he stood up with his bag over his shoulder, a fire-stick on one arm and a small boomerang in his hand. With his first step he began to sing his wapaia and to travel singing into distant parts.

His wapaia song [song of travel] commenced thus, "Dama-inda ngurpa, dama-inda ngurpalina," which means "leaving those belonging to me, I am going forth into the far-away"; and as he traveled along he put all that he saw—birds, snakes, kangaroo tracks, trees, bushes, and whatever else he came across—into his song.

After traveling for a month he came to a great sandhill, from the top of which he saw a vast water. He went down the hill and waded into the water, seeing his own image reflected in it. He came back to land by a narrow passage which was being covered by the waters driven by a fierce wind. Then he climbed the highest hill near, and saw from it a great fire surrounding him. He sought to find out who had lighted the fire, but could see no traces of men, and thought it must have sprung up of itself. Even now, men say, this fire is always in that part, which is called the Wiluma country, and the people in it are the Yerowiraye, or "fire-people." Having gathered some hot coals from the fire, the Mura-mura went on his wanderings to the south, making his song, which is sung by the Urabunna.

While he was traveling thus, his wife and daughters were out one day gathering nardoo, and the mother was mending the *katu* or breakwind, to make it stronger before winnowing the seed, when one of her children came to her, and

said, “See, mother, the great whirlwind coming up. Quick! Make the katu strong, so that the wind cannot blow it away.” So the mother used all her strength to make the katu fast, and when the whirlwind struck it they all three covered behind it for shelter. But the wind blew stronger and stronger till at last it carried off the youngest girl. Then the other child was carried off, and finally the mother was lifted up by the furious blast.

Each night as the whirlwind swept along, carrying the woman and her two children, it rested, and wherever it did so a water hole was formed, not in a channel or hollow, but on the open dry tableland. Each morning it carried them further and further till it buried them at last in the distant northern sands.

The Mura-mura Makatakaba traveled all the time towards the south carrying the hot coals which he had got in the Wiluma country and in time reached the Macumba country, where he came to a camp of people who were rubbing up and eating puaa from the seeds of one of the gum trees. He was hungry and asked for some of the food, but they took no notice and laughed at him because he was nearly bald, with a long lock of hair hanging down behind, and had a small pointed beard. They also ordered him roughly away, and took no notice of his threats, when he said, “Do you think I have no *wolkadra* in my armpits?”

But they only shouted at him, “Yidni kutchi, yidni worana.” Which means, “Are you a Kutchi? Are you a Worana?” And they took up spears to throw at him.

The Mura-mura went sadly away with his finger on his lip, thinking of revenge. He did not go far away, but took a couple of coals out of his bag and set fire to the grass, saying to the flames, “Spread with great quickness.” He put out the fire with his hands and went near to the camp again. There he took out more coals and again set the grass on fire, and in a moment he was standing in the midst of the flames. The people in the camp tried to escape, but the quickly spreading fire burnt them all up.

The old Mura-mura went on from camp to camp, but the people were all unfriendly to him and made fun of his bald head, so he avenged himself by burning them up.

## THE YURI-ULU

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Howitt, A. W., and Otto Siebert. “Legends of the Dieri and Kindred Tribes of Central Australia.” *The Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 34 (1904): 110–112.

**Date:** ca. 1900

**Original Source:** Aboriginal Australian

**National Origin:** Australia

The following **legend** focuses on the boy's initiation ceremony among the Dieri. Beyond the supernatural restoration of sight that opens the narrative, an unusual feature of this legend is that the fathers-in-law are bound to each other in a kinship relationship labeled *kami-mara*. Normally among the Dieri, from whom the tale was collected, it is the mothers-in-law who must be *kami-mara* for the proper obligations to be fulfilled. The *pirha* (bowl) in this context is used not as a container, but as a drum for the initiation ceremony.

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**A**n old blind widower lived at Mararu, with his two sons the Yuri-ulu who from their early youth had to provide him with food. As they became older they went further afield hunting, and delighted to kill young birds with the boomerang, and when they returned at evening to their camp, to cook them for their father.

One evening on returning, they observed that an old man had come to the camp, and had seated himself close to them. They informed their father and he told them to call the stranger. They did so, but received no answer, and even when they went to him and invited him to come to their father, he still remained silent. Not troubling themselves more about him, they ate their food, and darkness having come on, they lay down and slept. In the early morning the boys went out hunting. Then the stranger, after having warmed his hands at the fire to strengthen himself, seized the blind man, wrestled with him, struggled with him, struck him on the face, and scratched his face till the blood came. Then with a piece of wood he scraped the blood off. By the struggling and the scratching the dimness of the old man's eyes had been removed, so that he could see better than before. As the stranger had done to him, so he now did to the stranger, struck him and scratched him until the blood came, which he wiped off and then recognized the stranger as his *kami* [cousin through his mother's lineage].

After they had recognized each other as *kami-mara* [that is, maternal relatives] they sat down together, and the stranger told him that he had come to consult with him as to the circumcision of his sons. The two, having decided that the boys should be circumcised, commenced their preparations. Stone axes were sharpened, *kandri* melted, *ngulyi* [eucalyptus gum] collected, and the axes fastened afresh to their hafts with them. The boys were sent out early next morning to hunt, and to be out of the way, while the old men were at work, so as not to see what they were doing. These went to a place where there was a great *pirha*, that is, a great tree [that was suitable for making a *pirha*, a bowl], which they cut down, separated a piece of the stem, and having removed the bark, hollowed it out to make a great *pirha*. Then they placed it in hot moist earth to soften, and kept its sides apart by pieces of wood till it became cool.

The following morning they ornamented it with longitudinal markings and laying it on its back, the stranger struck it with his open hand. Listening, but hearing no reply, he struck it again but harder, and there was an echo, which they thought was a reply by the women at a distance.

Early on the following morning while the boys were still asleep, the stranger started homewards to Minka-kadi, to call together the people for the ceremony, at which the boys were to be circumcised. After a time he returned with them, bringing with him his two daughters, who, as he and his kami had agreed, should be the wives of the two boys.

Then while the boys were out hunting, there was held a meeting of the old men, at which they consulted as to the manner of conducting the ceremony. Towards evening, as the boys returned, a number of men were lying in wait for them, and two who were uncles to them, sprang forward and laid their hands on the boy's mouths, as a sign that they should not henceforth speak to any but themselves. Then they took them apart to a place where they built a breakwind (katu), and taught them the pirha song. Early the next day the women and children and the two boys were sent to a distance to hunt, so that the men might hold a council undisturbed. They collected the tulas [small stone chisel used for circumcision] and selected the good from the bad. Then they decided what presents the boys should give to the woningaperi [men who perform circumcision].

In the evening, when everyone had collected on the ceremonial ground, the Yuri-ulu returned. As they approached, a few of the men joined them, then more, until by the time they had reached the ground, they were surrounded by a great crowd, not counting the women and the children. The Yuri-ulu were then taken behind their katu to be decorated with emu and cockatoo feathers. When this was done the boys were openly led to the ground, across which they marched, and each one standing on a pirha which rested on two spears, grasped the kalti [spear-like pole used in the circumcision ceremony] as high up as possible, being supported by his kami. Thus they remained for some time. The ngandri (mothers) were sitting in a row which extended from their katu to the kalti, having on each side the katus of one-half of the ngaperi (fathers). One after the other the mothers, who were seated, rose and went to each of the boys and with her open hands stroked him about the navel. When the last one had returned to her place, each boy was carried to his katu, on the back of one of his kami, where his ornaments were taken from him and carried to his father, to be given to those who performed the rite of circumcision on him. Then the muffled sound of the pirha being struck was heard, and shortly after the sisters of the Yuri-ulu came forward, and commenced their dance in parties of four each, one of the elder and one of the younger. At the end of this the men carried each other about on their backs.

About midnight the women were driven away from the ground to their main camp, the ngandri only remaining behind, at a little distance, forming a

connection between the men at the ground and the women at the camp, but also keeping the latter quiet, and seeing that none of them watched the ceremony with impertinent curiosity. In order to keep the women, and especially the ngandri, informed as to the beginning of the ceremony, the great pirha was struck several times, and replied to by the ngandri striking on their stomachs with the open hand.

The boys were now taken to the camp of the ngaperi and there carefully watched by their uncles, so that they should not sleep, being shaken up into wakefulness when they dozed off. Then the woningaperi and the taru [father-in-law] came up to them decked with feathers, and three neyi [lineage “brothers”] of each boy placed themselves together so that the boys could be laid on their backs and there circumcised by his taru. This being done their woningaperi, the uncles and especially the taru, were placed before them, and the latter gave to each a bundle of the hair of one of his daughters, as a sign that she should be his promised wife. Then the boys were taken back to their katu.

## A CANNIBAL STORY

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Dunlop, W., and T. V. Holmes. “Australian Folklore Stories” *The Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 28 (1899): 29–32.

**Date:** ca. 1850

**Original Source:** Aboriginal Australian

**National Origin:** Australia

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The two brothers of the following narrative assume one of the common roles of **culture hero**, that of cleansing the environment of monsters to make the world safe for humans. The cleansing of the world by a pair of brothers is a widely distributed **motif**. See, for example, “Origin of Acoma” (Volume 4, page 3) and “The Two Boys Who Slew the Monsters and Became Stars” (Volume 4, page 148). The fact that the snake is given its present form by the brothers demonstrates that the events are set in a time preceding the current order of the universe. This marks the tale as a **myth**.

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“**F**ather, you must allow my brothers and myself to go and look after these people, there is another gone, we have not one left. No sooner do any of them go out to look for meat for the camp than we lose them, none of them return. This is the last, and the women declare that they do not know where they are gone. Indeed it cannot be that they are wearied of

serving you, my dear father, and have willingly left you, for if that were the case their *lubras* [women] would have gone with them. I fear there is something wrong. Let us go, and in three months we shall come back to my mother and you. I am very sorry to leave you, but you are strong and can catch plenty of opossums and flying squirrels and the bandicoots that my mother is so fond of. My sisters also will do all they can for you, so I am not afraid of your wanting." Thus spoke the son of Burrburram, a great and powerful old man in his camp.

He was ready to hunt or fish or to form spears from the straight trunk of the blue gum, which for this purpose they cut with patient care with their stone hatchets, and then split into thin strips, which are hardened by the help of fire and polished. He was ready to prepare the soft-furred skins of the opossum for rugs, or to smooth the hard flint into heads for these finely polished spears. He was ready to build the earthen hut, or *my-my*, to form cups and pails from the excrescences which grow on the red gum in which to carry water and from which to drink the simple mixtures of gum and the sweet honey from the honeysuckle tree. These and many other services had been performed by Burrburram's attendants with pleased zeal. But now they were all gone and the camp that used to be the scene of mirth was now silent, or only lamentation was heard for those who were so strangely absent.

For some time the father would not consent to the proposal of his son; he feared that he also and his brother would go, to return no more. The affectionate old man, trusting that his beloved sons would be able to overcome all who might attempt to injure them, at last reluctantly consented that they should leave him to search for his servants, each one of whom he felt for as a friend as well as a dependant.

Burrburram gave the young men much advice and many directions, and after two days spent in preparing a large bunch of spears, a stone tomahawk, an opossum rug each, and other supplies, they set out on their mysterious search. They walked across the mountain now called Mount William. About the second day they saw a wide plain stretching below them. To this they descended and continued their journey over it until they thought there must be no end to it. Day after day they walked on, now through thick bush, now over stony places, on which were hollows round and basin-like, from which had at some former period been thrown the stones that now covered the plain. These hollows were generally filled with pure water and afforded drink to the wanderers.

At last, near one of the largest and deepest of these pools, they saw what appeared to be a *my-my* [hut], but it was so large they thought it must be a natural mound. Towards it, however, they directed their course, and after a little time saw a man walking towards them. He seemed very old but was big and strong looking, with a strangely wicked fierce countenance. He carried a large log on his back, and as soon as he came near he threw this on the ground and called to the young men to come and help him. He had got a fine bandicoot in



the log, and his hand was so large he could not put it into the hole he showed them, to pull out the animal.

“Make haste, and pull it out,” said he, again, in his most persuasive manner, “and we will go to my camp there and have it roasted; make haste, I am very hungry, and I know it is a fine fat one” and he eyed the young men with a strange, eager, malignant glance.

They gazed at him intensely, and then the elder said to him, “I know that you are a murderer, put your own hand in.”

He replied, “I cannot, it will not go in, or I would not have waited for you. Oh, put your hand in and let me get my supper, I have not had a roast for a week and I am very hungry.” But his wicked expression growing every moment fiercer convinced the brothers that he had some plan of injuring them.

They answered, “It is you who have killed our dear friends, you old wretch, and you shall put in your own hand; put it in instantly or this spear shall save you from all future murder.”

“I cannot, I cannot,” he rejoined.

“Well, if you cannot,” said they, “put in this stick, and drive out the Bandicoot.”

“I will do so,” he answered, “since you are determined,” and the old man put in the little piece of stick and out came a snake. Unlike our snakes now, at each end it had a head, and with each mouth it hissed.

But one of the young men, strong and good, fixed his eyes upon it and said, “You wretched assistant of this wicked murderer, you shall never have so much power again. You shall have only one head, and one little stroke shall be enough to kill you.”

One of its heads instantly changed, and the snake appeared as we now see them, but it seemed to feel shame at its altered form, and harmlessly glided away into the long grass. The old man lost all courage when he saw what a powerful foe he had provoked, yet he tried all his cunning. “I have two beautiful young girls in the my-my, come with me and be my friends, I will treat you well and make you happy.”

But they spurned his deceitful offer and put an end to his wicked life. They then went to the large hut they had seen, where they found young and beautiful girls, who eagerly thanked them for killing their persecutor, and led them into a room larger than any one they had ever seen or heard of, and there they saw heaps of human bones piled up at the sides and corners as if thrown there after being picked bare, and many heads of the poor people who had been roasted and eaten by the old man.

They strove to find out from the girls whether any of their father’s missing servants had been brought to the my-my, but the girls said they did not know, they were too frightened to look at them, they could not tell.

Therefore, the young men left the girls to go back to the parents from whom they had been taken, and again set out on their weary way. At last they rejoiced

to see the sun shining upon a large lake surrounded by tall trees and bushes. But on one side they saw a high thick tree, under its shade they longed to rest and to slake their thirst from the bright water. Towards it they went, and when they came near it they heard a soft and inviting voice telling them to come up into the tree, that it was cool and pleasant, and that there was a soft bed of rushes to rest upon after their walk.

They looked, and saw a woman lying on the tree, handsome and pleasing, though rather too fat. They looked on the water of the lake, which was deep up to the foot of the tree, and felt almost stifled by the dreadful smell of decayed animal remains. There they beheld many bodies of men who had been drowned in the lake. For a moment they stood in horror, then the youngest brother prepared to mount the tree. The elder one besought him to allow him to go up, or else to leave this female murderer and come away home; but all their missing servants lay amongst the drowned, and revenge must be taken for their murder.

So he climbed the tree, his young face hardening with rage, and his rich black curls looking so beautiful that even the wicked woman wished she could think of saving him. When he got up, just as he was placing his foot on the highest branch, the woman, who till now had lain looking as kind and still as she could, raised one foot, and with a rapid motion attempted to throw him down. But he had carefully watched her, and leant so as to let her foot pass over his body without touching him, at the same time seizing her before she was aware of his intention, he threw her into the lake, where she perished among the festering bodies of those she had slain.

He then descended, and they sadly turned their steps homewards, so depressed and overcome by the scenes they had witnessed, and by the death of their beloved friends (some young like themselves, and the play-fellows of their boyhood, and some old men who had assisted their father in teaching them all they knew), that they walked on the whole of the rest of that day and stretched themselves.

At night they lay below a tree, without remembering that they had neither eaten nor tasted water since the morning of the day before. Next morning they pursued their way; they caught a flying squirrel but they could not find any water.

At the end of the third day, they came to the foot of a hill, and there they saw a beautiful spring gushing out of the rock. Of this they drank eagerly, and then looking up they gladly saw their own beloved Mount William. Strengthened by the hope of soon reaching home, they climbed the hill, but how should they make known the dreadful tale they had to tell? It must be done, and as they gained sight of the smoke from their father's camp, they hastened to get over the fearful task. But how can any one tell the grief or describe the heart-rending cries that followed? For many days and nights the whole camp was filled with the howlings of despair, and all faces were covered over with white clay, to show the depth of their sorrow.



# ***Melanesia***



# SOLOMON ISLANDS

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## LATA AND SINOTA

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** O'Ferrall, W. "Native Stories from Santa Cruz and Reef Islands." *The Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 34 (1904): 227–228.

**Date:** ca. 1904

**Original Source:** Santa Cruz and Reef Islands

**National Origin:** Solomon Islands

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The Reef Islands are a cluster of small western Pacific islands in the Solomon Island archipelago east of Papua New Guinea in the nation of Melanesia. The exploits of Lata are not limited to the Solomons, however, but are widely spread throughout Oceania. In Hawai'i, for example, he is known as the hero Laka. In the following narrative, he is elevated to the status of god and creator; he also manifests characteristics of a **trickster** to accompany his supernatural power. The following tale seems to have been related by a Christian convert, hence the reference to "heathens" praying to Lata.

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**T**his Lata was he who created this world and the things in it. He was very wise. The heathen pray to him, and offer to him pigs, and pray also to him for every fruit-bearing tree that it may bear fruit.

Now Lata and Sinota had a dispute about a canoe. Sinota went into the bush to chop a canoe, but he could not find a good tree for it, and when he had sought in vain, he took an axe and chopped Lata's canoe, and in the morning Lata's canoe lay on the ground and was chopped in pieces.

When Lata saw it he thought, "What has done this?" Then he sat down and sang a song; and he looked again and saw that his canoe was chopped with an axe, and that someone had chopped it, and when he had finished his song, the canoe came together again as if no one had chopped it.

Then Sinota took his axe again, and went to seek Lata's canoe, that he might destroy it utterly, but when he came to the place it was standing upright again as though no one had chopped it. Then he began to chop it again, and as he was chopping a chip sprang up and fell into his bag, and when he went back to the village the chip still remained in his bag.

In the morning Lata arose and went again to the place, and he saw that the canoe was chopped again, and he sat down and sang a song again, and as he sang the canoe desired to come together again but could not because the chip was not there, but in Sinota's bag.

And while he sang Sinota heard the chip in his bag jumping about; then he arose quickly and took his bag and axe and ran to Lata, and Lata said to him, "It was you who chopped the canoe."

He replied, "Yes, it was I; why do you question me thus? It was not your canoe." And Sinota said, "Yes, it was mine."

And they two began to quarrel about it, and Lata said to him, "Very well, you say it was yours, speak as I do." And Sinota tried, but was not able. Then Lata took his axe and chopped another canoe in the bush, and they brought food, a great quantity, to feed the people, that they might draw it down to the sea.

And on the day appointed, the food for the people was ready, and they assembled together in the place where the canoe was, and they said that he had made the canoe heavy, for they fastened two ropes to it, very strong ones, to draw it down to the sea, but they were not able. Then Lata said to them, "It is all one, don't bother; it shall stay here, and you go back to the village."

Then Lata sat down and began to sing a song, and the canoe began to move of its own accord down to the village. But Sinota did not do this; he made ready food for the people, and they came and tied his canoe to two great ropes, and they drew his canoe into the village, and the people said he had no *malete* [supernatural power].

Then they two made ready their canoes, and took them down to the sea, for Lata had deceived Sinota about the tying it together.

Lata showed him the plant which we use for mats and said to him, "You use this," and Sinota thought Lata spoke the truth. And Lata tied his canoe with coconut fiber, but over it he put the other fiber, so Sinota thought that Lata had tied his canoe with mat fiber; he did not know of the coconut fiber beneath. Then when Lata reached the island, his food was finished in the canoe, all but one chestnut and it brought forth fruit. Then Lata threw out a rope, and a mouse followed the rope and brought a bag, and he drew in the bag, and water sprang out from the bag. So he reached the island.

## WARUNGARCE

**Tradition Bearer:** Bo

**Source:** Fox, C. E., and F. H. Drew. “Beliefs and Tales of San Cristoval (Solomon Islands).” *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 45 (1915): 180–182.

**Date:** ca. 1915

**Original Source:** San Cristoval

**National Origin:** Solomon Islands

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San Cristoval is located in the Solomons near the more famous island of Guadalcanal. The malignant spirit of the following narrative is locally called an ataro hasimou. Having straight hair and a lighter complexion, these spirits are said to be physically different from the Melanesians of the Solomon Islands. Their appearances are often associated with rain-storms, rainbows, or sunshowers (as in the following tale). Ancestral ghosts, on the other hand, are benevolent and can be called on to combat the ataros. “Warungarce” pits a shape-shifting ataro against such a ghost or family guardian spirit who has assumed the guise of a turtle.

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Two people were married; the name of the man was Bworouharimamu and the name of his wife was Saumamaruitaaru. They lived in their village by the shore. When Saumamaruitaaru was about to bear a child, they went for a walk along the sand, and they saw a large fruit of the *uri* (*Spondias dulcis*), which the current had carried out from the neighboring river and the sea had washed up on the beach; and they took it and asked one another whence it could have come. So they carried down their canoe, launched it through the surf, and paddled along the coast till they came to the mouth of the river, which they turned.

Bworouharimamu told his wife Saumamaruitaaru to cover up carefully her body and said to her, “When we land we will go to this side of the *uri*, the side nearest us, and don’t you go in to the farther side; and when there is a sunshower we must hurry into our canoe.” So they went along gathering the fruit, but the woman wandered away to the farther side of the tree under an overhanging branch. Then the woodland spirit became changed again and came down from the tree, and then there was a sunshower [rain falls while the sun is shining], and the spirit took the form of the woman. The name of the spirit (ataro) was Warungarae.

Then the spirit said to the man, “Come, jump quickly into the canoe with me or Warungarae will see us and devour us.” So they embarked, Warungarae first and then Bworouharimamu, who took the steering paddle, and they paddled



away down the river. And now Saumamaruitaaru came back from the farther side of the tree and saw her husband and the spirit paddling away and already some distance off.

She began shouting and calling out to her husband, "Here am I, here am I, it's I myself, but that is the evil spirit you are carrying off with you in your canoe."

But the spirit said to him, "Ah! What a clever deceiver, that is the evil spirit himself all the time; paddle hard or he will devour us both." It was all in vain that his wife shouted herself hoarse on the bank, for neither of them paid any further attention to her, but paddled on along the edge of the harbor till they were lost to sight.

So she climbed up a tall *daro* tree, whose branches bent down over the water, and made her way along them. Then she untied the necklace of fish teeth which she wore round her neck and unstrung it. She took off one of the teeth and threw it down into the water, and all the fish of the sea rose up and came to her. "No," she said, "I can't go with any of you, for soon, perhaps, you will be pursuing your prey and will throw me off, without troubling about me; you will never think of me, you will be sure to lose me."

So then she threw down into the water another tooth from her necklace, and all the sharks rose up and came to her.

But she said to them, "No, I dare not trust myself to you, for presently, perhaps, you will be chasing some canoe, and you will throw me away, without troubling what becomes of me." And so with the next tooth, she spoke the same words as before. At length there was only one tooth left, the very last tooth of all, but she threw it down into the water and up rose the turtles, for it was a turtle's tooth.

Then she said, "Good, now I can jump down safely," for she called the turtle her ancestor. So she sprang down from the overhanging branch of the *daro* tree on to the back of the turtle, whose name was Hasihonueero, and there she crouched. The turtle dived down with her and took her right out to the open sea. Then she (the turtle) dived again, down and down, till the woman on her back felt as though she must die for lack of breath, but they came up safely again to the surface of the sea.

Then the turtle took a long breath, and leaving the woman at the surface, went down and down to the bottom and brought stones to make a place for the woman to walk about on. When she had brought four or five and saw that they nearly reached to the surface of the sea, she brought the woman there, but the water still reached to her throat. Then the turtle brought some more and piled them up on the island and they very nearly reached to the surface, the water now came to her armpits. She brought four or five more and the water came to her breast; four or five more and the water only came to her waist. So she stood there while the turtle went for a few more, till the water came to her knees and then only to her ankles. And at last, when the turtle had brought some more stones the place was dry, above the waves: it was an island.

The woman walked about on it, but as yet there were no trees on it, and said to herself, “Yes, it has indeed become an island, this work of my ancestor, but still there are no trees on it.” And then at the sound of her speaking, trees sprouted from the ground, and the grass and fruits good to eat—breadfruit and almonds, Barringtonia nuts and coconuts, food of all kinds, yams, both smooth and prickly, and taro.

Then the woman said to herself, “Yes, now indeed there are all sorts of food for me to eat, but still there is no fire,” whereupon the turtle who had befriended her, came to the shore of the island and said to her, “Choose out a flat piece of shell from my back and make with it a house for yourself, and as for that other thing you desire, rub on the shell till a spark comes.” And so she did, and there she lived.

At length she bore the child, whom she was expecting when she and her husband set out in their canoe, and she took him joyfully in her arms and brought him to the turtle to nurse, and said to her, “Grandmother, you must nurse my child for awhile.” So the turtle came and set him firmly on her back, and carried him off far out to sea.

## WALUTAHANGA

**Tradition Bearer:** Walakalia

**Source:** Fox, C. E., and F. H. Drew. “Beliefs and Tales of San Cristoval (Solomon Islands).” *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 45 (1915): 148–151.

**Date:** ca. 1915

**Original Source:** San Cristoval

**National Origin:** Solomon Islands

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According to the supernatural traditions of San Cristoval, figona are spirits, some of which incarnate in the form of a serpent. The members of this particular class of figonas are the objects of veneration and sacrifice. The following **myth** details the origin of one of them, Walutahanga.

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**H**er [Walutahanga] mother was a woman named Huapiaoru and her father’s name was Porokalihidani. Her father and mother lived at a place called Sikora near Langalanga on the west coast of Mwala. One day Huapiaoru conceived, and in due time her daughter was born, but it was a snake, and her mother was startled and afraid as she had only expected an ordinary child.

There was no one else present, however, and the snake said, “Don’t be afraid of me, mother, but take care of me and I shall do you nothing but good.”

So her mother took her and hid her under a pile of firewood by the wall. When the husband came home he said, "Well, wife, where is the child?"

"It is dead," she said. After a time she conceived again and bore a daughter. All this time her husband knew nothing about the snake which lay hid in the house. When he and his wife went to work in their garden she made him go first and she would remain and call out her snake daughter to take care of her little girl, the snake's sister. The snake coiled round her and made a cradle for her. Then the woman followed her husband to the garden and when he asked her, "What have you done, wife, with our little daughter?"

She would reply, "I left her with her grandmother." So when they went home again after their day's work she would go first, and when she got near the door she would rap loudly on the flat roots of a large tree, and the snake daughter would slip away and hide. But after a time her husband noticed that she always went out, last and came home first, and he felt sure she was concealing something, so when he went off down the path one day he did not go far, but slipped back through the bush and hid near the door. Presently, his wife came out, shut the door, and went off to the garden. The husband stood listening, and presently in the house he heard the sound of singing, and it was the snake singing to her sister the following, sleeping song:

Ro ruru ro, is ruro, osa ngaraugara,  
No kaa too a aeku ni ura hai inio,  
No kaa too nimanimaku huni akololoio;  
Ro ruru ro, is ruro.

That is to say:

Ro ruru ro, is ruro, don't cry,  
I have no feet to stand with you,  
I have no arms to embrace you,  
Ro ruru ro, is ruro.

The baby was just sinking into a soft sleep when the man came in and saw the coils of a snake round his daughter. "You are making my child cry," he called out, and chopped up the snake into eight pieces with his axe, and threw the pieces outside. Presently, Huapiaoru came home to see what had become of her husband, and there before the doorway lay scattered the eight pieces of her snake daughter. Her mother sat down and began to cry, but the severed head said to her, "Don't cry, mother, I must go away, for my father doesn't like me, and wishes to kill me; go and get me eight leaves of giant caladium" (a sacred leaf). Her mother went for the caladium leaves and the snake called to the sky that rain should rain upon the earth, and a great rain rained for eight days. On the eighth day, the severed pieces of the snake reunited, and she lay by the stream which the rain had brought down, ready to depart on her travels, but as yet she had no canoe.

After a time a banyan came floating down upon the waters, and Walutahanga climbed on to it, but it was too short. "This is not my canoe," said she. Presently another tree, an atare, came floating by, and the snake climbed upon it, but it was too short. "This, is not my canoe," said she. At last a third tree came down, a mute, and this was the right length. "This is my canoe," said she, and she floated away down the river and out to sea. First she went to Marapa, the ghost land (Macau Sound), and landed at Qaeralo. But when she had landed she looked back and saw her home. "I am still in sight of home," said she, "I must go farther." Where she landed there is a pirupiru, a sacred grove, to mark the spot. She went off again on the matte and this time she came to Boromoli close to Siota in Florida. Since that time there has been a pirupiru there, where she landed at Lumu. But she looked across the sea and saw her home. "I am still in sight of home," said she, "I must travel farther." So she set off again in her canoe and came to the farther side of Florida, where now there is a great cave up which a canoe may be paddled, but there was no cave there then. Here she encountered an octopus. "Where are you going, evil long body and crooked tooth?" said the octopus; "don't come near my canoe-house." She made no answer. "If you come any nearer," said the octopus, "I shall kill you."

"But I don't want to harm you or drive you away," said the snake. "I am a wanderer. I have no home." The octopus called out wicked words to her, and she became angry and rushed upon him. He backed suddenly in fear and broke a large rock behind him. She rushed at him again and he backed away from her, right into the cliff, breaking a passage into the solid rock, and that is why there is a cave there now. The snake followed him, till at last he squeezed into a cranny where she could not see him, and she passed him, and went on, up into the island. She went into the bush and found a cave in which to live, and here she stayed. No one knew of her arrival, till one day a party went fishing on the reef and one of them felt hungry. The cave where Walutahanga was living was in his garden. He said to the others, "Wait here for me and I will go and get some bananas." Now the bananas grew just at the mouth of the cave. So he went, and one bunch was ripe, just at the cave's mouth, but as he put out his hand to pluck it, the snake seized him, pulled him into the cave and devoured him. His companions waited some time, but as he did not return they supposed he had gone back to the village, so another of them went to the garden to get the bananas, and he too was devoured in the same manner, and so was the third. Then the people said to one another, "Something must be the matter. Let two go together." So two of them went; one stood a little way off and the other went to pluck the bananas. Out came the snake, seized him and pulled him into the cave. His friend who saw all that happened returned to the others and all of them hurried up to the village, where they and all the people armed themselves and set out for the cave, to kill the intruder. But though they went out valiantly very few came home again, for the snake pulled them down one by one and devoured them in the cave. So they began to look about for a charm, and one of

them remembered two famous man-eating dogs living at Langalanga in Mwala. Two of them took a canoe and paddled over to Langalanga. The owner of the dogs lived up in the bush, so they went to him, and there he sat at the door of his house with his two famous dogs, who barked with joy at the sight of men to eat, but were restrained by their owner. "What do you want?" said he. "We have come here," they replied, "to hire these dogs to destroy a terrible man-eating snake which has come to live in our country." So he said, "Very well, you shall have the dogs, but go first into the garden to get some taro, and I will send the dogs to show you the way, and tomorrow you can go home."

"All very fine," said they, "but the dogs will eat us."

"No," said he, "I will tell them not to." So the dogs ran before and they followed them and dug taro in the garden and came back again and slept there one night. Next day they set off for home again, taking the two dogs, who had been told what was wanted of them, and were howling with delight at the thought of fighting the snake. When they got near the shore, the dogs smelt the snake and nothing could hold them back. They jumped out of the canoe into the sea, swam ashore, and rushed off into the bush, straight to the cave. The younger said to the elder, "Do you go to the mouth of the cave and draw the snake out with your barking, and I will climb up above and jump down upon it when it comes out to seize you."

So they did. And when the snake heard the dog barking she came out, one fathom of her. But the dog called to his brother above, "Not yet, let her come out farther." So the snake came out farther, and when she had come out three fathoms, the dog above leapt down on her and bit her neck, and the other dog rushed in and helped, and the people who were all standing round with spears and axes rushed in also, and Walutahanga was cut to pieces, and stabbed in a hundred places till she was dead, eight pieces lying on the ground.

Then they divided the portions and gave one to a woman and child, and this was the head of the snake. Each man made a fire, and cooked his portion and ate it, and the woman and child made a fire to cook the head. But the smoke blew into their faces, and they began to sniff, and the tears stood in their eyes with the smoke. "Ah," said the head to the woman, "you two pity me, you two alone out of all these people; you shall not regret it; you may cook me, but don't eat me." So the woman and child cooked the head but did not eat it. Then the rest said, "Each of us must bring the bones of the portion he has eaten, and when all have been collected on a day we will take them far out to sea, and throw them into the water." So they did, but the head bones were absent. They asked the woman and child where they were, and they replied that they had cooked the head but had not eaten it; so the people took it from them and ate it. Then they chose a day, and all launched their canoes and carried the bones far out to sea and threw them overboard into the sea, where they sank to the bottom out of sight, and all the people cheered lustily. But they might not have done so had they seen the bones reuniting bone to bone at the bottom of

the sea. Then came eight showers of rain, and at the eighth the snake was whole again, and stretched herself at the bottom of the sea with a noise like thunder. “What is that strange noise?” said the people, and paddled home as fast as they could go. But still faster went the snake under the water, and as she went she made eight great waves, and the eighth overturned their canoes and drowned the people in them, and rolled over their village, destroying everything in it. Then Walutahanga bethought her of the woman and child, and went to seek them. She found them in the branches of a banyan, safe and sound. “Come down, friends,” said she, and made to grow for them coconuts, yams and taro, and made a stream to flow, and gave them pigs. “Now,” said she, “I have prepared all this for you, but I myself must go away, for I see clearly that the people of this land do not want me, and only wish to kill me.”

So she set off again and came back to Langalanga, but not to Sikora, her home. On that day a man was fishing with a net, and saw her coming in from the sea, a snake of terrible size. “Don’t be afraid of me,” said Walutahanga; “I, like you, am born of woman, receive me kindly and all will be well.”

“But,” said the man, “I am afraid of you, long evil body and crooked tooth.”

“If you will receive me,” said the snake, “your garden shall be fruitful, and you shall be successful in war.”

“But,” objected the man, “my canoe is much too small to hold you.”

“Let me but rest my head in it,” replied the snake, “and paddle ashore with me.” So he did. When they got ashore people began to come together, and the snake said to the man, “Go and build me a house to dwell in.”

“How am I to do that?” said he; “I shall take years to make one big enough.” However, she told him that all he had to do was to get eight leaves of cane and eight leaves of giant caladium, and with these he made her a house. So the snake lived there and helped him in all his undertakings, and has been worshipped ever since by the people.

## **KARAMUNAGAU**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Fox, C. E., and F. H. Drew. “Beliefs and Tales of San Cristoval (Solomon Islands).” *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 45 (1915): 142–143.

**Date:** ca. 1915

**Original Source:** San Cristoval

**National Origin:** Solomon Islands

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“Karamunagau,” like the **myth** that precedes it, explains the origin of one of the serpent *figonas* as well as the reasons for and the nature of

her sacrifices. The figona Karamunagau, however, proves to be considerably less benign than the serpent figona Walutahanga.

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The serpent Karamunagau came at first from an island in the open sea to a village called Fafara, near Rumahui, on the north-west end of San Cristoval. Her head reached the shore and told them to make for her a house, tall and long. When the people had made the house the serpent landed and coiled herself within it. She told them to go and mark out a garden, but when they had done so she was not satisfied, as the garden was too small. They therefore marked, out another. This time she was pleased, and told them to cut down the trees. When the trees had been cut down and the fallen timber burnt, the garden was spaced out with lines of logs, and then a charm was uttered over the stakes up, which the yam vines would run, and another for the stone axes with which they were cut. Then the garden was planted with yams, which in due course sprouted, were staked up, grew to maturity and were dug. A small yam was first dug and put in the house sacred to the serpent.

After this she told them to go and look for opossums; only the male ones were to be eaten. Soon the people of the village were plagued with sickness, which was inflicted on them by the serpent because it desired to eat the flesh of a pig and no pig had been offered. They sacrificed a pig and all recovered. At another time a number of them fell sick because no shell money had been offered. Those who refused to sacrifice any died. About this time the people got tired of the serpent and told her to leave them. She went south-east to Mwanigatoga. When she reached this place she said to the people, "I come here to dwell among you, but I bring with me no sacrifices." Until this time the people of Mwanigatoga had not made any sacrifices for the fruits of the ground, but the serpent told them that henceforth they must do so before any of them ate their yams or taro. "Don't take your yams and taro without giving thanks," said the serpent; "but do as I tell you and sacrifice to me." The people, however, had no wish to make sacrifices of first-fruits to the serpent, and told her she might go to some other place. "I go," replied the serpent, "but remember I have begun among you this practice of sacrificing the first-fruits of your gardens." She then swam out to sea, swimming with her head and tail out of the water. On that day there was only one man in the village of Haununu; the rest had gone up into the bush to work in their gardens. This man looked out to sea, and saw the head and tail of the serpent standing up out of the water like an enormous tree. Those in the bush hurried down, but meanwhile the serpent had landed at the point called Mararo and the solitary man in the village advanced trembling to meet her. "Fear not," said the serpent, "but go and look for a place where I may dwell." He showed her Wainaou and she told him to build her a house there. The rest of the people were afraid and wished her to go away, but she said to them, "Fear not, my children, I am your mother." While she lived here she gave

birth to two young serpents, the first a female named Kafinuagigisi and the second a male named Finuagigisi. The people of Bofarito, an inland village, now claimed the serpent, as the man who had welcomed her to Haununu was really a bushman, a native of Bofarito. So there she went and there she remained, but of the people who sacrificed to her there, only two remain, and the rest are all dead.

## TARAEMATAWA

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Fox, C. E., and F. H. Drew. "Beliefs and Tales of San Cristoval (Solomon Islands)." *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 45 (1915): 171–172.

**Date:** ca. 1915

**Original Source:** Bauro Island

**National Origin:** Solomon Islands

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Supernatural belief among the villages of the Solomon Islands holds that death may be magically overcome; the dead may be brought back to life. Ataros possess this ability to revive corpses, and the same is true for certain priests as illustrated in the following tale.

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Taraematawa was going through maraufu seclusion [period of seclusion and fasting prescribed for those planning to go bonito fishing] in the canoe-house by the shore at the time of bonito fishing. They were secluded there for three months, ten of them, living apart from all women. One day they went fishing for waiiau (bonito), and Taraematawa went off by himself. A sudden great storm came up on the sea; the canoe was swamped and Taraematawa was drowned, and his body washed up on a sandy shore far from his home, where it was soon buried from sight by the sand. There was nothing to show where he lay except the string of shell money he had worn round his neck, which lay above, half hidden in the sand.

But now there came down to the shore two beautiful girls. They walked along by the edge of the waves, and one of them saw the shell money. They dug and found his body, and laid it on the sand, bewailing the death of such a fine young man. After a time they went back to their village and told the priest.

The old man gave them two dracaena leaves, on which he breathed, saying a charm. "One of these," said he, "will restore to life and one will kill." The two girls returned with the dracaena leaves to the corpse on the sand, and first tried the leaf which killed. This had no effect on the dead man. They then



touched him with the other leaf. He opened one eye. They struck him with it. He lifted an arm. They did so again. He lifted a leg. They did so once more, and he stood up on his feet, a living man.

The girls had their dog with them, so they said to the stranger, "See if you can race the dog to that tree." He tried to, but there was no strength in his limbs, and the dog won. They struck him again with the dracaena leaf, and this time he got first to the tree. Then the girls gave him a green coconut to drink from, but he was sick. They used the dracaena leaf again, and he drank. So it was with the eating of yams and taro. At first he could not eat without being sick, but with the help of the charmed dracaena leaf he became sound and whole. Then they took him up to their garden and sat talking, loath to leave him.

At last he said, "Have you no house work to do?"

"Yes," they replied, "we must go back to the village, but we will meet you again here." They went home, and he took his way to the canoe-house, where the men of the place were secluded for bonito fishing, but there was no one there but one lame boy, all the rest being away fishing.

So Taraematawa said to the lame boy, "Let us take this canoe and go after bonito."

But the lame boy replied, "That canoe is forbidden."

However, he persuaded him, and they went. When they had put to sea, Taraematawa asked for a hook, but the lame boy had none, so Taraematawa took out a dog's tooth and pretended to fish with that, to the amusement of his companion. Fishing with two rods, one in each hand, Taraematawa caught two fine bonito, and they returned to the canoe-house. He told the lame boy to climb for coconuts, and gave him a piece of soft wood to husk them with, so as to keep him employed for some time, and then he went off to see his friends in their garden.

When the fishers came back empty-handed they stared in surprise at the two bonito, but the lame boy took all the credit for catching them. "There were plenty close in to the shore," said he; "you went too far out." They looked doubtful, but after a time went out again in their canoes.

Taraematawa appeared again when they had gone, and he and the lame boy went out as before, this time taking the chief's canoe, and Taraematawa caught four bonito, which they put in the canoe-house. The same thing happened as before, but this time the fishers could not believe the lame boy, and, unknown to him, they left a watcher on shore when they went, and the watcher saw Taraematawa go out with the lame boy and catch five fine bonito. Taraematawa, on his return from the garden, disclosed himself to them, and next day was the great feast in the village to mark the conclusion of the maraufea, fine mats being laid all along the path from the canoe-house to the village, since none of the secluded men must set foot to the ground.

While they were all feasting Taraematawa suddenly heard the sound of the winding of a conch far off. "The sound," said he, "is like that of my own conch

at Koine in my big canoe,” and cries with grief, but the people have heard nothing. It came nearer, only three or four miles away, and they all heard it.

Nearer and nearer came the sound, and they saw the canoes, and the people in them called out, “Have you seen Taraematawa?” for they were his people.

“If ere he is,” answered the people on the shore. The two girls began to weep at the thought of the departure of their guest, but their father said, “You shall go with him too.”

So they dried their eyes, and their father loaded Taraematawa’s canoe with shell money, hanging it on the bow of the canoe till the bow sank and the stern rose up in the air. Then Taraematawa and his two beautiful wives embarked and set out for his home, where they lived together.

## WAIPUAMAREMARE

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Fox, C. E., and F. H. Drew. “Beliefs and Tales of San Cristoval (Solomon Islands).” *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 45 (1915): 173–174.

**Date:** ca. 1915

**Original Source:** Bauro Island

**National Origin:** Solomon Islands

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The following tale is similar to the one immediately preceding by virtue of their shared themes of transcending death. Waipumaremare, in fact, was not only dead but had been living in the land of the dead before his revival. The areca nut that he is hunting when he climbs into the land of the dead is also known as the widely used and addictive betel nut.

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He was the elder of two brothers. His younger brother went one day to a stream near the village, and found a bunch of pua (areca nuts) floating down with the water. He took it and carried it into the house, and leaving it in his bag he went out again. Presently Waipua came in and asked for some pua, but no one had any to give him. However, someone said, “There are some nuts in your brother’s bag over there, which he has just brought back from the stream.” So he took it and began to tamu (chew areca nut, leaves and lime) and used it all up. Presently his brother came in again and asked where his areca nuts were, and when he learnt that they were all eaten he began to cry. Nothing would console him. Waipua put strings of shell money round his neck and gave him presents, but he only cried the more for his areca nut, so at last Waipua said, “Well, don’t cry, I will follow the stream till I come to the tree itself from

which your nuts came.” So he took his spear and club and bow and arrows and set out to look for the tree. After a time he came to an areca nut tree standing by the brink of the stream, but the nuts were not quite the same, so he went on. Presently he came to another areca nut tree, but again the nuts were not quite like those his brother had found, so he went on again. Night came on and he slept by the stream and went on again next day, but it was well on into the afternoon before he reached the tree he was seeking. He saw some fine branches, so he climbed up, but just as he stretched out his hand to pluck them, the tree lengthened and they were high above his head once more. This happened again and again till he was almost crying with vexation, but he was determined not to give in. At last he noticed the branch of a banyan which almost reached him, and he thought if he stood on the branch he would then be able to grasp the bunch of areca nuts, so he stepped on to the branch; but as he did so the areca nut tree sank down away from him, and sank lower and lower out of sight, and there he was perched upon the bough of a large banyan in another country, the country of the sky. He sat there wondering what he should do, and presently he saw two very beautiful girls come down to the stream to draw water, but instead of a bamboo they carried the skull of a dead man. Suddenly they saw his shadow in the water and started, thinking it was a man, but he moved and they did not look up. Then he dropped some leaves he was chewing, and the two girls saw the leaves floating by and wondered how they came there. Then he dropped a piece of areca nut and finally some of the red juice from his mouth.

“It must be a bird,” said they, and looked up and saw Waipua sitting on the bough of the banyan.

“You are a ghost,” said they.

“No,” said he, “but you are certainly ghosts; no one else would use a skull, we don’t do such a thing in my country.”

However, he came down, and they took him home to their village, but left him outside in an enclosure, and went and told their father and mother to go out to the enclosure and see the thing they had found. So their father and mother went to look and found Waipua all decked out in his bravest ornaments, shell necklaces, and shell armllets, and a flower in his hair, and they were delighted with him and brought him in and scolded their daughters for leaving this fine fellow outside.

After a time the father and mother went away, but before going they said to their daughters, “Be very careful not to lift the stone so that he looks down and sees his home and desires to return to it”; but Waipua heard their words, and when they were gone he asked the girls what their parents had said to them.

“Oh,” said they, “they only told us to stay at home and cook”; but he shook his head and said, “No, that was not what they said.”

“Well,” said the girls, “if you must know, they told us to go to the garden and get coconuts.”

“No,” said he, “they said something else.” So at last they told him, and he persuaded them to lift the stone, and when the three had lifted it, he looked clown and saw his own country down below him, and a great longing seized him to return to his home. So for four long days the three of them collected strong lengths of rattan and made a small platform, and sat on it, and let it down by the four corners, through the hole. They let themselves down and down, but it was a long way and night came on, so they tied up for the night and slept. Next morning they went on again and reached the ground. But there was no longer a house where the village had been, for after his death the people had scattered far and wide, and the trees had grown up in the village, and the houses had rotted away. So they made a new one, and when the new village was finished they made a great feast, and there were great rejoicings. And there Waipua lived happily with his two wives.

## AN EXILE'S REVENGE

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** O'Ferrall, W. “Native Stories from Santa Cruz and Reef Islands.” *The Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 34 (1904): 230–232.

**Date:** ca. 1904

**Original Source:** Santa Cruz and Reef Islands

**National Origin:** Solomon Islands

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The men of Santa Cruz have a reputation as sailors, and at night they navigate by the stars which figure so prominently in the following narrative. The action of the following narrative is set in motion by the competition between the protagonist and his maternal uncle that is common in Melanesia and other cultures that trace descent through the maternal line. Under such kinship rules, the maternal uncle, rather than the biological father, acts as disciplinarian and “father figure.” The protagonist’s residence in the clubhouse is appropriate. Only married people and children inhabit individual huts, the unmarried men and boys occupy the clubhouse, which usually stands apart from the family dwellings.

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There was a certain woman who was enceinte [pregnant] and her kinsfolk made a great feast, for her nearest kinsman also said that he would make a great feast, and he came to the big island to Pevo, and he went to the place where she had not yet brought forth the child, and he stayed there for a long while; and this man had married one hundred wives.

And when the child was grown up and a young man, he was very handsome and he lived altogether in the club house. In the night he went to work, but in

the daytime he went back again into the club house and dwelt there. And so it was every night he worked in the garden of his kinsman's wives, but he did not work in the last one's garden. And when the wind was favorable the kinsman returned and they told him that his kinsman had arrived. And he went down and took a mat and put it on his shoulder and went with it, and when his kinsman saw him, he said softly to himself, "Whence is this great man," and he began to be jealous of him and hate him, and he questioned the people, "Who is this man?" and they say to him, "This is your kinsman."

But when he heard this, he was very angry, and he said to his wives, "You go and work," and he went with them, and began to question them, and he began with the first until he had questioned them all.

And the son began to inquire, "Who is that working in the garden with my mother?"

But they did not tell him, but they said, "It is your kinsman." And he made as though he would sail to another island, but he pretended only, and they prepared food for his voyage; and when he came near the place he turned round and went northwards, and he did not eat any food at all nor did he drink, and his body weakened, and dizziness came over him and no one relieved him at the steer oar. He only held it until he was near the island, then he tacked and reached Nole.

And he was very weak and lay on the beach and cried bitterly; and as he cried a tree said to him, "Don't cry," and he looked up but saw nothing, and so laid down again and cried again, and the tree spoke again, and he looked up but saw no one; but the tree said to him, "It was I who spoke to you, I this tree that you see"; and he went and sat down at its bole [trunk], and it said, "Break off one root," and he did so. And he perceived a fire burning and he cooked food and ate. Then he slept all night in the track of the stars as they looked down upon him.

And the stars came clown and spoke to the tree, "Do you smell a man?" and it replied, "You smell a man because you go to and fro always, but there is no man here." Every night they came down to catch fish. One night the tree instructed him, "Today at midnight when they come down you follow them," and he did so and followed them, and as they caught fish he took the fish, and when they came back they kept seeking for the fish, saying, "Where is the fish?" But he had gone back already to the tree; and he did so every night.

And one night the tree said to the stars, "My son is here, go and fish and take great care of him."

But they said to it, "You are a fool, this is a man, and you have not told us," and they took him and went, and when they came back they gave him fish, and when he had eaten he slept. And one night he besought them to fly away with him into the sky; and they took him up into the sky and he dwelt there. And he saw when the wives (of his kinsman) were enceinte; and, when they were near the birth, he cut open their wombs and took out the babes and took them away, and taught them to gather together money for him.

And he lived a long time there, and presently the stars said to him, “Do you wish to return to your country?”

And he replied, “I wish it, but how can it be?” So they made a great raft, and put his property upon it, and let him down to his home; and the people rejoiced greatly. And he sat and waited for his kinsman who had driven him away, and when he saw him coming he shot him, and when he was shot he died.

## THE CANNIBAL AND THE PIG WHO ATE HUMAN FLESH

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** O’Ferrall, W. “Native Stories from Santa Cruz and Reef Islands.” *The Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 34 (1904): 232–233.

**Date:** ca. 1904

**Original Source:** Duff Island

**National Origin:** Solomon Islands

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As previously noted (“A Cannibal Story,” page 324), the **motif** of twins who serve as **culture heroes** is common in the world’s traditional narratives. While the pig may seem an unlikely threat to human beings, three facts should be taken into account. First, the pig is the most powerful and highly destructive animal in the lives of the traditional Melanesian people; gardens must be carefully guarded from its ravages. Second, it is of crucial cultural significance in the lives of the indigenous population of the Solomon Islands, because it is used for a variety of utilitarian, legal, and religious purposes. Finally, the hog appears as a rampaging deity elsewhere in Oceania (see “Kampuaa Legends: Legends of the Hog God,” page 380).

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**T**hey two ate human flesh and dwelt on the other side of the island, and that man was called Tepkakhola, and that pig was called Ulaka. And they two ate men, until there was scarcely anyone left, only ten brothers and one woman still remained. Then they met together and said, “Let us build a canoe and flee away from here,” and they worked till the canoe was finished. Then they made ready the food.

After that, in the evening, they began their journey, but their sister had a very big foot; and alas for her, when she lifted up one foot the canoe turned over; then she tried with her first brother, but when she lifted up her foot the canoe sank, and so she tried with all her ten brothers, but it was so with them all.

Then she said to them, "Very well, it is all one, let those two devour me," and they were very sorry for her, and they said to her, "We will make a cave for you"; and they dug out a very big cave, and carried much food into it, and very many coconuts into it, and placed slats of wood at its mouth, and when they had covered them over with earth, they sailed away and reached Metema and dwelt there.

But the woman lived altogether in the cave which her brothers had made for her. And the slats at the mouth of the cave rotted.

One day as she was sitting, two lizards came into the cave, one was chasing the other, and they two jumped down her throat, and she thought to herself, "Why have these two lizards entered into me?" And so it was that in about a month's time she perceived that she was pregnant, and presently she bore twins, and she nourished her two children till they were grown up and were very strong. And while they were still children they asked their mother, "Why is it that we three live together in this cave?" And when they had become young men, one shot and pierced through the door, and they saw light for the first time.

Then they spake together, "What is this thing?" and their mother told them.

Then they said to their mother, "Make ready coconut leaves for a torch," and their mother did as they told her; she took some and dried them in the sun; and when it was evening, she made them into a torch for fishing, and they two directed her to go to the place where the water springs forth from the rock, and that water is called "Tutu."

And she went, and while she was seeking it, Tepkakhola saw the fire afar off, and he said, "Who is this? I have sought in vain for a man, and who is this?" And he ran, and when he saw her coming, he drew near and met her near the shore, and said, "Is it you, my friend?"

And she said, "It is I," and he said, "Where do you live; I have not seen you?"

And she said, "I live here."

And he said, "Give me some fish," and she gave him one bag full, and he came rather nearer and followed her, and when he had finished one bag, he said, "Give me more, and if not, I will eat your sons," and she gave him another bag; and he came near the place where her two sons were; and they had made a cross-stick, and she had taken the midrib of the sago palm leaf, and made it like a fish bone, and had put it into the net, in the place where the water flows forth from the rock. As the woman drew near the place she drew forth the rib, and he said, "Give me that fish," and she said, "It is my sons' food" and he said, "Give it to me," and she said, "There is only one fish, and I want it very much for my two sons," and he said, "Give it to me," and she said, "I will put it into your mouth," and when he opened his mouth wide, she thrust the "midrib" down his throat, and sang a song, and it stuck in his throat, and so it was that he cried

out, "My sister, I am dying," and her two sons came upon him suddenly, and shot him, and he died. And they three dwelt in peace.

And the two sons used to go shooting fish, and their mother said to them, "When you are fishing, don't go far away, lest that evil thing see you." And they went and climbed a tree, and shouted out, "Ulaka! Ulaka!" And he heard afar off and ran, and as he ran, his tail struck the trees, and it broke them off short; and they two kept quiet, and when they saw him they were afraid, and he went away; then they climbed down. And one day they made many spears, and climbed into another tree and called out again, "Ulaka! Ulaka!" And he ran, and they kept quiet, and he came and found some coconuts, and he ate them, and his countenance was very terrible, and when he had eaten he lay down; and when they saw that he was gorged, they came down and speared him. And they had put spears ready in the path, and as he fled, one on the one side of the road, and the other on the other side stood ready, and he turned to one to gore him, and the other speared him, then he turned again to that one, and the other speared him, and they kept on doing this till they reached the beach, and he died there.





# ***Micronesia***



# KIRIBATI

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## THE DARKNESS AND THE CLEAVING-TOGETHER

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Grimble, Arthur. "Myths from the Gilbert Islands." *Folklore* 33 (1922): 92–98.

**Date:** ca. 1922

**Original Source:** Kiribati

**National Origin:** Kiribati

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Kiribati refers to the group of islands located north of Fiji in the central Pacific Ocean and formerly known as the Gilbert Islands. In following narrative, a **myth** of origin of the physical and biological universe the "Darkness and the Cleaving-together" signifies a state of primal chaos. The creation myth that develops from an initial state in which heaven and earth are joined and must forcibly be separated is common in Oceanic traditional cosmologies. Despite the name "Sir Spider," the fact that Na Arean "felt with his hands" signifies that he is anthropomorphic. In many narratives he is portrayed as a **trickster** who assumes other shapes as well, particularly lizard and eel. Na Arean the Younger is the common combination of trickster and **culture hero**. He makes the earth habitable for life, gives animals their current shapes, and initiates ceremonial life. The original source chose to edit the lengthy family trees contained in the original version of this narrative. As noted elsewhere in this volume, however (see "The Descendants of Fanga," page 417, and "The Bride from the Underworld," page 372), genealogies often play a major role in the mythology of the Pacific Islands.

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**I**n the beginning there was nothing in the Darkness and the Cleaving-together save one person. We know not how he grew; whence came he? We know not his father or his mother, for there was only he. His name was Na

Arean to Moa-ni-bai (Sir Spider the First-of-things). As for him, he walked over the face of heaven, which was like hard rock that stuck to the earth. And heaven and earth were called the Darkness and the Cleaving-together.

So Na Arean walked over heaven alone: he trod it underfoot; he felt it with his hands; he went north, he went south, he went east, he went west, he fetched a compass about it; he tapped it with the end of his staff; he sat upon it and knocked upon it with his fingers. Lo, it sounded hollow as he knocked, for it was not sticking there to the earth below. It stood forth as the floor of a sleeping house stands over the ground. And none lived below in the hollow place, nay, not a soul, for there was only Na Arean. So he entered beneath the rock that was heaven and stood below.

And now is Na Arean about to make men grow beneath that rock; he is about to command the Sand to lie with the Water, saying, "Be ye fertile."

They heard; they brought forth children, and these were their names: Na Atibu and Nei Teakea.

Then Na Arean commanded Na Atibu to lie with his sister Teakea. They heard; they brought forth children, and these were their names: Te Ikawai (The Eldest), Nei Marena (The Woman Between), Te Nao (The Wave), Na Kika (Sir Octopus), and Riiki the Eel, and a multitude of others. And the youngest child was Na Arean the Younger, namesake of Na Arean the Moa-ni-bai. And Na Arean the Younger was also called Te Kikinto (The Mischief-maker), for he made mischief among men.

So when these works were done, Na Arean the Moa-ni-bai said in his heart, "It is enough. I go, never to return." So he spoke to Na Atibu, saying, "Na Atibu, here is thy dwelling-place; thy task is to make a world of men; and as for me, I go, never to return. Finish my work."

And Na Atibu called his son Na Arean the Younger; he told him the words of Na Arean the Moa-ni-bai.

Na Arean answered, "Sir, what shall be done in this matter?"

His father said, "Do that thou wilt do."

Na Arean the Younger began his work; he looked upon the multitude of the children of Sand and Water. They lay, moving not, in their birthplaces. It was as if they were dead. He called aloud to them, "Sirs, what think ye?" Only his voice came back again, "Sirs, what think ye?" So he said in his heart, "These be mad folk," and he named them Baba ma Bono (Fools and Deaf-mutes).

Then he stretched out his hand over the multitude. He stroked their bodies, they stirred; he bent their legs, they were supple; he loosed their tongues, they spoke; he touched their eyes, they saw; he opened their ears, they heard; he called them by name, they answered; and he said, "They are no longer fools, nor deaf, nor dumb; they are all in their right minds."

He went back to his father Na Atibu and said, "Sir, they are all in their right minds. What shall be done in this thing?"

Na Atibu answered, "Do that thou wilt do."

So Na Aream said to the children of Sand and Water, "Arise." They would have arisen, but behold, the heavens were not yet on high; their foreheads smote the heavens.

They fell back, crying, "Sir, how may we arise?"

Then Na Aream called to him Riiki that great Eel and said, "Sir, thou art long, and taut: thou shalt lift the heavens on thy snout."

Riiki answered, "It is well." So he coiled himself in the midst beneath the heavens. He raised his snout and heaved from below.

Lo the heavens moved, and as they moved Na Aream called aloud, saying, "Lift, lift."

But Riiki answered, "I can no more, for heaven cleaves to the Underworld."

Then said Na Aream to Na Kika (Sir Octopus), "Strike forth with thine arms. Heaven cleaves to the Underworld."

Na Kika answered, "I strike, I strike."

He said again to Baka-naaneku and Te-auanei (two Sting-rays), "Slide sideways and cut. Heaven cleaves to the Underworld."

They answered, "We cut, we cut."

He said again to Tabakea (the Turtle), "Heave with thy back."

He answered, "I heave, I heave."

He said again to the Wave his brother, "Surge from beneath."

He answered, "I surge, I surge."

And he said again to the children of Sand and Water, "Push, thou," "Blow, thou," "Roll, thou," "Let go, thou." And all obeyed his word. So Riiki the Eel raised the heavens aloft and the earth sank under the sea. And as Riiki lifted, Na Aream called to him, "Tabekia riki, tabekia ri-iki (Lift it more, lift it more)." Therefore his name is Riiki to this day, in memory of Na Aream's word.

Then Na Aream said to Riiki, "Let be, it is enough."

He answered, "How may I let be? If I stand from beneath, the heavens will fall again." So Na Aream called four women and said to them, "These be your names: Make-north, Make-south, Make-east, Make-west. Go hold the four corners of heaven, for you are its supports." They went, and their feet became roots, as it were the roots of mighty trees, so that they might not again be moved.

So the heavens stood on high, and Na Aream said to Riiki, "Thy work is done."

Riiki answered, "It is done."

And Na Aream took hold upon his body and struck off his legs, which were many. He said to him, "Go, lie in thy place." So Riiki lay across the heavens, and to this day his belly is seen to shine across heaven, even Naiabu (the Milky Way). As for his legs, they fell into the sea and became the great and the small eels that live therein.

But behold, the heavens and the sea were dark, for there was no light. And Na Aream said in his heart, "It is as though my work were of no avail, for it

cannot be seen.” He went back to his father Na Atibu and said, “Sir, what shall be done in this matter?”

He answered, “Do that thou wilt do.”

So Na Arean said, “Na Atibu, thou shalt die. I shall get from thee a light for the world.”

He answered, “Do that thou wilt do.” So he slew his father. Then also with Na Atibu died Teakea, his sister and wife.

When that thing was done, Na Arean called his brothers the Wave and the Octopus; he said, “Let us mourn the dead.”

They answered, “We cannot, but do thou mourn him.”

He said to them, “Ye also shall mourn with me.”

They said, “Begin.”

So he began:

How still, how still thou liest,  
My father Na Atibu, with Teakea thy wife.  
And his brother lifted up the song in answer  
There is no ghost in him.  
He shall speed under the heavens to northward;  
There, I ween, be no spirits, no men, no things.  
He shall speed under the heavens to southward;  
There, I ween, be no spirits, no men, no things.

And Na Arean answered again:

[Yea, for] there shall lie with me a woman, the woman Aro-maiaki.  
My seed shall spring from her, the breed of southern spirits; let them dwell in the south;  
The breed of northern spirits; let them dwell in the north;  
The breed of eastern spirits; let them dwell in the east;  
The breed of western spirits; let them dwell in the west;  
The breed of spirits of heaven and the Underworld; let them dwell on earth.

And when Na Arean had done, he took the right eye of Na Atibu and flung it to the Eastern sky. Behold, the sun! He took the left eye and flung it to the Western sky. Behold, the moon! He took the brain and crumbled it between his palms; he scattered it over the heavens. Behold the stars. He took the flesh and broke it in bits; he sowed it over the waters. Behold the rocks and stones. He took the bones and planted them on the first land, even the land of Samoa; and from the bones of Na Atibu grew the Tree of Samoa, the Ancestor.

This was the manner of the making of the land of Samoa. Na Arean said in his heart, “The heavens stand on high and the earth is under the water.” So he

called his brothers, the Wave and Na Kika, saying, “See how the children of Water and Sand are swimming in the sea.” He said again, “Go, Octopus, drag together the sand and stones.” He said again, “Go, Wave, wash the sand and stones; stick them together.” They heard. So at last the sand and stones rose above the sea, a great land. It was called Samoa. Thereon Na Arean planted the bones of Na Atibu, and they grew into the Tree called Kai-ntiku-aba, the Tree of Samoa. On the branches of Kai-ntiku-aba grew many Ancestors, and at its roots also grew many others.

When Samoa was finished, Na Arean went north and made the land of Tarawa with its people. The first man on Tarawa was called Tabuki-n-Tarawa (Eminence-of-Tarawa), and his wife was Nei Baia.

When Tarawa was finished, he made the land of Beru with its people. Tabu-ariki was the first man of Beru, and his wife was Nei Teiti. Then Na Arean lay with that woman of the south, Nei Aro-maiaki; he begot children on her: the breed of spirits of the south, a multitude of Ancestors. And the eldest ancestor was Te I-Matang....

[Here, in the native text, follows a genealogy, interpolated with historic comments, which traces the line of Te I-Matang down to those descendants who migrated to the Gilbert Islands from Samoa, and gives an excellent, though short, account of their arrival in Micronesia.]

Now the Tree of Samoa was a marvelous tree. It was an ancestor, for people grew upon it, and they were called the breed of Samoa. This was the manner of that Tree: it sprang from the spine of Na Atibu, the father of Na Arean, when he died.... The spine was buried in Samoa. Behold, it became that Tree Kai-ntiku-aba, whose right side was the northern solstice, and whose left side was the southern solstice.

[Here again follow genealogical details. The names of the ancestors who grew from the various parts of the Tree are given, and their lines, intermarriages are traced down to those personages who led the migration from Samoa to the Gilbert Islands.]

When Na Arean had lain with Nei Aro-maiaki, he went north and begot children on Nei Aro-meang, the woman of the north; his children were the breed of the spirits of the north. But set aside their story, for they were slaves. Now is Na Arean about to beget men, the breed of the men of the north—even Taburimai and Riiki. Taburimai was the man of Na Arean’s begetting with Nei Aro-meang.

[Here with a wealth of detail the text relates how Taburimai founded a family in the north and shows how this family (1) migrated southward from the Gilberts to Samoa, and (2) after many generations returned from Samoa to the Gilberts.]





# *Polynesia*



# HAWAI'I

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## PELE'S LONG SLEEP

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Westerveldt, W. D. *Hawaiian Legends of Volcanoes*. Boston: G.H. Ellis Press, 1916, 72–86.

**Date:** 1916

**Original Source:** Hawai'ian

**National Origin:** Hawai'i

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Hawai'i, the group of islands that (as of 1959) comprises the southernmost state of the United States, was formed by volcanoes arising from the sea floor. This geographic feature and the ecology associated with it has had a profound effect on the narrative tradition and on the pantheon of traditional gods and goddesses as seen in the following group of narratives. The Pele of Hawai'ian **myth** is associated with the volcano, and with unusual geological features of the environment produced by volcanic activity. These formations are attributed to divine conflicts pitting Pele against other mythic figures. In contemporary **belief tale**, **legend**, and **personal experience narrative**, Pele is credited with taking vengeance on tourists who take away bits of lava rock as souvenirs. Pele's younger sister, Hiiaka (Hi'iaka) goddess of the dance, in spite of conflict caused by Pele's jealousy, remained a favorite of the volcano goddess.

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**P**ele and her family dwelt in the beauty of Puna. On a certain day there was a fine, clear atmosphere and Pele saw the splendid surf with its white crests and proposed to her sisters to go down for bathing and surf-riding.

Pele, as the high chieftess of the family, first entered the water and swam far out, then returned, standing on the brink of the curling wave, for the very crest was her surfboard which she rode with great skill. Sometimes her brother, Kamo-hoalii, the great shark-god, in the form of a shark would be her surfboard. Again and again she went out to the deep pit of the waves, her sisters causing the country inland to resound with their acclamation, for she rode as one born of the sea.

At last she came to the beach and, telling the sisters that the tabu on swimming was lifted, and they could enter upon their sport, went inland with her youngest sister, Hiiaka, to watch while she slept. They went to a house thatched with ti leaves, a house built for the goddess.

There Pele lay down, saying to her sister Hiiaka, "I will sleep, giving up to the shadows of the falling evening—dropping into the very depths of slumber. Very hard will be this sleep. I am jealous of it. Therefore it is tabu. This is my command to you, O my little one. Wait you without arousing me nine days and eight nights. Then call me and chant the 'Hulihia'" (a chant supposed to bring life back and revive the body).

Then Pele added, "Perhaps this sleep will be my journey to meet a man—our husband. If I shall meet my lover in my dreams the sleep will be of great value. I will sleep."

Hiiaka moved softly about the head of her sister Pele, swaying a kahili fringed and beautiful. The perfume of the hala, the fragrance of Keaau, clung to the walls of the house. From that time Puna has been famous as the land fragrant with perfume of the leaves and flowers of the hala tree.

Whenever Pele slept she lost the appearance which she usually assumed, of a beautiful and glorious young woman, surpassing all the other women in the islands. Sleep brought out the aged hag that she really was. Always when any worshipper saw the group of sisters and Pele asleep in their midst they saw a weary old woman lying in the fire-bed in the great crater.

While Pele was sleeping her spirit heard the sound of a hula-drum skillfully played, accompanied by a chant sung by a wonderful voice. The spirit of Pele arose from her body and listened to that voice. She thought it was the hula of Laka, who was the goddess of the dance. Then she clearly heard male voices, strong and tender, and a great joy awoke within her, and she listened toward the east, but the hula was not there. Then westward, and there were the rich tones of the beaten drum and the chant. Pele's spirit cried, "The voice of love comes on the wind. I will go and meet it."

Pele then forsook Keaau and went to Hilo, but the drum was not there. She passed from place to place, led by the call of the drum and dance, following it along the palis (precipices) and over the deep ravines, through forest shadows and along rocky beaches until she came to the upper end of Hawaii. There she heard the call coming across the sea from the island Maui. Her spirit crossed the channel and listened again. The voices of the dance were louder and clearer and more beautiful.

She passed on from island to island until she came to Kauai, and there the drum-beat and the song of the dance (did not die away or change), so she knew she had found the lover desired in her dream.

Pele's spirit now put on the body of strong healthful youth. Nor was there any blemish in her beauty and symmetry from head to foot. She was anointed with all the fragrant oils of Puna. Her dress was the splendid garland of the red lehua flower and maile leaf and the fern from the dwelling-places of the gods. The tender vines of the deep woods veiled this queen of the crater. In glorious young womanhood she went to the halau. The dark body of a great mist enveloped her.

The drum and the voice had led her to Haena, Kauai, to the house of Lohiau, the high-born chief of that island. The house for dancing was long and was beautifully draped with mats of all kinds. It was full of chiefs engaged in the sports of that time. The common people were gathered outside the house of the chief.

The multitude saw a glorious young woman step out of the mist. Then they raised a great shout, praising her with strong voices. It seemed as if the queen of sunrise had summoned the beauty of the morning to rest upon her. The countenance of Pele was like the clearest and gentlest moonlight. The people made a vacant space for the passage of this wonderful strange woman, casting themselves on the ground before her.

An ancient chant says,

O the passing of that beautiful woman.  
 Silent are the voices on the plain,  
 No medley of the birds is in the forest;  
 There is quiet, resting in peace.

Pele entered the long house, passed by the place of the drums, and seated herself on a resting place of soft royal mats.

The chiefs were astonished, and after a long time asked her if she came from the far-off sunrise of foreign lands.

Pele replied, smiling, "Ka! I belong to Kauai."

Lohiau, the high chief, said, "O stranger, child of a journey, you speak in riddles. I know Kauai from harbor to clustered hills, and my eyes have never seen any woman like you."

"Ka!" said Pele, "the place where you did not stop, there I was."

But Lohiau refused her thought, and asked her to tell truly whence she had come. At last Pele acknowledged that she had come from Puna, Hawaii, "the place beloved by the sunrise at Haehae."

The chiefs urged her to join them in a feast, but she refused, saying she had recently eaten and was satisfied, but she "was hungry for the hula—the voices and the drum."

Then Lohiau told her that her welcome was all that he could give. “For me is the island, inland, seaward, and all around Kauai. This is your place. The home you have in Puna you will think you see again in Kauai. The name of my house for you is Ha-laau-ola [Tree of Life].”

Pele replied, “The name of your house is beautiful. My home in Puna is Maui-ola [Long Life]. I will accept this house of yours.”

Lohiau watched her while he partook of the feast with his chiefs, and she was resting on the couch of mats. He was thinking of her marvelous, restful beauty, as given in the ancient chant known as “Lei Mauna Loa.”

Lei of Mauna Loa, beautiful to look upon.  
The mountain honored by the winds.  
Known by the peaceful motion.  
Calm becomes the whirlwind.  
Beautiful is the sun upon the plain.  
Dark-leaved the trees in the midst of the hot sun  
Heat rising from the face of the moist lava.  
The sunrise mist lying on the grass,  
Free from the care of the strong wind.  
The bird returns to rest at Palaaau.  
He who owns the right to sleep is at Palaaau.  
I am alive for your love—  
For you indeed.

Then Lohiau proposed to his chiefs that he should take this beautiful chiefess from Kauai as his queen, and his thought seemed good to all. Turning to Pele, he offered himself as her husband and was accepted.

Then Lohiau arose and ordered the sports to cease while they all slept. Pele and Lohiau were married and dwelt together several days, according to the custom of the ancient time.

After this time had passed Lohiau planned another great feast and a day for the hula-dance and the many sports of the people. When they came together, beautiful were the dances and sweet the voices of Lohiau and his aikane (closest friend).

Three of the women of Kauai who were known as “the guardians of Haena” had come into the halau and taken their places near Lohiau. The people greeted their coming with great applause, for they were very beautiful and were also possessed of supernatural power. Their beauty was like that of Pele save for the paleness of their skins, which had come from their power to appear in different forms, according to their pleasure. They were female mo-o, or dragons. Their human beauty was enhanced by their garments of ferns and leaves and flowers.

Pele had told Lohiau of their coming and had charged him in these words, “Remember, you have been set apart for me. Remember, and know our

companionship. Therefore I place upon you my law, 'Ke kai okia' [Cut off by the sea] are you—separated from all for me."

Lohiau looked on these beautiful women. The chief of the women, Kilinoe, was the most interesting. She refused to eat while others partook of a feast before the dancing should begin, and sat watching carefully with large, bright, shining eyes the face of Lohiau, using magic power to make him pay attention to her charms. Pele did not wish these women to know her, so placed a shadow between them and her so that they looked upon her as through a mist.

There the chiefs took their hula-drums and sat down preparing to play for the dancers. Then up rose Kilinoe, and, taking ferns and flowers from her skirts, made fragrant wreaths wherewith to crown Lohiau and his fellow hula-drummers, expecting the chief to see her beauty and take her for his companion. But the law of Pele was upon him and he called to her for a chant before the dance should commence.

Pele threw aside her shadow garments and came out clothed in her beautiful pa-u (skirt) and fragrant with the perfumes of Puna. She said, "It is not for me to give an olioli mele [a chant] for your native dance, but I will call the guardian winds of your islands Niihau and Kauai, O Lohiau! And they will answer my call."

Then she called for the gods who came to Hawaii; the gods of her old home now known through all Polynesia; the great gods Lono and his brothers, coming in the winds of heaven. Then she called on all the noted winds of the island Niihau, stating the directions from which they came, the points of land struck when they touched the island and their gentleness or wrath, their weakness or power, and their helpfulness or destructiveness.

For a long time she chanted, calling wind after wind, and while she sang, soft breezes blew around and through the house; then came stronger winds whistling through the trees outside. As the voice of the singer rose or fell so also danced the winds in strict harmony. While she sang, the people outside the house cried out, "The sea grows rough and white, the waves are tossed by strong winds and clouds are flying, the winds are gathering the clouds and twisting the heavens."

But one of the dragon-women sitting near Lohiau said, "The noise you think is from the sea or rustling through the leaves of the trees is only the sound of the people talking outside the great building. Their murmur is like the voice of the wind."

Then Pele chanted for the return of the winds to Niihau and its small islands and the day was at peace as the voice of the singer softened toward the end of the chant. Hushed were the people and wondering were the eyes turned upon Pele by the chiefs who were seated in the great halau. Pele leaned on her couch of soft mats and rested.

Very angry was Kilinoe, the dragon-woman. Full of fire were her eyes and dark was her face with hot blood, but she only said, "You have seen Niihau.



Perhaps also you know the winds of Kauai.” By giving this challenge she thought she would overthrow the power of Pele over Lohiau. She did not know who Pele was, but supposed she was one of the women of high rank native to Kauai.

Pele again chanted, calling for the guardian winds of the island Kauai:

O Kauai, great island of the Lehua,  
Island moving in the ocean,  
Island moving from Tahiti,  
Let the winds rattle the branches to Hawaii.  
Let them point to the eye of the son.  
There is the wind of Kane at sunset—  
The hard night-wind for Kauai.

Then she called for kite-flying winds when the birds sport in the heavens and the surf lies quiet on incoming waves, and then she sang of the winds kolonahe, softly blowing; and the winds hunahuna, breaking into fragments; and the winds which carry the mist, the sprinkling shower, the falling rain and the severe storm; the winds which touch the mountain-tops, and those which creep along the edge of the precipices, holding on by their fingers, and those which dash over the plains and along the sea-beach, blowing the waves into mist.

Then she chanted how the caves in the seacoast were opened and the guardians of the winds lifted their calabashes and let loose evil winds, angry and destructive, to sweep over the homes of the people and tear in pieces their fruit trees and houses. Then Pele’s voice rang out while she made known the character of the beautiful dragon-women, the guardians of the caves of Haena, calling them the mocking winds of Haena.

The people did not understand, but the dragon-women knew that Pele only needed to point them out as they sat near Lohiau, to have all the chiefs cry out against them in scorn. Out of the house they rushed, fleeing back to their home in the caves.

When Pele ceased chanting, winds without number began to come near, scraping over the land. The surf on the reef was roaring. The white sand of the beach rose up. Thunder followed the rolling, rumbling tongue of branching lightning. Mist crept over the precipices. Running water poured down the face of the cliffs. Red water and white water fled seaward, and the stormy heart of the ocean rose in tumbled heaps. The people rushed to their homes. The chiefs hastened from the house of pleasure. The feast and the day of dancing were broken up. Lohiau said to Pele, “How great indeed have been your true words telling the evil of this day. Here have come the winds and destructive storms of Haena. Truly this land has had evil today.”

When Pele had laid herself down on the soft mats of Puna for her long sleep she had charged her little sister, who had been carried in her bosom, to wake her if she had not returned to life before nine days were past.

The days were almost through to the last moment when Lohiau lamented the evil which his land had felt. Then as the winds died away and the last strong gust journeyed out toward the sea Pele heard Hiiaka's voice calling from the island Hawaii in the magic chant Pele had told her to use to call her back to life.

Hearing this arousing call, she bowed her head and wept. After a time she said to Lohiau, "It is not for me to remain here in pleasure with you. I must return because of the call of my sister. Your care is to obey my law, which is upon you. Calm will take the place of the storm, the winds will be quiet, the sea will ebb peacefully, cascades will murmur on the mountain sides, and sweet flowers will be among the leaves. I will send my little sister, then come quickly to my home in Puna."

Hiiaka knew that the time had come when she must arouse her goddess sister from that deep sleep. So she commenced the incantation which Pele told her to use. It would call the wandering spirit back to its home, no matter where it might have gone. This incantation was known as "Hulihia ke au" ("The current is turning"). This was a call carried by the spirit-power of the one who uttered it into far-away places to the very person for whom it was intended. The closing lines of the incantation were a personal appeal to Pele to awake.

E Pele e! The milky way (the i'a) turns.  
 E Pele e! The night changes.  
 E Pele e! The red glow is on the island.  
 E Pele e! The red dawn breaks.  
 E Pele e! Shadows are cast by the sunlight.  
 E Pele e! The sound of roaring is in your crater.  
 E Pele e! The uhi-uha is in your crater [this means the sound of wash of lava is in the crater].  
 E Pele e! Awake, arise, return.

The spirit of Pele heard the wind, Naue, passing down to the sea and soon came the call of Hiiaka over the waters. Then she bowed down her head and wept.

When Lohiau saw the tears pouring down the face of his wife he asked why in this time of gladness she wept.

For a long time she did not reply. Then she spoke of the winds with which she had danced that night—the guardians of Niihau and Kauai, a people listening to her call, under the ruler of all the winds, the great Lono, dwelling on the waters.

Then she said, "You are my husband and I am your wife, but the call has come and I cannot remain with you. I will return to my land—to the fragrant blossoms of the hala, but I will send one of my younger sisters to come after

you. Before I forsook my land for Kauai I put a charge upon my young sister to call me before nine days and nights had passed. Now I hear this call and I must not abide by the great longing of your thought.”

Then the queen of fire ceased speaking and began to be lost to Lohiau, who was marveling greatly at the fading away of his loved one, As Pele disappeared peace came to him and all the land of Kauai was filled with calm and rest.

Pele’s spirit passed at once to the body lying in the house thatched with ti leaves in Puna.

Soon she arose and told Hiiaka to call the sisters from the sea and they would go inland.

Then they gathered around the house in which Pele had slept. Pele told them they must dance the hula of the lifted tabu, and asked them, one after the other, to dance, but they all refused until she came to Hiiaka, who had guarded her during her long sleep. Hiiaka desired to go down to the beach and bathe with a friend, Hopoe, while the others went inland.

Pele said, “You cannot go unless you first dance for the lifted tabu.”

Hiiaka arose and danced gloriously before the hula god and chanted while she danced—

Puna dances in the wind.  
The forest of Keaau is shaken.  
Haena moves quietly.  
There is motion on the beach of Nanahuki.  
The hula-lea danced by the wife,  
Dancing with the sea of Nanahuki.  
Perhaps this is a dance of love,  
For the friend loved in the sleep.

Pele rejoiced over the skill of her younger sister and was surprised by the chanted reference to the experiences at Haena. She granted permission to Hiiaka to remain by the sea with her friend Hopoe, bathing and surf-riding until a messenger should be sent to call her home to Kilauea. Then Pele and the other sisters went inland.

## **LEGEND OF THE BREADFRUIT TREE**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Westervelt, W. D. *Hawaiian Legends of Old Honolulu*. Boston: G.H. Ellis Press, 1915, 29–37.

**Date:** 1915

**Original Source:** Hawai’ian

**National Origin:** Hawai’i

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Hawai'ians venerated nature gods; the term for these deities was "akua." Potentially, any natural phenomenon may be a god. Moreover, so may an image made from a natural object (such as the breadfruit tree of the following narrative) become a god if it is worshipped as such. Papa and Wakea, the central couple of this **myth** are significant not only in Hawai'ian tradition, but elsewhere in the Pacific as well. Papa is the mother of the gods and associated with the earth and the underworld, while Wakea is a god of the heavens and associated with light. The term "tabu" as used below is commonly spelled taboo in contemporary English usage. The concept refers to those things that are so sacred as to be dangerous to all but the most supernaturally powerful individuals. Therefore, when chips or sap from the tabooed tree struck ordinary humans they fell dead on the spot as punishment for their profane touch.

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**T**he wonderful breadfruit tree was a great tree growing on the eastern bank of the rippling brook Puehuehu. It was a *tabu* tree, set apart for the high chief from Kou and the chiefs from Honolulu to rest under while on their way to bathe in the celebrated diving-pool Wai-kaha-lulu. That tree became a god, and this is the story of its transformation:

Papa and Wakea were the ancestors of the great scattered sea-going and sea-loving people living in all the islands now known as Polynesia. They had their home in every group of islands where their descendants could find room to multiply.

They came to the island of Oahu, and, according to almost all the legends, were the first residents. The story of the magic breadfruit tree, however, says that Papa sailed from Kahiki (a far-off land) with her husband Wakea, landing on Oahu and finding a home in the mountain upland near the precipice Kilohana.

Papa was a kupua—a woman having many wonderful and miraculous powers. She had also several names. Sometimes she was called Haumea, but at last she left her power and a new name, Ka-meha-i-kana, in the magic breadfruit tree.

Papa was a beautiful woman, whose skin shone like polished dark ivory through the flowers and vines and leaves which were the only clothes she knew. Where she and her husband had settled down they found a fruitful country—with bananas and sugarcane and taro. They built a house on the mountain ridge and feasted on the abundance of food around them. Here they rested well protected when rains were falling or the hot sun was shining.

Papa day by day looked over the seacoast which stretches away in miles of marvelous beauty below the precipices of the northern mountain range of the island Oahu. Clear, deep pools, well filled with most delicate fish, lay restfully

among moss-covered projections of the bordering coral reef. The restless murmur of surf waves beating in and out through the broken lines of the reef called to her, so, catching up some long leaves of the hala-tree, she made a light basket and hurried down to the sea. In a little while she had gathered sea-moss and caught all the crabs she wished to take home.

She turned toward the mountain range and carried her burden to Hoakola, where there was a spring of beautiful clear, cold, fresh water. She laid down her moss and crabs to wash them clean.

She looked up, and on the mountain-side discerned there something strange. She saw her husband in the hands of men who had captured and bound him and were compelling him to walk down the opposite side of the range. Her heart leaped with fear and anguish. She forgot her crabs and moss and ran up the steep way to her home. The moss rooted itself by the spring, but the crabs escaped to the sea.

On the Honolulu side of the mountains were many chiefs and their people, living among whom was Lele-hoo-mao, the ruler, whose fields were often despoiled by Papa and her husband. It was his servants who while searching the country around these fields, had found and captured Wakea. They were forcing him to the temple Pakaka to be there offered in sacrifice. They were shouting, "We have found the mischief-maker and have tied him."

Papa threw around her some of the vines which she had fashioned into a skirt, and ran over the hills to the edge of Nuuanu Valley. Peering down the valley she saw her husband and his captors, and cautiously she descended.

She found a man by the side of the stream Puehuehu, who said to her, "A man has been carried by who is to be baked in an oven this day. The fire is; burning in the valley below."

Papa said, "Give me water to drink."

The man said, "I have none."

Then Papa took a stone and smashed it against the ground. It broke through into a pool of water. She drank and hastened on to the breadfruit tree at Nini, where she overtook her husband and the men who guarded him. He was alive, his hands bound behind him and his leaf clothing torn from his body. Wailing and crying that she must kiss him, she rushed to him and began pushing and pulling him, whirling him around and around.

Suddenly the great breadfruit tree opened and she leaped with him through the doorway into the heart of the tree. The opening closed in a moment.

Papa, by her miraculous power, opened the tree on the other side. They passed through and went rapidly up the mountain-side to their home, which was near the head of Kalihi Valley. As they ran Papa threw off her vine pa-u, or skirt. The vine became the beautiful morning-glory, delicate in blossom and powerful in medicinal qualities. The astonished men had lost their captive. According to the ancient Hawaiian proverb, "Their fence was around the field of nothingness." They pushed against the tree, but the opening was tightly

closed. They ran around under the heavy-leaved branches and found nothing. They believed that the great tree held their captive in its magic power.

Quickly ran the messenger to their high chief, Lele-hoo-mao, to tell him about the trouble at the tabu breadfruit tree at Nini and that the sacrifice for which the oven was being heated was lost.

The chiefs consulted together and decided to cut down that tree and take the captive out of his hiding-place. They sent tree-cutters with their stone axes. The leader of the tree-cutters struck the tree with his stone axe. A chip leaped from the tree, struck him, and he fell dead. Another caught the axe. Again chips flew and the workman fell dead.

Then all the cutters struck and gashed the tree.

Whenever a chip hit any one he died, and the sap of the tree flowed out and was spattered under the blows of the stone axes. Whenever a drop touched a workman or a bystander he fell dead.

The people were filled with fear and cried to their priest for help. Wohi, the priest, came to the tree, bowed before it, and remained in silent thought a long time. Then he raised his head and said, "It was not a woman who went into that tree. It was Papa from Kahiki. She is a goddess and has a multitude of bodies. If we treat her well we shall not be destroyed."

Wohi commanded the people to offer sacrifices at the foot of the tree. This was done with prayers and incantations. A black pig, black awa and red fish were offered to Papa. Then Wohi commanded the wood-cutters to rub themselves bountifully with coconut oil and go fearlessly to their work. Chips struck them and the sap of the tree was spattered over them, but they toiled on unhurt until the great tree fell.

Out of this magic breadfruit tree a great goddess was made. Papa gave to it one of her names, Ka-meha-i-kana, and endowed it with power so that it was noted from Kauai to Hawaii. It became one of the great gods of Oahu, but was taken to Maui, where Kamehameha, secured it as his god to aid in establishing his rule over all the islands.

The peculiar divine gift supposed to reside in this image made from the wonderful breadfruit tree was the ability to aid worshippers in winning land and power from other people and wisely employing the best means of firmly establishing their own government, thus protecting and preserving the kingdom.

Papa dwelt above the Kalihi Valley and looked down over the plains of Honolulu and Ewa covered with well-watered growing plants which gave food or shade to the multiplying people.

It is said that after a time she had a daughter, Kapo, who also had kupua, or magic power. Kapo had many names, such as Kapo-ula-kinau and Laka. She was a high tabu goddess of the ancient Hawaiian hulas, or dances. She had also the power of assuming many bodies at will and could appear in any form from the mo-o, or lizard, to a human being.

Kapo was born from the eyes of Haumea, or Papa.

Papa looked away from Kapo and there was born from her head a sharp pali, or precipice, often mist-covered; this was Ka-moho-alii. Then Pele was born. She was the one who had mighty battles with Kamapuaa, the pig-man, who almost destroyed the volcano Kilauea. It was Ka-moho-alii who rubbed sticks and rekindled the volcanic fires for his sister Pele, thus driving Kamapuaa down the sides of Kilauea into the ocean.

These three, according to the Honolulu legends, were the highest-born children of Papa and Wakea.

Down the Kalihi stream below Papa's home were two stones to which the Hawaiians gave eepa, or gnomelike, power. If any traveler passes these stones on his way up to Papa's resting-place, that wayfarer stops by these stones, gathers leaves and makes leis, or garlands, and places them on these stones, that there may be no trouble in all that day's wanderings.

Sometimes mischievous people dip branches from lehua-trees in water and sprinkle the eepa rocks; then woe to the traveler, for piercing rains are supposed to fall. From this comes the proverb belonging to the residents of Kalihi Valley, "Here is the sharp-headed rain Kalihi" ("Ka ua poo lipilipi o Kalihi").

## THE BRIDE FROM THE UNDERWORLD

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Westervelt, W. D. *Hawaiian Legends of Ghosts and Ghost-Gods*. Boston: G.H. Ellis Press, 1916, 225–241.

**Date:** 1916

**Original Source:** Hawai'ian

**National Origin:** Hawai'i

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In traditional Hawai'ian culture, a lineage traceable to the earliest mythic beginnings of the islands were necessary for a family to claim the right of rulership. The following **myth** of a young hero who traveled to the land of the dead. The underworld journey was the last of the tests Hiku passed to demonstrate his right to rule by virtue of his descent from the divine Ku. Earlier tests were his ability to survive the tabooed waters and to ride a surfboard with no prior knowledge of or training in its use.

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**K**u, one of the most widely known gods of the Pacific Ocean, was thought by the Hawaiians to have dwelt as a mortal for some time on the western side of the island Hawaii. Here he chose a queen by the name of Hina as his wife, and to them were born two children. When he withdrew from his residence among men he left a son on the uplands of the district of North Kona,

and a daughter on the seashore of the same district. The son, Hiku-i-kana-hele (Hiku of the forest), lived with his mother. The daughter, Kewalu, dwelt under the care of guardian chiefs and priests by a temple, the ruined walls of which are standing even to the present day. Here she was carefully protected and perfected in all arts pertaining to the very high chiefs.

Hiku-of-the-Forest was not accustomed to go to the sea. His life was developed among the forests along the western slopes of the great mountains of Hawaii. Here he learned the wisdom of his mother and of the chiefs and priests under whose care he was placed. To him were given many of the supernatural powers of his father. His mother guarded him from the knowledge that he had a sister and kept him from going to the temple by the side of which she had her home.

Hiku was proficient in all the feats of manly strength and skill upon which chiefs of the highest rank prided themselves. None of the chiefs of the inland districts could compare with him in symmetry of form, beauty of countenance, and skill in manly sports.

The young chief noted the sounds of the forest and the rushing winds along the sides of the mountains. Sometimes, like storm voices, he heard from far off the beat of the surf along the coral reef. One day he heard a noise like the flapping of the wings of many birds. He looked toward the mountain, but no multitude of his feathered friends could be found. Again the same sound awakened his curiosity. He now learned that it came from the distant seashore far below his home on the mountain-side.

Hiku-of-the-Forest called his mother and together they listened as again the strange sound from the beach rose along the mountain gulches and was echoed among the cliffs.

“Hiku,” said the mother, “that is the clapping of the hands of a large number of men and women. The people who live by the sea are very much pleased and are expressing their great delight in some wonderful deed of a great chief.”

Day after day the rejoicing of the people was heard by the young chief. At last he sent a trusty retainer to learn the cause of the tumult. The messenger reported that he had found certain tabu surf waters of the Kona beach and had seen a very high queen who alone played with her surfboard on the incoming waves. Her beauty surpassed that of any other among all the, people, and her skill in riding the surf was wonderful, exceeding that of any one whom the people had ever seen, therefore the multitude gathered from near and far to watch the marvelous deeds of the beautiful woman. Their pleasure was so great that when they clapped their hands the sound was like the voices of many thunderstorms.

The young chief said he must go down and see this beautiful maiden. The mother knew that this young woman of such great beauty must be Kewalu, the sister of Hiku. She feared that trouble would come to Kewalu if her more powerful brother should find her and take her in marriage, as was the custom among



the people. The omens which had been watched concerning the children in their infancy had predicted many serious troubles. But the young man could not be restrained. He was determined to see the wonderful woman.

He sent his people to gather the nuts of the kukui, or candlenut tree, and crush out the oil and prepare it for anointing his body. He had never used a surfboard, but he commanded his servants to prepare the best one that could be made. Down to the seashore Hiku went with his retainers, down to the tabu place of the beautiful Kewalu.

He anointed his body with the kukui oil until it glistened like the polished leaves of trees; then taking his surfboard he went boldly to the tabu surf waters of his sister. The people stood in amazed silence, expecting to see speedy punishment meted out to the daring stranger. But the gods of the sea favored Hiku. Hiku had never been to the seaside and had never learned the arts of those who were skilful in the waters. Nevertheless as he entered the water he carried the surfboard more royally than any chief the people had ever known. The sunlight shone in splendor upon his polished body when he stood on the board and rode to the shore on the crests of the highest surf waves, performing wonderful feats by his magic power. The joy of the multitude was unbounded, and a mighty storm of noise was made by the clapping of their hands. Kewalu and her maidens had left the beach before the coming of Hiku and were resting in their grass houses in a grove of coconut trees near the heiau. When the great noise made by the people aroused her she sent one of her friends to learn the cause of such rejoicing. When she learned that an exceedingly handsome chief of the highest rank was sporting among her tabu waters she determined to see him.

So, calling her maidens, she went down to the seashore and first saw Hiku on the highest crest of the rolling surf. She decided at once that she had never seen a man so comely, and Hiku, surf-riding to the shore, felt that he had never dreamed of such grace and beauty as marked the maiden who was coming to welcome him.

When Kewalu came near she took the wreath of rare and fragrant flowers which she wore and coming close to him threw it around his shoulders as a token to all the people that she had taken him to be her husband.

Then the joy of the people surpassed all the pleasure of all the days before, for they looked upon the two most beautiful beings they had ever seen and believed that these two would make glad each other's lives.

Thus Hiku married his sister, Kewalu, according to the custom of that time, because she was the only one of all the people equal to him in rank and beauty, and he alone was fitted to stand in her presence.

For a long time they lived together, sometimes sporting among the highest white crests of storm-tossed surf waves, sometimes enjoying the guessing and gambling games in which the Hawaiians of all times have been very expert, sometimes chanting meles and genealogies and telling marvelous stories of sea

and forest, and sometimes feasting and resting under the trees surrounding their grass houses.

Hiku at last grew weary of the life by the sea. He wanted the forest on the mountain and the cold, stimulating air of the uplands. But he did not wish to take his sister-wife with him. Perhaps the omens of their childhood had revealed danger to Kewalu if she left her home by the sea. Whenever he tried to steal away from her she would rush to him and cling to him, persuading him to wait for new sports and joys.

One night Hiku rose up very quietly and passed out into the darkness. As he began to climb toward the uplands the leaves of the trees rustled loudly in welcome. The night birds circled around him and hastened him on his way, but Kewalu was awakened. She called for Hiku. Again and again she called, but Hiku had gone. She heard his footsteps as his eager tread shook the ground. She heard the branches breaking as he forced his way through the forests. Then she hastened after him and her plaintive cry was louder and clearer than the voices of the night birds.

E Hiku, return! E Hiku, return!  
 O my love, wait for Kewalu!  
 Hiku goes up the hills;  
 Very hard is this hill,  
 O Hiku! O Hiku, my beloved!

But Hiku by his magic power sent thick fogs and mists around her. She was blinded and chilled, but she heard the crashing of the branches and ferns as Hiku forced his way through them, and she pressed on, still calling, "E Hiku, beloved, return to Kewalu."

Then the young chief threw the long flexible vines of the ieie down into the path. They twined around her feet and made her stumble as she tried to follow him. The rain was falling all around her, and the way was very rough and hard. She slipped and fell again and again.

The ancient chant connected with the legend says:

Hiku, is climbing up the hill.  
 Branches and vines are in the way,  
 And Kewalu is begging him to stop.  
 Rain-drops are walking on the leaves.  
 The flowers are beaten to the ground.  
 Hopeless the quest, but Kewalu is calling:  
 "E Hiku, beloved! Let us go back together."

Her tears, mingled with the rain, streamed down her cheeks. The storm wet and destroyed the kapa mantle which she had thrown around her as she hurried

from her home after Hiku. In rags she tried to force her way through the tangled undergrowth of the uplands, but as she crept forward step by step she stumbled and fell again into the cold wet mass of ferns and grasses. Then the vines crept up around her legs and her arms and held her, but she tore them loose and forced her way upward, still calling. She was bleeding where the rough limbs of the trees had torn her delicate flesh. She was so bruised and sore from the blows of the bending branches that she could scarcely creep along.

At last she could no longer hear the retreating footsteps of Hiku. Then, chilled and desolate and deserted, she gave up in despair and crept back to the village. There she crawled into the grass house where she had been so happy with her brother Hiku, intending to put an end to her life.

The ieie vines held her arms and legs, but she partially disentangled herself and wound them around her head and neck. Soon the tendrils grew tight and slowly but surely choked the beautiful queen to death. This was the first suicide in the records of Hawaiian mythology. As the body gradually became lifeless the spirit crept upward to the lua-uhane, the door by which it passed out of the body into the spirit world. This "spirit-door" is the little hole in the corner of the eye. Out of it the spirit is thought to creep slowly as the body becomes cold in death. The spirit left the cold body a prisoner to the tangled vines, and slowly and sadly journeyed to Milu, the Underworld home of the ghosts of the departed.

The lust of the forest had taken possession of Hiku. He felt the freedom of the swift birds who had been his companions in many an excursion into the heavily shaded depths of the forest jungles. He plunged with abandon into the whirl and rush of the storm winds which he had called to his aid to check Kewalu. He was drunken with the atmosphere which he had breathed throughout his childhood and young manhood. When he thought of Kewalu he was sure that he had driven her back to her home by the temple, where he could find her when once more he should seek the seashore.

He had only purposed to stay a while on the uplands, and then return to his sister-wife. His father, the god Ku, had been watching him and had also seen the suicide of the beautiful Kewalu. He saw the spirit pass down to the kingdom of Milu, the home of the ghosts. Then he called Hiku and told him how heedless and thoughtless he had been in his treatment of Kewalu, and how in despair she had taken her life, the spirit going to the Underworld.

Hiku, the child of the forest, was overcome with grief. He was ready to do anything to atone for the suffering he had caused Kewalu, and repair the injury.

Ku told him that only by the most daring effort could he hope to regain his loved bride. He could go to the Underworld, meet the ghosts and bring his sister back, but this could only be done at very great risk to himself, for if the ghosts discovered and captured him they would punish him with severest torments and destroy all hope of returning to the Upperworld.

Hiku was determined to search the land of Milu and find his bride and bring her back to his Kona home by the sea. Ku agreed to aid him with the mighty

power which he had as a god, nevertheless it was absolutely necessary that Hiku should descend alone and by his own wit and skill secure the ghost of Kewalu.

Hiku prepared a coconut shell full of oil made from decayed kukui nuts. This was very vile and foul smelling. Then he made a long stout rope of ieie vines.

Ku knew where the door to the Underworld was, through which human beings could go down. This was a hole near the seashore in the valley of Waipio on the eastern coast of the island.

Ku and Hiku went to Waipio, descended the precipitous walls of the valley and found the door to the pit of Milu. Milu was the ruler of the Underworld. Hiku rubbed his body all over with the rancid kukui oil and then gave the ieie vine into the keeping of his father to hold fast while he made his descent into the world of the spirits of the dead. Slowly Ku let the vine down until at last Hiku stood in the strange land of Milu.

No one noticed his coming and so for a little while he watched the ghosts, studying his best method of finding Kewalu. Some of the ghosts were sleeping; some were gambling and playing the same games they had loved so well while living in the Upperworld; others were feasting and visiting around the poi bowl as they had formerly been accustomed to do.

Hiku knew that the strong odor of the rotten oil would be his best protection, for none of the spirits would want to touch him and so would not discover that he was flesh and blood. Therefore he rubbed his body once more thoroughly with the oil and disfigured himself with dirt. As he passed from place to place searching for Kewalu, the ghosts said, "What a bad-smelling spirit!" So they turned away from him as if he was one of the most unworthy ghosts dwelling in Milu. In the realm of Milu he saw the people in the game of rolling coconut shells to hit a post. Kulioe, one of the spirits, had been playing the kilu and had lost all his property to the daughter of Milu and one of her friends. He saw Hiku and said, "If you are a skilful man perhaps you should play with these two girls."

Hiku said, "I have nothing. I have only come this day and am alone." Kulioe bet his bones against some of the property he had lost. The first girl threw her cup at the kilu post. Hiku chanted:

Are you known by Papa and Wakea,  
O eyelashes or rays of the sun?  
Mine is the cup of kilu.

Her cup did not touch the kilu post before Hiku. She threw again, but did not touch, while Hiku chanted the same words. They took a new cup, but failed.

Hiku commenced swinging the cup and threw. It glided and twisted around on the floor and struck the post. This counted five and won the first bet. Then

he threw the cup numbered twenty, won all the property and gave it back to Kulioe.

At last he found Kewalu, but she was by the side of the high chief, Milu, who had seen the beautiful princess as she came into the Underworld. More glorious was Kewalu than any other of all those of noble blood who had ever descended to Milu. The ghosts had welcomed the spirit of the princess with great rejoicing, and the king had called her at once to the highest place in his court.

She had not been long with the chiefs of Milu before they asked her to sing or chant her mele. The mele was the family song by which any chief made known his rank and the family with which he was connected, whenever he visited chiefs far away from his own home.

Hiku heard the chant and mingled with the multitude of ghosts gathered around the place where the high chiefs were welcoming the spirit of Kewalu. While Hiku and Kewalu had been living together one of their pleasures was composing and learning to intone a chant which no other among either mortals or spirits should know besides themselves. While Kewalu was singing she introduced her part of this chant. Suddenly from among the throng of ghosts arose the sound of a clear voice chanting the response which was known by no other person but Hiku.

Kewalu was overcome by the thought that perhaps Hiku was dead and was now among the ghosts, but did not dare to incur the hatred of King Milu by making himself known; or perhaps Hiku had endured many dangers of the lower world by coming even in human form to find her and therefore must remain concealed. The people around the king, seeing her grief, were not surprised when she threw a mantle around herself and left them to go away alone into the shadows.

She wandered from place to place among the groups of ghosts, looking for Hiku. Sometimes she softly chanted her part of the mele. At last she was again answered and was sure that Hiku was near, but the only one very close was a foul-smelling, dirt-covered ghost from whom she was turning away in despair.

Hiku in a low tone warned her to be very careful and not recognize him, but assured her that he had come in person to rescue her and take her back to her old home where her body was then lying. He told her to wander around and yet to follow him until they came to the ieie vine which he had left hanging from the hole which opened to the Upperworld.

When Hiku came to the place where the vine was hanging he took hold to see if Ku, his father, was still carefully guarding the other end to pull him up when the right signal should be given. Having made himself sure of the aid of the god, he tied the end of the vine into a strong loop and seated himself in it. Then he began to swing back and forth, back and forth, sometimes rising high and sometimes checking himself and resting with his feet on the ground.

Kewalu came near and begged to be allowed to swing, but Hiku would only consent on the condition that she would sit in his lap. The ghosts thought that this would be an excellent arrangement and shouted their approval of the new sport. Then Hiku took the spirit of Kewalu in his strong arms and began to swing slowly back and forth, then more and more rapidly, higher and higher until the people marveled at the wonderful skill. Meanwhile he gave the signal to Ku to pull them up. Almost imperceptibly the swing receded from the spirit world.

All this time Hiku had been gently and lovingly rubbing the spirit of Kewalu and softly uttering charm after charm so that while they were swaying in the air she was growing smaller and smaller. Even the chiefs of Milu had been attracted to this unusual sport, and had drawn near to watch the wonderful skill of the strange foul-smelling ghost.

Suddenly it dawned upon some of the beholders that the vine was being drawn up to the Upperworld. Then the cry arose, "He is stealing the woman!" "He is stealing the woman!"

The Underworld was in a great uproar of noise. Some of the ghosts were leaping as high as they could, others were calling for Hiku to return, and others were uttering charms to cause his downfall. No one could leap high enough to touch Hiku, and the power of all the charms was defeated by the god Ku, who rapidly drew the vine upward.

Hiku succeeded in charming the ghost of Kewalu into the coconut shell which he still carried. Then stopping the opening tight with his fingers so that the spirit could not escape he brought Kewalu back to the land of mortals.

With the aid of Ku the steep precipices surrounding Waipio Valley were quickly scaled and the journey made to the temple by the tabu surf waters of Kona. Here the body of Kewalu had been lying in state. Here the *auwe*, or mourning chant, of the retinue of the dead princess could be heard from afar.

Hiku passed through the throngs of mourners, carefully guarding his precious coconut until he came to the feet, cold and stiff in death. Kneeling down he placed the small hole in the end of the shell against the tender spot in the bottom of one of the cold feet.

The spirits of the dead must find their way back little by little through the body from the feet to the eyes, from which they must depart when they bid final farewell to the world. To try to send the spirit back into the body by placing it in the *lua-uhane*, or "door of the soul," would be to have it where it had to depart from the body rather than enter it.

Hiku removed his finger from the hole in the coconut and uttered the incantations which would allure the ghost into the body. Little by little the soul of Kewalu came back, and the body grew warm from the feet upward, until at last the eyes opened and the soul looked out upon the blessed life restored to it by the skill and bravery of Hiku.

No more troubles arose to darken the lives of the children of Ku. Whether in the forest or by the sea they made the days pleasant for each other until at

the appointed time together they entered the shades of Milu as chief and chiefess who could not be separated. It is said that the generations of their children gave many rulers to the Hawaiians, and that the present royal family, the “House of Kalakaua,” is the last of the descendants.

## **KAMPUAA LEGENDS: LEGENDS OF THE HOG GOD**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Westervelt, W. D. *Hawaiian Legends of Old Honolulu*. Boston: G.H. Ellis Press, 1915, 247–278.

**Date:** 1915

**Original Source:** Hawai’ian

**National Origin:** Hawai’i

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Abraham Fornander, an early collector and compiler of Hawai’ian oral tradition writes, “The Kamapuaa stories ... seem to have no counterpart in any mythology beyond the borders of the Hawaiian Islands” (Westervelt 1915, 259). Although Westervelt does not emphasize this connection, Hina is identified as a god and Kamapuaa is explicitly named as a demi-god by folklorist Martha Beckwith (Beckwith 1940, 201):. His nature bears all the marks of a “kupua” (the offspring of a god born into a human family): he is a shape-shifter with extraordinary strength; he is extraordinarily ugly and can control nature. The following cycle of tales of Kamapuaa has been collated and rewritten with interjections by W. D. Westervelt. In spite of this, however, the content remains true to tradition.

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Some of the most unique legends of the nations have centered around imagined monsters. Centaurs, half man and half horse, thronged the dreams of Rome. The Hawaiians knew nothing about any animals save the fish of the seas, the birds of the forests, and the chickens, the dogs and the pigs around their homes. From the devouring shark the Hawaiian imagination conceived the idea of the shark-man who indulged in cannibalistic tendencies.

From the devastations of the hogs they built up the experiences of a rude vicious chief whom they called Kamapuaa, who was the principal figure of many rough exploits throughout the islands. Sometimes he had a hog’s body with a human head and limbs, sometimes a hog’s head rested on a human form, and sometimes he assumed the shape of a hog—quickly reassuming the form of a man. Kalakaua’s legends say that he was a hairy man and cultivated the stiff hair by cutting it short so that it stood out like bristles, and that he had his body

tattooed so that it would have the appearance of a hog. In place of the ordinary feather cloak worn by chiefs he wore a pigskin with its bristles on the outside and a pigskin girdle around his waist.

The legends say that he was born at Kaluanui, a part of the district of Hauula or Koolau coast of the island Oahu. His reputed father was Olopana, the high chief of that part of the island, and his mother was Hina, the daughter of a chief who had come from a foreign land. Other legends say that his father was Kahikiula (The Red Tahiti), a brother of Olopana. These brothers had come to Oahu from foreign lands some time before. Fornander always speaks of Olopana as Kamapuaa's uncle, although he had taken Hina as his wife.

The Koolauloa coast of Oahu lies as a luxuriant belt of ever-living foliage a mile or so in width between an ocean of many colors and dark beetling precipices of mountain walls rising some thousands of feet among the clouds. From these precipices which mark the landward side of a mighty extinct crater come many mountain streams leaping in cascades of spray down into the quiet green valleys which quickly broaden into the coral-reef-bordered seacoast. From any place by the sea the outline of several beautiful little valleys can be easily traced.

One morning while the sunlight of May looked into the hidden recesses and crevices of these valleys, bringing into sharp relief of shadow and light the out-cropping ledges, a little band of Hawaiians and their white friends lay in the shade of a great kamani tree and talked about the legends which were told of the rugged rock masses of each valley, and the quiet pools of each rivulet. Where the little party lay was one of the sporting-places of Kamapuaa the "hog-child treated in the legends as a demigod." Not faraway one of the mountain streams had broadened into a quiet bush-shaded lakelet with deep fringes of grass around its borders. Here the legendary hog-man with marvelous powers had bathed from time to time. A narrow gorge deep shadowed by the morning sun was the place which Kamapuaa had miraculously bridged for his followers when an enemy was closely pursuing them. Several large stones on the edges of the valleys were pointed out as the monuments of various adventures. An exquisitely formed little valley ran deep into the mountain almost in front of the legend-tellers. Far away in the upper end where the dark-green foliage blended with still darker shadows the sides of the valley narrowed until they were only from sixty to seventy feet apart, and unscalable precipices bent toward each other, leaving only a narrow strip of sky above. On the right of this valley is a branch-gorge down which fierce storms have hurled torrents of waters and mist. The upper end has been hollowed and polished in the shape of a finely rounded canoe of immense proportions. It was from this that the valley took its name Ka-liu-waa, possibly having the meaning, "the leaky canoe." Some of the legends say that this was Kamapuaa's canoe leaning against the precipice and always leaking out the waters which fell in it.

Lying toward the west was a very fertile and open tract of land, Kaluanui, where Kamapuaa was said to have been born of Hina. After his birth he was



thrown away by Kahiki-houna-kele, an older brother, and left to die. After a time Hina, the mother, went to a stream of clear, sweet water near her home to bathe. After bathing she went to the place where she had left her pa-u, or tapa skirt, and found a fine little hog lying on it. She picked it up and found that it was a baby. She was greatly alarmed, and gave the hog-child to another son, Kekelaiaika, that he might care for it, but the older brother stole the hog-child and carried it away to a cave in which Hina's mother lived. Her name was Kamaunuaniho.

The grandmother knew the hog-child at once as her grandson endowed with marvelous powers, and since the gods had given him the form of a hog he should be called kama (child), puua (hog). Then she gave to the older brother kapa quilts in which to place Kamapuaa. These were made in layers, six sheets of kapa cloth formed the under quilt for a bed and six sheets the upper quilt for a cover. In these Kamapuaa slept while his brother prepared taro and breadfruit for his food. Thus the wonderful hog ate and slept usually in the form of a hog until size and strength came to him.

Then he became mischievous and began to commit depredations at night. He would root up the taro in the fields of his neighbors, and especially in the field of the high chief Olopana. Then he would carry the taro home, root up ferns and grass until he had good land and then plant the stolen taro. Thus his grandmother and her retainers were provided with growing taro, the source of which they did not understand.

His elder brother prepared an oven in which to cook chickens. Kamapuaa rooted up the oven and stole the chickens. This brother Kahiki-houna-kele caught the hog-child and administered a sound whipping, advising him to go away from home if he wanted to steal, and especially to take what he wanted from Olopana.

Adopting this advice, Kamapuaa extended his raids to the home of the high chief. Here he found many chickens. Kamapuaa quickly killed some, took them in his mouth and threw many more on his back and ran home. The morning came before he had gone far and the people along the way saw the strange sight and pursued him. By the use of charms taught him by his sorceress-grandmother he made himself run faster and faster until he had outstripped his pursuer. Then he carried his load to his grandmother's cave and gave the chickens to the family for a great luau (feast).

Another time he stole the sacred rooster belonging to Olopana, as well as many other fowls. The chief sent a large number of warriors after him. They chased the man who had been seen carrying the chickens. He fled by his grandmother's cave and threw the chickens inside, then fled back up the hillside, revealing himself to his pursuers. They watched him, but he disappeared. He dropped down by the side of a large stone. On this he seated himself and watched the people as they ran through the valley calling to each other. The high grass was around the stone so that for a long time he was concealed.

For this reason this stone still bears the name Pohaku-pee-o-Kamapuaa (Kamapuaa's-hiding-stone).

After a time a man who had climbed to the opposite ridge cried out, "E, E, there he is sitting on the great stone!" This man was turned into a stone by the magic of Kamapuaa. The pursuers hastened up the hillside and surrounded the stone, but no man was there. There was a fine black hog, which they recognized as the wonderful one belonging to Kamaunuanoho. So they decided that this was the thief, and seized it and carried it down the bill to give to the high chief Olopana. After getting him down into the valley they tried to drive him, but he would not go. Then they sent into the forest for ohia poles and made a large litter. It required many men to carry this enormous hog, who made himself very heavy.

Suddenly Kamapuaa heard his grandmother calling, "Break the cords! Break the poles! Break the strong men! Escape!" Making a sudden turn on the litter, he broke it in pieces and fell with it to the ground. Then he burst the cords which bound him and attacked the band of men whom he had permitted to capture him. Some legends say that he killed and ate many of them. Others say that he killed and tore the people.

The wild life lived by Kamapuaa induced a large band of rough lawless men to leave the service of the various high chiefs and follow Kamapuaa in his marauding expeditions. They made themselves the terror of the whole Koolau region.

Olopana determined to destroy them, and sent an army of four hundred warriors to uproot Kamapuaa and his robbers. It was necessary for them to hasten to their hiding-places, but they were chased up into the hills until a deep gorge faced them. No way of escape seemed possible, but Kamapuaa, falling on the ground, became a long hog—stretching out he increased his length until he could reach from side to side of the deep ravine—thus he formed a bridge over which his followers escaped.

Kamapuaa, however, was not able to make himself small quickly enough to escape from his enemies. He tried to hide himself in a hole and pull dead branches and leaves over himself; but they soon found him, bound him securely, and tied him to a great stone which with "the stone of hiding" and "the watcher" are monuments of the legends to this day.

The people succeeded in leading the hog-man to Olopana's home, where they fastened him, keeping him for a great feast, which they hoped to have in a few days, but Kamapuaa, Samson-like, broke all his bonds, destroyed many of his captors—wantonly destroyed coconut trees and taro patches, and then went back to his home.

He knew that Olopana would use every endeavor to compass his destruction. So he called his followers together and led them up Kaliuwaa Valley, stopping to get his grandmother on the way. When he came to the end of the valley, and the steep cliffs up which his people could not possibly climb,

he took his grandmother on his neck and leaned back against the great precipice. Stretching himself more and more, and rubbing against the black rocks, at last he lifted his grandmother to the top of the cliffs so that she could step off on the uplands which sloped down to the Pearl Harbor side of the island. Then the servants and followers climbed up the sides of the great hog by clinging to his bristles and escaped. The hollow worn in the rocks looked like a hewn-out canoe, and was given the name Ka-waa-o-Kamapuaa (The canoe of Kamapuaa). Kamapuaa then dammed up the water of the beautiful stream by throwing his body across it, and awaited the coming of Olopana and his warriors.

An immense force had been sent out to destroy him. In addition to the warriors who came by land, a great fleet of canoes was sent along the seashore to capture any boats in which Kamapuaa and his people might try to escape.

The canoes gathered in and around the mouth of the stream which flowed from Kaliuwaa Valley. The warriors began to march along the stream up toward the deep gorge. Suddenly Kamapuaa broke the dam by leaping away from the waters, and a great flood drowned the warriors, and dashed the canoes together, destroying many and driving the rest far out to sea. Uhakohi is said to be the place where this flood occurred.

Then Kamapuaa permitted the people to capture him. They went up the valley after the waters had subsided and found nothing left of Kamapuaa or his people except a small black hog. They searched the valley thoroughly. They found the canoe, turned to stone, leaning against the precipice at the end of the gorge. They said among themselves, "Escaped is Kamapuaa with all his people, and ended are our troubles."

They caught the hog and bound it to carry to Olopana. As they journeyed along the seashore their burden became marvelously heavy until at last an immense litter was required resting on the shoulders of many men. It was said that he sometimes tossed himself over to one side, breaking it down and killing some of the men who carried him. Then again he rolled to the other side, bringing a like destruction. Thus he brought trouble and death and a long, weary journey to his captors, who soon learned that their captive was the hog-man Kamapuaa. They brought him to their king Olopana and placed him in the temple enclosure where sacrifices to the gods were confined. This heiau was in Kaneohe and was known as the heiau of Kawaewae. It was in the care of a priest known as Lonoaohi.

Long, long before this capture Olopana had discovered Kamapuaa and would not acknowledge him as his son. The destruction of his coconut trees and taro patches had been the cause of the first violent rupture between the two. Kamapuaa had wantonly broken the walls of Olopana's great fish-pond and set the fish free, and then after three times raiding the fowls around the grass houses had seized, killed and eaten the sacred rooster which Olopana considered his household fetish.

When Olopana knew that Kamapuaa had been captured and was lying bound in the temple enclosure he sent orders that great care should be taken lest he escape, and later he should be placed on the altar of sacrifice before the great gods.

Hina, it was said, could not bear the thought that this child of hers, brutal and injurious as he was, should suffer as a sacrifice. She was a very high chiefess, and, like the Hinas throughout Polynesia, was credited with divine powers. She had great influence with the high priest Lonoaohi and persuaded him to give Kamapuaa an opportunity to escape. This was done by killing a black hog and smearing Kamapuaa's body with the blood. Thus bearing the appearance of death, he was laid unbound on the altar. It was certain that unless detected he could easily climb the temple wall and escape.

Olopana, the king, came to offer the chants and prayers which belonged to such a sacrifice. He as well as the high priest had temple duties, and the privilege of serving at sacrifices of great importance. As was his custom he came from the altar repeating chants and prayers while Kamapuaa lay before the images of the gods. While he was performing the sacrificial rites, Kamapuaa became angry, leaped from the altar, changed himself into his own form, seized the bone daggers used in dismembering the sacrifices, and attacked Olopana, striking him again and again, until he dropped on the floor of the temple dead. The horrified priests had been powerless to prevent the deed, nor did they think of striking Kamapuaa down at once. In the confusion he rushed from the temple, fled along the coast to his well-known valleys, climbed the steep precipices and rejoined his grandmother and his followers.

Leading his band of rough robbers down through the sandalwood forests of the Wahiawa region, he crossed over the plains to the Waianae Mountains. Here they settled for a time, living in caves. Other lawless spirits joined them, and they passed along the Ewa side of the island, ravaging the land like a herd of swine. A part of the island they conquered, making the inhabitants their serfs.

Here on a spur of the Waianae Mountains they built a residence for Kamaunu-aniho, and established her as their priestess, or kahuna. They levied on the neighboring farmers for whatever taro, sweet-potatoes and bananas they needed. They compelled the fishermen to bring tribute from the sea. They surrounded their homes with pigs and chickens, and in mere wantonness terrorized that part of Oahu.

### **Kamapuaa on Oahu and Kauai**

While he lived on the Koolau coast he was simply a devastating, brutal monster, with certain powers belonging to a demi-god, which he used as maliciously as possible. After being driven out to the Honolulu side of the mountains, for a time he led his band of robbers in their various expeditions, but after a time his miraculous powers increased and he went forth terrorizing the island

from one end to the other. He had the power of changing himself into any in of a fish. As a shark and as a hog he was represented as sometimes eating those whom he conquered in battle. He ravaged the fields and chicken preserves of the different chiefs, but it is said never stole or ate pigs or fish.

He wandered along the low lands from the taro patches of Ewa to the coconut groves of Waikiki, rooting up and destroying the food of the people.

At Kamoiliili he saw two beautiful women coming from the stream which flows from Manoa Valley. He called to them, but when they saw his tattooed body and rough clothing made from pigskins they recognized him and fled. He pursued them, but they were counted as goddesses, having come from divine foreign families as well as Kamapuaa. They possessed miraculous powers and vanished when he was ready to place his hands upon them. They sank down into the earth. Kamapuaa changed himself into the form of a great hog and began to root up the stones and soil and break his way through the thick layer of petrified coral through which they had disappeared. He first followed the descent of the woman who had been nearest to him. Down he went through soil and stone after her, but suddenly a great flood of water burst upward through the coral almost drowning him. The goddess had stopped his pursuit by turning an underground stream into the entrance which he had made.

After this narrow escape Kamapuaa rushed toward Manoa Valley to the place where he had seen the other beautiful woman disappear. Here also he rooted deep through earth and coral, and here again a new spring of living water was uncovered. He could do nothing against the flood, which threatened his life. The goddesses escaped and the two wells have supplied the people of Kamoiliili for many generations, bearing the name, "The wells, or fountains, of Kamapuaa."

The chief of Waikiki had a fine tract well supplied with bananas and coconuts and taro. Night after night a great black bog rushed through Waikiki destroying all the ripening fruit and even going to the very doors of the grass houses searching out the calabashes filled with poi waiting for fermentation. These calabashes he dashed to the ground, defiling their contents and breaking and unfitting them for further use. A crowd of warriors rushed out to kill this devastating monster. They struck him with clubs and hurled their spears against his bristling sides. The stiff bristles deadened the force of the blows of the clubs and turned the spear-points aside so that he received but little injury. Meanwhile his fierce tusks were destroying the warriors and his cruel jaws were tearing their flesh and breaking their bones. In a short time the few who were able to escape fled from him. The chiefs gathered their warriors again and again, and after many battles drove Kamapuaa from cave to cave and from district to district. Finally he leaped into the sea, changed himself into the form of a fish and passed over the channel to Kauai.

He swam westward along the coast, selecting a convenient place for landing, and when night came, sending the people to their sleep, he went ashore.

He had marked the location of taro and sugarcane patches and could easily find them in the night. Changing himself into a black hog he devoured and trampled the sugarcane, rooted up taro and upset calabashes, eating the poi and breaking the wooden bowls. Then he fled to a rough piece of land which he had decided upon as his hiding-place.

The people were astonished at the devastation when they came from their houses next morning. Only gods who were angry could have wrought such havoc so unexpectedly, therefore they sent sacrifices to the heiaus, that the gods of their homes might protect them. But the next night other fields were made desolate as if a herd of swine had been wantonly at work all through the night. After a time watchmen were set around the fields and the mighty hog was seen. The people were called. They surrounded Kamapuaa, caught him and tied him with strongest cords of olona fiber and pulled him to one side, that on the new day so soon to dawn they might build their oven and roast him for a great feast.

When they thought all was finished the hog suddenly burst his bonds, became invisible and leaped upon them, tore them and killed them as he had done on Oahu, then rushed away in the darkness.

Again some watchers found him lying at the foot of a steep precipice, sleeping in the daytime. On the edge of the precipice were great boulders, which they rolled down upon him, but he was said to have allowed the stones too strike him and fall shattered in pieces while he sustained very little injury.

Then he assumed the form of a man and made his home by a ledge of rock called Kipukai. Here there was a spring of very sweet water, which lay in the form of a placid pool of clear depths, reflecting wonderfully whatever shadows fell upon its surface. To this two beautiful sisters were in the habit of coming with their water-calabashes. While they stooped over the water Kamapuaa came near and cast the shadow as a man before them on the clear waters. They both wanted the man as their husband who could cast such a shadow. He revealed himself to them and took them both to be his wives. They lived with him at Kipukai and made fine sleeping mats for him, cultivated food and prepared it for him to eat. They pounded kapa that he might be well clothed.

At that time there were factions on the island of Kauai warring against each other. Fierce hand-to-hand battles were waged and rich spoils carried away.

With the coming of Kamapuaa to Kauai a new and strange appearance wrought terror in the hearts of the warriors whenever a battle occurred. While the conflict was going on and blows were freely given by both club and spear, suddenly a massive war-club would be seen whistling through the air, striking down the chiefs of both parties. Mighty blows were struck by this mysterious club. No hand could be seen holding it, no strong arm swinging it, and no chief near it save those stricken by it. Dead and dying warriors covered the ground in its path. Sometimes when Kamapuaa had been caught in his marauding expedition, he would escape from the ropes tying him, change into a man, seize a club, become invisible and destroy his captors. He took from the fallen their rich

feather war cloaks, carried them to his dwelling-place and concealed them under his mats.

The people of Kauai were terrified by the marvelous and powerful being who dwelt in their midst. They believed in the ability of kahunas, or priests, to work all manner of evil in strange ways and therefore were sure that some priest was working with evil spirits to compass their destruction. They sought the strongest and most sacred of their own kahunas, but were unable to conquer the evil.

Meanwhile Kamapuaa, tired of the two wives, began to make life miserable for them, trying to make them angry, that he might have good excuse for killing them. They knew something of his marvelous powers as a demi-god, and watched him when he brought bundles to his house and put them away. The chief's house then as in later years was separated from the houses of the women and was tabu to them, but they waited until they had seen him go far away. Then they searched his house and found the war cloaks of their friends under his mats. They hastened and told their friends, who plotted to take vengeance on their enemy.

The women decided to try to drive the demi-god away, so destroyed the spring of water from which they had daily brought water for his need. They also carefully concealed all evidences of other springs. Kamapuaa returned from his adventures and was angry when he found no water waiting for him. He called for the women, but they had hidden themselves. He was very thirsty. He rushed to the place of the spring, but could not find it. He looked for water here and there, but the sisters had woven mighty spells over all the water-holes and he could not see them. In his rage he rushed about like a blind and crazy man. Then the sisters appeared and ridiculed him. They taunted him with his failure to overcome their wives. They laughed at his suffering. Then in his great anger he leaped upon them, caught them and threw them over a precipice. As they fell upon the ground he uttered his powerful incantations and changed them into two stones, which for many generations have been guardians of that precipice. Then he assumed the form of a hog and rooted deep in the rocky soil. Soon he uncovered a fountain of water from which he drank deeply, but which he later made bitter and left as a mineral-spring to the present day.

The people of Kauai now knew the secret of the wonderful swinging war club. They knew that a hand held it and an invisible man walked beside it, so they fought against a power which they could not see. They felt their clubs strike some solid body even when they struck at the air. Courage came back to them, and at Hanalei the people forced him into a corner, and, carrying stones, tried to fence him in, but he broke the walls down, tore his way through the people and fled. The high chief of Hanalei threw his magic spear at him as he rushed past, but missed him. The spear struck the mountain-side near the summit and passed through, leaving a great hole through which the sky on the other side of the mountain can still be seen. Kamapuaa decided that he was tired of

Kauai, therefore he ran to the seashore, leaped into the water and, becoming a fish, swam away to Hawaii.

## Pele and Kamapuaa

The three great mountains of Hawaii had been built many centuries before Pele found an abiding home in the pit of Kilauea. Kilauea itself appears rather as a shelter to which she fled than as a house of her own building. The sea waters quenched the fires built by her at lower levels, forcing her up higher and higher toward the mountains until she took refuge in the maelstrom of eternal fire known for centuries among the Hawaiians as *Ka lua o Pele* (The pit of Pele), the boiling center of the active pit of fire. Some legends say that Kamapuaa drove Pele from place to place by pouring in water.

The Kalakaua legends probably give the correct idea of the growths of Pele-worship as the goddess of volcanic fires when they say that the Pele family of brave and venturesome high chiefs with their followers settled under the shadows of the smoke-clouds from Kilauea and were finally destroyed by some overwhelming eruption. And yet the destruction was so spectacular, or at least so mysterious, that the idea took firm root that Pele and her brothers and sisters, instead of passing out of existence, entered into the volcano to dwell there as living spirits having the fires of the Underworld as their continual heritage. From this home of fire Pele and her sisters could come forth assuming the forms in which they had been seen as human beings. This power has been the cause of many legends about Pele and her adventures with various chiefs whom she at last overwhelmed with boiling floods of lava tossed out of her angry heart. In this way she appeared in different parts of the island of Hawaii apparently no longer having any fear of danger to her home from incoming seas.

The last great battle between sea and fire was connected with Pele as a fire-goddess and Kamapuaa, the demi-god, part hog and part man. It is a curious legend in which human and divine elements mingle like the changing scenes of a dream. This naturally follows the statement in some of the legends that Ku, one of the highest gods among the Polynesians as well as among the Hawaiians, was an ancestor of Kamapuaa, protecting him and giving him the traits of a demi-god. Kamapuaa had passed through many adventures on the islands of Oahu and Kauai, and had lived for a time on Maui. He had, according to some of the legends, developed his mysterious powers so that he could become a fish whenever he wished, so sometimes he was represented as leaping into the sea, diving down to great depth, and swimming until he felt the approach of rising land, then he would come to the surface, call out the name of the island and go ashore for a visit with the inhabitants or dive again and pass on to another island. Thus he is represented as passing to Hawaii after his adventures on the islands of Kauai and Oahu.

On Hawaii he entered into the sports of the chiefs, gambling, boxing, surf-riding, rolling the round *ulu maika* stone and riding the *holua* (sled). Here he



learned about the wonderful princess from the islands of the southern seas who had made her home in the fountains of fire.

Some of the legends say that he returned to Oahu, gathered a company of adherents and then visited the Pele family as a chief of high rank, winning her as his bride and living with her some time, then separating and dividing the island of Hawaii between them, Pele taking the southern part of the island as the scene for her terrific eruptions, and Kamapuaa ruling over the north, watering the land with gentle showers or with melting snow, or sometimes with fierce storms, until for many centuries fertile fields have rewarded the toil of man.

The better legends send Kamapuaa alone to the contest with the fire-goddess, winning her for a time and then entering into a struggle in which both lives were at stake.

It is said that one morning when the tops of the mountains were painted by the sunlight from the sea, and the shadows in the valley were creeping under the leaves of the trees of the forests, that Pele and her sisters went down toward the hills of Puna. These sisters were known as the Hiiakas, defined by Ellis, who gives the first account of them, as "The cloud-holders." Each one had a descriptive title, thus Hiiaka-noho-lani was "The heaven-dwelling cloud-holder," Hiiaka-i-ka-poli-o-Pele was "The cloud-holder in the bosom of Pele." There were at least six Hiiakas, and some legends give many more.

That morning they heard the sound of a drum in the distance. It was the tum-tum-tum of a hula. Filled with curiosity they turned aside to see what strangers had invaded their territory. One of the sisters, looking over the plain to a hill not far away, called out, "What a handsome man!" and asked her sisters to mark the finely formed athletic stranger who was dancing gloriously outlined in the splendor of the morning light.

Pele scornfully looked and said she saw nothing but a great hog-man, whom she would quickly drive from her dominions. Then began the usual war of words with which rival chiefs attacked each other. Pele taunted Kamapuaa, calling him a hog and ascribing to him the characteristics belonging to swine. Kamapuaa became angry and called Pele "the woman with red burning eyes, and an angry heart unfit to be called a chiefess." Then Pele in her wrath stamped on the ground until earthquakes shook the land around Kamapuaa and a boiling stream of lava rolled down from the mountains above. The stranger, throwing around him the finest tapa, stood unmoved until the flood of fire began to roll up the hill on which he stood. Then raising his hands and uttering the strongest incantations he called for heavy rains to fall. Soon the lava became powerless in the presence of the stranger. Then Pele tried her magical powers to see if she could subdue this stranger, but his invocations seemed to be stronger than those falling from her lips, and she gave up the attempt to destroy him. Pele was always a cruel, revengeful goddess, sweeping away those against whom her wrath might be kindled, even if they were close friends of her household.

The sisters finally prevailed upon her to send across to the hill inviting the stranger, who was evidently a high chief, to come and visit them. As the messenger started to bring the young man to the sisters he stepped into the shadows, and the messenger found nothing but a small hog rooting among the ferns. This happened day after day until Pele determined to know this stranger chief who always succeeded in thoroughly hiding himself, no matter how carefully the messengers might search. At last the chant of the hula and the dance of the sisters on the smooth pahoehoe of a great extinct lava bed led the young man to approach. Pele revealed herself in her rare and tempting beauty, calling with a sweet voice for the stranger to come and rest by her side while her sisters danced. Soon Pele was overcome by the winning strength of this great chief, and she decided to marry him. So they dwelt together in great happiness for a time, sometimes making their home in one part of Puna and sometimes in another. The places where they dwelt are pointed out even at this day by the natives who know the traditions of Puna.

But Kamapuaa had too many of the habits and instincts of a hog to please Pele, besides she was too quickly angry to suit the overbearing Kamapuaa. Pele was never patient even with her sisters, so with Kamapuaa she would burst into fiery rage, while taunts and bitter words were freely hurled back and forth. Then Pele stamped on the ground, the earth shook, cracks opened in the surface and sometimes clouds of smoke and steam arose around Kamapuaa. He was unterrified and matched his divine powers against hers. It was demi-god against demi-goddess. It was the goddess of fire of Hawaii against the hog-god of Oahu. Pele's home life was given up. The bitterness of strife swept over the black sands of the seashore. When the earth seemed ready to open its doors and pour out mighty streams of flowing lava in the defense of Pele, Kamapuaa called for the waters of the ocean to rise. Then flood met fire and quenched it. Pele was driven inland. Her former lover, hastening after her and striving to overcome her, followed her upward until at last amid clouds of poisonous gases she went back into her spirit home in the pit of Kilauea.

Then Kamapuaa as a god of the sea gathered the waters together in great masses and hurled them into the firepit. Violent explosions followed the inrush of waters. The sides of the great crater were torn to pieces by fierce earthquakes. Masses of fire expanded the water into steam, and Pele gathered the forces of the Underworld to aid in driving back Kamapuaa. The lavas rose in many lakes and fountains. Rapidly the surface was cooled and the fountains checked, but just as rapidly were new openings made and new streams of fire hurled at the demi-god of Oahu. It was a mighty battle of the elements. The legends say that the hog-man, Kamapuaa, poured water into the crater until its fires were driven back to their lowest depths and Pele was almost drowned by the floods. The clouds of the skies had dropped their burden of rain. All the waters of the sea that Kamapuaa could collect had been poured into the crater. Fornander gives a part of the prayer of Kamapuaa against Pele. His appeal was directly to the gods

of water for assistance. He cried for “The great storm clouds of skies,” while Pele prayed for “The bright gods of the Underworld, The gods thick-clustered for Pele.”

It was the duty of the Pele family to stir up volcanic action, create explosions, hurl lava into the air, make earthquakes, blow out clouds of flames and smoke and sulfurous-burdened fumes against all enemies of Pele. Into the conflict against Kamapuaa rushed the gods of Po, the Underworld, armed with spears of flashing fire, and hurling sling-stones of lava. The storms of bursting gases and falling lavas were more than Kamapuaa could endure. Gasping for breath and overwhelmed with heat, he found himself driven back. The legends say that Pele and her sisters drank the waters, so that after a time there was no check against the uprising lava. The pit was filled and the streams of fire flowed down upon Kamapuaa. He changed his body into a kind of grass now known as Ku-kae-puaa, and tried to stop the flow of the lava. Apparently the grass represented the bristles covering his body when he changed himself into a hog.

Kamapuaa has sometimes been called the Samson of Hawaiian traditions, and it is possible that a Biblical idea has crept into the modern versions of the story. Delilah cut Samson’s hair and he became weak. The Hawaiian traditions say that, if Kamapuaa’s bristles could be burned off, he would, lose his power to cope with Pele’s forces of fire. When the grass lay in the pathway of the fire, the lava was turned aside for a time, but Pele, inspired by the beginning of victory, called anew upon the gods of the Underworld for strong reinforcements.

Out from the pits of Kilauea came vast masses of lava piling up against the field of grass in its pathway and soon the grass began to bum; then Kamapuaa assumed again the shape of a man, the hair or bristles on his body were singed and the smart of many bums began to cause agony. Down he rushed to the sea, but the lava spread out on either side, cutting off retreat along the beach. Pele followed close behind, striving to overtake him before he could reach the water. The side streams had reached the sea, and the water was rapidly heated into tossing, boiling waves. Pele threw great masses of lava at Kamapuaa, striking and churning the sea into which he leaped midst the swirling heated mass. Kamapuaa gave up the battle, and, thoroughly defeated, changed himself into a fish. To that fish he gave the tough pigskin which he assumed when roaming over the islands as the hog-man. It was thick enough to stand the boiling waves through which he swam out into the deep sea. The Hawaiians say that this fish has always been able to make a noise like the grunting of a small pig. To this fish was given the name “humu-humu-nuku-nuku-a-puaa.”

It was said that Kamapuaa fled to foreign lands, where he married a high chiefess and lived with his family many years. At last the longing for his homeland came over him irresistibly and he returned appearing as a humu-humu in his divine place among the Hawaiian fishes, but never again taking to himself the form of a man.

Since this conflict with Kamapuaa, Pele has never feared the powers of the sea. Again and again has she sent her lava streams over the territory surrounding her firepit in the volcano Kilauea, and has swept the seashore, even pouring her lavas into the deep sea, but the ocean has never retaliated by entering into another conflict to destroy Pele and her servants. Kamapuaa was the last who poured the sea into the deep pit. The friends of Lohiau, a prince from the island of Kauai, waged warfare with Pele, tearing to pieces a part of the crater in which she dwelt; but it was a conflict of land forces, and in its entirety is one of the very interesting tales handed down by Hawaiian tradition.

Kamapuaa figured to the last days of Pele-worship in the sacrifices offered to the fire-goddess. The most acceptable sacrifice to Pele was supposed to be puaa (a hog). If a hog could not be secured when an offering was necessary, the priest would take the fish humu-humu-nuku-nuku-a-puaa and throw it into the pit of fire. If the hog and the fish both failed, the priest would offer any of the things into which, it was said in their traditions, Kamapuaa could turn himself.

## A GIANT'S ROCK-THROWING

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Westervelt, W. D. *Hawaiian Legends of Ghosts and Ghost-Gods*. Boston: G.H. Ellis Press, 1916, 21–25.

**Date:** 1916

**Original Source:** Hawai'ian

**National Origin:** Hawai'i

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Both **myth** and **legend** have been used to explain features of the environment. This legend of a Hawai'ian Hercules explains the origin of a geological feature the Rock of Kauai, while offering a **cautionary tale** about the discrete use of one's natural gifts.

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**A** long time ago there lived on Kauai a man of wonderful power, Hau-pu. When he was born, the signs of a demi-god were over the house of his birth. Lightning flashed through the skies, and thunder reverberated—a rare event in the Hawaiian Islands, and supposed to be connected with the birth or death or some very unusual occurrence in the life of a chief.

Mighty floods of rain fell and poured in torrents down the mountain-sides, carrying the red iron soil into the valleys in such quantities that the rapids and the waterfalls became the color of blood, and the natives called this a blood-rain.

During the storm, and even after sunshine filled the valley, a beautiful rainbow rested over the house in which the young chief was born. This rainbow was

thought to come from the miraculous powers of the newborn child shining out from him instead of from the sunlight around him. Many chiefs throughout the centuries of Hawaiian legends were said to have had this rainbow around them all their lives.

Hau-pu while a child was very powerful, and after he grew up was widely known as a great warrior. He would attack and defeat armies of his enemies without aid from any person. His spear was like a mighty weapon, sometimes piercing a host of enemies, and sometimes putting aside all opposition when he thrust it into the ranks of his opponents.

If he had thrown his spear and if fighting with his bare hands did not vanquish his foes, he would leap to the hillside, tear up a great tree, and with it sweep away all before him as if he were wielding a huge broom. He was known and feared throughout all the Hawaiian Islands. He became angry quickly and used his great powers very rashly.

One night he lay sleeping in his royal rest-house on the side of a mountain which faced the neighboring island of Oahu. Between the two islands lay a broad channel about thirty miles wide. When clouds were on the face of the sea, these islands were hidden from each other; but when they lifted, the rugged valleys of the mountains on one island could be clearly seen from the other. Even by moonlight the shadowy lines would appear.

This night the strong man stirred in his sleep. Indistinct noises seemed to surround his house. He turned over and dropped off into slumber again.

Soon he was aroused a second time, and he was awake enough to hear shouts of men far, far away. Louder rose the noise mixed with the roar of the great surf waves, so he realized that it came from the sea, and he then forced himself to rise and stumble to the door.

He looked out toward Oahu. A multitude of lights were flashing on the sea before his sleepy eyes. A low murmur of many voices came from the place where the dancing lights seemed to be. His confused thoughts made it appear to him that a great fleet of warriors was coming from Oahu to attack his people.

He blindly rushed out to the edge of a high precipice which overlooked the channel. Evidently many boats and many people were out in the sea below.

He laughed, and stooped down and tore a huge rock from its place. This he swung back and forth, back and forth, back and forth, until he gave it great impetus which added to his own miraculous power sent it far out over the sea. Like a great cloud it rose in the heavens and, as if blown by swift winds, sped on its way.

Over on the shores of Oahu a chief whose name was Kaena had called his people out for a night's fishing. Canoes large and small came from all along the coast. Torches without number had been made and placed in the canoes. The largest fishnets had been brought.

There was no need of silence. Nets had been set in the best places. Fish of all kinds were to be aroused and frightened into the nets. Flashing lights, splashing paddles, and clamor from hundreds of voices resounded all around the nets.

Gradually the canoes came nearer and nearer the center. The shouting increased. Great joy ruled the tumult which drowned the roar of the waves.

Across the channel and up the mountain-sides of Kauai swept the shouts of the fishing party. Into the ears of drowsy Hau-pu the noise forced itself. Little dreamed the excited fishermen of the effect of this on far-away Kauai.

Suddenly something like a bird as large as a mountain seemed to be above, and then with a mighty sound like the roar of winds it descended upon them. Smashed and submerged were the canoes when the huge boulder thrown by Hau-pu hurled itself upon them. The chief Kaena and his canoe were in the centre of this terrible mass of wreckage, and he and many of his people lost their lives.

The waves swept sand upon the shore until in time a long point of land was formed. The remaining followers of the dead chief named this cape "Kaena."

The rock thrown by Hau-pu embedded itself in the depths of the ocean, but its head rose far above the water, even when raging storms dashed turbulent waves against it. To this death-dealing rock the natives gave the name "Rock of Kauai."

Thus for generations has the deed of the man of giant force been remembered on Oahu, and so have a cape and a rock received their names.

# NEW ZEALAND

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## CREATION OF HEAVEN AND EARTH

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Wohlers, J. F. H. "New Zealand Heaven and Earth Myth. *The Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 6 (1877): 343–344.

**Date:** ca. 1877

Original: Source: New Zealand Maori

**National Origin:** New Zealand

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Consisting of two large islands and several smaller ones, New Zealand is located to the southeast of Australia in the southwestern Pacific Ocean. The indigenous Maori probably settled in New Zealand after migrating from other Polynesian islands in the east. The following cosmological **myth** gives one Maori version of the creation of the universe and the introduction of death. Therefore, in dealing with basic, enduring concerns of humanity, the narrative is typical of the **genre**. As is the case with many Maori creation myths, "Creation of Heaven and Earth" begins not at the inception of the universe, but at a later date when gods and deified elements (for example, heaven) had already come into existence.

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**T**he name of the oldest god was Tangaroa. He was the uncle of Heaven (Rangi) and the first husband of the Earth, whose personal name as a woman was Papatuanuku. Once, when Tangaroa was absent, Heaven took his wife, the Earth. When Tangaroa came back Heaven Rangi had to meet him in a duel for the offence, and was by him wounded and lamed for ever. Tangaroa, having had satisfaction, left the Earth, and she was thenceforth

Heaven's wife. The latter being lamed, could not stand upright. Heaven was then laying flat on the earth, and it was close and dark on the same; no wind could blow, no light could shine. Still Heaven and Earth brought forth many children; most of them were cripples, but a few had sound limbs. Among the latter was Tane, the most conspicuous.

The children found the close darkness inconvenient, and had a consultation what to do to gain light and liberty. Some proposed to kill their father, Heaven, and to be content with one parent, their mother, Earth. Others advised to lift Heaven up high above, and there let him remain a stranger to them. This was agreed to. After much exertion, Heaven was lifted and carried up by his children, and fastened by Tane. When Tane came down again he looked up to his father, but the old man looked dark and sad. So Tane went and fetched ornaments, with which he gave Heaven a bright polish. Then, when he came down again, and looked up, he thought his father was not yet ornamented as he ought to be; so he got more ornaments, of which he drew the Milky Way and set the constellations. Then he came down and looked at what he had made, and it was good.

Now Tane looked at his mother, the Earth, who was still void of ornaments. So he raised some of her crippled children, the trees. First he put their legs (branches) to the ground and their heads (stumps and roots) up. Then he went aside and looked at them; but the trees did not please him in that position. So he took them up again, and put the heads to the ground, and the legs (branches) up. Then he went aside and looked at what he had made, and it was good.

Though Heaven and Earth have been parted, yet their love to each other continues. Her sighs may be seen ascending from her bosom, the wooded hills, in vapory mist toward Heaven, and Heaven weeps down his tears upon her, the dew drops.

Tane—the name signifies man, or male—had now leisure to think of himself. He wandered about by the springs of water, in the woods, among birds, and sought a wife meet for him, but found none. At last he turned to his mother, the Earth, and she advised him to take Hinehaone (maid formed out of ground). With her he had one daughter, named Hineatauirā (maid of the bright morning sky). When the daughter was grown up she became Tane's wife, but did not know that he was her father. They had some children [whose names seem to indicate decay and death].

Once, when Tane was absent on a visit, to his elder brother Rehua, who lived in the tenth stratum of the heavens, Hineatauirā asked her mother-in-law, the Earth, "Where is my husband?"

The mother-in-law answered, "What! Thy husband! He is thy father." When she had learned this she was so overcome with shame, that she took leave of her mother-in-law and went down into the nether world.

When Tane came back and asked for his wife, his mother told him, that she was gone to the lower world, but had left word that Tane was to stay and to



bring up their children. Tane now went himself to that world of darkness to bring up again his wife. He came to a house and asked toward the gable of that house, but received no answer. Ashamed and dejected, he went round the house, and then a voice inside the house said, "Tane, where art thou going? I follow our sister," he answered. Then the voice said,

Go back, Tane, to the world of light,  
To educate our fruit.  
Leave me in the world of night,  
To draw down our fruit.

## **THE LEGEND OF MAUI**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Grey, Sir George. *Polynesian Mythology and Ancient Traditional History of the New Zealanders*. 2nd edition. Auckland: H. Brett, 1885, 10–35.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Maori

**National Origin:** New Zealand

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The child of the human woman Taranga and the god of the underworld Makeatutara, Maui is the foremost Polynesian **culture hero**. He is especially important in Maori mythology. In the following **cycle of myths**, he manifests those characteristics that are typical of culture heroes. He contrives to acquire fire for humanity by his trickery, he creates utilitarian implements and alters the environment for the benefit of his people. Also, typical of such mythic characters is the coupling of culture hero with the **trickster**. As trickster he is an impulsive, willful shape-shifter who accomplishes his goals via sorcery and physical self-transformation. Along the way he creates the dog and is the vehicle for bringing the inevitability of death into the world. The story of Rangi-nui and of Papa-tu-a-nuku alluded to in this myth is found in its entirety in "Creation of Heaven and Earth" (page 396).

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One day Maui asked his brothers to tell him the place where their father and mother dwelt; he begged earnestly that they would make this known to him in order that he might go and visit the place where the two old people dwelt; and they replied to him, "We don't know; how can we tell whether they dwell up above the earth, or down under the earth, or at a distance from up?"

Then he answered them, "Never mind, I think I'll find them out"; and his brothers replied, "Nonsense, how can you tell where they are—you, the last

born of all of us, when we your elders have no knowledge where they are concealed from us; after you first appeared to us, and made yourself known to us and to our mother as our brother, you know that our mother used to come and sleep with us every night, and as soon as the day broke she was gone, and, lo, there was nobody but ourselves sleeping in the house, and this took place night after night, and how can we tell then where she went or where she lives?"

But he answered, "Very well, you stop here and listen; by and by you will hear news of me."

For he had found something out after he was discovered by his mother, by his relations, and by his brothers. They discovered him one night whilst they were all dancing in the great House of Assembly. Whilst his relations were all dancing there, they found out who he was in this manner. For little Maui, the infant, crept into the house, and went and sat behind one of his brothers, and hid himself, so when their mother counted her children that they might stand up ready for the dance, she said, "One, that's Maui-taha; two, that's Maui-roto; three, that's Maui-pae, four, that's Maui-waho"; and then she saw another, and cried out, "Hallo, where did this fifth come from?"

Then little Maui, the infant, answered, "Ah, I'm your child too."

Then the old woman counted them all over again, and said, "Oh, no, there ought to be only four of you; now for the first time I've seen you." Then little Maui and his mother stood for a long time disputing about this in the very middle of the ranks of all the dancers.

At last she got angry, and cried out, "Come, you be off now, out of the house at once; you are no child of mine, you belong to someone else."

Then little Maui spoke out quite boldly, and said, "Very well, I'd better be off then, for I suppose, as you say it, I must be the child of some other person; but indeed I did think I was your child when I said so, because I knew I was born at the side of the sea, and was thrown by you into the foam of the surf, after you had wrapped me up in a tuft of your hair, which you cut off for the purpose; then the seaweed formed and fashioned me, as caught in its long tangles the ever-heaving surges of the sea rolled me, folded as I was in them, from side to side; at length the breezes and squalls which blew from the ocean drifted me on shore again, and the soft jellyfish of the long sandy beaches rolled themselves round me to protect me; then again myriads of flies alighted on me to buzz about me and lay their eggs, that maggots might eat me, and flocks of birds collected round me to peck me to pieces, but at that moment appeared there also my great ancestor, Tama-nui-ki-te-Rangi, and he saw the flies and the birds collected in clusters and flocks above the jellyfish, and the old man ran, as fast as he could, and stripped off the encircling jellyfish, and behold within there lay a human being; then he caught me up and carried me to his house, and he hung me up in the roof that I might feel the warm smoke and the heat of the fire, so I was saved alive by the kindness of that old man. At last I grew, and then I heard of the fame of the dancing of this great House of Assembly. It was that

which brought me here. But from the time I was in your womb, I have heard the names of these your first born children, as you have been calling them over until this very night, when I again heard you repeating them in proof of this I will now recite your names to you, my brothers. You are Maui-taha, and you are Maui-roto, and you are Maui-pae, and you are Maui-waho, and as for me, I'm little Maui-the-baby, and here I am sitting before you."

When his Mother, Taranga, heard all this, she cried out, "You dear little child, you are indeed my last-born, the son of my old age, therefore I now tell you your name shall be Maui-tikitiki-a-Taranga, or Maui-formed-in-the-top-knot-of-Taranga," and he was called by that name.

After the disputing which took place on that occasion, his mother, Taranga, called to her last-born, "Come here, my child, and sleep with the mother who bore you, that I may kiss you, and that you may kiss me," and he ran to sleep with his mother.

Then his elder brothers were jealous, and began to murmur about this to each other. "Well, indeed, our mother never asks us to go and sleep with her; yet we are the children she saw actually born, and about whose birth there is no doubt. When we were little things she nursed us, laying us down gently on the large soft mats she had spread out for us—then why does she not ask us now to sleep with her? When we were little things she was fond enough of us, but now we are grown older she never caresses us, or treats us kindly. But as for this little abortion, who can really tell whether he was nursed by the sea-tangles or by whom, or whether he is not some other person's child, and here he is now sleeping with our mother. Who would ever have believed that a little abortion, thrown into the ocean, would have come back to the world again a living human being!—and now this little rogue has the impudence to call himself a relation of ours."

Then the two elder brothers said to the two younger ones, "Never mind, let him be our dear brother; in the days of peace remember the proverb—when you are on friendly terms, settle your disputes in a friendly way—when you are at war, you must redress your injuries by violence. It is better for us, oh, brothers, to be kind to other people; these are the ways by which men gain influence in the world—by laboring for abundance of food to feed others—by collecting property to give to others, and by similar means by which you promote the good of others, so that peace spreads through the world. Let us take care that we are not like the children of Rangi-nui and of Papa-tu-a-nuku, who turned over in their minds thoughts for slaying: their parents; four of them consented, but Tawhiri-ma-tea had little desire for this, for he loved his parents; but the rest of his brothers agreed to slay them; afterwards when Tawhiri, saw that the husband was separated far from his wife, then he thought what it was his duty to do, and he fought against his brothers. Thence sprang the cause which led Tumatauenga to wage war against his brethren and his parents, and now at last this contest is carried on even between his own kindred, so that man fights against

man. Therefore let us be careful not to foster divisions amongst ourselves, lest such wicked thoughts should finally turn us each against the other, and thus we should be like the children of Rangi-nui and of Papa-tu-a-nuku.”

Two younger brothers, when they heard this, answered, “Yes, yes, oh, eldest brothers of ours, you are quite right; let our murmuring end here.”

It was now night; but early in the morning Taranga rose up, and suddenly, in a moment of time, she was gone from the house where her children were. As soon as they woke up they looked all about to no purpose, as they could not see her; the elder brothers knew she had left them, and were accustomed to it; but the little child was exceedingly vexed; yet he thought, “I cannot see her, ‘tis true, but perhaps she has only gone to prepare some food for us. No—no—she was off, far, far away.”

Now at nightfall when their mother came back to them, her children were dancing and singing as usual. As soon as they had finished, she called to her last born, “Come here, my child, let us sleep together,” so they slept together; but as soon as day dawned, she disappeared; the little fellow now felt quite suspicious at such strange proceedings on the part of his mother every morning. But at last, upon another night, as he slept again with his mother, the rest of his brothers that night also sleeping with them, the little fellow crept out in the night and stole his mother’s apron, her belt, and clothes, and hid them; then he went and stopped up every crevice in the wooden window, and in the doorway, so that the light of the dawn might not shine into the house, and make his mother hurry to get up. But after he had done this, his little heart still felt very anxious and uneasy lest his mother should, in her impatience, rise in the darkness and defeat his plans. But the night dragged its slow length along without his mother moving; at last there came the faint light of early mom, so that at one end of a long house you could see the legs of the people sleeping at the other end of it, but his mother still slept on; then the sun rose up, and mounted far up above the horizon; now at last his mother moved, and began to think to herself, “What kind of night can this be, to last so long?” and having thought thus, she dropped asleep again. Again she woke, and began to think to herself, but could not tell that it was broad daylight outside, as the window and every chink in the house were stopped closely up.

At last up she jumped; and finding herself quite naked, began to look for her clothes, and apron, but could find neither; then she ran and pulled out the things with which the chinks in the windows and doors were stopped up, and whilst doing so, Oh, dear! Oh, dear! There she saw the sun high up in the heavens; then she snatched up, as she ran off, the old clout of a flax cloak, with which the door of the house had been stopped up, and carried it off as her only covering; getting, at last, outside the house, she hurried away, and ran crying at the thought of having been so badly treated by her own children.

As soon as his mother got outside the house, little Maui jumped up, and kneeling upon his hands and knees peeped after her through the doorway into

the bright light. Whilst he was watching her, the old woman reached down to a tuft of rushes, and snatching it up from the ground, dropped into a hole underneath it, and clapping the tuft of rushes in the hole again, as if it were its covering, so disappeared. Then little Maui jumped on his feet, and, as hard as he could go, ran out of the house, pulled up the tuft of rushes, and peeping down, discovered a beautiful open cave running quite deep into the earth.

He covered up the hole again and returned to the house, and waking up his brothers who were still sleeping, said, "Come, come, my brothers, rouse up, you have slept long enough; come, get up; here we are again cajoled by our mother." Then his brothers made haste and got up. Alas! Alas! The sun was quite high up in the heavens.

The little Maui now asked his brothers again, "Where do you think the place is where our father and mother dwell?"

And they answered, "How should we know, we have never seen it; although we are Maui-taha, and Maui-roto, and Maui-pae, and Maui-waho, we have never seen the place; and do you think you can find that place which you are so anxious to see? What does it signify to you? Cannot you stop quietly with us? What do we care about our father, or about our mother? Did she feed us with food till we grew up to be men? Not a bit of it. Why, without doubt, Rangi, or the heaven, is our father, who kindly sent his offspring down to us; Hau-whenua, or gentle breezes, to cool the earth and young plants; and Hau-ma-ringiringi, or mists, to moisten them; and Hau-ma-roto-roto, or fine weather, to make them grow; and Touarangi, or rain, to water them; and Tomairangi, or dews, to nourish them: he gave these his offspring to cause our food to grow, and then Papatu-a-nuku, or the earth, made her seeds to spring, and grow forth, and provide sustenance for her children in this long-continuing world."

Little Maui then answered, "What you say is truly quite correct; but such thoughts and sayings would better become me than you, for in the foaming bubbles of the sea I was nursed and fed: it would please me better if you would think over and remember the time when you were nursed at your mother's breast; it could not have been until after you had ceased to be nourished by her milk that you could have eaten the kinds of food you have mentioned; as for me, oh! my brothers, I have never partaken either of her milk or of her food; yet I love her, for this single reason alone—that I lay in her womb; and because I love her, I wish to know where is the place where she and my father dwell."

His brothers felt quite surprised and pleased with their little brother when they heard him talk in this way, and when after a little time they had recovered from their amazement, they told him to try and find their father and mother. So he said he would go. It was a long time ago that he had finished his first labor, for when he first appeared to his relatives in their house of singing and dancing, he had on that occasion transformed himself into the likeness of all manner of birds, of every bird in the world, and yet no single form that he then assumed had pleased his brothers; but now when he showed himself to them, transformed

into the semblance of a pigeon, his brothers said, "Ah! now indeed, oh, brother, you do look very well indeed, very beautiful, very beautiful, much more beautiful than you looked in any of the other forms which you assumed, and then changed from, when you first discovered yourself to us."

What made him now look so well in the shape he had assumed was the belt of his mother, and her apron, which he had stolen from her while she was asleep in the house; for the very thing which looked so white upon the breast of the pigeon was his mother's broad belt, and he also had on her little apron of burnished hair from the tail of a dog, and the fastening of her belt was what formed the beautiful black feathers on his throat.

He had once changed himself into this form a long time ago, and now that he was going to look for his father and mother, and had quitted his brothers to transform himself into the likeness of a pigeon, he assumed exactly the same form as on the previous occasion, and when his brothers saw him thus again, they said, "Oh, brother, oh, brother! You do really look well indeed," and when he sat upon the bough of a tree, oh, dear! he never moved, or jumped about from spray to spray, but sat quite still, cooing to himself, so that no one who had seen him could have helped thinking of the proverb: "A stupid pigeon sits on one bough, and jumps not from spray to spray."

Early the next morning, he said to his brothers, as was first stated, "Now do you remain here, and you will hear something of me after I am gone; it is my great love for my parents that leads me to search for them; now listen to me, and then say whether or not my recent feats were not remarkable. For the feat of transforming oneself into birds can only be accomplished by a man who is skilled in magic, and yet here I, the youngest of you all, have assumed the form of all birds, and now, perhaps, after all, I shall quite lose my art and become old and weakened in the long journey to the place where I am going."

His brothers answered him thus, "That might be indeed, if you were going upon a warlike expedition, but, in truth, you are only going to look for those parents whom we all so long to see, and if they are found by you, we shall ever after all dwell happily, our present sorrow will be ended, and we shall continually pass backwards and forwards between our dwelling-place and theirs, paying them happy visits."

He answered them, "It is certainly a very good cause which leads me to undertake this journey, and if, when reaching the place I am going to, I find everything agreeable and nice, then I shall, perhaps, be pleased with it, but if I find it a bad, disagreeable place, I shall be disgusted with it."

They replied to him, "What you say is exceedingly true, depart then upon your journey, with your great knowledge and skill in magic." Then their brother went into the wood, and came back to them again, looking just as if he were a real pigeon. His brothers were quite delighted, and they had no power left to do anything but admire him.

Then off he flew, until he came to the cave which his mother had run down into, and he lifted up the tuft of rushes; then down he went and disappeared in the cave, and shut up its mouth again so as to hide the entrance; away he flew very fast indeed, and twice he dipped his wing, because the cave was narrow; soon he reached nearly to the bottom of the cave, and flew along it; and again, because the cave was so narrow, he dips first one wing and then the other, but the cave now widened, and he dashed straight on.

At last he saw a party of people coming alone under a grove of trees, they were manapau trees, and flying on, he perched upon the top of one of these trees, under which the people had seated themselves; and when he saw his mother lying down on the grass by the side of her husband, he guessed at once who they were, and he thought, "Ah! There sit my father and mother right under me"; and he soon heard their names, as they were called to by their friends who were sitting with them; then the pigeon hopped down, and perched on another spray a little lower, and it pecked off one of the berries of the tree and dropped it gently down, and bit the father with it on the forehead; and some of the party said, "Was it a bird which threw that down?" But the father said, "Oh no, it was only a berry that fell by chance."

Then the pigeon again pecked off some of the berries from the tree, and threw them down with all its force, and struck both father and mother, so that he really hurt them; then they cried out, and the whole party jumped up and looked into the tree, and as the pigeon began to coo, they soon found out from the noise, where it was sitting amongst the leaves and branches, and the whole of them, the chiefs and common people alike, caught up stones to pelt the pigeon with, but they threw for a very long time, without hitting it; at last the father tried to throw up at it; ah, he struck it, but Maui had himself contrived that he should be struck by the stone which his father threw; for, but by his own choice, no one could have hit him; he was struck exactly upon his left leg, and down he fell, and as he lay fluttering and struggling upon the ground, they all ran to catch him, but lo, the pigeon had turned into a man.

Then all those who saw him were frightened at his fierce glaring eyes, which were red as if painted with red ochre, and they said, "Oh, it is now no wonder that he so long sat still up in the tree; had he been a bird he would have flown off long before, but he is a man," and some of them said, "No, indeed, rather a god—just look at his form and appearance, the like has never been seen before, since Rangi and Papa-tu-a-nuku were torn apart."

Then Taranga said, "I used to see one who looked like this person every night when I went to visit my children, but what I saw then excelled what I see now; just listen to me. Once as I was wandering upon the seashore, I prematurely gave birth to one of my children, and I cut off the long tresses of my hair, and bound him up in them, and threw him into the foam of the sea, and after that he was found by his ancestor Tama-nui-ki-te-Rangi"; and then she told his history nearly in the same words that Maui-the-infant had told it to herself and

his brothers in their house, and having finished his history, Taranga ended her discourse to her husband and his friends.

Then his mother asked Maui, who was sitting near her, "Where do you come from? from the westward?" and he answered, "No."

"From the north-east then?"

"No."

"From the south-east then?"

"No."

"From the south then?"

"No."

"Was it the wind which blows upon me, which brought you here to me then?" when she asked this, he opened his mouth and answered, "Yes."

And she cried out, "Oh, this then is indeed my child"; and she said, "Are you Maui-taha?" he answered, "No."

Then said she, "Are you Maui-tikitiki-o-Taranga?" and he answered, "Yes."

And she cried aloud, "This is, indeed, my child. By the winds and storms and wave-uplifting gales he was fashioned and became a human being; welcome, oh my child, welcome; you shall climb the threshold of the house of your great ancestor Hine-nui-te-po, and death shall thenceforth have no power over man."

Then the lad was taken by his father to the water, to be baptized, and after the ceremony prayers were offered to make him sacred, and clean from all impurities; but when it was completed, his father Makea-tu-tara felt greatly alarmed, because he remembered that he had, from mistake, hurriedly skipped over part of the prayers of the baptismal service, and of the services to purify Maui; he knew that the gods would be certain to punish this fault, by causing Maui to die, and his alarm and anxiety were therefore extreme. At nightfall they all went into his house.

Maui, after these things, returned to his brothers to tell them that he had found his parents, and to explain to them where they dwelt.

Shortly after Maui had thus returned to his brothers, he slew and carried off his first victim, who was the daughter of Maru-te-whare-aitu; afterwards, by enchantments, he destroyed the crops of Maru-te-whare-aitu, so that they all withered.

He then again paid a visit to his parents, and remained for some time with them, and whilst he was there he remarked that some of their people daily carried away a present of food for some person; at length, surprised at this, he one day asked them, "Who is that you are taking that present of food to?" And the people who were going with it answered him, "It is for your ancestress, for Muri-ranga-whenua."

He asked again, "Where does she dwell?"

They answered, "Yonder."

Thereupon he says, "That will do; leave here the present of food, I will carry it to her myself."



From that time the daily presents of food for his ancestress were carried by Maui himself; but he never took and gave them to her that she might eat them, but he quietly laid them by on one side, and this he did for many days. At last, Muri-ranga-whenua suspected that something wrong was going on, and the next time he came along the path carrying the present of food, the old chieftainess sniffed and sniffed until she thought she smelt something coming, and she was very much exasperated, and her stomach began to distend itself, that she might be ready to devour Maui as soon as he came there.

Then she turned to the southward, and smelt and sniffed, but not a scent of anything reached her; then she turned round from the south to the north, by the east, with her nose up in the air sniffing and smelling to every point as she turned slowly round, but she could not detect the slightest scent of a human being, and almost thought that she must have been mistaken; but she made one more trial, and sniffed the breeze towards the westward. Ah! Then the scent of a man came plainly to her, so she called aloud, "I know from the smell wafted here to me by the breeze that somebody is close to me," and Maui murmured assent. Thus the old woman knew that he was a descendant of hers, and her stomach, which was quite large and distended immediately began to shrink, and contract itself again. If the smell of Maui had not been carried to her by the western breeze, undoubtedly she would have eaten him up.

When the stomach of Muri-ranga-whenua had quietly sunk down to its usual size, her voice was again heard saying, "Art thou Maui?" and he answered, "Even so."

Then she asked him, "Wherefore has thou served thine old ancestress in this deceitful way?" and Maui answered, "I was anxious that thy jaw-bone, by which the great enchantments can be wrought, should be given to me."

She answered, "Take it, it has been reserved for thee." And Maui took it, and having done so returned to the place where he and his brothers dwelt.

The young hero, Maui, had not been long at home with his brothers when he began to think, that it was too soon after the rising of the sun that it became night again, and that the sun again sank down below the horizon, every day, every day; in the same manner the days appeared too short to him. So at last, one day he said to his brothers, "Let us now catch the sun in a noose, so that we may compel him to move more slowly, in order that mankind may have long days to labor in to procure subsistence for themselves."

They answered him, "Why, no man could approach it on account of its warmth, and the fierceness of its heat"; but the young hero said to them, "Have you not seen the multitude of things I have already achieved? Did not you see me change myself into the likeness of every bird of the forest; you and I equally had the aspect and appearance of men, yet I by my enchantments changed suddenly from the appearance of a man and became a bird, and then, continuing to change my form, I resembled this bird or that bird, one after the other, until I had by degrees transformed myself into every bird in the world, small or great;

and did I not after all this again assume the form of a man? Therefore, as for that feat, oh, my brothers, the changing myself into birds, I accomplished it by enchantments, and I will by the same means accomplish also this other thing which I have in my mind.”

When his brothers heard this, they consented on his persuasions to aid him in the conquest of the sun. Then they began to spin and twist ropes to form a noose to catch the sun in, and in doing this they discovered the mode of plaiting flax into stout square shaped ropes, (tuamaka); and the manner of plaiting flat ropes, (paharahara); and of spinning round ropes; at last, they finished making all the ropes which they required. Then Maui took up his enchanted weapon [the jawbone of Muri-ranga-whenua], and he took his brothers with him, and they carried their provisions, ropes, and other things with them, in their hands. They traveled all night, and as soon as day broke, they halted in the desert, and hid themselves that they might not be seen by the sun; and at night they renewed their journey, and before dawn they halted, and hid themselves again; at length they got very far, very far, to the eastward, and came to the very edge of the place out of which the sun rises.

Then they set to work and built on each side of this place a long high wall of clay, with huts of boughs of trees at each end to hide themselves in; when these were finished, they made the loops of the noose, and the brothers of Maui then lay in wait on one side of the place out of which the sun rises, and Maui himself lay in wait upon the other side.

The young hero held in his hand his enchanted weapon, the jaw-bone of his ancestress—of Muri-ranga-whenua, and said to his brothers, “Mind now, keep yourselves hid, and do not go showing yourselves foolishly to the sun; if you do, you will frighten him; but wait patiently until his head and forelegs have got well into the snare, then I will shout out; haul away as hard as you can on the ropes on both sides, and then I’ll rush out and attack him, but do you keep your ropes tight for a good long time (while I attack him), until he is nearly dead, when we will let him go; but mind, now, my brothers, do not let him move you to pity with his shrieks and screams.”

At last the sun came rising up out of his place, like a fire spreading far and wide over the mountains and forests; he rises up, his head passes through the noose, and it takes in more and more of his body, until his fore-paws pass through; then were pulled tight the ropes, and the monster began to struggle and roll himself about, whilst the snare jerked backwards and forwards as he struggled. Ah, was not he held fast in the ropes of his enemies!

Then forth rushed that bold hero, Maui-tikitiki-o-Taranga, with his enchanted weapon. Alas! The sun screams aloud; he roars; Maui strikes him fiercely with many blows; they hold him for a long time, at last they let him go, and then weak from wounds the sun crept along its course. Then was learnt by men the second name of the sun, for in its agony the sun screamed out, “Why am I thus smitten by you! Oh, man! Do you know what you are doing? Why

should you wish to kill Tama-nui-te-Ra?" Thus was learnt his second name. At last they let him go. Oh, then, Tama-nui-te-Ra went very slowly and feebly on his course.

Maui-taha and his brothers after this feat returned again to their own house, and dwelt there, and dwelt there, and dwelt there; and after a long time his brothers went out fishing, whilst Maui-tikitiki-o-Taranga stopped idly at home doing nothing, although indeed he had to listen to the sulky grumblings of his wives and children, at his laziness in not catching fish for them.

Then he called out to the women, "Never mind, oh, mothers, yourselves and your children need not fear. Have not I accomplished all things, and as for this little feat, this trifling work of getting food for you, do you think I cannot do that? certainly; if I go and get a fish for you, it will be one so large that when I bring it to land you will not be able to eat it all, and the sun will shine on it and make it putrid before it is consumed." Then Maui snooded [attached to a net or line] his enchanted fish-hook, which was pointed with part of the jaw-bone of Muri-ranga-whenua, and when he had finished this, he twisted a stout fishingline to his hook.

His brothers in the meantime had arranged amongst themselves to make fast the lashings of the top side of their canoe, in order to go out for a good day's fishing. When all was made ready they launched their canoe, and as soon as it was afloat Maui jumped into it, and his brothers, who were afraid of his enchantments, cried out, "Come, get out again, we will not let you go with us; your magical arts will get us into some difficulty." So he was compelled to remain ashore whilst his brothers paddled off, and when they reached the fishing ground they lay upon their paddles and fished, and after a good day's sport returned ashore.

As soon as it was dark night Maui went down to the shore, got into his brothers' canoe, and hid himself under the bottom boards of it. The next forenoon his brothers came down to the shore to go fishing again, and they had their canoe launched, and paddled out to sea without ever seeing Maui, who lay hid in the hollow of the canoe under the bottom boards. When they got well out to sea Maui crept out of his hiding-place; as soon as his brothers saw him, they said, "We had better get back to the shore again as fast as we can, since this fellow is on board"; but Maui, by his enchantments, stretched out the sea so that the shore instantly became very distant from them, and by the time they could turn themselves round to look for it, it was out of view.

Maui now said to them, "You had better let me go on with you, I shall at least be useful to bail the water out of our canoe." To this they consented, and they paddled on again and speedily arrived at the fishing ground where they used to fish upon former occasions. As soon as they got there his brothers said, "Let us drop the anchor and fish here"; and he answered, "Oh no, don't; we had much better paddle a long distance farther out." Upon this they paddled on, and paddled as far as the farthest fishing ground, a long way out to sea, and then his brothers at last say, "Come now, we must drop anchor and fish here."

And he replied again, "Oh, the fish here are very fine I suppose, but we had much better pull right out to sea, and drop anchor there. If we go out to the place where I wish the anchor to be let go, before you can get a hook to the bottom, a fish will come following it back to the top of the water. You won't have to stop there a longer time than you can wink your eye in, and our canoe will come back to shore full of fish." As soon as they heard this they paddled away—they paddled away until they reach a very long distance off, and his brothers then said, "We are now far enough."

And he replied, "No, no, let us go out of sight of land, and when we have quite lost sight of it, then let the anchor be dropped, but let it be very far off, quite out in the open sea."

At last they reach the open sea, and his brothers begin to fish. Lo, lo, they had hardly let their hooks down to the bottom, when they each pulled up a fish into the canoe. Twice only they let down their lines, when behold the canoe was filled up with the number of fish they had caught.

Then his brothers said, "Oh, brother, let us all return now."

And he answered them, "Stay a little; let me also throw my hook into the sea."

And his brothers replied, "Where did you get a hook?"

And he answered, "Oh, never mind, I have a hook of my own."

And his brothers replied again, "Make haste and throw it then." And as he pulled it out from under his garments, the light flashed from the beautiful mother-of-pearl shell in the hollow of the hook, and his brothers saw that the hook was carved and ornamented with tufts of hair pulled from the tail of a dog, and it looked exceedingly beautiful. Maui then asked his brothers to give him a little bait to bait his hook with; but they replied, "We will not give you any of our bait." So he doubled his fist and struck his nose violently, and the blood gushed out, and he smeared his hook with his own blood for bait, and then he cast it into the sea, and it sank down, and sank down, till it reached to the small carved figure on the roof of a house at the bottom of the sea, then passing by the figure, it descended along the outside carved rafters of the roof, and fell in at the doorway of the house, and the hook of Maui-tikitiki-o-Taranga caught first in the sill of the doorway.

Then, feeling something on his hook, he began to haul in his line. Ah, ah!—there ascended on his hook the house of that old fellow Tonga-nui. It came up, up; and as it rose high, oh, dear! how his hook was strained with its great weight; and then there came gurgling up foam and bubbles from the earth, as of an island emerging from the water, and his brothers opened their mouths and cried aloud.

Maui all this time continued to chant forth his incantations amidst the murmurings and wailings of his brothers, who were weeping and lamenting, and saying, "See now, how he has brought us out into the open sea, that we may be upset in it, and devoured by the fish."

Then he raised aloud his voice, and repeated the incantation called Hiki which makes heavy weights light, in order that the fish he had caught might come up easily, and he chanted an incantation beginning thus:

Wherefore, then, oh! Tonga-nui,  
Dost thou hold fast so obstinately below there?

When he had finished his incantation, there floated up, hanging to his line, the fish of Maui, a portion of the earth, of Papa-tu-a-Nuku. Alas! alas! their canoe lay aground.

Maui then left his brothers with their canoe, and returned to the village; but before he went he said to them, "After I am gone, be courageous and patient; do not eat food until I return, and do not let our fish be cut up, but rather leave it until I have carried an offering to the gods from this great haul of fish, and until I have found a priest, that fitting prayers and sacrifices may be offered to the god, and the necessary rites be completed in order. We shall thus all be purified. I will then return, and we can cut up this fish in safety, and it shall be fairly portioned out to this one, and to that one, and to that other; and on my arrival you shall each have your due share of it, and return to your homes joyfully; and what we leave behind us will keep good, and that which we take away with us, returning, will be good too."

Maui had hardly gone, after saying all this to them, than his brothers trampled under their feet the words they had heard him speak. They began at once to eat food, and to cut up the fish. When they did this, Maui had not yet arrived at the sacred place, in the presence of the god; had he previously reached the sacred place, the heart of the deity would have been appeased with the offering of a portion of the fish which had been caught by his disciples, and all the male and female deities would have partaken of their portions of the sacrifice. Alas! Alas! those foolish, thoughtless brothers of his cut up the fish, and behold the gods turned with wrath upon them, on account of the fish which they had thus cut up without having made a fitting sacrifice. Then indeed, the fish began to toss about his head from side to side, and to lash his tail, and the fins upon his back, and his lower jaw. Ah! Ah! Well done Tangaroa, it springs about on shore as briskly as if it was in the water.

That is the reason that this island is now so rough and uneven—that here stands a mountain—and there lies a plain—that here descends a valley—that there rises a cliff. If the brothers of Maui had not acted so deceitfully, the huge fish would have lain flat and smooth, and would have remained as a model for the rest of the earth, for the present generation of men. This, which has just been recounted, is the second evil which took place after the separation of Heaven from Earth.

Thus was dry land fished up by Maui after it had been hidden under the ocean by Rangi and Tawhiri-ma-tea. It was with an enchanted fish-hook that

he drew it up, which was pointed with a bit of the jaw-bone of his ancestress Muri-ranga-whenua; and in the district of Heretaunga they still show the fish-hook of Maui, which became a cape stretching far out into the sea, and now forms the southern extremity of Hawke's Bay.

The hero now thought that he would extinguish and destroy the fires of his ancestress of Mahu-ika. So he got up in the night, and put out the fires left in the cooking-houses of each family in the village; then, quite early in the morning, he called aloud to the servants, "I hunger, I hunger; quick, cook some food for me." One of the servants thereupon ran as fast as he could to make up the fire to cook some food, but the fire was out; and as he ran round from house to house in the village to get a light, he found every fire quite out—he could nowhere get a light.

When Maui's mother heard this, she called out to the servants, and said, "Some of you repair to my great ancestress Mahu-ika; tell her that fire has been lost upon earth, and ask her to give some to the world again." But the slaves were alarmed, and refused to obey the commands which their masters, the sacred old people gave them; and they persisted in refusing to go, notwithstanding the old people repeatedly ordered them to do so.

At last, Maui said to his mother, "Well, then I will fetch down fire for the world; but which is the path by which I must go?"

And his parents, who knew the country well, said to him, "If you will go, follow that broad path that lies just before you there; and you will at last reach the dwelling of an ancestress of yours; and if she asks you who you are, you had better call out your name to her, then she will know you are a descendant of hers; but be cautious, and do not play any tricks with her, because we have heard that your deeds are greater than the deeds of men, and that you are fond of deceiving and injuring others, and perhaps you even now intend in many ways, to deceive this old ancestress of yours, but pray be cautious not to do so."

But Maui said, "No, I only want to bring fire away for men, that is all, and I'll return again as soon as I can do that." Then he went, and reached the abode of the goddess of fire; and he was so filled with wonder at what he saw, that for a long time he could say nothing. At last he said, "Oh, lady, would you rise up? Where is your fire kept? I have come to beg some from you."

Then the aged lady rose right up, and said, "Au-e! Who can this mortal be?"

And he answered, "It's I."

"Where do you come from?" said she; and he answered, "I belong to this country."

"You are not from this country," said she; "your appearance is not like that of the inhabitants of this country. Do you come from the north-east?"

He replied, "No."

"Do you come from the south-east?"

He replied, "No."

“Are you from the south?”

He replied, “No.”

“Are you from the westward?”

He answered, “No.”

“Come you, then, from the direction of the wind which blows right upon me?”

And he said, “I do.”

“Oh, then,” cried she, “you are my grandchild; what do you want here?”

He answered, “I am come to beg fire from you.”

She replied, “Welcome, welcome; here then is fire for you.”

Then the aged woman pulled out her nail; and as she pulled it out fire flowed from it, and she gave it to him. And when Maui saw she had drawn out her nail to produce fire for him, he thought it a most wonderful thing! Then he went a short distance off, and when not very far from her, he put the fire out, quite out; and returning to her again, said, “The light you gave me has gone out, give me another.” Then she caught hold of another nail, and pulled it out as a light for him; and he left her, and went a little on one side, and put that light out also; then he went back to her again, and said, “Oh, lady, give me, I pray you, another light for the last one has also gone out.” And thus he went on and on, until she had pulled out all the nails of the fingers of one of her hands; and then she began with the other hand, until she had pulled all the fingernails out of that hand, too; and then she commenced upon the nails of her feet, and pulled them also out in the same manner, except the nail of one of her big toes. Then the aged woman said to herself at last, “This fellow is surely playing tricks with me.”

Then out she pulled the one toenail that she had left, and it, too, became fire, and as she dashed it down on the ground the whole place caught fire. And she cried out to Maui, “There, you have it all now!” And Maui ran off, and made a rush to escape, but the fire followed hard after him, close behind him; so he changed himself into a fleet-winged eagle, and flew with rapid flight, but the fire pursued, and almost caught him as he flew. Then the eagle dashed down into a pool of water; but when he got into the water he found that almost boiling too: the forests just then also caught fire, so that it could not alight anywhere, and the earth and the sea both caught fire too, and Maui was very near perishing in the flames.

Then he called on his ancestors Tawhiri-ma-tea and Whatitiri-matakataka, to send down an abundant supply of water, and he cried aloud, “Oh, let water be given to me to quench this fire which pursues after me”; and lo, then appeared squalls and gales, and Tawhiri-ma-tea sent heavy lasting rain, and the fire was quenched; and before Mahu-ika could reach her place of shelter, she almost perished in the rain, and her shrieks and screams became as loud as those of Maui had been, when he was scorched by the pursuing fire; thus Maui ended this proceeding. In this manner was extinguished the fire of Mahu-ika, the goddess of fire; but before it was all lost, she saved a few sparks which she threw, to

protect them, into the Kaiko-mako, and a few other trees, where they are still cherished; hence, men yet use portions of the wood of these trees for fire when they require a light.

Then he returned to the village, and his mother and father said to him, "You heard when we warned you before you went, nevertheless you played tricks with your ancestress; it served you right that you got into such trouble"; and the young fellow answered his parents, "Oh, what do I care for that; do you think that my perverse proceedings are put a stop to by this? certainly not; I intend to go on in the same way for ever, ever, ever."

And his father answered him, "Yes, then, you may just please yourself about living or dying; if you will only attend to me you will save your life; if you do not attend to what I say, it will be worse for you, that is all." As soon as this conversation was ended, off the young fellow went to find some more companions for his other scrapes.

Maui had a young sister named Hinauri, who was exceedingly beautiful; she married Irawaru. One day Maui and his brother-in-law went down to the sea to fish: Maui caught not a single fish with his hook, which had no barb to it, but as long as they went on fishing Maui observed that Irawaru continued catching plenty of fish; so he thought to himself, "Well, how is this? How does that fellow catch so many whilst I cannot catch one?" Just as he thought this, Irawaru had another bite, and up he pulled his line in haste, but it had got entangled with that of Maui, and Maui thinking he felt a fish pulling at his own line, drew it in quite delighted; but when he had hauled up a good deal of it, there were himself and his brother-in-law pulling in their lines in different directions, one drawing the line towards the bow of the canoe, the other towards the stem.

Maui, who was already provoked at his own ill-luck, and the good luck of his brother-in-law, now called out quite angrily, "Come, let go my line, the fish is on my hook."

But Irawaru answered, "No, it is not, it is on mine."

Maui again called out very angrily, "Come, let go, I tell you it is on mine."

Irawaru then slacked out his line, and let Maui pull in the fish; and as soon as he had hauled it into the canoe, Maui found that Irawaru was right, and that the fish was on his hook; when Irawaru saw this too, he called out, "Come now, let go my line and hook."

Maui answered him, "Cannot you wait a minute, until I take the hook out of the fish."

As soon as he got the hook out of the fish's mouth, he looked at it, and saw that it was barbed; Maui, who was already exceedingly wrath with his brother-in-law, on observing this, thought he had no chance with his barbless hook of catching as many fish as his brother-in-law, so he said, "Don't you think we had better go on shore now?"

Irawaru answered, "Very well, let us return to the land again."



So they paddled back towards the land, and when they reached it, and were going to haul the canoe up on to the beach, Maui said to his brother-in-law, "Do you get under the outrigger of the canoe, and lift it up with your back"; so he got under it, and as soon as he had done so, Maui jumped on it, and pressed the whole weight of the canoe down upon him, and almost killed Irawaru.

When he was on the point of death, Maui trampled on his body, and lengthened his backbone, and by his enchantments drew it out into the form of a tall, and he transformed Irawaru into a dog, and fed him with dung.

As soon as he had done this, Maui went back to his place of abode, just as if nothing unusual had taken place, and his young sister, who was watching for the return of her husband, as soon as she saw Maui coming, ran to him and asked him, saying, "Maui, where is your brother-in-law?"

Maui answered, "I left him at the canoe."

But his young sister said, "Why did not you both come home together," and Maui answered, "He desired me to tell you that he wanted you to go down to the beach to help him carry up the fish; you had better go therefore, and if you do not see him, just call out, and if he does not answer you, why then call out to him in this way, 'Mo-i, mo-i, mo-i'."

Upon learning this, Hinauri hurried down to the beach as fast as she could, and not seeing her husband she went about calling out his name, but no answer was made to her; she then called out as Maui had told her, "Mo-i, mo-i, mo-i"; then Irawaru, who was running about in the bushes near there, in the form of a dog, at once recognized the voice of Hinauri, and answered, "Ao! Ao! Ao! Ao-ao-o!" Howling like a dog, and he followed her back to the village, frisking along and wagging his tail with pleasure at seeing her; and from him sprang all dogs, so that he is regarded as their progenitor, and all Maoris still call their dogs to them by the words, "Mo-i, mo-i, mo-i."

Hinauri, when she saw that her husband had been changed into a dog, was quite distracted with grief, and wept bitterly the whole way as she went back to the village, and as soon as ever she got into her house, she caught up an enchanted girdle which she had, and ran back to the sea with it, determined to destroy herself, by throwing herself into the ocean, so that the dragons and monsters of the deep might devour her; when she reached the seashore, she sat down upon the rocks at the ocean's very edge, and as she sat there she first lamented aloud her cruel fate, and repeated an incantation, and then threw herself into the sea, and the tide swept her off from the shore.

Maui now felt it necessary to leave the village where Irawaru had lived, so he returned to his parents, and when he had been with them for some time, his father said to him one day, "Oh, my son, I have heard from your mother and others that you are very valiant, and that you have succeeded in all feats that you have undertaken in your own country, whether they were small or great; but now that you have arrived in your father's country, you will, perhaps, at last be overcome."

Then Maui asked him, "What do you mean, what things are there that I can be vanquished by?"

And his father answered him, "By your great ancestress, by Hine-nui-te-po, who, if you look, you may see flashing, and as it were, opening and shutting there, where the horizon meets the sky."

And Maui replied, "Lay aside such idle thoughts, and let us both fearlessly seek whether men are to die or live for ever."

And his father said, "My child, there has been an ill omen for us; when I was baptizing you, I omitted a portion of the fitting prayers, and that I know will be the cause of your perishing."

Then Maui asked his father, "What is my ancestress Hine-nui-te-po like?" and he answered, "What you see yonder shining so brightly red are her eyes, and her teeth are as sharp and hard as pieces of volcanic glass; her body is like that of a man, and as for the pupils of her eyes, they are jasper; and her hair is like tangles of long seaweed, and her mouth is like that of a barracouta."

Then his son answered him, "Do you think her strength is as great as that of Tama-nui-te-Ra, who consumes man, and the earth, and the very waters, by the fierceness of his heat?—was not the world formerly saved alive by the speed with which he traveled?—if he had then, in the days of his full strength and power, gone as slowly as he does now, not a remnant of mankind would have been left living upon the earth, nor, indeed, would anything else have survived. But I laid hold of Tama-nui-te-Ra, and now he goes slowly for I smote him again and again, so that he is now feeble, and long in traveling his course, and he now gives but very little heat, having been weakened by the blows of my enchanted weapon; I then, too, split him open in many places, and from the wounds so made, many rays now issue forth, and spread in all directions. So, also I found the sea much larger than the earth, but by the power of the last born of your children, part of the earth was drawn up again, and dry land came forth."

And his father answered him, "That is all very true, O, my last born, and the strength of my old age; well, then, be bold, go and visit your great ancestress who flashes so fiercely there, where the edge of the horizon meets the sky."

Hardly was this conversation concluded with his father, when the young hero went forth to look for companions to accompany him upon this enterprise: and so there came to him for companions, the small robin, and the large robin, and the thrush, and the yellow-hammer, and every kind of little bird, and the fantail, and these all assembled together, and they all started with Maui in the evening, and arrived at the dwelling of Hine-nui-te-po, and found her fast asleep.

Then Maui addressed them all, and said, "My little friends, now if you see me creep into this old chieftainess, do not laugh at what you see. Nay, nay, do not I pray you, but when I have got altogether inside her, and just as I am coming out of her mouth, then you may shout with laughter if you please."

And his little friends, who were frightened at what they saw, replied, "Oh, sir, you will certainly be killed."

And he answered them, "If you burst out laughing at me as soon as I get inside her, you will wake her up, and she will certainly kill me at once, but if you do not laugh until I am quite inside her, and am on the point of coming out of her mouth, I shall live, and Hine-nui-te-po will die."

And his little friends answered, "Go on then, brave Sir, but pray take good care of yourself."

Then the young hero started off, and twisted the strings of his weapon tight round his wrist, and went into the house, and stripped off his clothes, and the skin on his hips looked mottled and beautiful as that of a mackerel, from the tattoo marks, cut on it with the chisel of Uetonga, and he entered the old chieftainess.

The little birds now screwed up their tiny cheeks, trying to suppress their laughter; at last, the little Tiwakawaka could no longer keep it in, and laughed out loud, with its merry cheerful note; this woke the old woman up, she opened her eyes, started up, and killed Maui.

Thus died this Maui we have spoken of, but before he died he had children, and sons were born to him; some of his descendants yet live in Hawaiki [legendary land of the ancestors], some in Aotearoa (or in these islands); the greater part of his descendants remained in Hawaiki, but a few of them came here to Aotearoa. According to the traditions of the Maori, this was the cause of the introduction of death into the world (Hine-nui-te-po being the goddess of death: if Maui had passed safely through her, then no more human beings would have died, but death itself would have been destroyed), and we express it by saying, "The water-wagtail laughing at Maui-tikitiki-o-Taranga made Hine-nui-te-po squeeze him to death." And we have this proverb, "Men make heirs, but death carries them off."

Thus end the deeds of the son of Makea-tu-tara, and of Taranga, and the deeds of the sons of Rangi-nui, and of Papa-tu-a-Nuku; this is the narrative about the generations of the ancestors of the Maori, and therefore, we the people of that country, preserve closely these traditions of old times, as a thing to be taught to the generations that come after us, so we repeat them in our prayers, and whenever we relate the deeds of the ancestors from whom each family is descended.

# SAMOA

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## THE DESCENDANTS OF FANGA

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Abercromby, John. "Samoa Tales I." *Folklore* 3 (1891): 455–459.

**Date:** ca. 1891

**Original Source:** Samoan

**National Origin:** Samoa

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The Samoan Islands are located in the South Pacific about midway between Hawai'i and New Zealand. As noted with Hawai'ian **myth**, Polynesian mythology pays particular attention to the details of lineage, links between human and divine families, and attachments to territory. The following myth demonstrates such concerns, as well.

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**T**here was a woman called Fanga. She brought forth a daughter, whose name was Papa (flat). She had no vagina; her body was all in one. She was exceedingly beautiful, and many men desired to obtain Papa, but her husbands deserted her [when they discovered her abnormality].

Then she lived with another chief whose name was Oloynataua. The chief Olomataua felt and he perceived that the woman was as one piece. He did not divorce her, because great was his love for the woman, because she was beautiful.

The chief said one day to Papa, "Let us go to work." They went to work, and when their work was done they rested. Then they bathed, and went to their house and laid down. The woman slept soundly. The chief then felt the woman that he might know.

Then he thought of a plan. He took a shark's tooth, and made an incision into the private parts of his wife, and left the shark's tooth in the part. It was

said the shark's tooth became the private parts of the woman. The chief was rejoiced because he had got his wife. That is the tale of the woman.

They began then to cohabit, and the woman became pregnant and bore a son, Ulufanuasee by name. His father belonged to the conquered party. Aea-sisifo was the chief's name. Aeasasae was conqueror. Aea-sisifo was trodden down, and Ulufanuasee ran away because his father the chief Aea-sisifo was conquered. Ulufanuasee ran away and came to Falelata and dwelt in the mountain.

Ulufanuasee was always gliding on the waves at Mauu; that was his occupation. He saw the waves breaking at Fangaiofu; then he went down there to glide on the waves. He left his girdle of leaves and his hairband on the beach while he was gliding.

A certain lady, Sinalalofutu by name, with her attendant girls, went down there. The lady saw Ulufanuasee, and she fell in love with him. Then she took his leaf-girdle and his hair-band and hid them.

Ulufanuasee could not find his things, and he said, "Lady, be not angry; have any of you seen my things?"

The lady said, "Chief, where did you leave your things? We do not know." Lo! the woman continued to hide them.

The chief again asked, "Lady, have you seen my things? Be quick, for I am going."

Then she showed him his leaf-girdle and his hair-band. And the lady said, "Chief, what think you? Let us drink inland." Then they went and talked. Long did Sinalalofutu talk to Ulufanuasee, saying, "What do you think? Let us dwell together and I will be your wife." The chief then married her, and put away the other woman.

Sinalalofutu became pregnant and brought forth two girls—twins. They were not separated but were joined together in their backs. Their names were: the one Ulu, the other Na. These were their names; Ulumaona was called from the water which sprang from the ulu; it subsided (maona) and ran away towards the sea. That was what their names arose from. They lived many months; the years were not known [till] the girls were grown up.

One day the girls said thus to their family, "Friends, when our family return from work let them first give us warning by crying out tulou, and then throw down the log of firewood, lest we should be startled, for we are going to sleep." Then they slept. The family came down, did not give warning, but threw down their firewood. The girls were startled in their sleep, and ran outside, each by her own opening. Their bodies were separated by the intervening post, and they were parted from the other. Each one ran away. They left that country. The father cried out, "I am of the conquered party."

This is the story of the departure of Ulu and Ona, who left their land and swam by sea and arrived at Tutuila. They dwelt at Tutuila. On a certain night there came a chief, Moamoanua by name, who lived in the bush. He came to the ladies. He did not come in the light. The women said to the chief, "Come into the light."

The chief answered, "I cannot enter; my eyes are dazzled by the light, for they are sore." They were not sore. It was his lie, that he might conceal his shame from the women; for he had a large nose like a cockscomb. That is the reason why he lived in the bush, that he might not be seen.

They spread their mats and lay down, and the chief slept between them; he faced the women. He turned to one woman and afterwards turned to the other. Then the chief Moamoanua said to the women, "Women, do you keep awake, and when the cocks crow quickly awake me. I go off very early, lest my weak eyes should be dazzled by the sun."

The cocks crew and the women awoke the chief, saying, "Chief, awake!" The chief was startled, and went away into the bush, where he lived alone. He did thus for many nights, and both the women were with child by the chief. But they had not seen one another, because the chief went away by night.

Then one of them said to the other, "Lady, what do you think? Here we are near our confinements, and we have not seen who the chief is like." The chief came down one night, and the women dallied with him in order that he might sleep soundly. The chief became sleepy, and slept soundly.

When it was morning the women went and pulled up the house blinds, and each stood at one end of the house. The house was light, for the sun shone into it. Then they woke up the chief, saying, "Moamoanua, awake, it is morning." The chief was startled. The women saw his nose, and he ran off into the bush.

The women laughed aloud, saying, "A god, a god!" They ran away and left that country. They swam out to sea because they knew he was a god. They swam between Tutuila and Manua, brought forth in the water, deserted their children, and were carried by the current to Aleipata. It is said they were changed into gods. The women swam on, and they saw light excrement floating by.

One of the women [said], "Lady, that shall be my name."

The other said, "What?"

[She answered], "Taema."

Again they reached a sprit of a sail floating about. They swam on, and the sprit turned round and round.

The other woman said, "What name?"

The other answered, "Tilafainga" (sportive sprit of a sail).

These are their two names to each of them, Ulu and Ona their first names; Taema and Tilafainga their names afterwards. They continued to swim, and reached land.

## FANGONO

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Abercromby, John. "Samoan Tales II." *Folklore* 3 (1892): 158–165.

**Date:** ca. 1892

Original Source: Samoan

National Origin: Samoa

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The following narrative shares many themes with the category of folk-tale that Stith Thompson labeled the *novella*. For example, there is the abduction of a young woman by a supernatural would-be bridegroom, the quest for the woman by her true love and the supernatural assistance the hero obtains in his quest. The verse passages that punctuate the adventure are typically Polynesian, however.

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Tafitofou and Ongafau had a daughter Sina, who remained single. She was very beautiful, and the handsome young men built houses near Sina. Although there were so many handsome men Sina preferred Tingilau.

A visiting party of Talingamaivalu came, but they did not go to the house of Sina. He went to the house of Tafitofau and Ongafau, lest Sina should see that his body was full of pimples. His present of food was pigs and sharks. The parents of Sina favored his suit because they were afraid lest they should be killed [because he was a god].

When Sina knew that her parents favored Talingamaivalu she at once married Tingilau. Then the woman was taken away. She was not taken to the east or to the west, she was taken to Fiji.

Talingamaivalu came and looked into Sina's house; she was not there. He suspected that she had married. Then he rushed at once after Tafitofau and Ongafau to kill them. He asked, "Where is Sina?"

They answered, "My lord, she is married."

Talingamaivalu went off and sought in the western islands, and he reached the eastern islands and then got to Fiji. He then tried to imitate the voice of her brother, but did not succeed. Then he tried to imitate the voice of her mother, and he succeeded. Then he awoke her, saying, "Sina! Alas for this ungrateful girl! What about the chief. By-and-by we two shall be killed. Lift up the houseblinds that I may give you the fine mats of your dowry."

Then Sina drew near, and Talingamaivalu took hold of her and threw her across his shoulder. Tingilau felt about, and Sina was not there.

Then he rushed away westward; she was not there. Again he rushed away eastward. He then went and launched his canoe, and sought her in the Samoan group. Then Tingilau sang mournfully:

Do you nininini the sea of Nini, The sea of Savaii leaped up,  
The rain fell, the wind blew.  
Report it to a god who has enemies.

He stands outside in the cold,  
 He urged to lift up the screens.  
 Seize him and cook him for chiefs,  
 That all Savaii may have a portion.  
 Had but your praises been shouted,  
 O Sina, in the inland village.

Then sang mournfully the woman Puanatalai:

Tingilau, come inland here.  
 Do not make a noise, but listen  
 To the canoe at anchor in the lagoon.  
 There is the clotted blood.  
 It was the guess of Tingilaumaoto.  
 Draw near, let us sit together.  
 Tingilau, consider in your heart,  
 Shall I go or shall I remain?  
 I grieve, for I married in vain,  
 The heart of Tingilau cannot rest.

Then mournfully sang Tingilau:

Woman Puanatalai,  
 It is said you are a princess.  
 Causelessly do you act,  
 Yield until you show respect,  
 Until your party come to sit with you,  
 Till I steer standing in my canoe  
 As if I had come on a begging journey.  
 It was the pursuit of Sinaitauanga.  
 If she had had her praises shouted  
 You would have been quiet in the quiet sea.  
 The sea of the new moon rushes in  
 Shooting by its means the man  
 Talingamaivalu by name.  
 Catch him and cook him and tie him up,  
 Whether will all Samoa get a portion.

Then mournfully sang Sinaleuuna (she is in love with Tingilau):

Man, there is a canoe anchored in the lagoon,  
 It is the canoe of Tingilaumaolo.  
 Come near, that we may eat cold food.



Then Tingilau sang mournfully:

Have I come on a begging journey?  
It is the pursuit of Sinaitauanga.

Then answered Sinaleuuna:

Do you go, for she has passed on.  
You will nananana in the sea of Nana,  
The sea of Aleipata rushes in.  
Make an apology to those ashore,  
To Puupu and the Laulala,  
Fangapu and the Papaitufanga.  
Had your praises but have been shouted,  
O Sina, in the inland villages.

Then mournfully sang Sangaialemalama:

Do you depart hence,  
A little more and you would have found her.

Then Tingilau went near to Tutuila and mournfully sang:

You will ninanina the sea of Nina,  
The sea of Tutuila rushed in.  
Make apologies to those ashore,  
That is the country of Taema,  
And the country of Sinataevaeva,  
Shouting praises of my wife  
Who was taken off by Talingafaua.

Then sang Taemala mournfully:

Do you depart hence,  
A little sooner and you would have found her.

Then Tingilau sang mournfully:

O woman, thou Taema,  
When I sang, you sang, I did not follow up  
Your refusal to hear.  
Our names are proper,  
Sinatauanga and Tingilau.

Then he came off Manua; the King of Manua was seated there.

He said, "Friend Tingilau, do you return? This is the end of inhabited countries. If you go to the country of gods, then you will die."

He replied, "Asking your presence, King of Manua; with due respect to your speech, O King of Manua, permit me to travel over the sea of flying fish. Tingilau will perish in following his desire."

"Go, then, now that intercession and advice have been offered." Then Tingilau went out into the great ocean, and he arrived at the Puangangana. Then Tingilau sang mournfully:

Begging pardon, begging pardon,  
Make apologies ashore to the Puangangana.  
By this time were shouted praises  
Of Sina in the inland villages.

Then answered the Puangangana, "Tingilau, you are present; Tingilau, you have come." Then the man sat still, [being] afraid. Tingilau sang mournfully:

The body of the pua, leaves of the pua,  
The trunk of the pua, the top of the pua,  
Be not angry, but let me ask  
Whether is Sina's praise shouted in the inland villages?

The pua answered, "Come here. What a chief this is to run into danger! How do you know that there are trees which talk? You have passed beyond the country of men, you have come to the country of gods."

The pua then said, "You go, when I pass out of sight, then at once do you jump down into the bottom of your canoe and leave it with me whether you get to the country of Sinasengi, where you will find your enemy."

Tingilau then went, and, when the pua was out of sight, he at once leaped down into the bottom of his canoe. He then prepared a fine mat, and was about to make the land vanish. Then he went to look; there was no one but [something] like the body of a canoe and outrigger. "I will go," said he, "for my fine mat. There it is in the rubbish carried by the current." Then he sat with the fine mat. The canoe of Tingilau was then beached, and he jumped ashore, and clung to a cocoa-nut. Then he fell down and slept. The birds fluttered about.

Then said Sinasengi, "Bother it! What is the matter with the birds? There are two kinds of birds in my country, the tarn and the heron." The woman went down to visit the birds. She looked; the man was not [as he should look]; he was burnt continually by the action of the sun at sea, there was no body to the man, he was [like] the skin of a paonga [a tree from which house mats are made] fruit. Then the woman Sinasengi fainted as if dead. She revived again, and she [said],

“Stop a bit till I startle him. If he is not startled he is a god; if he is startled he is a man. “Catch you!”

The man was startled, and said, “O lady, I was startled.”

Sinasengi said, “O chief, you debase yourself on the beach, and leave good mats and good houses and good cloth, and you debase yourself on this bad place.”

Tingilau said, “Excuse me, floating about I came and drew up my canoe in this place.”

They went up into the house. The woman went and cooked an oven of food. She baked taro unscraped, and scraped taro; she roasted a fowl unplucked, and a plucked fowl; she baked a pig unsinged and a pig singed. She opened the oven, and she laid out the fowl that was broiled with its feathers, and the taro that was baked with the skin.

Tingilau called out and said, “Lady, things are not done like this to visitors in our country.”

Sinasengi then called aloud, “I abominate the people who have brought the wrong things to the chief.” She went and took down the singed pig and the scraped taro. The man ate.

The man married the woman and she had a child. After some days he walked around and mourned because he thought of his wife Sina. Sinasengi thought about Tingilau wandering about, and she went to her Punga-avalalo. Punga-avalalo asked, “Why have you come?”

She said, “I have come because the conduct of my husband has changed was brought away by Talingamaivalu.” The woman came to Tingilau and said, “I know why you wander about; it is for your wife. Had I known, you should have gone. But now go with some of my Pungavalalo, by which you will catch your enemy.” Then his crew embarked; there were three with Tingilau.

The Punga-avalalo said, “When we two say ‘Dive!’ then do you jump down. It is a difficult land in which Talingamaivalu lives in Papatealalo.” Punga-avalalo said, “Tingilau, jump!” Tingilau jumped and dived down, and reached the land. Punga-avalalo said, “Do you ask of a lame man watching a grindstone the road to the country of Talingamaivalu. If he directs you wrongly, do you kill him; then lift up the grindstone and you will see Talingamaivalu sunning himself.”

The Punga-avalalo went to Sina and said, “We are come with Tungilau. When he comes, receive him with surprise, and say, [‘This is] my brother Pinono from Savaii.’”

The men came, and Sina welcomed them with surprise, [exclaiming], “O Talingamaivalu, listen with your eight ears, while I explain to you this is my brother Pinono from Savaii.” Talingamaivalu said, “My love to you.” Then he went and made an oven of food, and sang:

If he eats the big taro  
Her male friend is her husband.

If he eats the small taro  
Her male friend is her brother.

He brought the food, and laid out the big taro. Tingilau refused it. Talingamaivalu called out, “It is her brother.”

Sina said, “Talingamaivalu, this chief desires to eat of my plantation. It takes three months to reach it.”

Talingamaivalu replied, “Well, what about it?”

The woman said, “This chief has many gods. When you go, do not walk, but slide along. When you pull up taro, do not pull it up with your hands, but pull it up with your toes. If you hunt a pig, hunt a wild shy pig. When you draw salt water, bale it up with a net. When you rub a light, rub it on a banana. When you climb a cocoa-nut, go up with your feet upwards.”

Talingamaivalu said, “Well, what about it? The prohibitions of the gods of No.”

Then he prepared the oven of food. He chased a pig and did not catch it; he chased a fowl and did not catch it. Then Talingamaivalu grew angry. He prepared his oven of food. Sina and Tingilau ran away. They stretched out the mosquito-screen, and under it they placed the mallet for [preparing] native cloth and the kingfisher of Tutiula. Talingamaivalu went and said, “Woman Sina!” Sina did not answer. Then he went to awake her. She did not answer. He lifted up the screen, and the kingfisher jumped out and struck the eye of Talingamaivalu; it was blinded. Again he lifted it, and again the kingfisher jumped up and struck the other eye and blinded it.

Talingamaivalu cried out, “This woman shall not live.” Talingamaivalu then threw himself down. The woman was not there. Then he bit the mallet and broke his teeth.

The kingfisher cried out, “Tingilau and Sina have run away.”

## **TATTOO**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Abercromby, John. “Samoa Tales I.” *Folklore* 3 (1891): 459–467.

**Date:** ca. 1891

**Original Source:** Samoan

**National Origin:** Samoa

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Samoa shares the art of tattooing with many other Polynesian islands. Predictably, Samoan **myth** offers explanations for the origins and significance of this culturally significant custom. The three narratives that follow provide perspectives on tattooing in traditional Samoan culture.

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This is the tale about the land named Pulotu. They say it is the land of gods, [such as] Savea-siuleo. He decrees wars; but it is not known whether it is a true country.

Taema married Savea-siuleo. After some time she was prematurely delivered of Alualutoto (clotted blood); this she wrapped up carefully and hid in the garden. After a day or two it was heard to cry. People ran to the place where it was buried, and they brought [away] the girl.

She was called Nafanua (hid in the earth), because she was placed there when first born. They brought it from the place in which it was placed. It could not be quieted; it cried for many days and nights. The chief Savea-siuleo ordered the toa tree (*Casuarina equisetifolia*) in Ongea to be cut down to quiet the girl with. The toa tree was cut down and given to the girl, but she was not quieted; she still continued to cry. Then the chief commanded to cut down the Toa-ina-loto to quiet the girl with. The chief ordered a bread-fruit tree to be brought first. They brought a tree, and the girl was quieted when they brought the tree to her; she cried no more. The girl grew to maturity, but the number of her years is not known because the tale is only by word of mouth.

Taema remembered the saying of her father, "Remember, I am of the conquered party [during a warfare]." Taema said to her child Nafanua, "I feel sorry for my father being in the conquered party."

Nafanua asked her mother, "Who is your father? Where is he?"

[She answered], "He is in Samoa." The girl was sorry for his being conquered, and she said, "Let us visit him."

Taema and Tilafainga swam away, and took with them the Toa-ina-loto. They swam in the sea and reached a land called Fiji. They heard tattooers going about in the land. Taema said to Tilafainga that they should call in at that land and make trial of the tree. They went ashore. Taema covered her breasts and the two went ashore. The two women fought all the women of Fiji. Taema sprang up with the tree, and Fiji was defeated. Three times was Fiji repulsed. Again they fought and Fiji was defeated, and [its people] were chased to the cave in which they dwelt. They reached the end of the cave when the lady struck her head against the basket of tattooing instruments. She took hold of it to take it down to the sea. They swam here to Samoa with the basket, and thus they sang, "The women are marked and the men left." The clam shell, used as a cup, fell, and they dived for it. When they rose up they had forgotten the song, "Tattoo the women, but leave the men," and they made a mistake, saying, "Tattoo the men, but leave the women." This was the origin of tattooing in Samoa; but for this, they would not have been tattooed.

They reached Falea-lupo (a settlement at the west end of Savaii). Two boys were keeping watch there. The women said to the boys, "Children, where are your parents?" The boys answered, "They have gone to work."

They said to them, "You go to them and say, 'There is a traveling party of ladies by the sea.' Come quickly; and when you come, do not throw down anything, lest we should be startled."

The boys went to fetch their parents. Their father said to them, "What is it?"

They answered, "There is a traveling party of ladies by the sea, who say that you are to come quickly." The man ran down, for he doubted whether visitors had come to the house where the ladies were. He saluted them with, "You are come!"

The ladies said, "Yes; come here. What is the noise [we hear]?"

The man said, "It is caused by the cruelty of the conquering party."

The women asked, "How so?"

The man answered, "The state of the conquered party is very grievous. They kill people, and raise the finger-nails of others." The ladies wept, and told the man that he should go to the place where the conquering parties were defeated and raise themselves from subjection. The man said, "Ladies, pray do not make use of such words, lest the conquering party should hear." The man suspected that they would be ill-used. The women still continued; great was the discussion.

Then all the people of the town collected together to show this thing. The people were distressed, because if they were again defeated they would not live.

The women said, "Do not be distressed, but leave the matter with us two." The people agreed to this. Then they drove away the persecutors belonging to the conquering party, saying, "You go; we are going to revolt." The conquering party heard of it, and called a council. They were angry. The troops for the war collected; all Aeasasae came. Aea-sisifo said to the women, "How about this war?"

The women answered thus, "When you fight, all of you confine yourselves to the inland [side] of the road, and we will confine ourselves to the seaward side of the road. Let none of you pass over to the sea side of the road, and neither of us will cross over to the land side of the road; we will not pass to and fro. You fight first and we will come after." They fought and [the] Aea-sisifo were defeated. The two women saw they were defeated, and that they came along anyhow by the sea side of the road. The women made a rush and struck the man because he had broken the law. Then the women made a stand; the women held the troops in check. Aeasasae was defeated and beaten. Aea-sasae was conquered and Aea-sisifo was victor.

This was why these two had come back from Pulotu: the saying of Nufanua-sese, "I am of the conquered party; remember me."

They brought their two professions, the profession of tattooing and the profession of war.

The profession of war was accomplished; their father was conqueror.

That tale is ended.

## Origin of Tattooing

These two left the district of Aea and came to the Itutaoa, and they came to Safotu. The name of its chief was Seve. He was asleep, for it was night. Thus they called to him, "Seve, Seve! Do you wish to engage in our profession?" When these two came the chief was startled, and he told his dream to the family, saying, "Friends, this is my dream. A traveling party of two called out to me, saying, 'Seve, do you wish to engage in our profession?'" When the morning was light, Seve said to his daughter, "Woman, let us go to the east to my friend." They came to Salelavalu to his friend Mafua, the name of the chief. The traveling ladies were with him, and Mafua was preparing food for them. He spread lots of good things before the travelers. Seve and his daughter entered the house of Mafua. The ladies said, "You have come."

Seve answered, "You are sitting there." Then they exchanged salutations. Mafua also saluted Seve, because he was his friend. Then he gave the fine mat of the daughter of Seve to the ladies. The ladies felt kindly towards Seve, and gave him some of the tattooing instruments. Then they went to their own town of Safotu with their profession, because they said, "Whether does Seve desire their profession?" That is one branch of the family of tattooers. Satulauena is its name. That is a very large family.

## Mafua

He lived with the women. They said to Mafua, "Mafua, come and tattoo towards the sea. When you tattoo anyone let your kava [plant used to make a calming, euphoria-producing tea] be first; do not reject it in favor of another chief, but drink it yourself, for it is our kava to bring success to your profession." Mafua went to tattoo. The kava was made and was first offered to Mafua. He refused it, and went on with his tattooing. The tattooing was accomplished, and again they made kava. The first cup was offered to Mafua, again he refused, saying, "Let the chief be first, and let my kava be after." He then went to his house, where the women were sitting who had the profession of tattooing.

They said, "You rest from your work."

Mafua answered, "You are wishing success."

The women said, "Come and tell us whether you followed your profession as we directed."

He replied, "I went, and they made kava and served it out, bringing me the first cup. I refused, telling them to take it to the chief. They took it to him first, and I again tattooed. When it was done they again made kava, and brought me the first cup; again I refused [saying], that the chief should be served first. They took it first to the chief, and I came after."

The women said to Mafua, "Mafua, you have broken covenant, you have given away the kava, for we told you that your kava should be first to make your occupation prosperous. You shall no more engage in the occupation because you

have broken covenant.” Then they took away from Mafua the occupation of tattooer; he did not tattoo again because he had broken covenant. Again he became poor, and regretted uselessly because the profitable occupation had passed from him.

Then the ladies again swam to Upolu, and reached the lee end of the island. There was a man fishing; Pule was his name. He said, “My love to the traveling ladies. Come, whence have you journeyed?”

They replied, “You have spoken. We have come from Savaii.”

[He said], “Come here and take the fish I have caught to make a meal of.” He gave all the fish he had caught to the travelers.

The ladies asked, “Where is your home?”

Pule said, “It is some distance inland. Come and partake of some food.” They went to his house and ate. Then he prepared a feast. Great was the love of Pule for the ladies. The ladies said to Pule, “Do you take our occupation of tattooers and make use of it. When you are engaged in it your kava must be first, to bring success to your occupation. Now we are going.”

They went towards the east. They went along the mountain range till they reached the mountain of Olotapu, inland of Safata. There was a man, Atapu by name, who was a skilful workman. He planted every kind of food, bananas, kava, yams, and taro. All looked very well. The traveling women came as Atapu was at work. Atapu looked as the travelers came in sight. Great was the astonishment and compassion of Atapu. He ran and spread good mats in the house. Then he said, “Come into the house and sit down while I pull up some kava.” He brought some kava, and the women said, “The good wind cannot be concealed. It is the road of prosperity which is walked on.”

Atapu ran off to bring cold food, ripe bananas. They ate, and then Atapu said to the ladies, “Do you recline while I go to cook some food, for I am all alone.” He then went off to prepare food. He prepared it nicely with delight. Then he brought it and addressed his word to those in the house, “Tuloutulon awake, and take some food.”

The women said, “Come here, you are wearied; I am sorry for you.” They also said to him, “Atapu, when tomorrow comes we will give you our occupation, that you may engage in it.” On the morrow they explained to him what he must do, “When kava is served out, your kava must be first, to bring success to your occupation.” Then Atapu went to tattoo. The kava was served out, and Atapu asked them to bring a pair of water-bottles to him. They brought the water-bottles. They dealt out the kava, Atapu’s was first. They brought it to him; he did not drink it, but poured it into one of the bottles. They also brought him cold food. Atapu told them to put it into a basket; but he did not eat nor drink until the tattooing was finished, as he intended to take the food to the ladies who had given him orders. When he finished tattooing, they brought more kava; Atapu’s was first. He put it into the other bottle. Then they brought food and native property. Atapu did not eat, for he meant it all for the ladies.



He went inland [and found] the ladies were seated each one by a post in the doorway of the house. They said, "You have rested from work."

He replied, "You are wishing success."

They said, "Come and tell us how you did your work."

He answered, "I went, and they prepared the morning kava. My kava was first, and I poured it into a bottle; and this cold food I did not eat, but kept it to bring to you two. Then I tattooed. When it was done they again prepared kava, and my cup was first; and I poured it into the second bottle; also I did not eat the food until we should all eat together." Great was their affection for him, and they said, "Love to you! It is the road of prosperity which is traveled."

Then they had their meal. When it was done they said to him, "Ataliu, very pleasing is your kind conduct. Now we are going, and we leave these things that you may properly work at your profession. Although Tulauena engaged in it, his work was incomplete; he will be under you."

These are the two great branches of the family: Sa-Tulauena is one great branch, the king of which is Seve; and Pe-o-Sa-sua is the other great branch, the king of which is Atapu.

That is the end.

# TAHITI

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## THE CREATION

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Henry, Tuiira. "Tahitian Folklore." *Journal of the Polynesian Society* 10 (1901): 51–52.

**Date:** ca. 1901

**Original Source:** Tahiti

**National Origin:** Tahiti

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The creator god of the following Tahitian **myth** appears throughout Polynesia. Below he is named Ta'aroa. In the New Zealand Maori "Creation of Heaven and Earth" (page 396), his name is Tangaroa. In their myths of the creation of their islands, the Samoans call him Tangaloa. In the Tahitian narratives, he is the supreme conjuror, requiring only his magic to create the universe from the void. Despite the harmony of the world he created, discord arose, and through the malice of the man he created from sand, death entered the world.

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**T**a'aroa (unique) was the great supreme being, who existed alone in a little world, in a shell like an egg, revolving in dark empty space for ages. At length, he burst forth from confinement, and finding himself quite alone he conjured forth the famous god Tu, who became his companion and artisan in the great work of creation. When the universe was completed, gods innumerable were conjured into existence to fill every region, and, last of all creatures, man was made to inhabit the earth, which was prepared for him.

Ta'aroa was known under four titles according to his attributes: Ta'aroa of the heavens, said to be ten in number; Ta'aroa the great foundation, in a rock

in the centre of the earth, from which land grew; Ta'aroa of the surface of the earth; and Ta'aroa of the netherlands, supposed to be down in the earth, the entrance to which was an extinct crater called Te Mehani, in the island of Ra'iatea, near Tahiti.

The first man that was created was Ti'i, clothed in sand, whom Ta'aroa conjured from out of the earth, and then pronounced him perfect. Then was born a wife for Ti'i, Hina, to extricate and mitigate many things, a demi-goddess, whose parents were Te-fatu (the lord) and Fa'ahotu (be fruitful), and she had a face before and behind, and was full of goodness. Ti'i was malicious and had a white heron to bewitch and slay mankind.

After the creation, peace and harmony everywhere existed for a long period. But at last, discontentment arose and there was war among the gods in their different regions, and among them, so Ta'aroa and Tu uttered curses to punish them.

They cursed the stars, which made them blink; and they cursed the moon, which caused it to wane and go out. But Hina, the mitigator of many things, saved their lives, since which the host of stars are ever bright, but keep on twinkling; and the moon always returns after it disappears.

They cursed the sea, which caused low tide; but Hina preserved the sea, which produced high tide; and so these tides have followed each other ever since.

They cursed the rivers, which frightened away the waters, so that they hid beneath the soil; but Hina reproduced the shy waters, which formed springs, and so they continue thus to exist.

They cursed the trees, which caused their leaves to turn yellow and their fruit to go out of season; but Hina saved their lives, which caused new leave, ever to succeed the old and the fruit to return in their seasons. And so it would have been with people, they would have withered under the curse of the gods, while Hina would have saved their lives, had it not been that Ti'i conjured them to death.

Hina said, "Oh, Ti'i! Do not persist in invoking man to death. When he suffers under the curse of the gods, I shall resuscitate him. Behold, my moon and glittering stars, my budding trees and my fruit that come in seasons, are they not more comely than thy dying men?" But her husband was unyielding, and he replied, "My master, Ta'aroa, whose curse is death, loves to slay, and I shall conjure to death all whom I cause my white heron to enter." So, according to the Tahitians, the man and not the woman caused people to lose eternal life, and at length he fell and died beneath his own curse.

# Glossary

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- anecdote:** Originally, a short, humorous tale. Now, the term commonly refers to single-episode narratives, regarded as true and commonly concentrating on an individual.
- animal tales:** Narratives told as conscious fictions in which the characters, though they speak and behave like human beings, are animals. These animal characters are commonly stock types. For example, in many Native American traditions, coyote is regarded as an exploitive, impulsive manipulator. In African American tales, rabbit is type cast in the same role. The tales are most often moralistic (“don’t be greedy”) or etiological (why the frog has no tail) in intent.
- belief tales:** Legends or personal experience narratives that are told with the purpose of validating a particular folk belief.
- cautionary tales:** Narratives whose plots embody a message cautioning against the consequences of particular kinds of behavior.
- culture hero:** Character in myth who finishes the work that brings technology (usually symbolized as fire), laws, religion, and other elements of culture to humans. Culture heroes may take over the business of creating order out of chaos where a Supreme Creator left off. The culture hero serves as a secondary creator or transformer of the universe. He/she transforms the universe by means of his gifts into a universe in which humans can live. In some myths, the culture hero cleanses the universe of things that threaten human existence: monsters, cannibals, or meteorological phenomena.
- cumulative tale:** A tale that begins with an incident, action, or phrase and adds a succession of elements to create a lengthy chain of events.
- cycle:** A group of tales that focuses on a central character, plot, or theme.
- fable:** Fictional narrative ending with a didactic message that is often couched in the form of a “moral” or proverb.
- fairy tale:** See **ordinary folktale**.
- family saga:** Chronologically and often thematically linked collection of legends constituting the folk history of a particular family, usually over several generations. The term was coined by folklorist Mody C. Boatright.
- folk history:** Accounts based on perceptions of historical events rather than on written documentation or similar media.

- formula/formulaic element:** Conventional elements that recur in folk narrative. For example, clichés, structural patterns, stock characters, or situations.
- framing:** The act of setting apart a traditional performance from other types of activity by words, occasions of performance or other distinguishing features.
- genre:** Type, category.
- legend:** Narrative told as truth, set in the historical past, and that does not depart from the present reality of the members of the group.
- local legend:** Legends derived from and closely associated with specific places and events believed to have occurred in those locales.
- märchen:** See **ordinary folktale**.
- motif:** Small element of traditional narrative content, such as an event, object, concept, or pattern.
- myth:** Narratives that explain the will (the intent) and the workings (the orderly principles) of a group's major supernatural figures. Myth is set in a world that predates the present reality.
- natural context:** Setting, in all its elements, in which a performance would ordinarily take place.
- novelle:** Romantic tale.
- numskull:** Character who behaves in an absurdly ignorant fashion, also called "noodle."
- ordinary folktale:** Highly formulaic and structured fictional narrative that is popularly referred to as "fairytale" and designated by folklorists as *märchen* or "wonder tale." Term coined by folklorist Stith Thompson.
- personal experience narrative:** Narrative intended as truth performed in the first person by the individual to whom the described events happened.
- personal legend:** Narrative intended as truth told about a specific (usually well-known) individual.
- resource person:** The bearer of a particular tradition, such as the performer of a folktale.
- stock character:** Recurrent narrative character who invariably plays a stereotyped role such as trickster or fool.
- tale type:** Standard, recurrent folk narrative plot.
- tall tale:** Fictional narrative often told as a firsthand experience, which gradually introduces hyperbole until the audience realizes by the conclusion that the tale is a lie.
- trickster:** Character who defies the limits of propriety and often gender and species. Trickster lives on the margins of his world by his wits and is often regarded as possessing supernatural power. Often a mythic figure such as a coyote or hare will function as both culture hero and trickster.
- validating device:** Any element occurring within a traditional narrative that is intended to convince listeners that the tale is true.
- variant:** Version of a standard tale type.

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### **About the Editor**

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The Greenwood Library of

# world folktales

STORIES FROM THE GREAT COLLECTIONS

volume two

Asia



EDITED BY THOMAS A. GREEN

The  
Greenwood Library  
of  
World Folktales



# The Greenwood Library of World Folktales

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Stories from the Great Collections

VOLUME 2

Asia

Edited by Thomas A. Green

Jack Zipes, Advisory Editor



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# Introduction to Volume 2

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Asia for the purposes of *The Greenwood Library of World Folktales* will be divided into the subregions of East Asia, South Asia, and Southeast Asia. The two other potential subregions of Asia, Central Asia and Southwestern (or Western) Asia, are considered under other regions in this collection. The tales of Central Asia, because of the subregion's absorption into the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, have been incorporated into Volume 3: Europe, along with Russian tales. As explained in the Introduction to Volume 1 (page xvii), Southwestern Asia (designated in these volumes as the Middle East) has important ties to the African continent that are emphasized by including the subregion in that volume.

East Asia includes China and those areas historically associated with China—for example, Mongolia, Korea, Japan, and Tibet, as well as areas of far northeastern Asia such as Siberia. Covering one-third of the largest continent in the world, East Asia's cultural, ecological, linguistic, and religious diversity do not allow blanket statements to be made about the region. The tales included in this section are grounded in animistic worldviews (for example, the Ainu "Blessing from the Owl God," page 3) and nationalistic myths (the Japanese "A Miraculous Sword," page 64). Others are animal fables (the Tibetan "The Tiger and the Frog," page 121) and historical legends (the Japanese "The Isolated Island," page 66). Obviously, the narratives compiled in this anthology can do no more than hint at the depth and breadth of East Asian traditional repertoires.

South Asia consists of the Indian subcontinent—composed of India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Bhutan, and Nepal—and the contiguous islands of Sri Lanka and Maldives. South Asia is the home of one of the earliest of the world's civilizations, the Harappan (3300 B.C.E.). Some of the oldest existing transcriptions of oral epics, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata have their sources in Iron Age South Asia (1000–500 B.C.E.). See, for example, the following excerpts from the *Mahabharata* "Story of Savitri" (page 133) and "Royal Rivals: The Pandavas and

Kauravas” (page 141). Invading cultures such as the Indo-Scythians left their marks later (see the Pakistani “Raja Rasalu,” page 268). Trade and warfare with Macedonia, Rome, Persia, and other empires of the European and Asian classical periods are likely to account for the similarities between the South Asian narrative repertoire and the tales of the cultures with whom they came in contact. Buddhism, Hinduism, and Jainism originated in the region. These religions and later Islam made an impact on the traditional narratives of South Asia. Subsequently, the tale “The Demon with the Matted Hair” (page 156) is derived from *The Jataka* a compendium of tales of the Buddha in his previous incarnations, and “The Brahman, the Tiger, and the Six Judges” (page 153) reflects the Hindu caste system. Ultimately the influence of Buddhist and Hindu influence spread to Southeast Asia, resulting in “Indianized Kingdoms” in that neighboring region.

**Southeast Asia** is the subregion of Asia framed by China, India, and Australia. The subregion includes territory located on both the Asian mainland and on islands extending to within 400 miles of Australia to the southeast. In the early twenty-first century, the mainland nations comprise Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar (Burma), Thailand, and Vietnam, while the island polities are Brunei, East Timor, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Singapore. Most information on early Southeast Asia comes from the reports of Indian traders and dates only from ca. 300 B.C.E. From at least the first century B.C.E., India exerted a powerful presence in the area, as evidenced by the Hindu Jawa Dwipa Kingdom in Indonesia in 200 B.C.E. By 200 C.E. with the Srivijaya Empire and continuing until the Majapahit Empire (1293–ca. 1500) Indianized Kingdoms dominated the region. China maintained strong economic and political ties to the area, and on the mainland, states began to develop at about the same time with Chinese rather than Indian influence prevailing in some areas (modern Vietnam, for example). In the 1400s, Islam came to be felt in the region and eventually came to dominate in many areas (see “The Story of Bantugan,” page 398, for insights into the character of Islam on the Philippine Island of Mindanao). European explorers and merchants followed in the 1500s. The influence of the flow of trade and the cultural exchanges that followed in its wake is seen in the present collection in tales such as the Filipino versions of “Cinderella” (“Poor Little Maria,” page 419) and “Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves” (“The Fifty-One Thieves,” page 424). The cultural heterogeneity of Southeast Asia is further reflected in narratives such as the Malaysian Dusun myth “The Three Rajahs” (page 308). Indigenous traditions survive in the Southeast Asian love for trickster figures, both human (see the Dusun tale “Ginas and the Rajah,” page 318) and especially the Malaysian *plandok* and the Indonesian *Kantjil* (mouse deer). See the Dusun “Mouse Deer the Trickster” cycle (page 328) and the Indonesian “Kantjil the Mouse Deer” cycle (page 364).

# **EAST ASIA**





# AINU

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## BLESSING FROM THE OWL GOD

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Miura, Kiyoko. "Two Songs That Were Sung and Danced by Owl God." *Yakura Epos of the Ainu: Study and Translation of Kamuy-Yukara*. <http://www.harvest-fields.ca/ebook/etexts1/01/38/00.htm> (July 2, 2007).

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Ainu

**National Origin:** Japan

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Historically, the Ainu were indigenous to the northern areas of modern Japan (Hokkaido and northern Honshu) and eastern Russia (the Kamchatka Peninsula, the Kuril Islands, and Sakhalin). While the origins of the Ainu continue to be debated, they constitute a distinct ethnic entity who displayed significant cultural and physical differences from the ethnic Japanese who gradually displaced them as they moved from south to north. Hunting, fishing, and gathering provided the primary subsistence for the Ainu. These activities were supplemented by gardens tended by the women. The Ainu paid homage through prayer and ceremony to those manifestations of the divine essence (Ainu, "kamuy") embodied in, for example, fire, water, bears, owls, various plants, boats, mountains, and lakes. By virtue of these beliefs in a supernatural presence dwelling in the surrounding world and its forces, the Ainu religion was classified as animistic. The "yukara" are the sacred songs of the Ainu, and as in the following example, they are presented as lines of poetry and in first-person voice. The following narrative is included not only for its intrinsic worth, but to illustrate the traditional manner of presentation. Other texts in this volume ("The Owl," page 13, and "The Man in the Moon," page 14) appear as prose translations in first person.

---

“Fall, silver tricklings, fall ...  
Fall, golden tricklings, fall ...”  
So singing I flew  
Along a stream.  
As flying over the hamlet, I looked  
And there I saw the people—  
Those who had once been poor were now rich,  
Those who had once been rich were now poor.  
At the seashore,  
The children were playing  
With their little toy bows  
And with little toy arrows.  
“Fall, silver tricklings, fall ...  
Fall, golden tricklings, fall ...”  
So singing I went  
Gliding over the children.  
Running below my eyes,  
The children said each and all:  
“Beautiful little bird!  
Divine little bird!  
Come, now, come quickly!  
Whoever would shoot that little bird first,  
Whoever would fetch that divine bird first  
Will be our hero!  
And be our leader in the true sense!”

The children of those-once-poor-but-now-rich  
Notched their little golden arrows  
Upon their little golden bows, and  
Off they shot!  
But, I let those golden arrows  
Go beneath my body  
And above my body.  
Then,  
There was a boy  
Among those children,  
Who had an ordinary little arrow  
And an ordinary little bow.  
I looked at him.  
From the cloth he wore  
He appeared to have come from a poor family.  
But—  
From the looks in his eyes

He appeared to be descended from an illustrious family.  
So he stood out among all other boys  
Like a bird of virtue!  
And, he too  
Notched his little arrow  
Upon his little bow.  
As he drew his bow,  
The children of those-once-poor-but-now-rich  
Said scornfully:  
“How funny!  
Such a cub of a wretched tribe!  
Even our golden arrows  
Can’t reach  
That bird—  
That holy bird!  
It’ll be a wonder  
If that bird—  
That holy bird—  
Would ever take  
This ordinary wooden arrow—  
This arrow of rotten wood—  
That this son of a wretched  
Would dare to shoot!”  
Abusing thus,  
The children gathered around the boy  
Giving him kicks and cuffs.  
But—  
The poor boy did not hesitate and  
Drew his bow at me.  
Watching at him, thus,  
I felt sympathy toward him.  
“Fall, silver tricklings, fall ...  
Fall, golden tricklings, fall ...”  
So singing I went slowly  
Gliding over in a big circle  
In the sky.  
The boy stood  
On one foot drawn far back  
And on the other stepped forward.  
And, biting his lower lip,  
He drew his bow at me.  
Then—  
Off he shot his arrow!

The tiny arrow glittered in the air  
As it flew toward me;  
And, as I saw it nearing me,  
Soon I held out my hands  
And took that little arrow.  
And, while I was descending round and round,  
The wind whistled by my ears.  
Then—  
The children all ran toward me,  
Striving with one another,  
And leaving sand storm behind.  
As soon as I fell on the ground,  
The poor boy reached  
And grabbed me before anyone.  
So, the boys of those-once-poor-but-now-rich  
Who arrived late called him  
With a score of bad names,  
And pushed and beat this poor boy calling  
With ten and a score of cursing names:  
“Abominable cub!  
Son of the wretched!  
How dare you would take the lead  
In what we were doing!”  
But, the poor boy  
Covered me again and again,  
Held me under his stomach,  
And escaped from the crowd of those boys  
Taking as long as an age.  
Then, after such hubbub  
His footsteps on a run  
Sounded light and rhythmic.  
The boys of those-once-poor-but-now-rich  
Threw stones and chips of wood  
After him, but he ran  
Without the least attention to them,  
Leaving sand storm behind,  
Until he at last arrived at a little house.  
Then, the boy took me in  
From the window of the honor room of the house,  
And he began and told the story  
Of what had happened.  
From the house appeared  
An old man and his wife

Shading their eyes with their hands.  
 They seemed, the man and his wife,  
 To bear an air of dignity,  
 In spite of their poor attire.  
 As they looked at me,  
 They were so astonished,  
 They doubled their bodies from the waists.  
 The old man then tightened his belt  
 And bowed at me:  
 "Owl, our God!  
 Our heavy God!  
 In spite of our poverty,  
 You have come to our house.  
 We thank our God a thousand times!  
 We had once counted ourselves among the rich,  
 But now we are poor and worthless as you see.  
 So, God of the village!  
 Heavy God!  
 We have no right to beg you to stay  
 At our house ...; but,  
 As it is already after sunset,  
 We should offer our heavy God  
 The place to rest  
 And we shall perform a ceremony tomorrow  
 To send our Heavy God to where He belongs  
 At least with the sacred wooden symbols."  
 Thus saying, the old man  
 Bowed twenty times  
 And bowed thirty times.  
 The wife of the old man  
 Spread a "flower" mattress  
 Over the seat of honor  
 Below the window I entered  
 And put me upon it.  
 Then—  
 They went to bed and  
 Soon started snoring.  
 I sat on my empty body  
 Between my ears.  
 But, as the night advanced,  
 I got up:  
 "Fall, silver tricklings, fall ...  
 Fall, golden tricklings, fall ..."

I sang softly and went round and round  
To the left and to the right  
Dancing in this small house;  
And, the sound I made as I danced  
Was so beautiful as a rustle of gold.  
When I flapped my wings,  
There was about me  
A mount of precious jewelry,  
The God's treasures falling from heaven,  
Making sound so beautiful as rustles of gold.  
In a quick moment  
I filled this tiny house  
With those shining jewelries,  
The God's treasures.  
"Fall, silver tricklings, fall ...  
Fall, golden tricklings, fall ..."  
While I sang,  
I made this tiny house  
Into a large house,  
A golden house,  
In a quick moment.  
In the house,  
I built a magnificent altar and  
Quickly wove a magnificent silk robe  
And decorated the house entirely.  
I decorated the now great house,  
Far grander than any house of other rich people.  
As I finished this job,  
I sat between the ears of my body,  
Just as I had been placed.  
Then, to the family of this house  
I sent dream to their sleep  
And let them know that I saw  
And took sympathy of them,  
For the family-once-rich-but-now-poor,  
By an ill-fortune,  
Have been despised and ill-treated  
By those-once-poor-but-now-rich;  
And that I therefore came down  
To stay at their house,  
Although I was not a small god,  
And thus to make them wealthy again.  
In a short while

The night's black news began to thin away;  
And the people of the family awoke and got up.  
Rubbing their eyes still,  
They looked about and instantly  
They fell down on their buttocks.  
The old woman  
Cried in a loud voice,  
The old man  
Dropped big drops of tears.  
But, quickly  
He got up and came  
Where I was, and bowed  
Scores of times,  
Hundreds of times;  
And spoke in the meantime:  
"I thought it was  
But a dream I saw in sleep!  
How could we imagine  
To see all this in our real life!  
In spite of our poverty,  
In spite of our wretched life by the ill-fortune,  
You have come to our humble cot.  
That only gave us honor  
Beyond our words of gratitude.  
But, above this all,  
Our God,  
Our Heavy God,  
You took sympathy upon us  
For being misfortuned,  
And bestowed a favor of us  
With the heaviest of all  
The heavy gifts from Heaven!"  
Saying thus in tears,  
The old man bowed deeply and worshipped me.  
Then—  
This old man cut trees,  
Began to shave them to make into a bunch  
Of beautiful sacred wooden decorations  
With which he decorated about me.  
The old lady tightened her sash  
And, with a help of the little kids,  
Gathered some kindlewood,  
Drew water

And prepared to make Sake.  
In a short while,  
Six casks of Sake  
Were placed at the seat of honor.  
Then—  
I had a pleasure  
Of speaking with the “old granny of fire”  
About things in Heaven.  
In two days since  
The aroma of Sake,  
Which the Gods favor,  
Began to fill the house.  
Then—  
The little boy who had brought me to this house  
Was clothed in a ragged kimono in purpose,  
And was sent to the village on an errand  
Carrying invitation to the feast  
Given to all those-once-poor-but-now-rich.  
As I watched after him,  
The little boy  
Went to each house  
And delivered the message;  
Then, those-once-poor-but-now-rich  
Laughed hard and said:  
“How strange!  
How dare would those poor folks invite us!  
With what sort of Sake and food  
They are going to entertain us!  
Let’s go and see,  
Then, have a good laugh  
Over their doings!”  
So, they came  
In a big crowd.  
But, when they saw the house  
From a good distance,  
They were amazed:  
Some went back  
As they were so embarrassed;  
But others still came to the house  
Where they were taken aback.  
Then—  
As the lady of the house  
Came out



And led them in the house  
 By taking their hands, one by one,  
 They all  
 Came in  
 Creeping  
 On knees and hands,  
 Not a single person being able to raise his face!  
 Then—  
 The master of the house  
 Got up  
 And spoke  
 With the voice so rich and resonant  
 Like a cuckoo singing,  
 And he told them all about  
 Such-and-such that had happened.  
 “Having been so poor,  
 We could not visit you folks;  
 But, the Heavy God  
 Took sympathy on us  
 And had mercy on us,  
 Since we had never had vicious thoughts in the past.  
 Therefore, from this time on,  
 I beg you, illustrious ones,  
 Do be friends with us  
 And visit with us,  
 As we are in one  
 And belong to one same family.”  
 As the master of the house spoke,  
 All those-once-poor-but-now-rich  
 Apologized again and again for their wrongs  
 By rubbing their hands.  
 And, they swore among themselves  
 To become good friends with each other  
 From this time on.  
 I was, then, worshipped by them all.  
 And, then,  
 They became casual  
 And open-hearted  
 And held a grand feast with Sake.  
 I, myself, enjoyed a good talk  
 With the holy goddess “granny” of fire  
 And the god of the household  
 And the old goddess protecting the yard

Of the sacred woods standing;  
And watched the men and women  
Singing and dancing,  
To my heart's content.  
The feast went on  
For two days,  
For three days.  
Looking at everybody  
Happy and friendly,  
I was relieved  
And thus I bade farewell  
To the old goddess "granny" of fire,  
To the god of the household,  
And to the old goddess of the sacred wood yard.  
Then—  
I returned to my own home.  
Before I reached,  
My house had been decorated  
With full of beautiful sacred wooden symbols  
And with good Sake.  
Then—  
I sent my messenger for to invite all  
The lower gods  
And the higher gods,  
And held a magnificent feast.  
And, I told the gods  
My experiences,  
Giving detailed accounts  
Of the circumstances,  
Of the people in the village  
Where I visited,  
And of the happenings in consequence.  
So, the gods  
Praised me.  
When they were leaving,  
I gave them each  
Beautifully decorated sacred wooden symbol  
In twos and in threes.  
As I look now and then towards the village,  
I can see things are now in peace;  
People are keeping good friendship;  
And the man I made rich is now the village chief.  
That little boy

Is now  
 A grown-up man  
 And has a wife  
 And children,  
 And is taking care of his father  
 And his mother.  
 Each time he makes Sake,  
 He worships me  
 With it  
 And with the sacred wooden symbols,  
 Before having the feast of Sake.  
 I, too,  
 Sit forever  
 Behind  
 These good men and women  
 To protect them and  
 Their village.  
 —So told the Owl God of his experiences.

## THE OWL

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Pilsudski, Bronislas [Bronislaw]. "Ainu Folklore." *Journal of American Folklore* 25 (1912): 72.

**Date:** ca. 1912

**Original Source:** Ainu

**National Origin:** Japan

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Horokaruru ("the back sea") is often found in Ainu traditional narratives. Apparently, the location is loosely equivalent to the concept of a far away land in European folktales.

Self-brought-up-Man, a demi-god, was according to **myth** the first Ainu and a protagonist in many of their tales. The following is a prose translation of an Ainu sung myth. Therefore, it utilizes first-person voice. Compare the style of "The Owl" to "The Man in the Moon" (page 14).

---

I was living happily in the Horokaruru settlement, in that part of it which is near to the big forest. But then I heard that the sister of Self-brought-up-Man was very beautiful. Therefore I wanted to see her by my side, always sitting at my knee, nearer to the door (the usual place for Ainu women to sit). So I went to Self-brought-up-Man's house and sat down. Self-brought-up-Man

bade me good-morning, but he never turned to speak to me. I said, “Although I am not very powerful, nevertheless I should like to see thy younger sister in my house, at my knee. That is why I have come to see thee.”

But Self-brought-up-Man answered, “Oh, thou scapegrace! thou art only a useless bird, a little man-owl, covered with bristly feathers, a small owl, and I have no idea of letting my sister marry thee.” When I heard those insulting words, a mighty anger arose in my heart. I went out furious, and perched on the top of a big “inau” built at the back of the house. There I sat, full of wrath, and began to screech and to shout towards Self-brought-up-Man’s house. My cries from on high fell on the women’s corner. I shouted down at them from the “inau.” And Self-brought-up-Man’s guardian spirit, the angel (seremaki), was taken ill, and Self-brought-up-Man himself nearly saw the lower world (that is, the land of the dead).

For two days, for three days, I screeched; and at last Self-brought-up-Man said, “Little man-owl, do not be angry any more! I am no longer going to withhold my sister from thee. I shall allow thee to take my sister, and to look at her, while she shall sit at thy knee.” So I kept my temper, and married the woman, and took her with me everywhere I went. Therefore I am of one blood with mankind. I am only a little man-owl, but next of kin to man.

## THE MAN IN THE MOON

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Pilsudski, Bronislas [Bronislaw]. “Ainu Folklore.” *Journal of American Folklore*. 25 (1912): 73–74.

**Date:** ca. 1912

**Original Source:** Ainu

**National Origin:** Japan

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The “Inau” is an Ainu prayer wand made from a stick with a tassel on the end. The following **myth** reveals the intimate connection between the elements of the environment that is the result of traditional Ainu animistic beliefs.

---

**M**y elder sister brought me up. Every day she went out to fetch water. She hit the pail, she struck the scoop. Once she went out and I waited for her in vain. Three nights I waited, and she came not. At last I got anxious. I built an “inau” to my grandmother the Fire, and asked her about my sister, but got no answer. Then, angry, I built an “inau” to the god of the house, and asked him, but he gave no answer. So I went out, full of wrath, to the river’s side, and asked the river-god, but got no news. I went also to the forest and built

an “inau,” and asked my grandmother the Red Fir, but she did not know; so I asked the Siberian Silver Fir, but in vain. Full of anger, I left them, and went to my grandmother the Willow-Bush Thicket, and asked her; and she said, “I am a willow-bush thicket, and fond of talking; so listen to what I shall tell thee. Thy sister went up to the moon, and got married to the Man in the Moon.”

I got very angry and marched away, with evil steps, back to the house. As soon as I arrived there, I took an arrow with a black feather, and another one with a white feather, and went out. First I let fly the arrow with the black feather, then the one with the white feather, and, holding the ends of the arrows with my two hands, I rose up into the air among the clouds; and there was my elder sister, who stepped out of her house smiling, and the ends of her eyebrows drooped. She was holding the hand of a little girl. I never had seen such a girl before. From her face, beams of light were darting forth. That light spread out on all sides, and struck my head. Beautiful eyes looked at me. All my bad feelings vanished. My sister said, “Why art thou angry, my boy? Dost thou not see, that, thanks to the Man in the Moon, thou wilt be able to marry this beautiful little girl?”

From that time I was in high spirits, and my anger was gone. I entered the house, and there was my divine brother-in-law sitting on an iron stool, and smiling at me amiably. I was contented and sat down. Never had I seen a man like that before. Near the corner where the “inau” to the god of the house is set, there was a high case which reached to the roof; and at the women’s corner there were likewise cases leaning on beams. In the middle, on an iron stool, sat the divine man, and he was looking at me. He looked kindly at me, as though he might have seen me before.

Then the mistress of the house gave me to eat; and the master said, “I am a god, and I wanted to have thy sister; therefore I took her who was handling the pail and the scoop to my house. There I married her, and we are living very happily. Take my child now, and marry her, though she be miserable, then wilt thou at least have somebody to fetch thy water.”

Since that time I have been related to the Man in the Moon. He married my elder sister, and they had two children—a boy and a girl. We were powerful, and had no children, and grew old. And my elder sister had children and brought them up, and then grew old. This we heard from the birds.

## SEAL ISLAND

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Pilsudski, Bronislas [Bronislaw]. “Ainu Folklore.” *Journal of American Folklore* 25 (1912): 76–78.

**Date:** ca. 1912

**Original Source:** Ainu

**National Origin:** Japan

In the following supernatural narrative, “Self-brought-up-Man” is portrayed as a personal protector of the protagonist rather than as a demi-god removed from human contact. The power displayed by this demi-god contrasts with his description as “a miserable little man,” which argues against judging by superficial appearances. The tale is told in first person (like **personal experience narratives** and Ainu sacred songs), set in the historical past (like **legends**). These qualities make the following Ainu tale a good example of the difficulties inherent in cross-cultural classification of folk narratives.

---

**M**y grandfather had brought me up, feeding me on the flesh of sea-animals which he brought home. Thus we lived. One year, as usual, my grandfather went out to sea to kill some animals, that I might have something to eat. When he came home, late in the afternoon, he had killed no game. Then he said to me, “I have been on the island where I go every year to get game for our living, but there was not one seal on the island. I heard their roaring, though, far out at sea—the roaring of old beasts. So I thought that the old seals had wandered away from our island to another place. It is a long time since the island that has fed us for so long has been crowded with seals. Now there is not one animal left there; so I came back without killing anything.” This is what my grandfather said.

From the moment I heard his words, I kept thinking how I might reach this far-off island. The thought kept me awake nights. One night, when my grandfather was sound asleep, I went down to the seashore. There I took the boat which my grandfather used for hunting, pulled it out on the water, and steered in the direction of the other sea. Rowing with all my strength, I soon came in sight of an island far out at sea. A few more strokes of the oars brought me quite close to it, and at last I was able to land.

There were lots of seals everywhere. But from the end of the island a miserable little man appeared. He approached, and soon began to scold me. “Why did you come? Why did you come out on this island? The creatures here are much worse than elsewhere, so why did you come? It is very dangerous to stay here. Hide your boat in yonder cave in the rock, fill it with killed seals, and secrete yourself among their bodies. The awful god of the island is near, so you must hide before he sees you.”

The god then arrived; and I heard him ask, “What is this boat?” And Self-brought-up-Man answered, “It is my boat.”

“But the little sitting-board is fastened to it with a rope which was twisted with the left hand, and it smells like the smell of a human being,” said the evil god again.

“I am only half god and half man,” Self-brought-up-Man answered, “so the boat may be human, and its smell is human.”

“Self-brought-up-Man,” said the god, “you are mighty and fearless, and so are your deeds; but today we shall measure our powers.” This is what he said, and I heard it.

Then the evil god went home; and Self-brought-up-Man turned towards me, and said, “My child, go back to your village as quickly as you can; and when you are sailing near the head of the island, carve an ‘inau’ out of a birch tree, and one out of an ash tree, and put them into your boat. Carve out an ‘inau’ from the ‘uita’ tree, which is the tree of the evil god, and leave it on the island. Your father was a great friend of mine in my youth, therefore I warn you not to come here again, because this land is very dangerous. When you have gone, and are in the middle of the sea, you will hear the din and roar of the battle between the god and myself, and a bloody rain will fall on your boat from above. This will be a sign that I am hurt. But you will go farther still, and again a bloody rain will fall (at the rear of your boat this time), and you will look back and see me kill that evil god. As long as you are away from home, your grandfather will be uneasy about you. He is walking to and fro on the path on which you went away, to the end of it, leaning on a big stick. He knows that you are on this island, and he is praying to me to help you. His words strike the clouds, and his prayers fall on my head from above. Direct your boat under that rainbow!”

On looking up, I saw that I was near my home, and my grandfather was walking on the sand of the shore, leaning on a thick stick. He was looking so hard up at the sky, and was praying so fervently, that he never noticed me, though I landed just in front of him. I took two seals out of the boat, one in each hand, carried them to my grandfather, and threw them down in front of him. He was so frightened that he fell down on his back. Then only did he look at me, and he was very glad to see me. He patted me on the back and on the chest, and began to scold me gently. “What have you been doing? Why did you go to that island? If it had not been for my friend, the god Samaye [an alternative name for ‘Self-brought-up-Man,’ usually considered as an honorific] I should see your body no more.”

So I went home, skinned the dead animals, cut out quantities of meat, cooked it, and gave my grandfather to eat. After a time my grandfather said to me, “I am old, and my death is near. After I am dead, do not go to the island whence you have just come, because it is dangerous for you.”

## SAMAYEKURU AND HIS SISTER

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Pilsudski, Bronislas [Bronislaw]. “Ainu Folklore.” *Journal of American Folklore* 25 (1912): 81–83.

**Date:** ca. 1912

**Original Source:** Ainu

**National Origin:** Japan

Self-brought-up-Man again defeats a god in this narrative. The god's ability to change shape into first a salmon and then a dish suggests the Ainu belief that not only animals, plants, and forces of nature can be animated by a spiritual essence, but common objects as well. The narrative told from the point of view of the god at first remains ambiguous as to whether Self-brought-up-Man is a clever **trickster** or simply lucky. The concluding episode, however, leaves no doubt as to the intent behind the sibling's triumph over the god.

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I was the god of the upper heaven. There were many gods around, but, looking at the places where they lived, I nowhere could find a woman like myself. In the lower world in the Ainu land, the younger sister of Samayekuru ("Self-brought-up-Man"), though she was only an Ainu woman, had a face like mine. She seemed to be quite like myself. So I came down to the lower world. In the yard, near Samayekuru's house, fresh fish were hanging out on sticks to dry. Samayekuru himself was out hunting with his sister, and so was not at home. I entered the empty house. As Samayekuru was only a man, I thought he must be weaker than I. I went to the sticks on which the fresh fish were hanging, threw down one big salmon, and assumed its shape. Then I waited till Samayekuru and his sister brought home a big litter full of bear-meat. They pushed the litter in through an opening in the back wall, after which Samayekuru's sister went into the hut and pulled in the litter. They were both tired, so they lighted a big fire; and Samayekuru said, "I am tired of eating bear-meat all the time. Go and get some fresh fish for me to eat." His sister went out, approached the sticks with the fish, and tried to select one. At last she took me down, and carried me into the house. Samayekuru said, "The fresh fish is too cold, warm it a little at the fire." Thus he said; and she tied a thread to my tail and hung me, head down, on the hook on which the kettle usually hangs. But Samayekuru remarked, "The fire is not big enough: put on some more wood, and make it bigger." His sister then went out to get some wood, and brought in a whole pile. A huge fire blazed up, and my head became hot. It crackled aloud "putsi!" so violently that it burnt me. My soul went up to the tail, and was nearly burning. I got frightened, pushed aside the beams of the roof with much noise, and got out into the fresh air. Making a terrible ado, I returned to the upper heaven.

When I reached home, I cried, "Samayekuru was only a man born on the poor earth, and I was a mighty god!" and I thought that a man born on the poor earth would be weaker than I, but he was stronger. Angrily I went down to earth again. Samayekuru was out hunting with his sister, as before, and I entered the empty house. I hid away Samayekuru's dish, and turned into a dish myself and waited. At last I heard the steps of Samayekuru and his sister, who



were coming home. Through the opening in the back wall they pushed in the litter with the bear-meat. The younger sister came in by the door, and took the litter with the meat. They were tired, and made a big fire, after which Samayekuru said to his sister, "Did you wash your dishes this morning before going out hunting?"

"No, I did not wash them," answered the sister.

"Then prepare some hot water and wash them now," he ordered. So she got up, took her big kettle, filled it with water, and hung it over the fire to get it hot. As soon as the water was boiling, she brought her brother's dish. I thought I should die if she should throw me into the boiling water. And she threw me in; but I jumped out of the kettle, pushed away the roof near the door with a loud rumbling noise, and flew out. Then I noisily raised myself to the upper heaven, and returned to my divine home.

When I was inside, I began to think, "Samayekuru is a man only, so he ought to be weaker than I am, but he has turned out to be stronger." Full of anger, I sat brooding a long time. At last I decided to go down once more, without changing my shape, in my own divine, beautiful body. So I did, and went down to the yard near Samayekuru's house, and stood there; but I did not want to enter the house as a guest. Samayekuru's sister went out in the yard, and said, "I know that you do not care to step into our house. You are walking angrily about, so I shall not lead you in; but yonder there is my little metal hut, and you will do well to go there." So I went towards this little house, and at night I stepped in and sat down.

"Samayekuru surely is angry with me," I thought. "Though I be a mighty god, and though Samayekuru be born on this poor earth, he has beaten me," I thought, and decided to tell him so. Suddenly, however, I smelled the smell of dung. I thought I had come to a little silver house. But why this nasty smell of dung? I looked around, and there I was, sitting in a very filthy place; and Samayekuru and his sister had poured out their dung on me, and soiled me from head to foot. "I am a mighty god, and Samayekuru is only a man, born on earth; but as to power, he has entirely beaten me," thought I. "Whatever I might do, I could never surpass Samayekuru in power, so I had better calm down."

From the filthy place where I was sitting, I leaped up with a terrible noise, went to the upper heaven, and returned home, quite soiled with dung from head to foot. I took off my iron armor and washed it, after having washed my head and my whole body. I was quite angry, and sat down full of wrath. My brothers, the other gods, talked with one another, and said, "As we walked around the house, in the yard, we perceived a nasty smell." I heard these words, but made no reply, and sat quite ashamed. One day, however, when I was seated, my elder brother came and began to scold me. "What is it? Samayekuru is so powerful, that he wants to beat every one, and you are stupid to have roused him." Thus they all scolded me.

## THE LADY OF KUNNEPET

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Batchelor, John. "Specimens of Ainu Folk-Lore." *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan* 18 (1890): 25–39.

**Date:** ca. 1888

**Original Source:** Ainu

**National Origin:** Japan

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The following **myth** details an epic battle between an Ainu hero and the Thunder God. Several features of the narrative have important connotations in Ainu culture, according to the collector of the myth, John Batchelor. "Slave" in the context of this narrative is likely to refer to a prisoner of war who was being trained as a household servant or even a page. The head of the fireplace is regarded as sacred space, and thus the protagonist was aided by supernatural forces in his quest. The fact that the Lady of Kunnepet cooks for the hero at their first meeting is significant, because Ainu marriage ceremony consists in the act of the bride cooking food and giving it to her betrothed. Finally, among the Ainu white symbolizes purity and goodness while black is associated with evil.

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**T**here was a person who was reared as a slave at Shinutapka. Now, once upon a time he heard it noised abroad that there was a lady residing at Kunnepet who was famous for her beauty. So, one day, after he had cooked and eaten some food, our slave buckled on his belt, stuck his trusty sword into his girdle, and fastened on his helmet; then, being taken up by the winds which arose from the head of the fireplace, he was hastily carried through the upper window; and his inspiring guardian god having rested upon him with a sound, they went before the mighty winds till he arrived at the village of Kunnepet.

So he came to the lady of Kunnepet. When he looked at her he saw that she was there weeping very exceedingly. Still shedding tears, she spake and said, "The thunder-gods who live in the heavens above are two in number, and the younger of them does nothing but make advances to me and is about to marry me. This being so, O *Poiyaumbe* [Ainu, "brave hero"] they cannot marry though you have come for me; nevertheless I will cook some food that you may eat." When she had so said she swung a pretty little pot over the fire and put some of her choice treasured-up food into it. She then dipped in her ladle and stirred up the delicious food. Next she took a pretty eating cup and set it upon a beautiful tray; then, heaping it up high, carried it to him and bowed profusely.

When he had but just commenced to eat, flashes of white lightning came through the upper window and hung upon the beams in curious forms. Upon

looking up he saw a lady even more beautiful than the lady of Kunnepet, reclining in a white chariot. She had anger depicted upon her countenance; and, in her wrath said, "O Poiyaumbe listen to me for I have something to say. I am the younger sister of the wolf-god and the benefactress of the lady of Kunnepet, whilst you are watched over by my elder brother. This being so, I am here to tell you that the thunder-god is angry with you for coming to visit this lady and is going to make grievous war against you. Nay, the war is at hand. Though I am a worthless woman, I have come to assist you. Get into my white chariot"; so spake the younger sister of the wolf-god.

So he got into the chariot, which immediately went out of the upper window. Then the trappings of the chariot whistled and rattled. As they went on their way, they skirted the mountains towards the source of the river, and, proceeding along, they saw white and black lightning playing about in the clouds of the lower heavens. As he was looking at it, he saw the aforementioned thunder-god sitting in a black chariot; he was unmistakably a very little man. There too sat a little woman, who, without doubt, was his younger sister. She held a wand in her hand; with which she continually struck first one end of the chariot and then the other, as they hung and waved about over the tops of the mountains.

The thunder-god, having anger expressed upon his countenance, said, "Look here, O Poiyaumbe, listen well to me for I have something to say. You have been paying your addresses to and flirting with the lady of Kunnepet, whom I have determined to take to myself as wife. I take this as a cause for war. Be very careful, my fine fellow, for I will bring down your haughty looks." When he had so spoken, he set upon him mightily with his sword; so that his blows rattled upon the sides of the white chariot. Upon this Poiyaumbe also drew his sword and set upon the thunder-god as determinately as he was attacked by him. So they fought with might and main, but the black chariot rose and fell to meet the attack. So that the blows of the sword upon its sides and floor sent forth a clashing sound.

And now there was a tremendous roaring sound of thunder over the world, together with a mighty wind blowing; and both day and night they did nothing but fight. After the war had raged for twice ten months, the god of thunder said, "I observe that as they fight upon this land in which men dwell, they are wasting and wearing out the country, for, as you see, its foundations (back-bones) consist of rocks; they ought to be more careful of the world. Now then, come, the foundations (backbones) of the world above are made of iron, let us go up there and fight; for there they may wage war without having any regard to the spoilage of the place." So spake he.

He then withdrew into the air and the young hero followed close behind him. The younger sister of the wolf-god, having the wand in her hand, continued to strike first one end and then the other of the chariot. The thin trappings whistled and the thick trappings rattled, as the white chariot followed close upon the black one. The gates of heaven opened with a sound, and, having

passed through, were shut upon us with another noise. Now, what they saw was on this wise. A splendid country lay before us and a very beautiful waterway opened up to our view. On the sides of the river were forests of magnificent oaks, and the clouds upon the horizon were floating gently along. Now, the thunder-god said, "This country is, in truth, the high heaven. Its foundations consist of iron so that if they fight here for two or three years they need have no fear of damaging it. This is indeed a place in which they can especially measure our strength."

Having so said, he set upon me mightily with his sword, and the hero too turned upon him as fiercely. Nevertheless, the edge of the black chariot clashed against the sword and warded off the blows, so there was only the sound of clashing iron. In the same way our white chariot, also rising up and guarding with its floor, sent forth a clashing sound. And now, fighting fiercely, they chased each other from one end of heaven to the other, till at length they chanced to pass over a metal house which was covered in with a lid, and, over this they stayed and fought; whilst doing so, there came forth a voice from the inside of the house which said, "Look here, O Poiyaumbe and thunder-god, I have something to say, so pay attention. It is indeed true that the foundations of Ainu-land are rocks, and it is also true that the foundations of heaven above consist of metal. But as ye continue to carry on your battles here, heaven has grown wary and waxed hot for the reason that its foundations are iron. Ye should be careful. Now then, come, underneath Ainu-land there are six countries, and beneath these again there is another, a beautiful land. The name of that country is *Chirama* [Ainu, "lotheyst"], and its foundations consist of earth. Go ye to that land and fight, for unless ye do, our country and villages will be all spoiled." So sounded forth the voice of God.

Upon this the thunder-god sheathed his sword and Poiyaumbe also sheathed his. Then, as they entered heaven, so they we went out—with a rush. They passed down through space headfirst, like snipes, and, piercing our land, they went through six countries. Having done this, they came, as they were told they should, to a truly beautiful country; without doubt this was *Chirama-land*, upon which they had descended.

And now they chased one another from one end of the country to the other, fighting, as before, most fiercely. Nevertheless, whenever and however they fought, the black chariot rising, falling, and swinging to and fro, kept off the hero's blows with its sides and floor, so that the result was nothing but the sound of clashing metal. In the same way the white chariot also rose up and fenced the blows with its sides and floor like a shield. However much Poiyaumbe strove, he could by no means touch the body of the thunder-god. Poiyaumbe therefore aimed at nothing but to cut the trappings by which the black chariot was suspended. And fighting hard with this intent, he was able, after a time and by the help of God, to sever them. So, too, all the trappings of our white chariot the were cut asunder. They therefore all fell down to the

ground. Then the thunder-god got out of his black chariot and came to Poiyaumbe, walking by the help of his hands [that is, crawling].

Upon this the younger sister of the thunder-god shed many tears and said, "Oh my elder brother, you are a god; and if you would but marry a goddess you would have no need to carry on this fierce combat with Poiyaumbe. Why do you set your affections on this Lady of Kunnepet as though she were the only woman? Now our charmed black chariot has been quite broken up and you are as one fighting without armor. Be careful or Poiyaumbe will slay you." So spake the sister of the thunder-god through her tears.

After she had said this, the sister of the wolf-god went out and fought against her. Then the thunder-god set upon Poiyaumbe most fiercely and he returned the attack just as vehemently. Thus fighting together, Poiyaumbe managed with great difficulty to strike him now and then, so that his garments were hanging about him in rags. But he was not to be beaten; for he also in like manner cut his clothes into many pieces. Whilst things were going on so, a mighty sound as if the true gods were coming to us, issued forth from the east of Chirama-land, and all at once my Lady of Kunnepet, more beautiful than ever, and shedding many tears, alighted and came to the side of the wolf-god. And now the sister of the thunder-god fought mightily, but after two or three final struggles, she was cut down and slain. Her divine spirit roared loudly as it ascended into the skies. She went up to heaven a living goddess; and, when she had departed the roaring ceased.

After this my Lady of Kunnepet, in company with the sister of the wolf-god came to Poiyaumbe's side and they three together fought against the thunder-god. So that after a time he was, though with difficulty, cut down and slain. His spirit roared as it went up; but, as it was not possible for it to go into the western end of Chirama-land it ascended to the high heavens with a great noise. It went up a new god and then the sound died away.

When all was over, my Lady of Kunnepet and the younger sister of the wolf-god saluted one another with their swords, and then, after they had come to our country and to the village of Kunnepet, the sister of the wolf-god said, "As I am a goddess, I must take a husband from among the gods, but as you are a man, it would be well for you to marry the Lady of Kunnepet. Now, you are watched over by my elder brother the wolf-god, so henceforth do no more fighting, but when you have wine, be careful that you make some *inao* [prayer sticks] and offer libations to the wolf-god."

When she had finished speaking, she departed with a great sound. Then my Lady of Kunnepet worked away with a willing heart and great pleasure, and, having prepared food, she heaped up very full a pretty cup, and, setting it on a beautiful tray, brought it to Poiyaumbe with many bows. After eating a little of it, he pushed the remainder to her and she, lifting it up and down in thankfulness, finished it. Then, when the meal was over, my Lady of Kunnepet proceeded to get the house in order and they have lived happily ever since.

## THE BRIDE RESCUES HER HUSBAND

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Pilsudski, Bronislas [Bronislaw]. "Ainu Folklore." *Journal of American Folklore* 25 (1912): 83–86.

**Date:** ca. 1912

**Original Source:** Ainu

**National Origin:** Japan

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The following Ainu tale builds on the familiar **motif** of a bride rescuing her betrothed or her husband from supernatural abduction. Although this is a familiar theme in the European **ordinary folktale**, it is impossible to establish any direct influence between the Ainu narrative and any Indo-European antecedent.

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**F**rom childhood I was brought up by my aunt, who fed me with fine food. She fed me very well indeed, and brought me up splendidly in my father's house. On the floor there was a large pile of iron cases on which iron pots were standing, one within another; and iron pans in a row, also one within another. It was a splendid house, a fine house! In this house on the seashore I was living. My aunt gave me every day a plate of good meat and of grease, so full that I could not even hold it. I ate, and thus we lived.

At last I grew up and became a large girl. So my aunt took out different kinds of silk, and bade me sew. But I did not know how to sew. I tangled the thread, and that ended it. My aunt scolded me. "My niece does not know how to sew! Why are you such a dullard?" Thus she spoke. After trying each day, I at last learned how to sew.

My aunt said, "Far off in Otasam lives your betrothed one. He is the youngest of three brothers. A piece of silk was torn in halves for you and him [as a sign of betrothal]. He must be grown up now. He is very rich, and will not come to you; therefore you had better go to him, to the rich man." This she said; and I heard it, and thought, "Until now my aunt has brought me up well. If I leave her for one day only, I rejoice to see her again." I was grieved, and remained. My aunt, however, spoke to me again about it, and every day she repeated the same words.

So at last I gathered the most necessary of my things, made a bag in which to take them on my back, and put my clothes in properly. I prepared many different things; and when I was ready to start, my aunt said, "In Otasam, where you are going, there are three brothers, rich men. The eldest one lives in the house nearest to us; in the middle one lives the youngest, with his younger sister; and the third one lives at the end of the settlement. When you arrive, you

will do well to enter the hut that is in the middle, which belongs to the youngest brother. This my aunt told me while I was taking leave.

Then I went away. Soon I saw before me a place situated high up. I stopped at the mountain Tomisa; then I walked on, and turned around and looked. There was my aunt, standing in front of her house, and she was following me with her eyes. I continued my march again, and, turning around, I still saw her looking after me. Finally I directed my steps towards the village Otasam, and set out on the way to it. I looked, and there was a big house, just as my aunt had described it to me; and behind it, as she had told me, was to be the house of my betrothed one, but, glancing around, I saw only one house in front of me. I began to think, and came to the conclusion that I was walking on the road to the house of the eldest rich brother. When I looked around, I saw another path, which I took; but soon I noticed that it led to the same house. I understood. "They are brothers," I thought, "and if I go to the eldest of them, the gods will have made me do it." So I entered the house, which was full of furniture, quite uncommon and divine. The rich man himself was living here. He met me full of joy, as if he had already seen me. He prepared food, and gave me to eat.

In the mean time it grew dark, and evening arrived. The rich man said, "You would do well if you would spend this night here." I went to sleep angry; and when I woke up, I saw the rich man sleeping with me. I got up weeping, and was just going to depart, when the rich man said, "What evil god made me do this! I had no bad intentions. You have been my younger brother's betrothed wife since childhood, and, though I did not think any evil concerning you, I did this. So when you come to your husband's house, and give him to eat, put this into his dish." Thus saying, he gave me the basket hilt of a sword. The hilt was inlaid with silver on one side, a little silver net was spread out, and a little silver man was pulling at it, and in the net were a whole lot of little silver-fishes. I was quite delighted, turned it over, and saw on the other side a little gold net spread out, and inside it a whole lot of little gold-fishes, and little gold men pulling at it.

After I had looked at it well, I put it under my shirt and went away. I walked on the path which I saw in front of me, and arrived at the house of the man who had been promised to me since childhood. Above the house two thick clouds were floating, and I entered the house. "She is as old as I am," said the rich man when he saw me. "The beautiful maiden is living." I was still at the door as he smiled at me. As soon as he saw me, I approached the fire and remained near it. When I sat down, he wanted to say something. "My little brother," he began, "has not eaten since last month, and he sleeps all the time. Therefore he has a swollen belly [suffering from dropsy]. I do not know the reason of this, and am very much astonished. Now that you have come, when he hears you are here, perhaps he will eat." This he said, and at the same time we heard footsteps near the house.

I looked up, and thought that my betrothed one was coming, but in reality it was the swollen sick man. As soon as he came in, he sat down near the fire.

The girl of the house prepared some food, put it into an iron dish, and gave me to eat; she also fed the owner of the house, my husband. As soon as we had finished eating, I gave back the rest of the food, and put on the dish the hilt which I had pulled out from the back of my shirt. Now even I looked at it with pleasure and admiration, and handed it over to my husband. He took it, and said, "My elder brother did not act according to his will when he forced you to spend a night with him. It is well for the gods to marry one another, and men and women should also marry. I am only a man; but the god of the upper heaven has a younger sister, who wants to marry me. She desires so strongly to take me up to heaven with my body, that I have not felt at all like eating since last month."

After having said these words, he seized me, ran out on the place in front of the house, and carried me towards the forest. At the back of the house there was a little iron hut, built on piles—a house which had feet. He pulled the hanging door aside, carried me into the hut, and there we lay down together. "Now we are married, therefore we sleep together for the first time. But if you are weak, the goddess will take me up, body and all. If you are strong, we shall live together a long time." This he said, and fell asleep.

When I woke up and looked around, I felt something pushing me. I looked, and saw an iron ring put around my husband's body, and an iron chain attached to it went up through the opening in the roof, and somebody was pulling at it from above. I seized the chain, naked as I was, and began to pull it down with all my strength. But the girl from heaven, being a goddess, was stronger than I. I began to weep and to scream. I called the younger sister (of my husband). She came in; but as soon as she saw me, she fled, shouting, "Oh, what is this! a naked woman!" I screamed again, and called the elder brother. He opened the door, came in, looked at me, and said, "A naked woman!" after which he ran away. At last my husband slipped out of my hands, and the goddess pulled the chain as hard as she could. She grasped it with one hand, then again with the other, and pulled my husband up quite close. Smiling, she pulled him into heaven and closed the door.

I could do no more, and began to cry. While weeping, I suddenly heard somebody coming from my native country, on the Tomisan hill. It was my aunt who had brought me up. She was carrying a sword without a scabbard. She brandished it and struck. I thought she had killed me; but suddenly I was changed into a little bird, and flew out through the hole in the roof. As I did not know where to fly, I looked down, and saw the parts of a naked woman's body lying near the house; and my aunt was sitting on them and crying, and was trembling all over.

I made a bridge out of clouds, and, walking on it, I arrived in heaven. When I came to the house of the goddess in the shape of a little bird, I fluttered my wings; and the gods said, "A maiden is walking around in heaven quite naked. We smell her body, and it makes us sick." This they said; but I entered the house through the upper hole in the roof. There was the goddess, holding the



dying soul of my husband like a coral between her hands, and she was busy preparing medicine for him. I snatched my husband's soul away and returned to earth, having put it into my mouth. As we had no place to go to, I crept into the mouth of the cut-up woman, and lost all consciousness. When I recovered, I looked around, and saw my husband, who at the same time returned to life again.

This is how I resuscitated one of the three brothers of Otasan. My aunt, whose power had brought my husband back from heaven to earth again, was also alive. From that time on, we all lived happily together. I related tales about the gods, and lived with the others. This is the legend.

# CHINA

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## IN THE BEGINNING

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Colum, Padric. *Orpheus: Myths of the World*. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1930, 237–239.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Unavailable

**National Origin:** China

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The concept of opposing but complementary forces, expressed as yang-yin in the following **myth**, is at the heart of Taoism (also Daoism) as well as other systems of Chinese philosophy and science. P'an Ku (also, Pan Gu) acts as a central figure in the dividing and ordering process that occurred to create the universe (the cosmos) out of the first state (primal chaos). The myth of a titan whose body is rent apart and whose parts give rise to various elements of the present world is found cross-culturally.

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**I**n the beginning there was *Yang-yin* which is light-darkness, heat-cold, dryness-moisture. Then that which was subtle went upward, and that which was gross tended downward; the heavens were formed from the subtle, the earth from the gross. Now there was *Yang* and *Yin*, the active and the passive, the male and the female. From the operation of *Yang* upon *Yin* came the seasons in their order, and the seasons brought into existence all the products of the earth. The warm effluence of *Yang* produced fire, and the subtlest parts of fire went to form the sun; the effluence of *Yin* produced water, and the subtlest parts of water went to form the moon. The sun operating on the moon produced the stars. The heavens became adorned with sun, moon, and stars, and the earth received rivers, rain, and dust. And *Yang* combining with *Yin*, the principle that

is above combining with the principle that is below, produces all creatures, all things. The power that is *Yang*, the receptivity that is *Yin*, can never be added to, never taken away from: in these two principles is the All.

So the sages relate in their perspicuous writings. But the people say that before *Yang* and *Yin* were separated, P'an Ku, a man, came into existence. He had a chisel and a mallet. He had horns projecting from his forehead and tusks projecting from his jaws. He grew in stature every day he lived—for eighteen thousand years he grew six feet every day in stature. Nothing was in place when P'an Ku came into the universe, but with his mallet and his chisel he ordered all things; he hewed out bases for the mountains, he scooped out basins for the seas, he dug courses for the rivers, and hollowed out the valleys. In this meritorious work P'an Ku was engaged for eighteen thousand years.

He was attended by the Dragon, the Unicorn, the Tortoise, and the Phoenix—the four auspicious creatures. The Dragon is the head of all the beasts because it is the one that is most filled with the principle of *Yang*: it is bigger than big, smaller than small, higher than high, lower than low; when it breathes its breath changes to a cloud on which it can ride up to Heaven. The Dragon has five colors in its body, and it is the possessor of a pearl which is the essence of the moon and a charm against fire; it can make itself visible and invisible; in the spring it mounts up to the clouds, and in the autumn it remains supine in the waters. The Unicorn is strong of body and exceptionally virtuous of mind, and it combines in itself the principles of *Yang* and *Yin*. It eats no living vegetation and it never treads upon green grass. The Tortoise is the most propitious of all created things; it possesses the secrets of life and death, and it can, with its breath, create clouds and palaces of enchantment. The Phoenix is at the head of all birds; its color is the blending of the five colors and its call is the harmony of the five notes; it bathes in the pure water that flows down from the K'un-lun Mountains, and at night it reposes in the Cave of Tan.

But notwithstanding the fact that he was respectfully attended by the auspicious creatures, P'an Ku put the sun and moon in places that were not properly theirs. The sun and the moon went into the sea, and the world was left without luminaries. P'an Ku went out into the deep; he held out his hands to indicate where they were to go, and he repeated a powerful incantation three times. Then the sun and the moon went into the places that were properly theirs and the universe rejoiced at the ensuing harmony.

But the establishment of the universe was not completed until P'an Ku himself had perished; he died after eighteen thousand years of labor with his chisel and mallet; then his breath became the wind and clouds, and his beard became the streaming signs in the sky; his voice became the thunder, his limbs the four quarters of the earth; his head became the mountains, his flesh the soil, and his blood became the rivers of earth; his skin and hair became the herbs and trees, and his teeth, bones, and marrow became metals, rocks, and precious stones.

Even then the universe was not adequately compacted: P'an Ku had built up the world in fifty-one stories, giving thirty-three stories to the heavens and eighteen stories to the hells beneath the earth. But he had left a great cavity in the bottom of the world, and, at inauspicious times, men and women fell down through it. A woman whose name was Nu-Ku found a stone which adequately covered the cavity; rightly positioning it, she covered up the emptiness, and so completed the making of the well-ordered world.

## THE WEAVER MAIDEN AND THE HERDSMAN

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Colum, Padric. *Orpheus: Myths of the World*. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1930, 239–241.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Unavailable

**National Origin:** China

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Chih Nü (also, Zhi-Nu) was the daughter of Yu-Huang (the Jade Emperor), the supreme deity of Chinese Taoism. There are several **variants** to the **myth** given below. In one, she had descended to earth to bathe when Niu Lang the herdsman, at the instructions of his ox, stole her clothes. To retrieve her clothes, she agreed to marry Niu Lang. On returning to the heavens, she confessed her marriage, and he was made an immortal. In another version, Yu-Huang was so pleased with his daughter's diligence that he wed her to the patron deity of cowherds. All versions agree that the couple's immoderate behavior led to the conclusion described below.

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**H**er august father, the Sun, would have the accomplished Chih Nü turn her footsteps towards his bright gardens or appear in his celestial halls. But Chih Nü would not leave her loom. All day and every day the maiden sat by the River of Heaven weaving webs that were endless.

The Sun thought in his august mind that if the maiden were wedded she would not permit herself to be a slave to the loom. He thought that if she had a husband she would depart a little from her exceptional diligence. Therefore he let it be known that he would favorably consider a proposal involving the marriage of the accomplished Chih Nü. Then one whose dwelling was at the other side of the heavenly river drew his august regard. This was Niu Lang: he herded oxen, and he was a youth who was exceedingly amiable and who had accomplishments that matched the accomplishments of Chih Nü.

They were united, the Weaver Maiden and the Herdsman Youth; they were united in the palace of the august Sun. The omens were favorable, and the heavens made themselves as beautiful as a flying pheasant for the ceremony. The guests drank of that sweet heavenly dew which makes those who drink of it more quick-witted and intelligent than they were before. The Sun, the Weaver Maiden, the Herdsman Youth, and all the guests who were present sang in mutual harmony the song that says, "The Sun and Moon are constant; the stars and other heavenly bodies have their courses; the four seasons observe their rule! How responsive are all things to the harmony that has been established in the heavens!" The august Sun expected that after this auspicious marriage his daughter would moderate her diligence and be more often at leisure.

But Chih Nü was as immoderate in her play as she was in her industry. No more did she work at her loom; no more did she attend to her inescapable duties; with her husband she played all day, and for him she danced and made music all night. The heavens went out of harmony because of this failure in right performance, and the earth was greatly troubled. Her august father came before Chih Nü and pointed out to her the dire consequences of her engaging in endless pastimes. But in spite of all he said to her the Weaver Maiden would not return to her loom.

Then the august Sun determined to make a separation between the pair whose union had such dire results. He commanded the blameless Niu Lang to go to the other bank of the River of Heaven, and to continue there his herdsman's duties. He commanded the accomplished Chih Nü to remain on her own side of the river. But the august Sun showed a spirit of kindness to his daughter and his son-in-law. They could meet and be together for one day and one night of the year. On the seventh day of the seventh month of every year they could cross the River of Heaven and be with each other. And to make a bridge by which they might cross the river a myriad of magpies would come together, and each by catching the head-feathers of the bird next him would make a bridge with their backs and wings. And over that bridge the Weaver Maiden would cross over to where the Herdsman Youth waited for her.

All day the Weaver Maiden sat at her loom and worked with becoming diligence. Her father rejoiced that she fulfilled her duties. But no being in the heavens or on the earth was as lonely as she was, and all day the Herdsman Youth tended his oxen, but with a heart that was filled with loneliness and grief. The days and the nights went slowly by, and time when they might cross the River of Heaven and be together drew near. Then a great fear entered the hearts of the young wife and the young husband. They feared lest rain should fall; for the River of Heaven is always filled to its brim, and one drop would cause it to flood its banks. And if there was a flood the magpies could not bridge the space between the Weaver Maiden and the Herdsman Youth.

For many years after their separation no rain fell. The magpies came in their myriad. The one behind held the head-feathers of the one before, and with their

backs and wings they made a bridge for the young wife to cross over to where the young husband waited for her.

With hearts that were shaken like the wings of the magpies she would cross the Bridge of Wings. They would hold each other in their arms and make over again their vows of love. Then Chih Nü would go back to her loom, and the magpies would fly away to come together in another year.

And the people of earth pray that no drop of rain may fall to flood the River of Heaven; they make such prayer when it comes near the seventh day of the seventh month. But they rejoice when no rain falls and they can see with their own eyes the magpies gathering in their myriad. Sometimes the inauspicious forces are in the ascendant; rain falls and the river is flooded. No magpies then go to form a bridge, and Chih Nü weeps beside her loom and Niu Lang laments as he drives his ox beside the flood of the River of Heaven.

## **THE STORY OF HOK LEE AND THE DWARFS**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Lang, Andrew. *The Green Fairy Book*. London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1892, 229–233.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Unavailable

**National Origin:** China

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The following **ordinary folktale** is a **variant** of “The Gifts of the Little People” (AT 503). A common concluding episode in the tale, a failed attempt by a companion or eavesdropper to imitate the protagonist’s success, has been replaced.

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**T**here once lived in a small town in China a man named Hok Lee. He was a steady industrious man, who not only worked hard at his trade, but did all his own housework as well, for he had no wife to do it for him. “What an excellent industrious man is this Hok Lee!” said his neighbors; “how hard he works: he never leaves his house to amuse himself or to take a holiday as others do!”

But Hok Lee was by no means the virtuous person his neighbors thought him. True, he worked hard enough by day, but at night, when all respectable folk were fast asleep, he used to steal out and join a dangerous band of robbers, who broke into rich people’s houses and carried off all they could lay hands on.

This state of things went on for some time, and, though a thief was caught now and then and punished, no suspicion ever fell on Hok Lee, he was such a very respectable, hard-working man.

Hok Lee had already amassed a good store of money as his share of the proceeds of these robberies when it happened one morning on going to market that a neighbor said to him, "Why, Hok Lee, what is the matter with your face? One side of it is all swelled up."

True enough, Hok Lee's right cheek was twice the size of his left, and it soon began to feel very uncomfortable. "I will bind up my face," said Hok Lee, "doubtless the warmth will cure the swelling." But no such thing. Next day it was worse, and day by day it grew bigger and bigger till it was nearly as large as his head and became very painful.

Hok Lee was at his wit's ends what to do. Not only was his cheek unsightly and painful, but his neighbors began to jeer and make fun of him, which hurt his feelings very much indeed.

One day, as luck would have it, a traveling doctor came to the town. He sold not only all kinds of medicine, but also dealt in many strange charms against witches and evil spirits. Hok Lee determined to consult him, and asked him into his house.

After the doctor had examined him carefully, he spoke thus, "This, O Hok Lee, is no ordinary swelled face. I strongly suspect you have been doing some wrong deed which has called down the anger of the spirits on you. None of my drugs will avail to cure you, but, if you are willing to pay me handsomely, I can tell you how you may be cured."

Then Hok Lee and the doctor began to bargain together, and it was a long time before they could come to terms. However, the doctor got the better of it in the end, for he was determined not to part with his secret under a certain price, and Hok Lee had no mind to carry his huge cheek about with him to the end of his days. So he was obliged to part with the greater portion of his ill-gotten gains.

When the Doctor had pocketed the money, he told Hok Lee to go on the first night of the full moon to a certain wood and there to watch by a particular tree. After a time he would see the dwarfs and little sprites who live underground come out to dance. When they saw him they would be sure to make him dance too. "And mind you dance your very best," added the doctor. "If you dance well and please them they will grant you a petition and you can then beg to be cured; but if you dance badly they will most likely do you some mischief out of spite." With that he took leave and departed.

Happily the first night of the full moon was near, and at the proper time Hok Lee set out for the wood. With a little trouble he found the tree the doctor had described, and, feeling nervous, he climbed up into it.

He had hardly settled himself on a branch when he saw the little dwarfs assembling in the moonlight. They came from all sides, till at length there appeared to be hundreds of them. They seemed in high glee, and danced and skipped and capered about, whilst Hok Lee grew so eager watching them that he crept further and further along his branch till at length it gave a loud crack. All the dwarfs stood still, and Hok Lee felt as if his heart stood still also.

Then one of the dwarfs called out, "Someone is up in that tree. Come down at once, whoever you are, or we must come and fetch you."

In great terror, Hok Lee proceeded to come down; but he was so nervous that he tripped near the ground and came rolling down in the most absurd manner. When he had picked himself up, he came forward with a low bow, and the dwarf who had first spoken and who appeared to be the leader, said, "Now, then, who art thou, and what brings thee here?"

So Hok Lee told him the sad story of his swelled cheek, and how he had been advised to come to the forest and beg the dwarfs to cure him.

"It is well," replied the dwarf. "We will see about that. First, however, thou must dance before us. Should thy dancing please us, perhaps we may be able to do something; but shouldst thou dance badly, we shall assuredly punish thee, so now take warning and dance away."

With that, he and all the other dwarfs sat down in a large ring, leaving Hok Lee to dance alone in the middle. He felt half frightened to death, and besides was a good deal shaken by his fall from the tree and did not feel at all inclined to dance. But the dwarfs were not to be trifled with.

"Begin!" cried their leader, and "Begin!" shouted the rest in chorus.

So in despair Hok Lee began. First he hopped on one foot and then on the other, but he was so stiff and so nervous that he made but a poor attempt, and after a time sank down on the ground and vowed he could dance no more.

The dwarfs were very angry. They crowded round Hok Lee and abused him. "Thou to come here to be cured, indeed!" they cried, "thou hast brought one big cheek with thee, but thou shalt take away two." And with that they ran off and disappeared, leaving Hok Lee to find his way home as best he might.

He hobbled away, weary and depressed, and not a little anxious on account of the dwarfs' threat.

Nor were his fears unfounded, for when he rose next morning his left cheek was swelled up as big as his right, and he could hardly see out of his eyes. Hok Lee felt in despair, and his neighbors jeered at him more than ever. The doctor, too, had disappeared, so there was nothing for it but to try the dwarfs once more.

He waited a month till the first night of the full moon came round again, and then he trudged back to the forest, and sat down under the tree from which he had fallen. He had not long to wait. Ere long the dwarfs came trooping out till all were assembled.

"I don't feel quite easy," said one; "I feel as if some horrid human being were near us."

When Hok Lee heard this he came forward and bent down to the ground before the dwarfs, who came crowding round, and laughed heartily at his comical appearance with his two big cheeks.

"What dost thou want?" they asked; and Hok Lee proceeded to tell them of his fresh misfortunes, and begged so hard to be allowed one more trial at



dancing that the dwarfs consented, for there is nothing they love so much as being amused.

Now, Hok Lee knew how much depended on his dancing well, so he plucked up a good spirit and began, first quite slowly, and faster by degrees, and he danced so well and gracefully, and made such new and wonderful steps, that the dwarfs were quite delighted with him.

They clapped their tiny hands, and shouted, "Well done, Hok Lee, well done; go on, dance more, for we are pleased."

And Hok Lee danced on and on, till he really could dance no more, and was obliged to stop.

Then the leader of the dwarfs said, "We are well pleased, Hok Lee, and as a recompense for thy dancing thy face shall be cured. Farewell."

With these words he and the other dwarfs vanished, and Hok Lee, putting his hands to his face, found to his great joy that his cheeks were reduced to their natural size. The way home seemed short and easy to him, and he went to bed happy, and resolved never to go out robbing again.

Next day the whole town was full of the news of Hok's sudden cure. His neighbors questioned him, but could get nothing from him, except the fact that he had discovered a wonderful cure for all kinds of diseases.

After a time a rich neighbor, who had been ill for some years, came, and offered to give Hok Lee a large sum of money if he would tell him how he might get cured. Hok Lee consented on condition that he swore to keep the secret. He did so, and Hok Lee told him of the dwarfs and their dances.

The neighbor went off, carefully obeyed Hok Lee's directions, and was duly cured by the dwarfs. Then another and another came to Hok Lee to beg his secret, and from each he extracted a vow of secrecy and a large sum of money. This went on for some years, so that at length Hok Lee became a very wealthy man, and ended his days in peace and prosperity.

# CHUKCHEE

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## THE YOUTH WHO RECEIVED SUPERNATURAL POWERS FROM THE KE'LET

**Tradition Bearer:** Rin'to

**Source:** Bogoras, Waldemar. "Chukchee Mythology." *The Jessup North Pacific Expedition*, ed. Franz Boas. *Memoir of the American Museum of Natural History New York*. Vol. VIII. New York: The American Museum of Natural History New York, 1910, 34–42.

**Date:** 1900

**Original Source:** Chukchee

**National Origin:** Siberia

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The traditional home of the Chukchee was far northeastern reaches of Siberia, where temperatures average  $-12$  degrees Celsius. Their indigenous culture was divided into two groups: nomadic reindeer herders or coastal dwellers. The Reindeer Chukchee relied on their herds for both transportation and sustenance, while the coastal dwellers exploited maritime resources, such as fish and sea mammals. As seen in the following narrative, the Chukchee world was populated by many spirits, and the shamans were invested with personal power (usually acquired from a tutelary spirit) that allowed them to divine, cure, and supernaturally attack their neighbors—abilities that led to their being both valued and feared. Death and rebirth and bizarre behavior at the onset of power are typical of shamanism cross-culturally.

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Once upon a time there were only three of them. The son was suffering, so the parents (even) could not sleep. A strong gale was blowing. Notwithstanding (the noise), they heard the clattering of sledge-runners.

The man's wife looked out into the darkness and saw the visitors. They were re'kkeñ [evil supernatural beings]. She said, "Oh, they are coming down upon us! Their reindeer were breathing fire. They came and entered the house. The suffering one immediately even ceased to moan. "Oh, we come for provisions. Oh, dear! with what are you going to treat us?"

"Oh, with thong-seal meat."

"We are not used to it. Oh, with what are you going to treat us?"

"With ring-seal meat."

"We do not eat such things."

They pointed at the direction of the suffering one. "We want that one."

"Indeed, there is nothing there."

Then one of them entered the sleeping-room, caught the suffering one by the ankle and carried him out. As soon as they had caught him, they only did thus with their mouths, whp! And only his bones were left. His little mother cried. Then one of the (re'kkeñ) took off his overcoat, picked up the bones and put them into the overcoat. The ke'let [spirit] did so with the bones of that man. Then they went out and said, "We are going away, watch us." The old woman watched them when they were going to their sledges. They came to the sledges and emptied the overcoat, flinging its contents in the direction of the house. And there was that one just now eaten by them. They restored him, the suffering one, to life. He came to the house, quite naked. And he had acquired great shamanistic power. He entered the house naked.

He seemed to be out of his wits. All at once he would strike his own body with a boulder, and the boulder would crumble to a mere nothing. From every settlement in the neighborhood there came inquisitive people. They wanted to kill him, and all at once they struck him with a spear. But his body was as hard as stone. And they could not do anything.

After a while he married. His wife was very pretty. So the other people, the wrong-doers, felt a desire to have this woman. They took this shaman and carried him to the (open) country. There they strangled him, and he was killed. They took his wife and went with her to the house. Then they saw the one whom they had just killed sitting in the house, as before. "Oh, again! Oh, dear! What shall we do?" The woman was too pretty.

So they dug a cellar, filled it with insects, hairy grubs. These grubs soon became quite large in size. Then they called him.

[He said to the woman], "Oh, but now I must give up the struggle. Now they will take you for good. But you must remember to dig the ground in the cellar." They pushed him into the cellar. The grubs caught him and consumed him. Then (his enemies) took the woman.

As soon as night came, she went away quietly and followed a trail. This was the working-trail of her husband. She followed the trail, and found the duodenum of a reindeer hanging on a bush. She stopped there and made a fire. After that she departed again and felt thirsty. She saw a river quite filled with grubs,

so she did not drink from that river. After a while she saw a lake. It was full of fish, but from this lake she could take a drink. At last she found her husband. He was standing outside a house, and was working at something. He said to her, "You have come?"

Meanwhile he had married also among the ke'let. The other wife said to her, "Put on my combination-suit!"

But her husband said, "Do not put it on, you will die."

His other wife said, "At least do look upon me!"

Her husband said, "Do not look upon her. She will take your soul." This was a ke'let woman: therefore, if she had looked upon her, she would have died immediately.

The other woman said again, "At least do sit on my pillow-bag!"

"Do not sit down. She will kill your child."

The human wife went out and busied herself in the outer tent. His other wife had made a cellar in the outer tent. In the darkness the human wife fell into that cellar. At last the child began to cry quite loud. Their husband said, "Oh, where is she?" He questioned his other wife. "Don't you know anything about her?"

"Oh, I do not know anything at all." Oho, the child was crying quite loud.

Their husband said, "Now, then, give me the drum!" Then he looked for his wife among the various Beings and could not find her. Then he set off (to visit) other kinds of Beings, those of the Morning Dawn, and she was not there. "Oh, oh, oh! How very extraordinary! I cannot find her." Again he struck the drum. This time he went to the Mid-Day, and searched for her there. She was not there.

He said to his ke'let wife, "It is you, who did (harm) to her." The ke'let wife answered him, "Why should I have done (harm) to my working-companion, my wife mate?"

"Now then, give me the drum again!" He searched for her among the Ground-Beings and saw her. He said to her, "Oh, what are you doing here?" She was starving.

She said, "It is your wife who made this cellar for me with the desire of murdering me."

Then her husband said, "Now let us leave her! She is bad, and so we shall be made childless."

"Oh," he said to his ke'let wife, "you are an experienced shaman! Do practice your art a little, and let us have some recreation."

"Aha, all right!" The woman practiced her art. The shaman, her husband, made a man of excrement, to give her the usual answers.

Then the woman practiced her art. The man made a fire all around the house, and flames flashed up. Meanwhile the mannikin made of excrement was giving answer, "Ġit, ġit, ġit." He proved to be quite lively. Then the ke'let woman felt quite warm, because the house was ablaze, and the fire approached the sleeping-room. The husband and his human wife went far away, taking with them their obsidian scraper.

At last the ke'let woman appeared from the sleeping-room, because she felt too hot. And the man made of excrement, who was giving answer, was down-cast, because the excrement was melting. He could only call out feebly, "Ġit, ġit," because this lively answerer was melting in the heat.

Then the tip of the tongue of the ke'let woman jumped out and rushed in pursuit of the fugitives. It was quite swift, and soon drew near. The man said, "Now put down the obsidian scraper!" A big mountain originated, quite slippery. The tip of the tongue would climb up halfway, and then slide down again. Still, somehow it succeeded in crossing it, and continued the pursuit.

They stuck into the ground a piece of wood, and it turned into a dense wood. The wood had no openings, and was quite thick and dense. When passing through that wood, the tongue came to be covered with blood. Still it passed through it, and continued the pursuit. Then the man said to his wife, "Draw a line on the ground with the little finger of your left hand!" This time a river originated. As soon as the tongue left the bank, it was carried down by the current, because the river was flowing in rapids. Still it crossed the river. Then the man said to his wife, "Draw another line on the ground!"

They apply all kinds of means: it crosses again and pursues them. At last he ordered her to draw a line with soot of her lamp, using her right hand. When the tongue came to that soot river, it felt superstitious fear, and could not cross it. Then they went away and disappeared. The tongue probably turned back.

The human beings ascended to the Morning Dawn. There in the upper world they died of old age. The name of the shaman is Tai'pat. His son took his abode on the moon, and became a Sacrifice-Being. They throw up to him some thong, and in doing this they throw that thong upon every kind of game. They sacrifice also blood to the moon.

The mother was immortal. And she became the Left-Side Morning Dawn. Those probably were the people from the time of first creation.

Those that possess evil charms also dwell upon the moon in another place. Also Epilepsy was created. Of old the people were immortal. Also Coughing-of-Blood comes from there. And also a man who is visited by his enemy's anger and ceases to catch game, his misfortune is also from there. It is necessary to be on guard, else even the lucky one may feel want. Truly, the game is made scarce by supernatural means. Then it becomes hard to kill. The sacrificing-shamans also have been created from there, and every kind of "Beings" [benevolent spirits], at least part of them. The end. Let the wind cease!

## RAVEN'S CREATION

**Tradition Bearer:** Aε'ttin-qeu

**Source:** Bogoras, Waldemar. "Chukchee Mythology." *The Jessup North Pacific Expedition*, ed. Franz Boas. *Memoir of the American Museum of Natural History New York*.

Vol. VIII. New York: The American Museum of Natural History New York, 1910, 151–154.

**Date:** 1900

**Original Source:** Chukchee

**National Origin:** Siberia

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Native cultures on both sides of the Bering Strait cast the raven as creator, **trickster**, and **culture hero**. In the following Chukchee **myth**, raven (Ku'urkîl, "the self-created one") brings the physical universe, trees, and animals into being. With the help of powerful female figures, his wife and spider woman, he populates the new universe with human beings.

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**R**aven and his wife live together—the first one, not created by any one, Raven, the one self-created. The ground upon which they live is quite small, corresponding only to their wants, sufficient for their place of abode. Moreover, there are no people on it, nor is there any other living creature, nothing at all—no reindeer, no walrus, no whale, no seal, no fish, not a single living being. The woman says, "Ku'urkîl [that is, Raven]."

"What?"

"But we shall feel dull, being quite alone. This is an unpleasant sort of life. Better go and try to create the earth!"

"I cannot, truly!"

"Indeed, you can!"

"I assure you, I cannot!"

"Oh, well, since you cannot create the earth, then I, at least, shall try to create a spleen-companion."

"Well, we shall see!" said Raven.

"I will go to sleep," said his wife.

"I shall not sleep," said Ku'urkîl. "I shall keep watch over you. I shall look and see how you are going to be."

"All right!" She lay down and was asleep. Ku'urkîl is not asleep. He keeps watch, and looks on. Nothing she is as before. His wife, of course, had the body of a raven, just like himself. He looked from the other side: the same as before. He looked from the front, and there her feet had ten human fingers, moving slowly. "Oh, my!" He stretches out his own feet—the same raven's talons. "Oh," says he, "I cannot change my body!"

Then he looks on again, and his wife's body is already white and without feathers, like ours. "Oh, my!" He tries to change his own body, but how can he do so? Although he chafes it, and pulls at the feathers, how can he do such a thing? The same raven's body and raven's feathers!

Again he looks at his wife. Her abdomen has enlarged. In her sleep she creates without any effort. He is frightened, and turns his face away. He is afraid to look any more. He says, "Let me remain thus, not looking on!" After a little while he wants to look again, and cannot abstain any longer. Then he looked again, and, lo! there are already three of them. His wife was delivered in a moment. She brought forth male twins. Then only did she awake from her sleep.

All three have bodies like ours, only Raven has the same raven's body. The children laugh at Raven, and ask the mother, "Mamma, what is that?"

"It is the father."

"Oh, the father! Indeed! Ha, ha, ha!" They come nearer, push him with their feet. He flies off, crying, "Qa, qa!" They laugh again. "What is that?"

"The father."

"Ha, ha, ha! the father!" They laugh all the time.

The mother says, "O children! You are still foolish. You must speak only when you are asked to. It is better for us, the full-grown ones, to speak here. You must laugh only when you are permitted to. You have to listen and obey." They obeyed and stopped laughing.

Raven said, "There, you have created men! Now I shall go and try to create the earth. If I do not come back, you may say, 'He has been drowned in the water, let him stay there!' I am going to make an attempt." He flew away. First he visited all the benevolent Beings and asked them for advice, but nobody gave it. He asked the Dawn—no advice. He asked Sunset, Evening, Mid-day, Zenith—no answer and no advice. At last he came to the place where sky and ground come together. There, in a hollow, where the sky and the ground join, he saw a tent. It seemed full of men. They were making a great noise. He peeped in through a hole burnt by a spark, and saw a large number of naked backs. He jumped away, frightened, ran aside, and stood there trembling. In his fear he forgot all his pride in his recent intentions.

One naked one goes out. "Oh! it seemed that we heard some one passing by, but where is he!"

"No, it is I," came an answer from one side.

"Oh, how wonderful! Who are you?"

"Indeed, I am going to become a creator. I am Ku'urkîl, the self-created one."

"Oh, is that so?"

"And who are you?"

"We have been created from the dust resulting from the friction of the sky meeting the ground. We are going to multiply and to become the first seed of all the peoples upon the earth. But there is no earth. Could not somebody create the earth for us?"

"Oh, I will try!" Raven and the man who spoke flew off together. Raven flies and defecates. Every piece of excrement falls upon water, grows quickly,

and becomes land. Every piece of excrement becomes land—the continent and islands, plenty of land. “Well,” says Raven, “Look on, and say, is this not enough?”

“Not yet,” answers his companion. “Still not sufficient. Also there is no fresh water; and the land is too even. Mountains there are none.”

“Oh,” says Raven, “shall I try again?” He began to pass water. Where one drop falls, it becomes a lake; where a jet falls, it becomes a river. After that he began to defecate a very hard substance. Large pieces of that excrement became mountains, smaller pieces became hills. The whole earth became as it is now.

Then he asks, “Well, how is it now?”

The other one looked. “It seems still not enough. Perhaps it would have been sufficient if there had not been so much water. Now some day the water shall increase and submerge the whole land, even the mountain-tops will not be visible.”

Oh, Raven, the good fellow, flew farther on. He strains himself to the utmost, creates ground, exhausts himself, and creates water for the rivers and lakes. “Well, now, look down! Is this not enough?”

“Perhaps it is enough. If a flood comes, at least the mountain-tops will remain above water. Yes, it is enough! Still, what shall we feed upon?”

Oh, Raven, the good fellow, flew off, found some trees, many of them, of various kinds—birch, pine, poplar, aspen, willow, stone-pine, oak. He took his hatchet and began to chop. He threw the chips into the water, and they were carried off by the water to the sea. When he hewed pine, and threw the chips into the water, they became mere walrus; when he hewed oak, the chips became seals. From the stone-pine the chips became polar bears; from small creeping black birch, however, the chips became large whales. Then also the chips from all the other trees became fish, crabs, worms, every kind of beings living in the sea; then, moreover, wild reindeer, foxes, bears, and all the game of the land. He created them all, and then he said, “Now you have food! hm!” His children, moreover, became men, and they separated and went in various directions. They made houses, hunted game, procured plenty of food, became people.

Nevertheless they were all males only. Women there were none, and the people could not multiply. Raven began to think, “What is to be done?” A small Spider-Woman is descending from above on a very slender thread. “Who are you?”

“I am a Spider-Woman!”

“Oh, for what are you coming here?”

“Well, I thought, ‘How will the people live, being only males, without females?’ Therefore I am coming here.”

“But you are too small.”

“That is nothing. Look here!” Her abdomen enlarged, she became pregnant, and then gave birth to four daughters. They grew quite fast and became women. “Now, you shall see!”



A man came—that one who was flying around with Raven. He saw them, and said, “What beings are these, so like myself and at the same time quite different? Oh, I should like to have one of them for a companion! We have separated, and live singly. This is uncomfortable. I am dull, being alone. I want to take one of these for a companion.”

“But perhaps it will starve!”

“Why should it starve? I have plenty of food. We are hunters, all of us. No, I will have it fed abundantly. It shall not know hunger at all.”

## THE SCABBY SHAMAN

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Bogoras, Waldemar. “The Folklore of Northeastern Asia as Compared with that of Northwest America.” *American Anthropologist* 4 (1902): 596–602.

**Date:** 1900

**Original Source:** Chukchee

**National Origin:** Siberia

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The following narrative provides a thorough description of the Chukchee concept of the relative positions of and the relationships among the various worlds that make up their conception of the universe. Shamans, as seen in the tale, have the power to read thoughts, travel, and send envoys to other worlds, and raise the dead. In addition, the events reveal both the malevolent and benign sides of the Chukchee shamans.

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There lived in the midland country a mighty shaman, Meemgin by name, rich in reindeer. He had eighty houses, all well filled with people, and eight large herds. His reindeer were like fallen boughs in a forest. His only son, Rintew, suddenly died. Meemgin sought for him throughout the whole earth, searched all worlds, and could not find him. In great sorrow he sat down in his sleeping-room and ceased to practice his art, not wanting to go out. His son’s body lay before him on a skin. Three years it lay there. All the flesh had decayed and fallen off, because three years had passed by. The joints had become loosened, and the intestines had fallen out upon the skin and mingled with the decayed hair.

At last the father arose, called two of his working-men, and said, “Beyond the limits of the earth, where the earth meets the sky, lives the greatest of all shamans, Scabby-one. Call on him, and say to him, “Meemgin requests you to revive his son.” He selected for his messengers four of his best reindeer. He hitched up, bade the men sit down, laid the reins on the reindeer, and put the

nooses around the men's wrists; then he charmed the heads and ears of the reindeer, the sledges, and the harness. Then he blew on the reindeer, and they flew away high up in the air like geese.

Scabby-one has a hundred houses, which stand on the "attainable limit of the sky." He lies in his sleeping-room unable to move. His whole body is covered with scabs. His mouth and palate, hands and feet, lips and eyes, soles, and ends of his nails, are covered with scabs. His wife moves him about like a log. Before the arrival of the messengers he said to his wife, "Place me near the rear wall and give me my drum, I shall beat it for a while, I shall look around in a dream." He struck the drum, which hung on a line from the ceiling because he was unable to hold it. After awhile he said to his wife, "Have plenty of food cooked today. Guests are coming."

He had hardly finished speaking when the men came. "Oh!" said Scabby-one, "who are you, and who sent you?"

"We are Meemgin's men."

"How did you travel?"

"With reindeer."

"What are reindeer? What are they like?"

"Don't you know? What do you and your people live on; there are so many of you? What kind of herds do you keep?"

"Herds of dogs. We live on dog meat." And indeed around the houses were walking innumerable dogs, large and fat, equal in size to reindeer. "Bring me your reindeer. I want to look at them." The men did so. The shaman looked them over and over, and said, "These reindeer are mine."

They thought, "Now, how are we going to get back?"

He guessed their thoughts immediately, and said, "Why do you doubt me? Do I need your reindeer?"

They thought again, "How can he take our reindeer? The dogs will tear them to pieces."

Well," replied Scabby-one, though nobody spoke a word, "I can so arrange that the dogs won't worry them. Bring the reindeer here." He charmed their ears, noses, and mouths; and the reindeer went to the houses, lifting their tails like dogs. "Let us go," said Scabby-one. There was a steep mountain close to the village. "Let us climb up," said he. They took him by his arms and carried him off to the top. "Now, lie down to sleep," said Scabby-one, and he made them lie down side by side. As soon as they had shut their eyes, he bade all the grass on the mountain-top to gather around his hands, and began to make a grass harness. When it was finished, he commanded it to tie itself around the necks of the sleepers. Then he took the reins and rode across the sky, alighting on the mountain near Meemgin's village. The two men did not know what had happened, but all the while remained in a deep sleep.

Scabby-one entered Meemgin's house. The father was sitting before the decayed body of his son, and did not even lift his head. "I have come at your

call,” said Scabby-one. “Although it may be difficult to find him who has been carried away, still an attempt may be made. And we are both equally gifted in magic. Have you sought for your son?”

“I have.”

“Where have you sought?”

“Everywhere.”

“Have you found anything?”

“Nothing.”

“In the sky above our heads are numerous shining stars. Have you looked among them?”

“I have.”

“Well?”

“Nothing.”

“Oh, where can we find your son if he is not there?”

“In the sea yonder live numerous large animals, walruses, thongseals, small seals. Have you looked among them?”

“I have.”

“Well?”

“Nothing.”

“Oh, where can we find your son if he is not there?”

“In the depths of the sea live another set of medium-sized beings, white, red, gray fishes, naked or covered with scales. Have you sought among those?”

“I have.”

“Well?”

“Nothing.”

“Oh, where can we find him if not there!”

“On the bottom of the sea live a third set of small beings—shells, star-fish, worms, sea-bugs. Have you looked among those?”

“I have.”

“Well?”

“Nothing.”

“Oh, where shall we find him if not there?”

“On the land all kinds of animals are running around—reindeer, foxes, bears, hares, wolves. On the earth’s skin creep various insects—white-capped beetles, centipedes, lady-bugs, and black beetles. Through the earth’s bosom countless red worms are squeezing themselves. Have you sought among all these?”

“Yes.”

“Well?”

“Nothing.”

“Oh, where can we find him if he is not there?”

“On the earth’s surface grow countless weeds and herbs. Have you looked among those, from one stalk to another?”

“I have.”

“Have you looked over all willow-sprouts in the brush? Have you looked over all larch trees in the forest?”

“Yes, I have.”

“The banks of the rivers are covered with pebbles. Have you sought among those?”

“Yes.”

“Well?”

“Nothing.”

“Oh, where shall we find your son if he is not there?”

“Everything visible and tangible, all that exists on the earth—have you looked over all that?”

“Yes.”

“Well?”

“Nothing.”

“Under this earth exists another world, belonging to the ke’let. It has skies of its own, stars, sun and moon, land and sea. Have you looked over all that exists on that earth, the stars above, the fishes in the sea, the herbs of the field, and the worms in the soil?”

“Yes.”

“Well?”

“Nothing.”

“Under that world there is a third world, peopled with men. It too has a sun and a moon, stars, and waters. Have you sought among the things in that world?”

“Yonder, above the outer side of the sky, there is a world, belonging to the upper ke’let, with new stars, sun and moon, and sea. Have you looked among them?”

“Over that world there exists one more, belonging to men, having earth and stars, with game in the forests, and fish in the water. Have you sought there?”

“Yes.”

“Which world has more life, the upper or the under one?”

“They are just equal.”

“Which sea has more fish, which land more game, which air more birds, the upper or the under one?”

“They are just equal.”

“Have you searched the world of sunset?”

“Yes.”

“Have you searched the world of sunrise, and that of the last rays of the twilight, and that of the noon, and that of the midnight?”

“Yes, every one. He is nowhere.”

“Highest of all there is a small world quite by itself, belonging to the female ke’let bird. Have you looked there?”

“No. I don’t know it.”

“He is probably there. The bird must have carried away your boy. I will go and see.”

He rattled with the drum and sank into the earth. Then far away was heard the clatter of the drum. Rising out of the ground, he flew upward with his drum to the world of the ke’let bird.

Two worlds were on his road. Twice he went up, and then came down again, crossing his own tracks like a hunted fox. Then he reached the small world above, and found a large stone house. Looking down the vent-hole, he saw a sleeping-room of stone. As he looked through its walls, he saw the boy’s soul pinioned with iron bands behind the large lamp, each joint tied separately. The WE-bird had carried him away for her food, and pinioned him there. Every morning she would ask, “What kind of food did you eat on earth?”

“I ate reindeer-meat, seal-blubber, walrus-fat, and whale-skin.” Then she would fly away over the three worlds, and would bring back every kind of meat, which she gave him to make him fatter. Huge pieces of fat and meat were suspended from the stone walls of the house. At the time of the shaman’s arrival the bird was not at home; but two re’kkeñ [evil being] dogs were tied in front of the entrance. Their ears kept turning toward every direction and noticed even the slightest noise. Scabby-one transformed himself into a mosquito and attempted to fly in, but the monsters snapped at him when they heard the buzzing of his wings. He turned into a gadfly, but to no avail. He turned into a white-capped beetle, but with no better success. “Oh, bad luck!” he cried. He turned into a carrion-fly, and in this shape flew into the house.

The re’kkeñ dogs did not hinder him, because there were many carrion-flies around the meat. He went into the sleeping-room, cut the soul’s bonds and transformed it into another carrion-fly. They escaped from the house, and made their way toward their own world, crossing their tracks as before, and turning hither and thither like hunted foxes. When they had reached the lowest sky, however, the ke’let bird overtook them. She shouted, “Ko, ko, ko! Why did you carry away my little boy?”

“Stolen from the thief, restored to the owner,” answered Scabby-one.

“Give him back to me, or I shall kill you!”

The beating of her wings made them flutter in the air like dry leaves. “Oh,” said Scabby-one, “she really wants to kill me. Now I shall try.” Pulling his right hand up his sleeve, he moved his little finger upwards. Fire fell down, singeing the ME-bird’s wings. “Oh, oh!” cried she, “indeed, you want to kill me. Now it is my turn.” She beat her wings again; but to no avail, for her feathers were singed.

Then Scabby-one killed the ke’let bird and burnt her to ashes. “Let us make haste,” said Scabby-one. The people in Meemgin’s house heard a distant clatter. It descended, sank into the earth, and after a while rose in the middle of the sleeping-room. “I have brought the boy. Let us make haste!” said Scabby-one. He called his ke’let and gave them the boy’s soul to hold, and then looked hard at the decayed heap and gulped it down, spattering the putrid fluid about. Then

he shouted, "Bring a new white skin!" He vomited, and spat out the boy's body. All the bones were in their right places, and the flesh stuck to the bones again. Then he swallowed the body a second time and spat it out again. It was covered with new skin, all sores were smoothed down. He swallowed it a third time and spat it out again: blood mounted in the cheeks, and the lips almost wanted to speak. Scabby-one shouted, "Give me the soul!" He swallowed it and spat it down on the body. The soul passed through the body and stuck in the wall of the house. "The body is too cold," said Scabby-one; "it will not hold together." He swallowed the body a fourth time, warmed it in his stomach, and spat it out again on the skin. Then he flung the soul at it. "Oh, oh, oh!" sighed the boy, and then sat down on the skin.

Then Scabby-one was paid with a herd of reindeer. He said, "I am going now. Let all people enter the house and not come out again, because I shall take with me everything that is outside. You must take good care of the boy. Since he has come back from the dead, he will be a great shaman, even greater than I; but his heart and mind will incline to the bad. Still do not thwart him, for, if you do, he will over-power you." He beat his drum, began an incantation, and moved around the house. Presently the sound of the song, the rattling of the drum, and the clattering of the reindeer-hoofs were heard ascending higher and higher, first to the level of the vent-hole, then over it; then it gradually vanished upward.

As soon as Scabby-one had left, Rintew began to maltreat the people. He ran about in the night outraging every woman, even the oldest, and beating every man. The people were powerless against him. If they tried to work evil charms against him, he caught the charms, gathered the secret words of the would-be sorcerers in a mitten, and in the morning distributed them among their owners, saying, "This is your word, and this is yours, and this is yours."

His father began to repent of his restoration to life, for the people were coming every day with fresh complaints. Finally he said, "We will remove him to another world." He went towards sunset to find a ke'let witch.

The witch immediately complied with his request and went to Meemgin's house, carrying her long staff with blood-stained point. She posted herself in ambush before the entrance, but Rintew guessed her purpose, turned into a white goose, and flew away through the vent-hole. The witch gave chase, but he escaped to the land of darkness. Then he lost his way in the dark, wandered around, and suddenly stumbled over a screech-owl, which said, "Oh, oh! Don't kick me!"

"Why, are you a man too?"

"Yes, we are residents of this country, and have a house here in the darkness."

"If you are residents here, give me shelter; I am weary, and want to sleep."

"Come in," said the owl; and he put him under his wing. He continued, "When you want to pass water, ask for a tub."

The next day he went on, and had a similar adventure with an eagle. In the morning he bade him farewell. "There is your way," said the eagle, pointing

straight ahead, where a small bright spot was visible, not larger than the hole made in the reindeer-skin by a reindeer fly's larva. "That light comes from the bright world. You must know, however, that the old woman has placed her staff across the entrance the whole length of the earth. She has transformed it into a high ridge of iron mountains. She has split herself in two, and each half keeps guard at one end of the staff. Do not try to go around the ridge, but climb across it, no matter how steep it may be. Go straight ahead to the place where you see a red line glowing, like red rust on iron. It is the blood with which the point of her staff is smeared. If you try to go around the ridge you will be killed. Even if you were the greatest of all shamans you would be killed."

In due time Rintew reached the mountains. They were quite vertical. Still he began to climb, clinging to the iron rocks with his nails and teeth. After a few steps he lost his foothold and tumbled down, but to his amazement he found himself on the other side of the mountains. Thus Rintew came back home and immediately resumed his old tricks. His father made a second attempt to put him out of the way, and summoned a little old woman of the Kerek tribe [a branch of the Siberian Koryak with a great reputation for sorcery], who succeeded in depriving Rintew of his senses, and then sent him outdoors to fetch some small thing. Meanwhile she transformed the sleeping-room into one world, and the house into another. Thus when leaving the house he really went out of two worlds. He recovered his senses on a high cliff, astride of a piece of rock overhanging the sea, and in such a position that the slightest motion would have made him lose his hold. He sat there for five days, when at last he saw a raven flying by. "O, Rintew! man of many tricks, how did you get there?"

"I don't know."

"Get down!"

"I cannot."

"Will not any of your tricks make you free?"

"You had better come and help me."

"What are you ready to pay?"

"Anything you want."

"When you come home, kill every living thing for my food."

"All right."

"Then hold your breath and listen. One day and one night will pass away, then you will see a drift-log carried by on the waves. When it is close by, leap down from your seat; don't think whether you will break your neck or not. When you have alighted on the log, you will pass into the open sea. Shut your eyes, then you will reach the shore. When you hear the rattle of the pebbles, go ahead to firm ground. With eyes shut, take a handful of pebbles and pour them from one hand into the other. They will become softer and softer. When at last you feel that they are as soft as cloudberries, throw them behind you over your head. Then you will be lifted and carried across another sea. Shut your eyes and take a handful of pebbles, and pour them from hand to hand. Again you will be carried

across the sea. On that shore you will find a small camping-site. Search it attentively; you will find a needle. Then on another camping-site you will find a round bead as red as a cloudberry. When you reach home, make a small drum, skin a black beetle to cover it, then perform the thanksgiving rites for the needle and the bead.”

In another version the mountain-ridge, though it appears very high from afar, assumes its real size—that of the woman’s staff—when he reaches it. After that he meets a large sea, which, when he reaches it, is seen to be a flat drum.

Thus Rintew came home and sent word to all his neighbors, saying he would perform a great ceremony. Meanwhile he began to construct a large wooden house, and finished it before all the people had assembled. They went into the building and entirely filled it. The Kerek witch came too, and he made a round mound for her seat, because she was so small. Then he started with his incantations. “Needle, come down!” he sang. It came down on a slender shining thread. He asked, “To whom shall I give it?”

“Me, me!” exclaimed all the women around. But the needle went up again, and vanished through the vent-hole.

Rintew beat his beetle-skin drum and chanted on. “When I wandered, lost among the unknown worlds, I held in my hand pebbles, which softened like cloudberry. Here is my cloudberry as hard as a pebble.” The cloudberry bead came down on the shining metal thread. “Who will take this pendant?”

“I will!” cried all the women around, and tried to lay hold of it.

Again Rintew beat his beetle-skin drum, and chanted on, “When I sat on the stone pillar overhanging the sea, I promised some trifle to the black raven. You cackling one, take now your booty! You little Kerek witch, do you feel gratified? Your charms will fall down on your own wicked body.” With a single leap he sprang out through the vent-hole. The beetle-skin drum followed, and, suddenly expanding, stuck in the opening. All doors and exits vanished. Of its own accord the drumstick began to beat the drum from beneath. The bead commenced to enlarge; at first it grew to the size of the upper piece of a drill, then to that of an infant’s head; then it became as large as a reindeer’s paunch, then as a blubber-bag, then as the carcass of a fat walrus, larger and larger, filling the house, and squeezing the people to the beams. The drumstick rattled on, the bead grew, blood oozed through the beams, the house burst and fell down. A bloody stream flowed to the sea from Rintew’s building.

Thus he exterminated all his people, and became the ancestor of a new tribe.

## THE AI’WAN SHAMANS

**Tradition Bearer:** Rıke’wgi

**Source:** Bogoras, Waldemar. “Chukchee Mythology.” *The Jessup North Pacific Expedition*, ed. Franz Boas. *Memoir of the American Museum of Natural History New York*. Vol. VIII. New York: The American Museum of Natural History New York, 1910, 7–25.



Date: 1900

Original Source: Chukchee

National Origin: Siberia

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The following narrative begins as a history of the enmity between two Chukchee bands. By its conclusion, the narrative has changed focus to the nature and acquisition of shamanic powers and the rituals used to treat the spirits that provide power to the practitioners.

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Once in olden times, the Ai'wan and the people of St. Lawrence Island were at war. One man from this shore met with misfortune through the wind. While on the ice fields he was carried away and spent two months on the ice fields. One day there was a fog, and no land was to be seen. Then he heard the roaring of walrus. Still he remained with head drawn back into his coat. Then he was visited by another man, by a shaman, who found him sleeping on [the surface of] the ice and awakened him, "Oh, how wonderful, you are here?" The other one looked up and, indeed, he wept aloud. The shaman said, "Do not weep! A settlement, though of St. Lawrence people, is quite near."

Then, suddenly, they saw it. They came ashore. A number of houses were there. The people were clad in bird-skin clothes. Those of St. Lawrence Island are also Ai'wan, their language being the same. They took hold of the strangers, they took captive those two men. They bound the shaman, the other one they killed with a drill, having perforated his head at the crown. After that they set free the shaman, intending to keep him as a slave.

He passed there only one night. When they were about to go to sleep, he went out and shouted toward the sea, calling the walrus spirit. Immediately from afar came the walrus. Oh, oh, the walrus came. Indeed, they were (as numerous) as sand. He walked along over their heads and went away. Then also the walrus which he had passed would come up in front. An old male walrus said, "Oh, now we are nearing the land. Your people are eager to pursue us. Oh, therefore some of us are going away. It seems that your people are bad." Oh, he said to two walrus, two year old ones, "Let us carry away our guest." By one of them he was made to sit on its body, and it dashed on, plunging along. The old walrus, the one that was most clever, followed it (like a leader). When one walrus got tired, he was made to sit on the other one.

When night came, they found a floe of sea-ice. The old walrus said, "Oh, all the people are tired. Let the people go to sleep." They put the man on [the surface of] the sea-ice. The old walrus said to the man, "Oh, you may sleep on [the surface of] the sea-ice. We will sleep by your side on the water." They inflated the crops on their throats and floated on the water like bladders. In due time the old walrus awoke. "Now let the people go along. Oh, my! you must be hungry."

“Oh yes!” said the man. It was still dark. The old walrus dived to the bottom of the sea and saw something like the [motionless star] Polar Star. He bent over it and it proved to be a shellfish. The little man was fed with those shellfish. They were quite warm and even hot. Probably the walrus cook them secretly, therefore they may have been hot.

They set off and moved on till midnight. The old walrus said, “It seems we are nearing land.” They moved on, and before the land was near, the dawn came. “Oh, you must be hungry again.”

“Oh yes!” The walrus again plunged down. This time he brought some shellfish of oblong shape. He ate again. “Now we are going to leave you. As soon as we shall see a floe of sea-ice, though a small one, we shall leave you on it.” Then they saw one. “Well, your people will be here this [dawn] morning. We are beginning to feel afraid.” They put him on the ice. “Oh, what are you doing, you are leaving me alone.”

“It is quite certain, that they will come.”

Then he was told by the walrus, “When you are overtaken by sleep, roar like a walrus, when you are going to sleep.” Then the walrus dashed on, plunging on the way. They went away, very far to the open sea. Soon after that he began to be overtaken by sleep. So he roared like a walrus and immediately turned into one.

When the dawn of the day came, some people approached in a boat and began to move along towards him. Before they were too near, he awoke. Just when the bowman was going to throw the harpoon, he said, “Oh, what are you going to do unto me?”

“Oh, dear! Is it not wonderful? You have become a walrus, and we came near killing you. Oh, whence did you come back?”

“Truly, it is bad. We come from a settlement of men. My companion, however, is not with me. Those people are wrong-doers. They drilled through his head and killed him.” He entered the house. “Oh, what news?”

“Truly, it is pitiful. Evil-doers are those people.”

The summer came. They went to war, the men of Uñi’sak, and probably from every neighboring settlement a number of boats assembled. Then a large company of boats set off. All boats were overloaded (with warriors). Before they were too near, they saw a cluster of houses of the St. Lawrence people standing on the seashore. In the rear of the houses was a bay of St. Lawrence Island; there actually a large part of the boatsmen went ashore. They walked along in the fog from the rear, just out of sight of the islanders. Then an old man, one of the crew said, “Oh, howl like wolves!” They had not been seen by the St. Lawrence people and they were not expected by them. Now, when they uttered their howls, another old man, one from St. Lawrence Island, said, “Oh, now they are coming.” The young men said, “But we are on an island.”

“Give answer to them!” So they roared like walrus. Then the old man, one of the boat’s crew, said again, “Oh, where are you? Now they have become our quarry.”

The larger part, those who had landed in the rear (of the houses), were still unknown to the St. Lawrence people. Those from St. Lawrence island hid by the seashore. But those from the boats attacked them from the rear and a slaughter ensued. The St. Lawrence women were already strangling themselves from mere fright. The others, at the same time, were mincing a large quantity of walrus blubber with their kitchen-knives, (preparing a meal for the victors). It was a great slaughter. Many St. Lawrence women were put on board the boats and brought over here.

Some years passed. The fourth year, the St. Lawrence people went to war. They landed in the night-time and found the people sleeping. So they started to murder them, thrusting their spears from outside under the outer tent-cover, all around the sleeping-room, and stabbing the sleepers. A small orphan child hid himself somewhere near the house, while they were still killing some of the sleepers, and before they had time to go to another house. He awakened all the neighbors. They rushed out. Then those from St. Lawrence Island fled to the open sea. Two men stayed behind on the ice-floe.

They lived on the ice-floe. Before the strong winds of autumn begin to blow, they came to steal some meat and so were taken captive. "Oh, we will not kill you." They, however, struggled on, not heeding these words. The next night, they stole some warm clothes and departed again. They went away together over the sea-ice, they walked along over the newly frozen sea. The ice was salt and yielded under every step.

Then they came to the shore. A St. Lawrence old man asked them, "Well, what kind of men are the land-people?"

"Oh, they are deucedly good."

"Oh, Oh," said the St. Lawrence old man, "Now let the (two) people become friendly to each other."

Summer came again. "Oh well, now let the people set off." Then the people of St. Lawrence Island came over here. They brought a quantity of wooden vessels, walrus hides, everything they had. They landed and the people became friends. So they distributed their vessels among our people. An old man from this side said, "Indeed, what will you give as return presents?" The visitors were clothed in bird skins. "What kind of skins are these?"

"Reindeer-skins."

"And what is a reindeer?" Then they showed them the reindeer-muzzles. They examined them. They said, "Oh, thus they are; like the holes in a boat cover, (namely in the walrus-hide cover, all along the border). Now then, eat some of the meat!" They cooked fat meat. "Oh, just like blubber!" They ate of it. "Oh, oh, quite exquisite!"

After that they went away. One man was left. He was a shaman, and he was treated just like the former one (that is, he was bound). When winter came, they set him free. The shaman had a sledge. So he departed in the night-time. He was hauling the sledge loaded with walrus-blubber. He moved on until he felt tired. It was full moon. At that time he was overtaken by another shaman,

one from the western country. That shaman also was hauling a sledge. The former heard only a noise above; that western shaman was flying along. On both sides he had long knives, which he used as wings. The other shaman who was hauling the sledge was startled and fled. When he was approached by the other one, just on his arrival, he also fled up with his sledge. Still, the other one was about to overtake him. Before he could catch up with him, (the other one) dived under ground, only the sledge remained there on the ground. Oh, the other one was unable to pursue him, the western shaman.

Then he sat down. "Oh, oh, oh; indeed; indeed! Not without reason was he talked about. Really I am much interested in seeing you." It seems that shaman was called Ke'mneku. "No shaman from any country whatsoever can vanquish me." Then Ke'mneku spoke to the ground downward. "Nevertheless you have frightened me. I thought you were a ke'let. Now come here." He appeared. "Give me your necklace. Let me give you this knife in exchange."

"No, I do not want to give it to you."

"Then I shall not be believed. Please, do give it to me."

"No, I won't."

"Then I will give you this big knife. Please, give me your necklace."

Then they exchanged their (assistant) spirits. And the other one gave him the necklace. He gave him the knife. The western shaman said to the other one, "Now then, move about with the knives." All at once the other one moved upwards in this manner. Then Ke'mneku said, after they had exchanged even their bodies, "Well, now put on the necklace; go away and fly up, just as I did. You will fly up, then sink down to the ground and plunge in." The other one flew up. Then, slowly moving he fell down, plunged into the ground, but (when he was in as far as) the middle of his body, he stuck fast. "Oh, I have been unable to do it. Give me your wrist-bands!"

"I will not give them to you."

"Then I will give you the tassel from my back. It is my tail, my guide in motion."

Then he consented. The western shaman said to him, after the tassel had been given [then he said to him], "Well now, fly up just as I did." He [himself] flew up and just went up clattering. The shaman from St. Lawrence Island said to the other one, "Well, now it is your turn." He gave him the wrist-bands. "You will fly up, then you will fall down again and plunge into the ground." Then the western shaman flew up. Slowly moving he fell down. Then he plunged into the ground and was submerged as in water. After a while he reappeared. He said, "Oh, oh, indeed; Ke'mneku is talked about. How is it now? I am unable (to pursue him). Still before this in my own mind I thought I could hardly be pursued by anyone. Oh, oh, truly; Ke'mneku has been talked about. How is it now? You have vanquished me. Oh, let us go away!" Then the western shaman flew up. They were traveling at night. In one night they traveled flying through every land. Ke'mneku said. "I am going away."

The western shaman came home. He said to his companions, "I saw a shaman from St. Lawrence Island. I was unable to follow him."

"You lie."

"Indeed, it is true."

"Well then, what kind (of a shaman) was he?" He showed the necklace. "This is his necklace."

"You lie. You have stolen it somewhere."

"Indeed, no!"

"Well then, what kind (of a shaman) was he?" Then he flew up with easy motion, then fell back to the ground and plunged in, as though it had been water. "Oh, really, you have acquired new shamanistic powers."

His father said to him, "Well now, let us see, whether he has really acquired new shamanistic powers. Go on, look for Children's-Death." He flew away night after night and traveled among all kinds of beings. Nothing. He came back to the house. By his father he was told, "What is the matter with you? You cause delay. Oh, surely he lied (to the people)." He departed again. This time he went underground. Then he came back and said, "I have been unable to do it." By his father he was told, "Oh, what is the matter with you?" By his son, the western shaman, (the father) was told, "Oh, but I could not find him among any kind of beings."

After that he went to the Being-of-Darkness. Then at last he saw a man; a mere mouth. This was Children's-Death. By the Darkness he was questioned, "What do you want?"

"By my father I have been sent. I was told, 'Go and look for Children's-Death'."

"Oh, oh, and for what purpose?"

"Only to show him to the people."

"Well, surely, he is in my neighbor's house."

He went there. There was an old man who dwelled in those regions, a mere mouth, smeared all around with dried blood. The shaman entered. "Oh, at last I see you." The other one questioned him.

[He replied], "By my father you are bidden to come."

"And for what purpose?"

"He said thus, 'I want to see the old woman yonder'." She refused to go.

"For what purpose?"

"They only want to see you. My father said, 'Go and look for Children's-Death'."

"Oh, but I refuse."

"Please come! It seems they will not believe me."

Then she consented. She said to him, "Sit down on my body." Then she flew up with him. A great noise spread around. It was very loud. And the whole world clattered and resounded. His father said, "Oh, what is the matter again? The world is full of noise. It appears that really he has acquired new shamanistic

powers.” In coming he let her plunge underground, and after that appear in the outer tent. “What luck?”

“It seems that this time I brought Children’s-Death.”

“Now bring her here. I want to see her.” She was as large as a tree. Still she decreased in size very quickly; and he put her on the palm of his hand before he showed her to them, so small had she come to be. Before she dwindled away, he spat on her, and she grew again. Then, on becoming thus, she decreased again in size. He made her plunge underground, then he made her appear. Then he took her in the other hand, and she became as large as before.

“Oh, that is you! You are the source of sorrow among every kind of beings, to those that have children. To whomsoever a child is born, it dies suddenly, and you are the cause of it. You are Children’s-Death. Now we will bind you.” They tied her with thongs, but she broke them all. Then they tied her with a grass-blade. She was struggling the whole night, but the grass-blade proved to be tough, (it could) not be broken by her. The whole night through there was clamor and weeping. Then they said to her, “Will you do evil the same as before?”

“Oh, no! Not now; not from now on. I will cease doing so.”

“Oh, but it seems to us, you will do evil again. You are bad, you are the source of trouble. You kill new-born children.”

“Oh, no! I have been made to obey by the angry ones (evil-minded conjurers). From now on, I shall not obey them. I repent having done so (heretofore). Oh, indeed! Set me free.”

“But it seems you will do evil again. Well, we will set you free.”

“From now on, I will turn to the Life-Giving-Being. Now the new-born child shall grow up, it shall die only in its old age.” Then they set her free.

She departed. Darkness asked her, “Well, how were you treated by the human beings?”

“Oh, I have been cruelly treated by them. Now I repent. Whatsoever I may be ordered to do by the angry ones, from now on I shall not obey them.” Darkness said, “That is your way. Though you say now, ‘I shall not obey the angry ones,’ still you lie. It seems, when you will be hungry again, you will comply again with their requests.” Nevertheless, when the angry ones spoke again, she paid no attention to them. Oh, but are the children dying only owing to the angry ones?

Again the (shaman’s) father sent him, “Go and look for Death, by whom people are killed.” Then again he sought among all kinds of beings, but could not find him. “What luck?”

“Oh, nothing.”

“Oh, I thought you were a shaman!” He departed again, this time underground. Again he could not find Death, and came back. “What luck?”

“Oh, I could not find him.”

“Oh, but what is the matter with you?” That was a wonderful father. Then he traveled along the crevices in the ground, and saw Iu’metun. Iu’metun was

black like coal, and had only three fingers on each hand. "Oh, that is you. You are the source of death." Iu'metun said, "What do you want?"

"I have come to visit you."

"Oh, now you are meddling again with my affairs. No live being has ever been able to see me, and now you have seen me. I was not, however, to be seen by anybody."

"My father bids you come."

"Where to and for what purpose?"

"They only want to see you." They departed. "What luck?"

"Yes, now I have brought him."

"Well, bring him here."

Then he showed him to them. He was no larger than a reindeer-fly. "Ah, here you are! You are Iu'metun. You kill everybody without illness. We say, 'How wonderful, what has killed him?' And it is you."

"No, I am not the one."

"Indeed, you are the one. If you are not the one, then, indeed, I cannot become black. But if you are really Iu'metun, I shall become black from you."

"No, truly, I am not the one. Set me free." Indeed, he renounced his own body. "Now we will bind you." Meanwhile he was induced to touch the man's skin. All at once the place where he had been touched reddened, and then became black. "What now, then? Indeed, you are Iu'metun."

"Oh, truly I am not he."

"Yes, you are. You are evil, you are a source of trouble. Why do you meddle with the affairs of man?"

"Oh, the Ground-Beings (evil spirits) tell me to do so."

"Also, when a man is alone in the open country, you meddle with him. Oh, we will tie you up."

"Oh, set me free! From now on treat the clefts of the ground with offerings. And when a shaman accuses me as the cause of suffering of a man, that shaman shall be able to cure him. Every source of illness of man shall be seen by the shamans, and even by merely breathing on the skin, they shall set (the sick) right. Also when a ransom is paid to the spirits, a single bead shall be used by the shaman as a sufficient payment. But when in a serious illness a reindeer is presented as ransom, let it be a buck, well broken, because if it struggles, it is not good for the suffering body. Also by incantations suffering shall be alleviated."

Then the old man said to him, "You lie."

"No, I do not. I was not a murderer of my own free will; the Ground-Beings told me so. Set me free. Now, even when an orphan-child wanders alone in the open country, I shall not meddle with him. Indeed, also an orphan-child shall be able to sleep safely in the open country."

"But surely, you deceive us."

"No, indeed! Set me free. Now I shall turn to the Merciful-Being, and I will help every orphan-child. I have been induced to do wrong by the Ground-Beings."

From now on, let the Ground-Beings be placated by offerings. Let a dog be killed, let it be stabbed (with an iron knife). Also let blood be sprinkled on the ground. Sausages let also be [stabbed] offered. The Sea-Beings also must be made friendly, When the people are unable to find game, something small may be used, a small root of *Polygonum viviparum*. It must be thrown into the sea. Then sea-game shall appear again, and all kinds of sea-game shall be taken. Also a man who has trouble with his young children may call as a shaman a little old beggar-woman. Then the child's clothes must be pinned in some unusual manner. Let them be quite friendly to the conjurer. And when the conjurer comes, let them give her some small presents. She may take home some sausage. A part of it has to be thrown to the Incantation-Beings. Then the child shall cease to suffer. Oh, set me free! They set him free. Unfortunately he proved a liar. The end.



# JAPAN

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## THE SUN GODDESS AND THE STORM GOD

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Colum, Padric. *Orpheus: Myths of the World*. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1930, 245–248.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Unavailable

**National Origin:** Japan

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Shinto the indigenous religion of Japan focuses on the veneration of both ancestors and nature spirits. Ama-terasu is the primary deity in the Shinto pantheon, and the Japanese imperial family claimed descent from her. Uzume is the Shinto goddess of joy and happiness; her name means “whirling.” Her dances that provoked Ama-terasu to leave her cave continue to be formed in traditional rites. The sword Kusanagi-no-Tsurugi (“grass-cutting sword”) is enfranchised in this **myth** as a treasure that links the Japanese imperial family to the god. See “A Miraculous Sword” (page 64) for another traditional narrative concerning this weapon.

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**T**hat lady, the resplendent Sun Goddess, was born out of the left eye of the august Father creator, and her brother, the powerful Storm God, was born out of his nostrils. To her was given the Plain of High Heaven for dwelling with the Earth for dominion, and to him the Sea was given for dwelling and dominion.

But between Ama-terasu, the Sun Goddess, and Susa-no-wo, the Storm God, there was strife. The resplendent Goddess was beneficently careful of things that grew upon the earth; she strove against the evil spirits that were

abroad on the earth, and she was especially careful of the temples that men built for their celebrations of the harvest rites. Her powerful brother had no care for these things. He would leave his own realm and go clamorously upon the earth. He would strip off branches and level trees, and tear out of the ground the crops that his beneficent sister had cared for. He would break down all that guarded men from the evil spirits that were abroad upon the earth. He would make turmoil in the temples and prevent the harvest rites from being celebrated. All the work whose beginnings on earth were helped by Ama-terasu, that shining and beneficent lady, were destroyed by Susa-no-wo, the bearded and impetuous Storm God.

Once he ascended into High Heaven. He came before the Heavenly River, the Yasu. The Goddess cried out, "You who would destroy all I have given growth to upon earth, have you come to darken and lay waste the Plain of High Heaven?" The Storm God declared that he had come to establish peace and trust between himself and his resplendent sister.

Then on the bank of the Heavenly River, the Yasu, the powerful Storm God and the resplendent Sun Goddess exchanged tokens of their trust in one another. To the Storm God the Sun Goddess gave her jewels; to the Sun Goddess the Storm God gave his sword. Then, from the spring whence rose the Heavenly River, the Yasu, Ama-terasu, the Sun Goddess, and Susa-no-wo, the Storm God, drank. They put into their mouths the tokens they had received from each other: from the sword that the Goddess put into hers was born a beautiful and courageous boy; from the jewels that the Storm God put into his, were born shining Gods of growth and power.

Thereafter the cocks, the long-singing birds of the Eternal Land, crowed everywhere upon the earth, prophesying the flourishing of all growing things and the checking of all the evil spirits that went abroad upon the earth. Men gathered full crops in and celebrated the harvest rites in temples that were blown upon no more. The beneficent lady, Ama-terasu, had her way upon earth, and the powerful God, Susa-no-wo, stayed in his own realm, the sea.

Out of the sea he went once more. He went clamorously upon the earth, destroying growing things, and breaking down the guards put up against the evil spirits that went abroad upon the earth. He threw down the temples and scattered the people who had come to celebrate the harvest rites. Then Ama-terasu would look no more upon the earth that her brother had wasted. She went within a cavern and would not come forth. Confusion came upon the eight million Gods, and the spirits of evil wrought havoc through the whole of creation.

She came forth again. The Gods seized upon Susa-no-wo, cut off his great beard, and took from him all his possessions. Then he went wandering upon the earth, but he was no longer able to work havoc upon it. He came to the mountains by the side of the ocean; he planted the mountains with the hairs of his beard, and the hairs became the Forest of Kii. The forest was his dominion; men gave homage to him as Lord of the Forest. It was he who slew the dragon of that

land. Once, with its eight heads rearing up, the dragon stood in his way. Susa-no-wo slew it and cut it to pieces. In the dragon's tail there was a sword—a sword that would be ever victorious—and that sword Susa-no-wo sent to Ama-terasu as his tribute to her and to her descendants.

Many were the dragons that were in the land that Susa-no-wo had come to. Once when he was on his way from his forest to the sea he came upon an old man and woman who were weeping upon the bank of a river. They told him the reason of their grief. Every year a maiden was given to the dragon of the place, and this time their daughter was being given him. The fury of the Storm God was aroused when he heard this: he went to where the dragon waited by the river, and he destroyed him, cutting him to pieces. Susa-no-wo then took the maiden for his wife. They lived in that land of Izumo, and they and their children after them had the lordship of that place.

Another God came to woo his daughter. He came within his house when Susa-no-wo was lying in slumber on his mat. He tied the hairs of his head to the beams of the roof, and he took in his hands the things that were Susa-no-wo's most cherished possessions—his sword, his bow and arrows, and his harp. He lifted the maiden up and carried her off with the treasures. But the harp cried out as it was taken in the hand of the younger God. Susa-no-wo awakened. He could not even move his head since his hair was tied to the beams of the roof, and he had to loosen each strand of hair before he could go in pursuit of the one who had carried off his daughter and his treasures. At last he freed himself; led by the sound of the harp that still played of itself he followed that one. But when he came to where Oh-kuni-nushi was with the maiden whom he had carried off, Susa-no-wo said, "You have great craft, and because you have I will give you this maiden and all my possessions; I will take you for my son-in-law."

Together Susa-no-wo and Oh-kuni-nushi ruled the Izumo, and, through his daughter, the descendants of Susa-no-wo peopled that land. But Susa-no-wo knew, and Oh-kuni-nushi knew, that their children would have to give place to the children of the resplendent Sun Goddess who were destined to be the rulers of the Eight Islands.

When Ama-terasu, on account of the destructiveness which her brother had wrought, had hidden herself in the cavern, the Gods had come together and had consulted as to how Ama-terasu's beneficence might be brought into the world once more. They had brought the cocks, the long-singing birds of the Eternal Land, and had placed them outside the cavern; they had lighted fires that made such a brightness before the cavern that the cocks crowed perpetually. They had the Goddess Uzume dance for all their company. On an upturned tub she had danced, and her dancing and her laughter had made all the Gods laugh loudly. Their laughter and merriment and the sound of the cocks crowing had filled the air and had made the earth shake. Ama-terasu, within the cavern, had heard the merry din. She had wondered what merriment could be in the world while she was within the cavern. She had put a finger out and had made

a little hole in the rock that closed her in. She had looked out at the crowd of the Gods, and she had seen the dancing and laughing Goddess. Then Ama-terasu had laughed. One of the strong-armed Gods had put his hand where the hole was in the rock and had made a wider opening. Then a long-armed God had put his hands within and had drawn the resplendent Goddess to the wide opening. Light immediately had filled the world. The cocks had crowed louder, and the evil spirits had drawn away. The Gods were made joyful, and the din of their merriment had filled all creation.

So the resplendent Sun Goddess had come back to the world. Then it was that the Storm God, banished, had gone forth and founded a new realm for himself. And the realm he had founded, he knew, was to pass to the descendants of the resplendent Goddess.

After the coming-forth of the Goddess from her cavern the growing plants flourished upon the earth, and the evil spirits were kept away. The cocks' crew. The harvests were brought in, and the harvest rites celebrated. The temples stood unshaken and unbroken. The banished Storm God went back to his own realm, and his descendants bore rule in the Eight Islands. Then the resplendent Goddess willed to have her grandson take possession of the Islands. He came; he faced the rulers of the land armed with the sword that must always be victorious. They gave him the land and they gave him power over all that was visible. But they kept for themselves the hidden world and all the powers of divination and sorcery. And since that time the children of the Sun Goddess bear rule in our land.

## **THE FIRST PEOPLE**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Colum, Padric. *Orpheus: Myths of the World*. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1930, 248–250.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Unavailable

**National Origin:** Japan

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In the Shinto pantheon, Izanagi is the primal sky deity who is the personification of light and the heavens. Izanami, his wife and sister, is his complementary opposite, the personification of the earth and darkness. Together they created Onogoro, the first island of the Japanese archipelago, the island where the first gods and humans were born. The **myth** of their creation of the next stage of the universe incorporates familiar **motifs** such as the obstacle flight, the descent to the underworld, and the imposition of death on humans.

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There were clouds and mists; there were divine generations who came and who passed away, leaving only him who was The-Lord-in-the-center-of-the-Heavens and the august God and Goddess who stood each side of him. And then were produced Izana-gi and Izana-mi, the man and the woman. They went across the rainbow bridge. The man held his spear downwards and drops flowed from it; the drops hardened and held themselves together and they formed a place on which the Primeval Couple, Izana-gi, the man, and Izana-mi, the woman, could stay. But the mists were still all around them.

They had children there: Wind-child and Forest-child, Waterfall-child and Mountain-child, Stream-child and Field-child, Sea-child and Islands-children. They had children who became the ancestors of men and women. When Wind-child grew up he swept away the mists; the spaces became clear. Then Izana-mi bore the Fire-children. After their birth she sickened; then she was seen no more above the ground.

Izana-gi went down into Meido, Place of Gloom, to find her. He went down through a cave; he went into depths following her voice. She told him not to come farther; she told him not to look where she was. But Izana-gi disobeyed her command. He lighted a torch and looked towards where he heard her voice.

For a little while there was a light in the pale-grey land of Meido. Izana-gi saw Izana-mi. Her eyes were hollow, and her lips were fleshless, and her forehead was a bone. The torch went out, and Izana-mi cursed her husband for having looked on her in the Place of Gloom. She said she would not let him go back to the world of their children, and that she would make him remain a dweller in Meido.

Izana-gi ran back; but Izana-mi pursued him and she called upon the dread dwellers of the Place of Gloom to catch him and hold him. Izana-gi, as he ran, took the shoots of bamboo and the wild grapes that grew upon the comb that was in his hair and flung them to the dwellers in the Place of Gloom. They stopped to eat the shoots and the grapes. Then he ran on. He came to the cave through which he had entered the Place of Gloom. And here Izana-mi, angry still, nearly caught him. He ran through the cave, and he laid hold of a rock that was outside and closed the cave up. Still Izana-mi was angry; she said that on account of his looking upon her in the Place of Gloom she would draw down into Meido a thousand people every day. "Then I shall bring to birth a thousand and a half a thousand people every day," Izana-gi said.

He went out of the cave and he bathed in a stream that flowed by it. He washed off the pollution that came from what he had touched in the Place of Gloom. What he washed off became stains on the water. And these stains became beings who brought a thousand people every day down to Meido. Therefore was Izana-gi, through his folk, under the necessity of bringing into birth a thousand and a half a thousand people every day. And because, through the willfulness of Izana-gi and the anger of Izana-mi, the Primeval Pair became separated, there has been ever since death and separation in the world.

## A MIRACULOUS SWORD

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Smith, Richard Gordon. *Ancient Tales and Folklore of Japan*. London: A. and C. Black, 1908, 56–60.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Japan

**National Origin:** Japan

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In spite of the approximate dates and the names of historical individuals provided in the following narrative, the tale walks a fine line between **myth** and **legend**. At least as important as the exploits of Yamato-dake no Mikoto is the confirmation of the sacred status of the “grass-cutting sword,” a weapon that received its name in recognition of its powers to thwart the assassination attempt on the protagonist in Suruga Province.

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**A**bout the year 110 B.C. there lived a brave prince known in Japanese history as Yamato-dake no Mikoto. He was a great warrior, as was his son, who is said to have been a husband to the Empress Jingo—I presume a second one, for it could not have been the Emperor who was assassinated before the Empress’s conquest of Korea. However, that does not very much matter to my story, which is merely the legend attached to the miraculous sword known as the Kusanagi no Tsurugi (the grass-cutting sword), which is held as one of the three sacred treasures, and is handed down from father to son in the Imperial Family. The sword is kept at the Atsuta Shrine, in Owari Province.

At the date given by my interpreter, 110 B.C. (I should add “or thereabouts,” allowing large margins), Yamato-dake no Mikoto had been successful at all events in suppressing the revolutionists known as the Kumaso in Kyushu. Being a man of energy, and possessing a strong force of trained men, he resolved that he would suppress the revolutionists up on the north-eastern coasts.

Before starting, Yamato-dake no Mikoto thought he should go to Ise to worship in the temples, to pray for divine aid, and to call on an aunt who lived near. Yamato-dake spent five or six days with his aunt, Princess Yamato Hime, to whom he announced his intention of subduing the rebels. She presented him with her greatest treasure—the miraculous sword—and also with a tinder-and-flint-box.

Before parting with her nephew Yamato Hime no Mikoto said, “This sword is the most precious thing which I could give you, and will guard you safely through all dangers. Value it accordingly, for it will be one of the sacred treasures.”

(Legend says that in the age of the gods Susanoo-no Mikoto once found an old man and a woman weeping bitterly because a mammoth eight-headed snake

had devoured seven of their daughters, and there remained only one more, whom, they felt sure, the eighth serpent's head would take. Susanoo-no Mikoto asked if they would give him the daughter if he killed the snake to which they gladly assented. Susanoo filled eight buckets with sake-wine, and put them where the serpent was likely to come, and, hiding himself in the vicinity, awaited events. The monster came, and the eight heads drank the eight buckets full of sake, and became, naturally, dead-drunk. Susanoo then dashed in and cut the beast to bits. In the tail he found a sword—the celebrated and miraculous sword “Kusanagi no Tsurugi,” the grass-cutting sword of our story.)

After bidding farewell to Yamato Hime no Mikoto, the Prince took his departure, setting out for the province of Suruga, on the eastern coast, to find what he could hear, it being in a turbulent state; and it was there that he ran into his first danger, and that his enemies laid a trap for him, through their knowledge that he was fond of hunting.

There were some immense rush plains in Suruga Province where now stands the village of Yaitsu Mura (“Yaita” means “burning fields”). It was resolved by the rebels that one of them should go and invite Yamato-dake to come out and hunt, while they were to scatter and hide themselves in the long grass, until the guide should lead him into their midst, when they would jump up and kill him. Accordingly, they sent to Yamato-dake a plausible and clever man, who told him that there were many deer on the grass plains. Would he come and hunt them? The man volunteered to act as guide. The invitation was tempting; and, as he had found the country less rebellious than he had expected, the Prince accepted.

When the morning arrived the Prince, in addition to carrying his hunting-bow, carried the sword given him by his aunt, the Princess Yamato. The day was windy, and it was thought by the rebels that as the rushes were so dry it would be more sure, and less dangerous to themselves, to fire the grass, for it was certain that the guide would make the Prince hunt upwind, and if they fired the grass properly the flames would rush with lightning speed towards him and be absolutely safe for themselves.

Yamato-dake did just as they had expected. He came quietly on, suspecting nothing. Suddenly the rushes took fire in front and at the sides of him. The Prince realized that he had been betrayed. The treacherous guide had disappeared. The Prince stood in danger of suffocation and death. The smoke, dense and choking, rushed along with rapidity and great roaring.

Yamato-dake tried to run for the only gap, but was too late. Then he began cutting the grass with his sword, to prevent the fire from reaching him. He found that whichever direction he cut in with his sword, the wind changed to that direction. If to the north he cut, the wind changed to the south and prevented the fire from advancing farther; if to the south, the wind changed to the north; and so on. Taking advantage of this, Yamato-dake retaliated upon his enemies. He got fire from his aunt's tinder-box, and where there was no fire in

the rushes he lit them, cutting through the grass at the same time in the direction in which he wished the fire to go. Rushing thus from point to point, he was successful in the endeavor to turn the tables on his enemies, and destroyed them all. It is important to note that there is in existence a sword, said to be this sword, in the Atsuta Shrine, Owari Province; a great festival in honor of it is held on June 21 every year.

From that place Yamato-dake no Mikoto went on to Sagami Province. Finding things quiet there, he took a ship to cross to Kazusa Province, accompanied by a lady he deeply loved, who was given the title of Hime (Princess) because of Yamato-dake's rank. Her name was Tachibana. They had not got more than ten miles from shore when a terrible storm arose. The ship threatened to go down.

"This," said Tachibana Hime, "is the doing of one of the sea-goddesses who thirst for men's lives. I will give her mine, my lord; perhaps that may appease her until you have safely crossed the wicked sea."

Without further warning, Tachibana Hime cast herself into the sea; the waves closed over her head, to the consternation and grief of all, and to the breaking of Yamato-dake's heart.

As Tachibana Hime had expected, the sea-goddess was appeased. The wind went down, the water calmed, and the ship reached Kazusa Province in safety. Yamato-dake went as far as Yezo, putting down small rebellions on the way.

Several years afterwards, accompanied by many of his old officers, he found himself back on the side of a hill in Sagami Province overlooking the place where poor Tachibana Hime had given up her life for him by throwing herself into the sea. The Prince gazed sadly at the sea, and thrice exclaimed, with tears flowing down his cheeks—brave though he was—"Azuma waya!" (Alas, my dearest wife!); and Eastern Japan, about the middle, has since then been called "Azuma."

## THE ISOLATED ISLAND

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Smith, Richard Gordon. *Ancient Tales and Folklore of Japan*. London: A. and C. Black, 1908, 120–125.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Japan

**National Origin:** Japan

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The **motif** of the uncharted, lost island appears not only in literature and film, but in oral tradition as well. The following **legend** provides evidence for this assertion. Legends commonly educate the groups in which they circulate. They address dangers in the environment, explain unusual phenomena, and provide models for imitation or avoidance, for



example. One set of messages in the “The Isolated Island” focuses on the dangers and rewards of seafaring—matters of crucial importance to the island empire of Japan. Another message embedded in the legend focuses on the social and kinship hierarchies in feudal Japan. The narrative includes verifiable historical details. For example, Toyotomi Hide-tsugu (1568–July 15, 1595) was a nephew, retainer, and successor of Toyotomi Hideyoshi (ca. 1536–1598), who served as regent and brought an end to the “Warring States Period” (ca. the mid-fifteenth to the early seventeenth centuries) in Japanese history. In 1595, Hidetsugu was accused of plotting a coup and ordered to commit suicide at Mount Koya. These facts function as **validating devices**; they encourage the acceptance of the nonverifiable portion of the tale.

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**M**any years ago the Lord of Kishu, head of one of the three families of the Tokugawas, ordered his people to hold a hunting-party on Tomagashima (Toma Island). In those days such hunting-parties were often ordered, more for the purpose of improving drill and organization than for sport. It brought men together, and taught others to handle them both on land and at sea. It made men recognize their commanders and superiors, and it disclosed what men were worthy of being made such. Hunting-parties of this kind were considered as military maneuvers.

On this particular hunt or maneuver, the Lord of Kishu was to make a kind of descent by water on the island of Toma, and kill all the game that his landing-party could beat up.

Boats and junks were armed as if for war, and so were the men—except that they wore no armor.

The day for the entertainment was fine. Some sixty boats put to sea, and landed successfully about eight hundred men on Toma Island; and busy indeed were they chasing boar and deer the whole morning.

Towards afternoon, however, a storm of great violence came on and completely stopped the sport. The men were ordered to return to the shore and regain their boats before these should be smashed on the beach.

On embarking they put out to sea with the intention of gaining the mainland. On shore trees were being uprooted, columns of sand flew high in the air, and the gale was indeed terrific; if on shore it was as bad as this, it must be much worse at sea. The Lord of Kishu’s boats and junks were tossed about as if they were floating leaves.

One of the party was a notably brave man, Makino Heinei, who had been nicknamed “Ino shishi” (Wild Boar) on account of his reckless bravery. Seeing that neither junks nor boats were making headway against the storm, he pushed the small boat off the junk, jumped into it alone, took the oars, laughed at every one, and cried, “See here! You all seem to be too frightened to make headway.

Look at what I do and follow me. I am not afraid of the waves, and none of you should be if you are to serve our Lord of Kishu faithfully.”

With that Makino Heinei shot out into the wild sea, and by extraordinary exertion managed to get some three hundred yards ahead of the rest of the fleet. Then the gale increased to such violence that he was incapable of doing anything. For fear of being blown out of the boat, he was obliged to hold tight to the mast and otherwise abandon his fate to good fortune. At times even the heart of the Wild Boar quailed. Often his boat was lifted clean out of the water by the wind; waves towered over him; he closed his eyes and awaited his fate.

Finally, one squall more powerful than the rest blew his boat out of the water, and it was seen from the other boats (which lay at anchor) to disappear into the horizon. Heinei clung to the boat tightly. When the mast blew away he held on to the ribs. He prayed hard and earnestly. Some eight hours after the storm began, Heinei found the boat in comparatively smooth water. She was flooded, and she was a wreck; but still she floated, and that was all he cared for at the moment. Moreover, Heinei felt encouraged, because between two dark clouds he could see an opening and some stars, though at present it was absolutely dark and the driving rain had not ceased.

Suddenly, when Heinei was wondering how far he had been blown from shore or from his friends, crack!—he felt his boat plump into a rock. The shock was so violent (for the boat was still being driven fast by the gale) that our hero lost his balance and was thrown fully ten feet away. Falling on soft stuff, Heinei thought he was in the sea; but his hands suddenly realized that it was soft wet sand. Delighted at this discovery, he looked at the clouds and the sky, and came to the conclusion that in another hour it would be daylight. In the meantime he thanked the gods for his deliverance, and prayed for his friends and for his lord and master.

As morning broke Heinei arose stiff, weary, and hungry. Before the sun appeared he realized that he was on an island. No other land was in sight, and it puzzled him sorely to guess where he could be, for from all the Kishu islands the mainland could be easily seen.

“Oh, here is a new tree! I have never seen that in Kishu,” said he. “And this flower—that also is new—while here is a butterfly more brilliant than any I know.” So saying and thinking, Heinei began looking about for food, and, being a Japanese, easily satisfied his appetite with the shellfish which were abundantly strewn everywhere after the storm.

The island on which Heinei had been cast was fair in size—some two miles across and ten in circumference. There was one small hill in the middle, which Heinei resolved to ascend, to see if he could discover Kishu from the top of it. Accordingly he started. The undergrowth of bush was so great that Heinei made a detour to another bay. The trees were quite different from any he had ever seen before, and there were many kinds of palms. At last he found to his delight a well-worn path leading up the mountain. He took it; but when he came to a damp place in the way he was in no whit reassured, for there he saw footmarks

which could have been made by no one who was not a giant—they were fully eighteen inches in length. A warrior belonging to Kishu must fear nothing, thought Heinei, and, arming himself with a stout stick, he proceeded. Near the top he found the opening to a somewhat large cave, and, nothing daunted, began to enter, prepared to meet anything. What was his surprise when an enormous man, fully eight feet in height, appeared before him, not more than ten feet from the entrance! He was a hideous, wild-looking creature, nearly black, with long unkempt hair, flashing angry eyes, and a mouth that stretched from ear to ear, showing two glittering rows of teeth; and he wore no clothes except the skin of a wild-cat tied round his loins.

As soon as he saw Heinei he came to a standstill, and said, in Japanese, “Who are you? How have you got here? And what have you come for?”

Makino Heinei answered these questions as fully as he thought necessary by telling his name and adding, “I am a retainer of the Lord of Kishu, and was blown away by the storm after we had been hunting and holding maneuvers on Toma Island.”

“And where are these places you speak of? Remember that this island is unknown to the world and has been for thousands of years. I am its sole occupant, and wish to remain so. No matter how I came. I am here. My name is Tomaru, and my father was Yamaguchi Shoun, who died, with his master Toyotomi Hide-tsubu, on Koyasan Mountain in 1563. Both died by their own hands; and I got here, no matter how, and here I intend to remain undisturbed. I heard of your Lord of Kishu and of the Tokugawa family before I left Japan, and for that reason I will help you by giving you my old boat, in which I arrived. Come to the beach. I will send you off in the right direction, and if you continue sailing north-west you shall in time reach Kishu. But it is a long way off—a very long way.”

With that they walked down to the beach.

“See,” said Tomaru, “the boat is well-nigh rotten, for it is many years since she was put here; but with luck you may reach Kishu. Stay—you must have some provision. I can give only dry fish and fruits; but to these you are welcome. And I must give you a present for your master, the Lord of Kishu. It is a kind of seaweed. You shall have some for yourself also. It is my great discovery on this island. No matter how bad a sword-cut you may get, it will stop the blood flowing and cure at once. Now, jump into the boat and row away. I like to be alone. You may speak of your adventure; but you are not to mention my name. Farewell!”

Heinei could only do as he was bid. Consequently, he made off. Rowing night and day and aided by favorable currents, he found himself off the coast of Kishu on the third day after leaving the island. The people were much astonished to see him alive, and the Lord of Kishu rejoiced, especially at the sword-cut-healing seaweed, which he had planted in the sea at a part of the coast which he renamed and called Nagusa-gori (District of the Famous Seaweed).

Later Makino Heinei sailed again by permission of his Lord to get more seaweed. The island was found; but the giant had disappeared.

## GHOST OF THE VIOLET WELL

**Tradition Bearer:** Shofukutei Fukuga

**Source:** Smith, Richard Gordon. *Ancient Tales and Folklore of Japan*. London: A. and C. Black, 1908, 19–26.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Japan

**National Origin:** Japan

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Yoshino Yama (Mount Yoshino), the site of this supernatural **legend** is located in Nara Prefecture, Japan. Shingé was of the samurai class, the highest in feudal Japan. Moreover, her father was a daimyo, a local feudal lord whose status placed him on the level immediately below the shogun generalissimo of Japan. Doctor Yoshisawa, in contrast, was an outcaste “eta,” a group that was excluded from the class system, which included samurai (military), farmers, craftspersons, and traders. As outcastes, the eta were forced to live in their own communities and were avoided by other members of Japanese society. Their low status resulted from their holding occupations associated with death, for example, disposing of animal carcasses and tanning animal hides. Lists of eta families persist to modern times, and conservative Japanese used the “eta lists” to prevent a child’s marriage to a spouse of eta descent. Under samurai codes, suicide was hemmed in with social considerations such as to pursue acceptable motives, to preserve one’s honor, or to criticize a superior without seeming to do so. Although some people were allowed to commit suicide, women could do so only with permission, and commoners were not restricted as to the means for death.

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**I**n the wild province of Yamato, or very near to its borders, is a beautiful mountain known as Yoshino yama. It is not only known for its abundance of cherry blossoms in the spring, but it is also celebrated in relation to more than one bloody battle. In fact, Yoshino might be called the staging-place of historical battles. Many say, when in Yoshino, “We are walking on history, because Yoshino itself is history.” Near Yoshino mountain lay another, known as Tsubosaka; and between them is the Valley of Shimizutani, in which is the Violet Well.

At the approach of spring in this tani [hollow] the grass assumes a perfect emerald green, while moss grows luxuriantly over rocks and boulders. Towards the end of April great patches of deep-purple wild violets show up in the lower parts of the valley, while up the sides pink and scarlet azaleas grow in a manner which beggars description.

Some thirty years ago a beautiful girl of the age of seventeen, named Shingé, was wending her way up Shimizutani, accompanied by four servants. All

were out for a picnic, and all, of course, were in search of wildflowers. O Shingé San was the daughter of a Daimio who lived in the neighborhood. Every year she was in the habit of having this picnic, and coming to Shimizutani at the end of April to hunt for her favorite flower, the purple violet (sumire).

The five girls, carrying bamboo baskets, were eagerly collecting flowers, enjoying the occupation as only Japanese girls can. They raced in their rivalry to have the prettiest basketful. There not being so many purple violets as were wanted, O Shingé San said, "Let us go to the northern end of the valley, where the Violet Well is."

Naturally the girls assented, and off they all ran, each eager to be there first, laughing as they went.

O Shingé outran the rest, and arrived before any of them; and, espying a huge bunch of her favorite flowers, of the deepest purple and very sweet in smell, she flung herself down, anxious to pick them before the others came. As she stretched out her delicate hand to grasp them—oh, horror!—a great mountain snake raised his head from beneath his shady retreat. So frightened was O Shingé San, she fainted away on the spot.

In the meanwhile the other girls had given up the race, thinking it would please their mistress to arrive first. They picked what they most fancied, chased butterflies, and arrived fully fifteen minutes after O Shingé San had fainted.

On seeing her thus laid out on the grass, a great fear filled them that she was dead, and their alarm increased when they saw a large green snake coiled near her head.

They screamed, as do most girls amid such circumstances; but one of them, Matsu, who did not lose her head so much as the others, threw her basket of flowers at the snake, which, not liking the bombardment, uncoiled himself and slid away, hoping to find a quieter place. Then all four girls bent over their mistress. They rubbed her hands and threw water on her face, but without effect. O Shingé's beautiful complexion became paler and paler, while her red lips assumed the purplish hue that is a sign of approaching death. The girls were heartbroken. Tears coursed down their faces. They did not know what to do, for they could not carry her. What a terrible state of affairs!

Just at that moment they heard a man's voice close behind them, "Do not be so sad! I can restore the young lady to consciousness if you will allow me."

They turned, and saw a remarkably handsome youth standing on the grass not ten feet away. He appeared as an angel from Heaven.

Without saying more, the young man approached the prostrate figure of O Shingé, and, taking her hand in his, felt her pulse. None of the servants liked to interfere in this breach of etiquette. He had not asked permission; but his manner was so gentle and sympathetic that they could say nothing.

The stranger examined O Shingé carefully, keeping silence. Having finished, he took out of his pocket a little case of medicine, and, putting some white powder from this into a paper, said, "I am a doctor from a neighboring

village, and I have just been to see a patient at the end of the valley. By good fortune I returned this way, and am able to help you and save your mistress's life. Give her this medicine, while I hunt for and kill the snake."

O Matsu San forced the medicine, along with a little water, into her mistress's mouth, and in a few minutes she began to recover.

Shortly after this the doctor returned, carrying the dead snake on a stick. "Is this the snake you saw lying by your young mistress?" he asked.

"Yes, yes," they cried, "that is the horrible thing."

"Then," said the doctor, "it is lucky I came, for it is very poisonous, and I fear your mistress would soon have died had I not arrived and been able to give her the medicine. Ah! I see that it is already doing the beautiful young lady good."

On hearing the young man's voice O Shingé San sat up. "Pray, sir, may I ask to whom I am indebted for bringing me thus back to life?" she asked.

The doctor did not answer, but in a proud and manly way contented himself by smiling, and bowing low and respectfully after the Japanese fashion; and departed as quietly and unassumingly as he had arrived, disappearing in the sleepy mist which always appears in the afternoons of spring time in the Shimizu Valley.

The four girls helped their mistress home; but indeed she wanted little assistance, for the medicine had done her much good, and she felt quite recovered. O Shingé's father and mother were very grateful for their daughter's recovery; but the name of the handsome young doctor remained a secret to all except the servant girl Matsu.

For four days O Shingé remained quite well; but on the fifth day, for some cause or another, she took to her bed, saying she was sick. She did not sleep, and did not wish to talk, but only to think, and think, and think. Neither father nor mother could make out what her illness was. There was no fever.

Doctors were sent for, one after another; but none of them could say what was the matter. All they saw was that she daily became weaker. Asano Zembei, Shingé's father, was heartbroken, and so was his wife. They had tried everything and failed to do the slightest good to poor O Shingé.

One day O Matsu San craved an interview with Asano Zembei—who, by the by, was the head of all his family, a Daimio and great grandee. Zembei was not accustomed to listen to servants' opinions; but, knowing that O Matsu was faithful to his daughter and loved her very nearly as much as he did himself, he consented to hear her, and O Matsu was ushered into his presence.

"Oh, master," said the servant, "if you will let me find a doctor for my young mistress, I can promise to find one who will cure her."

"Where on earth will you find such a doctor? Have we not had all the best doctors in the province and some even from the capital? Where do you propose to look for one?"

O Matsu answered, "Ah, master, my mistress is not suffering from an illness which can be cured by medicines—not even if they be given by the quart. Nor

are doctors of much use. There is, however, one that I know of who could cure her. My mistress's illness is of the heart. The doctor I know of can cure her. It is for love of him that her heart suffers; it has suffered so from the day when he saved her life from the snake-bite."

Then O Matsu told particulars of the adventure at the picnic which had not been told before—for O Shingé had asked her servants to say as little as possible, fearing they would not be allowed to go to the Valley of the Violet Well again.

"What is the name of this doctor?" asked Asano Zembei, "and who is he?"

"Sir," answered O Matsu, "he is Doctor Yoshisawa, a very handsome young man, of most courtly manners; but he is of low birth, being only of the eta. Please think, master, of my young mistress's burning heart, full of love for the man who saved her life—and no wonder, for he is very handsome and has the manners of a proud samurai. The only cure for your daughter, sir, is to be allowed to marry her lover."

O Shingé's mother felt very sad when she heard this. She knew well (perhaps by experience) of the illnesses caused by love. She wept, and said to Zembei, "I am quite with you in sorrow, my lord, at the terrible trouble that has come to us; but I cannot see my daughter die thus. Let us tell her we will make inquiries about the man she loves, and see if we can make him our son-in-law. In any case, it is the custom to make full inquiries, which will extend over some days; and in this time our daughter may recover somewhat and get strong enough to hear the news that we cannot accept her lover as our son-in-law."

Zembei agreed to this, and O Matsu promised to say nothing to her mistress of the interview.

O Shingé San was told by her mother that her father, though he had not consented to the engagement, had promised to make inquiries about Yoshisawa.

O Shingé took food and regained much strength on this news; and when she was strong enough, some ten days later, she was called into her father's presence, accompanied by her mother.

"My sweet daughter," said Zembei, "I have made careful inquiries about Dr. Yoshisawa, your lover. Deeply as it grieves me to say so, it is impossible that I, your father, the head of our whole family, can consent to your marriage with one of so low a family as Yoshisawa, who, in spite of his own goodness, has sprung from the eta. I must hear no more of it. Such a contract would be impossible for the Asano family."

No one ventured to say a word to this. In Japan the head of a family's decision is final.

Poor O Shingé bowed to her father, and went to her own room, where she wept bitterly; O Matsu, the faithful servant, doing her best to console her.

Next morning, to the astonishment of the household, O Shingé San could nowhere be found. Search was made everywhere; even Dr. Yoshisawa joined in the search.

On the third day after the disappearance one of the searchers looked down the Violet Well, and saw poor O Shingé's floating body.

Two days later she was buried, and on that day Yoshisawa threw himself into the well.

The people say that even now, on wet, stormy nights, they see the ghost of O Shingé San floating over the well, while some declare that they hear the sound of a young man weeping in the Valley of Shimizutani.

## **THE STORY OF MIMI-NASHI-HOICHI**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Hearn, Lafcadio. *Kwaidan: Stories and Studies of Strange Things*. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Co., 1904, 3–20.

**Date:** ca. 1904

**Original Source:** Japan

**National Origin:** Japan

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The story of the battle at Dan-no-ura, alluded to in the following supernatural **legend**, originally existed as one of the episodes of the great military epic *Heike monogatari* (*The Tale of the Heike*). The *Heike monogatari* was compiled from oral tradition transmitted by the class of blind bards of which Hoichi was a member.

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**M**ore than seven hundred years ago, at Dan-no-ura, in the Straits of Shimonoseki, was fought the last battle of the long contest between the Heike, or Taira clan, and the Genji, or Minamoto clan. There the Heike perished utterly, with their women and children, and their infant emperor likewise—now remembered as Antoku Tenno. And that sea and shore have been haunted for seven hundred years. Elsewhere I told you about the strange crabs found there, called Heike crabs, which have human faces on their backs, and are said to be the spirits of the Heike warriors. But there are many strange things to be seen and heard along that coast. On dark nights thousands of ghostly fires hover about the beach, or flit above the waves—pale lights which the fishermen call Oni-bi, or demon-fires; and, whenever the winds are up, a sound of great shouting comes from that sea, like a clamor of battle. In former years the Heike were much more restless than they now are. They would rise about ships passing in the night, and try to sink them; and at all times they would watch for swimmers, to pull them down. It was in order to appease those dead that the Buddhist temple, Amidaji, was built at Akamagaseki. A cemetery also was made close by, near the beach; and within it were set up monuments



inscribed with the names of the drowned emperor and of his great vassals; and Buddhist services were regularly performed there, on behalf of the spirits of them. After the temple had been built, and the tombs erected, the Heike gave less trouble than before; but they continued to do queer things at intervals—proving that they had not found the perfect peace.

Some centuries ago there lived at Akamagaseki a blind man named Hoichi, who was famed for his skill in recitation and in playing upon the biwa [lute]. From childhood he had been trained to recite and to play; and while yet a lad he had surpassed his teachers. As a professional biwa-hoshi he became famous chiefly by his recitations of the history of the Heike and the Genji; and it is said that when he sang the song of the battle of Dan-no-ura “even the goblins [kijin] could not refrain from tears.”

At the outset of his career, Hoichi was very poor; but he found a good friend to help him. The priest of the Amidaji was fond of poetry and music; and he often invited Hoichi to the temple, to play and recite. Afterwards, being much impressed by the wonderful skill of the lad, the priest proposed that Hoichi should make the temple his home; and this offer was gratefully accepted. Hoichi was given a room in the temple-building; and, in return for food and lodging, he was required only to gratify the priest with a musical performance on certain evenings, when otherwise disengaged.

One summer night the priest was called away, to perform a Buddhist service at the house of a dead parishioner; and he went there with his acolyte, leaving Hoichi alone in the temple. It was a hot night; and the blind man sought to cool himself on the verandah before his sleeping-room. The verandah overlooked a small garden in the rear of the Amidaji. There Hoichi waited for the priest's return, and tried to relieve his solitude by practicing upon his biwa. Midnight passed; and the priest did not appear. But the atmosphere was still too warm for comfort within doors; and Hoichi remained outside. At last he heard steps approaching from the back gate. Somebody crossed the garden, advanced to the verandah, and halted directly in front of him—but it was not the priest. A deep voice called the blind man's name—abruptly and unceremoniously, in the manner of a samurai summoning an inferior.

“Hoichi!”

“Hai!” [“Yes!”] answered the blind man, frightened by the menace in the voice, “I am blind! I cannot know who calls!”

“There is nothing to fear,” the stranger exclaimed, speaking more gently. “I am stopping near this temple, and have been sent to you with a message. My present lord, a person of exceedingly high rank, is now staying in Akamagaseki, with many noble attendants. He wished to view the scene of the battle of Dan-no-ura; and today he visited that place. Having heard of your skill in reciting the story of the battle, he now desires to hear your performance: so you will take your biwa and come with me at once to the house where the august assembly is waiting.”

In those times, the order of a samurai was not to be lightly disobeyed. Hoichi donned his sandals, took his biwa, and went away with the stranger, who guided him deftly, but obliged him to walk very fast. The hand that guided was iron; and the clank of the warrior's stride proved him fully armed—probably some palace-guard on duty. Hoichi's first alarm was over; he began to imagine himself in good luck—for, remembering the retainer's assurance about a "person of exceedingly high rank," he thought that the lord who wished to hear the recitation could not be less than a daimyo of the first class. Presently the samurai halted; and Hoichi became aware that they had arrived at a large gateway—and he wondered, for he could not remember any large gate in that part of the town, except the main gate of the Amidaji.

"Kaimon!" [respectful request to open the gate] the samurai called, and there was a sound of unbarring; and the twain passed on. They traversed a space of garden, and halted again before some entrance; and the retainer cried in a loud voice, "Within there! I have brought Hoichi." Then came sounds of feet hurrying, and screens sliding, and rain-doors opening, and voices of women in converse. By the language of the women Hoichi knew them to be domestics in some noble household; but he could not imagine to what place he had been conducted. Little time was allowed him for conjecture. After he had been helped to mount several stone steps, upon the last of which he was told to leave his sandals, a woman's hand guided him along interminable reaches of polished planking, and round pillared angles too many to remember, and over widths amazing of matted floor, into the middle of some vast apartment. There he thought that many great people were assembled: the sound of the rustling of silk was like the sound of leaves in a forest. He heard also a great humming of voices—talking in undertones; and the speech was the speech of courts.

Hoichi was told to put himself at ease, and he found a kneeling-cushion ready for him. After having taken his place upon it, and tuned his instrument, the voice of a woman—whom he divined to be the Rojo, or matron in charge of the female service, addressed him, saying,

"It is now required that the history of the Heike be recited, to the accompaniment of the biwa."

Now the entire recital would have required a time of many nights: therefore Hoichi ventured a question, "As the whole of the story is not soon told, what portion is it augustly desired that I now recite?"

The woman's voice made answer, "Recite the story of the battle at Dan-no-ura—for the pity of it is the most deep."

Then Hoichi lifted up his voice, and chanted the chant of the fight on the bitter sea, wonderfully making his biwa to sound like the straining of oars and the rushing of ships, the whirr and the hissing of arrows, the shouting and trampling of men, the crashing of steel upon helmets, the plunging of slain in the flood. And to left and right of him, in the pauses of his playing, he could hear voices murmuring praise, "How marvelous an artist!"

“Never in our own province was playing heard like this!”

“Not in all the empire is there another singer like Hoichi!” Then fresh courage came to him, and he played and sang yet better than before; and a hush of wonder deepened about him. But when at last he came to tell the fate of the fair and helpless—the piteous perishing of the women and children—and the death-leap of Nii-no-Ama, with the imperial infant in her arms—then all the listeners uttered together one long, long shuddering cry of anguish; and thereafter they wept and wailed so loudly and so wildly that the blind man was frightened by the violence and grief that he had made. For much time the sobbing and the wailing continued. But gradually the sounds of lamentation died away; and again, in the great stillness that followed, Hoichi heard the voice of the woman whom he supposed to be the Rojo.

She said, “Although we had been assured that you were a very skillful player upon the biwa, and without an equal in recitative, we did not know that any one could be so skillful as you have proved yourself tonight. Our lord has been pleased to say that he intends to bestow upon you a fitting reward. But he desires that you shall perform before him once every night for the next six nights—after which time he will probably make his august return-journey. Tomorrow night, therefore, you are to come here at the same hour. The retainer who tonight conducted you will be sent for you.... There is another matter about which I have been ordered to inform you. It is required that you shall speak to no one of your visits here, during the time of our lord’s august sojourn at Akamagaseki. As he is traveling incognito, he commands that no mention of these things be made.... You are now free to go back to your temple.”

After Hoichi had duly expressed his thanks, a woman’s hand conducted him to the entrance of the house, where the same retainer, who had before guided him, was waiting to take him home. The retainer led him to the verandah at the rear of the temple, and there bade him farewell.

It was almost dawn when Hoichi returned; but his absence from the temple had not been observed, as the priest, coming back at a very late hour, had supposed him asleep. During the day Hoichi was able to take some rest; and he said nothing about his strange adventure. In the middle of the following night the samurai again came for him, and led him to the august assembly, where he gave another recitation with the same success that had attended his previous performance. But during this second visit his absence from the temple was accidentally discovered; and after his return in the morning he was summoned to the presence of the priest, who said to him, in a tone of kindly reproach, “We have been very anxious about you, friend Hoichi. To go out, blind and alone, at so late an hour, is dangerous. Why did you go without telling us? I could have ordered a servant to accompany you. And where have you been?”

Hoichi answered, evasively, “Pardon me kind friend! I had to attend to some private business; and I could not arrange the matter at any other hour.”

The priest was surprised, rather than pained, by Hoichi's reticence: he felt it to be unnatural, and suspected something wrong. He feared that the blind lad had been bewitched or deluded by some evil spirits. He did not ask any more questions; but he privately instructed the men-servants of the temple to keep watch upon Hoichi's movements, and to follow him in case that he should again leave the temple after dark. On the very next night, Hoichi was seen to leave the temple; and the servants immediately lighted their lanterns, and followed after him. But it was a rainy night, and very dark; and before the temple-folks could get to the roadway, Hoichi had disappeared. Evidently he had walked very fast, a strange thing, considering his blindness; for the road was in a bad condition. The men hurried through the streets, making inquiries at every house which Hoichi was accustomed to visit; but nobody could give them any news of him. At last, as they were returning to the temple by way of the shore, they were startled by the sound of a biwa, furiously played, in the cemetery of the Amidaji. Except for some ghostly fires—such as usually flitted there on dark nights—all was blackness in that direction. But the men at once hastened to the cemetery; and there, by the help of their lanterns, they discovered Hoichi, sitting alone in the rain before the memorial tomb of Antoku Tenno, making his biwa resound, and loudly chanting the chant of the battle of Dan-no-ura. And behind him, and about him, and everywhere above the tombs, the fires of the dead were burning, like candles. Never before had so great a host of Oni-bi appeared in the sight of mortal man....

"Hoichi San!—Hoichi San!" the servants cried, "you are bewitched! ... Hoichi San!"

But the blind man did not seem to hear. Strenuously he made his biwa to rattle and ring and clang—more and more wildly he chanted the chant of the battle of Dan-no-ura. They caught hold of him; they shouted into his ear, "Hoichi San!—Hoichi San!—come home with us at once!"

Reprovingly he spoke to them, "To interrupt me in such a manner, before this august assembly, will not be tolerated."

Whereat, in spite of the weirdness of the thing, the servants could not help laughing. Sure that he had been bewitched, they now seized him, and pulled him up on his feet, and by main force hurried him back to the temple—where he was immediately relieved of his wet clothes, by order of the priest. Then the priest insisted upon a full explanation of his friend's astonishing behavior.

Hoichi long hesitated to speak. But at last, finding that his conduct had really alarmed and angered the good priest, he decided to abandon his reserve; and he related everything that had happened from the time of first visit of the samurai.

The priest said, "Hoichi, my poor friend, you are now in great danger! How unfortunate that you did not tell me all this before! Your wonderful skill in music has indeed brought you into strange trouble. By this time you must be aware that you have not been visiting any house whatever, but have been

passing your nights in the cemetery, among the tombs of the Heike—and it was before the memorial-tomb of Antoku Tenno that our people tonight found you, sitting in the rain. All that you have been imagining was illusion—except the calling of the dead. By once obeying them, you have put yourself in their power. If you obey them again, after what has already occurred, they will tear you in pieces. But they would have destroyed you, sooner or later, in any event.... Now I shall not be able to remain with you tonight: I am called away to perform another service. But, before I go, it will be necessary to protect your body by writing holy texts upon it.”

Before sundown the priest and his acolyte stripped Hoichi: then, with their writing brushes, they traced upon his breast and back, head and face and neck, limbs and hands and feet—even upon the soles of his feet, and upon all parts of his body—the text of the holy sutra called Hannya-Shin-Kyo. When this had been done, the priest instructed Hoichi, saying, “Tonight, as soon as I go away, you must seat yourself on the verandah, and wait. You will be called. But, whatever may happen, do not answer, and do not move. Say nothing and sit still as if meditating. If you stir, or make any noise, you will be torn asunder. Do not get frightened; and do not think of calling for help—because no help could save you. If you do exactly as I tell you, the danger will pass, and you will have nothing more to fear.”

After dark the priest and the acolyte went away; and Hoichi seated himself on the verandah, according to the instructions given him. He laid his biwa on the planking beside him, and, assuming the attitude of meditation, remained quite still—taking care not to cough, or to breathe audibly. For hours he stayed thus.

Then, from the roadway, he heard the steps coming. They passed the gate, crossed the garden, approached the verandah, stopped—directly in front of him.

“Hoichi!” the deep voice called. But the blind man held his breath, and sat motionless.

“Hoichi!” grimly called the voice a second time. Then a third time, savagely, “Hoichi!”

Hoichi remained as still as a stone, and the voice grumbled, “No answer!—that won’t do! ... Must see where the fellow is.”

There was a noise of heavy feet mounting upon the verandah. The feet approached deliberately, halted beside him. Then, for long minutes—during which Hoichi felt his whole body shake to the beating of his heart—there was dead silence.

At last the gruff voice muttered close to him, “Here is the biwa; but of the biwa-player I see—only two ears! ... So that explains why he did not answer: he had no mouth to answer with—there is nothing left of him but his ears ... Now to my lord those ears I will take—in proof that the august commands have been obeyed, so far as was possible.”

At that instant Hoichi felt his ears gripped by fingers of iron, and torn off! Great as the pain was, he gave no cry. The heavy footfalls receded along the

verandah—descended into the garden—passed out to the roadway—ceased. From either side of his head, the blind man felt a thick warm trickling; but he dared not lift his hands....

Before sunrise the priest came back. He hastened at once to the verandah in the rear, stepped and slipped upon something clammy, and uttered a cry of horror; for he saw, by the light of his lantern, that the clamminess was blood. But he perceived Hoichi sitting there, in the attitude of meditation—with the blood still oozing from his wounds.

“My poor Hoichi!” cried the startled priest, “What is this? You have been hurt?”

At the sound of his friend’s voice, the blind man felt safe. He burst out sobbing, and tearfully told his adventure of the night.

“Poor, poor Hoichi!” the priest exclaimed, “all my fault!—my very grievous fault! ... Everywhere upon your body the holy texts had been written—except upon your ears! I trusted my acolyte to do that part of the work; and it was very, very wrong of me not to have made sure that he had done it! ... Well, the matter cannot now be helped; we can only try to heal your hurts as soon as possible.... Cheer up, friend!—the danger is now well over. You will never again be troubled by those visitors.”

With the aid of a good doctor, Hoichi soon recovered from his injuries. The story of his strange adventure spread far and wide, and soon made him famous. Many noble persons went to Akamagaseki to hear him recite; and large presents of money were given to him—so that he became a wealthy man.... But from the time of his adventure, he was known only by the appellation of Mimi-nashi-Hoichi: “Hoichi-the-Earless.”

## **THE MONKEY AND THE JELLYFISH**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Lang, Andrew. *The Violet Fairy Book*. London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1901, 275–280.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Brauns, David. *Japanische Märchen und Sagen*. Leipzig: Verlag von Wilhelm Friedrich, 1885.

**National Origin:** Japan

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Otohime, whose name means “Luminous Jewel,” was the daughter of the divine dragon king of the sea Ryujin. The sea king’s messengers in **myth** are turtles. In this explanatory narrative, monkey uses his guile to escape in a **variant** of “Monkey Who Left His Heart at Home” (AT 91).

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Children must often have wondered why jellyfishes have no shells, like so many of the creatures that are washed up every day on the beach. In old times this was not so; the jellyfish had as hard a shell as any of them, but he lost it through his own fault, as may be seen in this story.

The sea-queen Otohime grew suddenly very ill. The swiftest messengers were sent hurrying to fetch the best doctors from every country under the sea, but it was all of no use; the queen grew rapidly worse instead of better. Everyone had almost given up hope, when one day a doctor arrived who was cleverer than the rest, and said that the only thing that would cure her was the liver of an ape.

Now apes do not dwell under the sea, so a council of the wisest heads in the nation was called to consider the question how a liver could be obtained. At length it was decided that the turtle, whose prudence was well known, should swim to land and contrive to catch a living ape and bring him safely to the ocean kingdom.

It was easy enough for the council to entrust this mission to the turtle, but not at all so easy for him to fulfill it. However, he swam to a part of the coast that was covered with tall trees, where he thought the apes were likely to be; for he was old, and had seen many things. It was some time before he caught sight of any monkeys, and he often grew tired with watching for them, so that one hot day he fell fast asleep, in spite of all his efforts to keep awake.

By and by some apes, who had been peeping at him from the tops of the trees, where they had been carefully hidden from the turtle's eyes, stole noiselessly down, and stood round staring at him, for they had never seen a turtle before, and did not know what to make of it. At last one young monkey, bolder than the rest, stooped down and stroked the shining shell that the strange new creature wore on its back. The movement, gentle though it was, woke the turtle. With one sweep he seized the monkey's hand in his mouth, and held it tight, in spite of every effort to pull it away. The other apes, seeing that the turtle was not to be trifled with, ran off, leaving their young brother to his fate.

Then the turtle said to the monkey, "If you will be quiet, and do what I tell you, I won't hurt you. But you must get on my back and come with me."

The monkey, seeing there was no help for it, did as he was bid; indeed he could not have resisted, as his hand was still in the turtle's mouth.

Delighted at having secured his prize, the turtle hastened back to the shore and plunged quickly into the water. He swam faster than he had ever done before, and soon reached the royal palace. Shouts of joy broke forth from the attendants when he was seen approaching, and some of them ran to tell the queen that the monkey was there, and that before long she would be as well as ever she was. In fact, so great was their relief that they gave the monkey such a kind welcome, and were so anxious to make him happy and comfortable, that he soon forgot all the fears that had beset him as to his fate, and was generally

quite at his ease, though every now and then a fit of homesickness would come over him, and he would hide himself in some dark corner till it had passed away.

It was during one of these attacks of sadness that a jellyfish happened to swim by. At that time jellyfishes had shells. At the sight of the gay and lively monkey crouching under a tall rock, with his eyes closed and his head bent, the jellyfish was filled with pity, and stopped, saying, "Ah, poor fellow, no wonder you weep; a few days more, and they will come and kill you and give your liver to the queen to eat."

The monkey shrank back horrified at these words and asked the jellyfish what crime he had committed that deserved death.

"Oh, none at all," replied the jellyfish, "but your liver is the only thing that will cure our queen, and how can we get at it without killing you? You had better submit to your fate, and make no noise about it, for though I pity you from my heart there is no way of helping you." Then he went away, leaving the ape cold with horror.

At first he felt as if his liver was already being taken from his body, but soon he began to wonder if there was no means of escaping this terrible death, and at length he invented a plan which he thought would do. For a few days he pretended to be gay and happy as before, but when the sun went in, and rain fell in torrents, he wept and howled from dawn to dark, till the turtle, who was his head keeper, heard him, and came to see what was the matter. Then the monkey told him that before he left home he had hung his liver out on a bush to dry, and if it was always going to rain like this it would become quite useless. And the rogue made such a fuss and moaning that he would have melted a heart of stone, and nothing would content him but that somebody should carry him back to land and let him fetch his liver again.

The queen's councilors were not the wisest of people, and they decided between them that the turtle should take the monkey back to his native land and allow him to get his liver off the bush, but desired the turtle not to lose sight of his charge for a single moment. The monkey knew this, but trusted to his power of beguiling the turtle when the time came, and mounted on his back with feelings of joy, which he was, however, careful to conceal.

They set out, and in a few hours were wandering about the forest where the ape had first been caught, and when the monkey saw his family peering out from the tree tops, he swung himself up by the nearest branch, just managing to save his hind leg from being seized by the turtle. He told them all the dreadful things that had happened to him, and gave a war cry which brought the rest of the tribe from the neighboring hills. At a word from him they rushed in a body to the unfortunate turtle, threw him on his back, and tore off the shield that covered his body. Then with mocking words they hunted him to the shore, and into the sea, which he was only too thankful to reach alive.

Faint and exhausted he entered the queen's palace, for the cold of the water struck upon his naked body, and made him feel ill and miserable. But wretched



though he was, he had to appear before the queen's advisers and tell them all that had befallen him, and how he had suffered the monkey to escape. But, as sometimes happens, the turtle was allowed to go scot-free, and had his shell given back to him, and all the punishment fell on the poor jellyfish, who was condemned by the queen to go shieldless for ever after.

## JIKININKI

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Hearn, Lafcadio. *Kwaidan: Stories and Studies of Strange Things*. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Co., 1904, 65–73.

**Date:** ca. 1904

**Original Source:** Japan

**National Origin:** Japan

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In Japanese Buddhism, the jikininki is a ghost that, because of its craving for human flesh, seeks corpses, thus making it the equivalent of the ghul (Anglicized as “ghoul”) of Arabic folklore. As the jikininki makes clear in his confession to the priest Muso Kokushi, these spirits are repelled by their own behavior, but they are compelled to their actions as punishment for sins of greed and impiety during life.

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Once, when Muso Kokushi, a priest of the Zen sect, was journeying alone through the province of Mino, he lost his way in a mountain-district where there was nobody to direct him. For a long time he wandered about helplessly; and he was beginning to despair of finding shelter for the night, when he perceived, on the top of a hill lighted by the last rays of the sun, one of those little hermitages, called anjitsu, which are built for solitary priests. It seemed to be in ruinous condition; but he hastened to it eagerly, and found that it was inhabited by an aged priest, from whom he begged the favor of a night's lodging. This the old man harshly refused; but he directed Muso to a certain hamlet, in the valley adjoining where lodging and food could be obtained.

Muso found his way to the hamlet, which consisted of less than a dozen farm-cottages; and he was kindly received at the dwelling of the headman. Forty or fifty persons were assembled in the principal apartment, at the moment of Muso's arrival; but he was shown into a small separate room, where he was promptly supplied with food and bedding. Being very tired, he lay down to rest at an early hour; but a little before midnight he was roused from sleep by a sound of loud weeping in the next apartment. Presently the sliding-screens were gently pushed apart; and a young man, carrying a lighted lantern, entered the

room, respectfully saluted him, and said, "Reverend Sir, it is my painful duty to tell you that I am now the responsible head of this house. Yesterday I was only the eldest son. But when you came here, tired as you were, we did not wish that you should feel embarrassed in any way: therefore we did not tell you that father had died only a few hours before. The people whom you saw in the next room are the inhabitants of this village: they all assembled here to pay their last respects to the dead; and now they are going to another village, about three miles off—for by our custom, no one of us may remain in this village during the night after a death has taken place. We make the proper offerings and prayers—then we go away, leaving the corpse alone. Strange things always happen in the house where a corpse has thus been left: so we think that it will be better for you to come away with us. We can find you good lodging in the other village. But perhaps, as you are a priest, you have no fear of demons or evil spirits; and, if you are not afraid of being left alone with the body, you will be very welcome to the use of this poor house. However, I must tell you that nobody, except a priest, would dare to remain here tonight."

Muso made answer, "For your kind intention and your generous hospitality and am deeply grateful. But I am sorry that you did not tell me of your father's death when I came; for, though I was a little tired, I certainly was not so tired that I should have found difficulty in doing my duty as a priest. Had you told me, I could have performed the service before your departure. As it is, I shall perform the service after you have gone away; and I shall stay by the body until morning. I do not know what you mean by your words about the danger of staying here alone; but I am not afraid of ghosts or demons: therefore please to feel no anxiety on my account."

The young man appeared to be rejoiced by these assurances, and expressed his gratitude in fitting words. Then the other members of the family, and the folk assembled in the adjoining room, having been told of the priest's kind promises, came to thank him—after which the master of the house said, "Now, reverend Sir, much as we regret to leave you alone, we must bid you farewell. By the rule of our village, none of us can stay here after midnight. We beg, kind Sir, that you will take every care of your honorable body, while we are unable to attend upon you. And if you happen to hear or see anything strange during our absence, please tell us of the matter when we return in the morning."

All then left the house, except the priest, who went to the room where the dead body was lying. The usual offerings had been set before the corpse; and a small Buddhist lamp—*tomyo*—was burning. The priest recited the service, and performed the funeral ceremonies—after which he entered into meditation. So meditating he remained through several silent hours; and there was no sound in the deserted village. But, when the hush of the night was at its deepest, there noiselessly entered a Shape, vague and vast; and in the same moment Muso found himself without power to move or speak. He saw that Shape lift the corpse, as with hands, devour it, more quickly than a cat devours a rat—beginning at the

head, and eating everything: the hair and the bones and even the shroud. And the monstrous Thing, having thus consumed the body, turned to the offerings, and ate them also. Then it went away, as mysteriously as it had come.

When the villagers returned next morning, they found the priest awaiting them at the door of the headman's dwelling. All in turn saluted him; and when they had entered, and looked about the room, no one expressed any surprise at the disappearance of the dead body and the offerings. But the master of the house said to Muso, "Reverent Sir, you have probably seen unpleasant things during the night: all of us were anxious about you. But now we are very happy to find you alive and unharmed. Gladly we would have stayed with you, if it had been possible. But the law of our village, as I told you last evening, obliges us to quit our houses after a death has taken place, and to leave the corpse alone. Whenever this law has been broken, heretofore, some great misfortune has followed. Whenever it is obeyed, we find that the corpse and the offerings disappear during our absence. Perhaps you have seen the cause."

Then Muso told of the dim and awful Shape that had entered the death-chamber to devour the body and the offerings. No person seemed to be surprised by his narration; and the master of the house observed, "What you have told us, reverend Sir, agrees with what has been said about this matter from ancient time."

Muso then inquired, "Does not the priest on the hill sometimes perform the funeral service for your dead?"

"What priest?" the young man asked.

"The priest who yesterday evening directed me to this village," answered Muso. "I called at his anjitsu on the hill yonder. He refused me lodging, but told me the way here."

The listeners looked at each other, as in astonishment; and, after a moment of silence, the master of the house said, "Reverend Sir, there is no priest and there is no anjitsu on the hill. For the time of many generations there has not been any resident-priest in this neighborhood."

Muso said nothing more on the subject; for it was evident that his kind hosts supposed him to have been deluded by some goblin. But after having bidden them farewell, and obtained all necessary information as to his road, he determined to look again for the hermitage on the hill, and so to ascertain whether he had really been deceived. He found the anjitsu without any difficulty; and, this time, its aged occupant invited him to enter. When he had done so, the hermit humbly bowed down before him, exclaiming, "Ah! I am ashamed!—I am very much ashamed!—I am exceedingly ashamed!"

"You need not be ashamed for having refused me shelter," said Muso. "You directed me to the village yonder, where I was very kindly treated; and I thank you for that favor."

"I can give no man shelter," the recluse made answer; and it is not for the refusal that I am ashamed. I am ashamed only that you should have seen me in my real shape—for it was I who devoured the corpse and the offerings last night

before your eyes.... Know, reverend Sir, that I am a jikininki—an eater of human flesh. Have pity upon me, and suffer me to confess the secret fault by which I became reduced to this condition.

“A long, long time ago, I was a priest in this desolate region. There was no other priest for many leagues around. So, in that time, the bodies of the mountain-folk who died used to be brought here—sometimes from great distances—in order that I might repeat over them the holy service. But I repeated the service and performed the rites only as a matter of business; I thought only of the food and the clothes that my sacred profession enabled me to gain. And because of this selfish impiety I was reborn, immediately after my death, into the state of a jikininki. Since then I have been obliged to feed upon the corpses of the people who die in this district: every one of them I must devour in the way that you saw last night.... Now, reverend Sir, let me beseech you to perform a Segaki-service for me: help me by your prayers, I entreat you, so that I may be soon able to escape from this horrible state of existence.”

No sooner had the hermit uttered this petition than he disappeared; and the hermitage also disappeared at the same instant. And Muso Kokushi found himself kneeling alone in the high grass, beside an ancient and moss-grown tomb of the form called go-rin-ishi, which seemed to be the tomb of a priest.

## **THE GOLDEN HAIRPIN**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Smith, Richard Gordon. *Ancient Tales and Folklore of Japan*. London: A. and C. Black, 1908, 1–9.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Japan

**National Origin:** Japan

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“The Golden Hairpin” is best classified as a supernatural **legend**. The **validating devices** of localization and citing specific names are hallmarks of the **genre**. The **motif** of the ghost or revenant who must return to fulfill an obligation or desire not satisfied in life is cross-culturally distributed. The appropriation of the living by the dead to accomplish this goal is a far less common theme.

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**U**p in the northern city of Sendai, whence come the best of Japanese soldiers, there lived a samurai named Hasunuma. Hasunuma was rich and hospitable, and consequently much thought of and well liked. Some thirty-five years ago his wife presented him with a

beautiful daughter, their first child, whom they called “Ko,” which means “Small” when applied to a child, much as we say “Little Mary or Little Jane.” Her full name was really “Hasu-ko,” which means “Little Lily”; but here we will call her “Ko” for short.

Exactly on the same date, “Saito,” one of Hasunuma’s friends and also a samurai, had the good fortune to have a son. The fathers decided that, being such old friends, they would wed their children to each other when old enough to marry; they were very happy over the idea, and so were their wives. To make the engagement of the babies more binding, Saito handed to Hasunuma a golden hairpin which had long been in his family, and said, “Here, my old friend, take this pin. It shall be a token of betrothal from my son, whose name shall be Kōnojō, to your little daughter Ko, both of whom are now aged two weeks only. May they live long and happy lives together.”

Hasunuma took the pin, and handed it to his wife to keep; then they drank saké to the health of each other, and to the bride and bridegroom of some twenty years thence.

A few months after this Saito, in some way, caused displeasure to his feudal lord, and, being dismissed from service, left Sendai with his family—whither no one knew.

Seventeen years later O Ko San was, with one exception, the most beautiful girl in all Sendai; the exception was her sister, O Kei, just a year younger, and as beautiful as herself.

Many were the suitors for O Ko’s hand; but she would have none of them, being faithful to the engagement made for her by her father when she was a baby. True, she had never seen her betrothed, and (which seemed more curious) neither she nor her family had ever once heard of the Saito family since they had left Sendai, over sixteen years before; but that was no reason why she, a Japanese girl, should break the word of her father, and therefore O Ko San remained faithful to her unknown lover, though she sorrowed greatly at his non-appearance; in fact, she secretly suffered so much thereby that she sickened, and three months later died, to the grief of all who knew her and to her family’s serious distress.

On the day of O Ko San’s funeral her mother was seeing to the last attentions paid to corpses, and smoothing her hair with the golden pin given to Ko San or O Ko by Saito in behalf of his son Kōnojō. When the body had been placed in its coffin, the mother thrust the pin into the girl’s hair, saying, “Dearest daughter, this is the pin given as a memento to you by your betrothed, Kōnojō. Let it be a pledge to bind your spirits in death, as it would have been in life; and may you enjoy endless happiness, I pray.”

In thus praying, no doubt, O Ko’s mother thought that Kōnojō also must be dead, and that their spirits would meet; but it was not so, for two months after these events Kōnojō himself, now eighteen years of age, turned up at Sendai, calling first on his father’s old friend Hasunuma.

“Oh, the bitterness and misfortune of it all!” said the latter. “Only two months ago my daughter Ko died. Had you but come before then she would have been alive now. But you never even sent a message; we never heard a word of your father or of your mother. Where did you all go when you left here? Tell me the whole story.”

“Sir,” answered the grief-stricken Kōnojō, “what you tell me of the death of your daughter, whom I had hoped to marry, sickens my heart, for I, like herself, had been faithful, and I hoped to marry her, and thought daily of her. When my father took my family away from Sendai, he took us to Yedo; and afterwards we went north to Yezo Island, where my father lost his money and became poor. He died in poverty. My poor mother did not long survive him. I have been working hard to try and earn enough to marry your daughter Ko; but I have not made more than enough to pay my journey down to Sendai. I felt it my duty to come and tell you of my family’s misfortune and my own.”

The old samurai was much touched by this story. He saw that the most unfortunate of all had been Kōnojō.

“Kōnojō,” he said, “often have I thought and wondered to myself, Were you honest or were you not? Now I find that you have been truly faithful, and honest to your father’s pledge. But you should have written—you should have written! Because you did not do so, sometimes we thought, my wife and I, that you must be dead; but we kept this thought to ourselves, and never told Ko San. Go to our Butsudan [family shrine]; open the doors of it, and burn a joss stick to Ko San’s mortuary tablet. It will please her spirit. She longed and longed for your return, and died of that sane longing—for love of you. Her spirit will rejoice to know that you have come back for her.”

Kōnojō did as he was bid. Bowing reverently three times before the mortuary tablet of O Ko San, he muttered a few words of prayer in her behalf, and then lit the incense-stick and placed it before the tablet.

After this exhibition of sincerity Hasunuma told the young fellow that he should consider him as an adopted son, and that he must live with them. He could have the small house in the garden. In any case, whatever his plans for the future might be, he must remain with them for the present.

This was a generous offer, worthy of a samurai. Kōnojō gratefully accepted it, and became one of the family. About a fortnight afterwards he settled himself in the little house at the end of the garden. Hasunuma, his wife, and their second daughter, O Kei, had gone, by command of the Daimio, to the Higan, a religious ceremony held in March; Hasunuma also always worshipped at his ancestral tombs at this time. Towards the dusk of evening they were returning in their palanquins. Kōnojō stood at the gate to see them pass, as was proper and respectful. The old samurai passed first, and was followed by his wife’s palanquin, and then by that of O Kei. As this last passed the gate Kōnojō thought he heard something fall, causing a metallic sound. After the palanquin had passed he picked it up without any particular attention.

It was the golden hairpin; but of course, though Kōnojō's father had told him of the pin, Kōnojō had no idea that this was it, and therefore he thought nothing more than that it must be O Kei San's. He went back to his little house, closed it for the night, and was about to retire when he heard a knock at the door. "Who is there?" he shouted. "What do you want?" There came no answer, and Kōnojō lay down on his bed, thinking himself to have been mistaken. But there came another knock, louder than the first; and Kōnojō jumped out of bed, and lit the ando [lamp]. "If not a fox or a badger," thought he, "it must be some evil spirit come to disturb me."

On opening the door, with the ando in one hand, and a stick in the other, Kōnojō looked out into the dark, and there, to his astonishment, he beheld a vision of female beauty the likes of which he had never seen before. "Who are you, and what do you want?" quoth he.

"I am O Kei San, O Ko's younger sister," answered the vision. "Though you have not seen me, I have several times seen you, and I have fallen so madly in love with you that I can think of nothing else but you. When you picked up my golden pin tonight on our return, I had dropped it to serve as an excuse to come to you and knock. You must love me in return; for otherwise I must die!"

This heated and outrageous declaration scandalized poor Kōnojō. Moreover, he felt that it would be doing his kind host Hasunuma a great injustice to be receiving his younger daughter at this hour of the night and make love to her. He expressed himself forcibly in these terms.

"If you will not love me as I love you, then I shall take my revenge," said O Kei, "by telling my father that you got me to come here by making love to me, and that you then insulted me."

Poor Kōnojō! He was in a nice mess. What he feared most of all was that the girl would do as she said, that the samurai would believe her, and that he would be a disgraced and villainous person. He gave way, therefore, to the girl's request. Night after night she visited him, until nearly a month had passed. During this time Kōnojō had learned to love dearly the beautiful O Kei. Talking to her one evening, he said, "My dearest O Kei, I do not like this secret love of ours. Is it not better that we go away? If I asked your father to give you to me in marriage he would refuse, because I was betrothed to your sister."

"Yes," answered O Kei, "that is what I also have been wishing. Let us leave this very night, and go to Ishinomaki, the place where (you have told me) lives a faithful servant of your late father's, called Kinzo."

"Yes: Kinzo is his name, and Ishinomaki is the place. Let us start as soon as possible."

Having thrust a few clothes into a bag, they started secretly and late that night, and duly arrived at their destination. Kinzo was delighted to receive them, and pleased to show how hospitable he could be to his late master's son and the beautiful lady.

They lived very happily for a year. Then one day O Kei said, "I think we ought to return, to my parents now. If they were angry with us at first they will have got over the worst of it. We have never written. They must be getting anxious as to my fate as they grow older. Yes, we ought to go."

Kōnojō agreed. Long had he felt the injustice he was doing Hasunuma.

Next day they found themselves back in Sendai, and Kōnojō could not help feeling a little nervous as he approached the samurai's house. They stopped at the outer gate, and O Kei said to Kōnojō, "I think it will be better for you to go in and see my father and mother first. If they get very angry show them this golden pin."

Kōnojō stepped boldly up to the door, and asked for an interview with the samurai.

Before the servant had time to return, Kōnojō heard the old man shout, "Kōnojō San! Why, of course! Bring the boy in at once," and he himself came out to welcome him.

"My dear boy," said the samurai, "right glad am I to see you back again. I am sorry you did not find your life with us good enough. You might have said you were going. But there—I suppose you take after your father in these matters, and prefer to disappear mysteriously. You are welcome back, at all events."

Kōnojō was astonished at this speech, and answered,

"But, sir, I have come to beg pardon for my sin."

"What sin have you committed?" queried the samurai in great surprise, and drawing himself up, in a dignified manner.

Kōnojō then gave a full account of his love affair with O Kei. From beginning to end he told it all, and as he proceeded the samurai showed signs of impatience.

"Do not joke, sir! My daughter O Kei San is not a subject for jokes and untruths. She has been as one dead for over a year—so ill that we have with difficulty forced gruel into her mouth. Moreover, she has spoken no word and shown no sign of life."

"I am neither stating what is untrue nor joking," said Kōnojō. "If you but send outside, you will find O Kei in the palanquin, in which I left her."

A servant was immediately sent to see, and returned, stating that there was neither palanquin nor any one at the gate.

Kōnojō, seeing that the samurai was now beginning to look perplexed and angry, drew the golden pin from his clothes, saying, "See! if you doubt me and think I am lying, here is the pin which O Kei told me to give you!"

"Bik-ku-ri-shi-ta-!" exclaimed O Kei's mother. "How came this pin into your hands? I myself put it into Ko San's coffin just before it was closed."

The samurai and Kōnojō stared at each other, and the mother at both. Neither knew what to think, or what to say or do. Imagine the general surprise when the sick O Kei walked into the room, having risen from her bed as if she had never been ill for a moment. She was the picture of health and beauty.



“How is this?” asked the samurai, almost shouting. “How is it, O Kei, that you have come from your sickbed dressed and with your hair done and looking as if you had never known a moment of illness?”

“I am not O Kei, but the spirit of O Ko,” was the answer. “I was most unfortunate in dying before the return of Kōnojō San, for had I lived until then I should have become quite well and been married to him. As it was, my spirit was unhappy. It took the form of my dear sister O Kei, and for a year has lived happily in her body with Kōnojō. It is appeased now, and about to take its real rest.”

“There is one condition, however, Kōnojō, which I must make,” said the girl, turning to him. “You must marry my sister O Kei. If you do this my spirit will rest truly in peace, and then O Kei will become well and strong. Will you promise to marry O Kei?”

The old samurai, his wife, and Kōnojō were all amazed at this. The appearance of the girl was that of O Kei; but the voice and manners were those of O Ko. Then, there was the golden hairpin as further proof. The mother knew it well. She had placed it in Ko’s hair just before the tub coffin was closed. Nobody could undeceive her on that point.

“But,” said the samurai at last, “O Ko has been dead and buried for more than a year now. That you should appear to us puzzles us all. Why should you trouble us so?”

“I have explained already,” resumed the girl. “My spirit could not rest until it had lived with Kōnojō, whom it knew to be faithful. It has done this now, and is prepared to rest. My only desire is to see Kōnojō marry my sister.”

Hasunuma, his wife, and Kōnojō held a consultation. They were quite prepared that O Kei should marry, and Kōnojō did not object.

All things being settled, the ghost-girl held out her hand to Kōnojō saying,

“This is the last time you will touch the hand of O Ko. Farewell, my dear parents! Farewell to you all! I am about to pass away.”

Then she fainted away, and seemed dead, and remained thus for half an hour; while the others, overcome with the strange and weird things which they had seen and heard, sat round her, hardly uttering a word.

At the end of half an hour the body came to life, and standing up, said. “Dear parents, have no more fear for me. I am perfectly well again; but I have no idea how I got down from my sick-room in this costume, or how it is that I feel so well.”

Several questions were put to her; but it was quite evident that O Kei knew nothing of what had happened—nothing of the spirit of O Ko San, or of the golden hairpin!

A week later she and Kōnojō were married, and the golden hairpin was given to a shrine at Shiogama, to which, until quite recently, crowds used to go and worship.

## STORY OF A TENGU

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Hearn, Lafcadio. *Kwaidan: Stories and Studies of Strange Things*. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Co., 1904, 215–224.

**Date:** ca. 1904

**Original Source:** Japan

**National Origin:** Japan

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In Japanese tradition, the Tengu are commonly represented either as winged men with the heads of birds, as birds of prey, or as men with unnaturally elongated noses. In folklore and popular culture, there is an association between the Tengu and the yamabushi (mountain-dwelling ascetics who practice Shugendo Buddhism). The protagonist of the following tale is obviously one of the latter.

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In the days of the Emperor Go-Reizen, there was a holy priest living in the Temple of Seito, on the mountain called Hiyei-Zan, near Kyôto. One summer day this good priest, after a visit to the city, was returning to his temple by way of Kita-no-Ôji, when he saw some boys ill-treating a kite. They had caught the bird in a snare, and were beating it with sticks. “Oh, the poor creature!” compassionately exclaimed the priest, “Why do you torment it so, children?”

One of the boys made answer, “We want to kill it to get the feathers.” Moved by pity, the priest persuaded the boys to let him have the kite in exchange for a fan that he was carrying; and he set the bird free. It had not been seriously hurt, and was able to fly away.

Happy at having performed this Buddhist act of merit, the priest then resumed his walk. He had not proceeded very far when he saw a strange monk come out of a bamboo-grove by the roadside and hasten towards him.

The monk respectfully saluted him, and said, “Sir, through your compassionate kindness my life has been saved; and I now desire to express my gratitude in a fitting manner.”

Astonished at hearing himself thus addressed, the priest replied, “Really, I cannot remember to have ever seen you before: please tell me who you are.”

“It is not wonderful that you cannot recognize me in this form,” returned the monk, “I am the kite that those cruel boys were tormenting at Kita-no-Ôji. You saved my life; and there is nothing in this world more precious than life. So I now wish to return your kindness in some way or other. If there be anything that you would like to have, or to know, or to see—anything that I can do for you, in short—please to tell me; for as I happen to possess, in a small degree,

the Six Supernatural Powers, I am able to gratify almost any wish that you can express.”

On hearing these words, the priest knew that he was speaking with a Tengu; and he frankly made answer, “My friend, I have long ceased to care for the things of this world: I am now seventy years of age; neither fame nor pleasure has any attraction for me. I feel anxious only about my future birth; but as that is a matter in which no one can help me, it were useless to ask about it. Really, I can think of but one thing worth wishing for. It has been my life-long regret that I was not in India in the time of the Lord Buddha, and could not attend the great assembly on the holy mountain Gridhrakûta. Never a day passes in which this regret does not come to me, in the hour of morning or of evening prayer. Ah, my friend! If it were possible to conquer Time and Space, like the Bodhisattvas, so that I could look upon that marvelous assembly, how happy should I be!”

“Why,” the Tengu exclaimed, “that pious wish of yours can easily be satisfied. I perfectly well remember the assembly on the Vulture Peak; and I can cause everything that happened there to reappear before you, exactly as it occurred. It is our greatest delight to represent such holy matters.... Come this way with me!”

And the priest suffered himself to be led to a place among pines, on the slope of a hill. “Now,” said the Tengu, “you have only to wait here for awhile, with your eyes shut. Do not open them until you hear the voice of the Buddha preaching the Law. Then you can look. But when you see the appearance of the Buddha, you must not allow your devout feelings to influence you in any way; you must not bow down, nor pray, nor utter any such exclamation as, ‘Even so, Lord!’ or ‘O thou Blessed One!’ You must not speak at all. Should you make even the least sign of reverence, something very unfortunate might happen to me.” The priest gladly promised to follow these injunctions; and the Tengu hurried away as if to prepare the spectacle.

The day waned and passed, and the darkness came; but the old priest waited patiently beneath a tree, keeping his eyes closed. At last a voice suddenly resounded above him—a wonderful voice, deep and clear like the pealing of a mighty bell—the voice of the Buddha Sâkyamuni proclaiming the Perfect Way. Then the priest, opening his eyes in a great radiance, perceived that all things had been changed: the place was indeed the Vulture Peak—the holy Indian mountain Gridhrakûta; and the time was the time of the Sûtra of the Lotus of the Good Law. Now there were no pines about him, but strange shining trees made of the Seven Precious Substances, with foliage and fruit of gems; and the ground was covered with Mandârava and Manjûshaka flowers showered from heaven; and the night was filled with fragrance and splendor and the sweetness of the great Voice. And in mid-air, shining as a moon above the world, the priest beheld the Blessed One seated upon the Lion-throne, with Samantabhadra at his right hand, and Mañjusrî at his left—and before them assembled—immeasurably spreading into

Space, like a flood of stars—the hosts of the Mahāsattvas and the Bodhisattvas with their countless following, “gods, demons, Nāgas, goblins, men, and beings not human.” Sâriputra he saw, and Kâsyapa, and Ananda, with all the disciples of the Tathâgata—and the Kings of the Devas—and the Kings of the Four Directions, like pillars of fire—and the great Dragon-Kings—and the Gandharvas and Garudas—and the Gods of the Sun and the Moon and the Wind—and the shining myriads of Brahma’s heaven. And incomparably further than even the measureless circling of the glory of these, he saw—made visible by a single ray of light that shot from the forehead of the Blessed One to pierce beyond uttermost Time—the eighteen hundred thousand Buddha-fields of the Eastern Quarter with all their habitants—and the beings in each of the Six States of Existence—and even the shapes of the Buddhas extinct, that had entered into Nirvâna. These, and all the gods, and all the demons, he saw bow down before the Lion-throne; and he heard that multitude incalculable of beings praising the Sûtra of the Lotos of the Good Law—like the roar of a sea before the Lord.

Then forgetting utterly his pledge—foolishly dreaming that he stood in the very presence of the very Buddha—he cast himself down in worship with tears of love and thanksgiving; crying out with a loud voice, “O thou Blessed One!”

Instantly with a shock as of earthquake the stupendous spectacle disappeared; and the priest found himself alone in the dark, kneeling upon the grass of the mountain-side. Then a sadness unspeakable fell upon him, because of the loss of the vision, and because of the thoughtlessness that had caused him to break his word. As he sorrowfully turned his steps homeward, the goblin-monk once more appeared before him, and said to him in tones of reproach and pain, “Because you did not keep the promise which you made to me, and heedlessly allowed your feelings to overcome you, the Gohôtendo, who is the Guardian of the Doctrine, swooped down suddenly from heaven upon us, and smote us in great anger, crying out, ‘How do ye dare thus to deceive a pious person?’ Then the other monks, whom I had assembled, all fled in fear. As for myself, one of my wings has been broken—so that now I cannot fly.” And with these words the Tengu vanished forever.

## HOW THE WICKED TANUKI WAS PUNISHED

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Lang, Andrew. *The Crimson Fairy Book*. London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1903, 190–191.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Brauns, David. *Japanische Märchen und Sagen*. Leipzig: Verlag von Wilhelm Friedrich, 1885.

**National Origin:** Japan

The Tanuki, the Japanese raccoon-faced dog, is a real Japanese forest-dwelling canine species. According to Japanese folk belief, the tanuki is also a goblin and magician who possesses supernatural strength and can change shapes at will. Similarly, foxes are shape-shifters with magical abilities. Both creatures are popular subjects of Japanese folklore and both are portrayed as intelligent though greedy **tricksters**.

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The hunters had hunted the wood for so many years that no wild animal was any more to be found in it. You might walk from one end to the other without ever seeing a hare, or a deer, or a boar, or hearing the cooing of the doves in their nest. If they were not dead, they had flown elsewhere. Only three creatures remained alive, and they had hidden themselves in the thickest part of the forest, high up the mountain. These were a grey-furred, long-tailed tanuki, his wife the fox, who was one of his own family, and their little son.

The fox and the tanuki were very clever, prudent beasts, and they also were skilled in magic, and by this means had escaped the fate of their unfortunate friends. If they heard the twang of an arrow or saw the glitter of a spear, ever so far off, they lay very still, and were not to be tempted from their hiding-place, if their hunger was ever so great, or the game ever so delicious. "We are not so foolish as to risk our lives," they said to each other proudly. But at length there came a day when, in spite of their prudence, they seemed likely to die of starvation, for no more food was to be had. Something had to be done, but they did not know what.

Suddenly a bright thought struck the tanuki. "I have got a plan," he cried joyfully to his wife. "I will pretend to be dead, and you must change yourself into a man, and take me to the village for sale. It will be easy to find a buyer, tanukis' skins are always wanted; then buy some food with the money and come home again. I will manage to escape somehow, so do not worry about me."

The fox laughed with delight, and rubbed her paws together with satisfaction. "Well, next time I will go," she said, "and you can sell me." And then she changed herself into a man, and picking up the stiff body of the tanuki, set off towards the village. She found him rather heavy, but it would never have done to let him walk through the wood and risk his being seen by somebody.

As the tanuki had foretold, buyers were many, and the fox handed him over to the person who offered the largest price, and hurried to get some food with the money. The buyer took the tanuki back to his house, and throwing him into a corner went out. Directly the tanuki found he was alone, he crept cautiously through a chink of the window, thinking, as he did so, how lucky it was that he was not a fox, and was able to climb. Once outside, he hid himself in a ditch till it grew dusk, and then galloped away into the forest.

While the food lasted they were all three as happy as kings; but there soon arrived a day when the larder was as empty as ever. "It is my turn now to pretend to be dead," cried the fox. So the tanuki changed himself into a peasant, and started for the village, with his wife's body hanging over his shoulder. A buyer was not long in coming forward, and while they were making the bargain a wicked thought darted into the tanuki's head, that if he got rid of the fox there would be more food for him and his son. So as he put the money in his pocket he whispered softly to the buyer that the fox was not really dead, and that if he did not take care she might run away from him. The man did not need twice telling. He gave the poor fox a blow on the head, which put an end to her, and the wicked tanuki went smiling to the nearest shop.

In former times he had been very fond of his little son; but since he had betrayed his wife he seemed to have changed all in a moment, for he would not give him as much as a bite, and the poor little fellow would have starved had he not found some nuts and berries to eat, and he waited on, always hoping that his mother would come back.

At length some notion of the truth began to dawn on him; but he was careful to let the old tanuki see nothing, though in his own mind he turned over plans from morning till night, wondering how best he might avenge his mother.

One morning, as the little tanuki was sitting with his father, he remembered, with a start, that his mother had taught him all she knew of magic, and that he could work spells as well as his father, or perhaps better. "I am as good a wizard as you," he said suddenly, and a cold chill ran through the tanuki as he heard him, though he laughed, and pretended to think it a joke. But the little tanuki stuck to his point, and at last the father proposed they should have a wager.

"Change yourself into any shape you like," said he, "and I will undertake to know you. I will go and wait on the bridge which leads over the river to the village, and you shall transform yourself into anything you please, but I will know you through any disguise." The little tanuki agreed, and went down the road which his father had pointed out. But instead of transforming himself into a different shape, he just hid himself in a corner of the bridge, where he could see without being seen.

He had not been there long when his father arrived and took up his place near the middle of the bridge, and soon after the king came by, followed by a troop of guards and all his court.

"Ah! He thinks that now he has changed himself into a king I shall not know him," thought the old tanuki, and as the king passed in his splendid carriage, borne by his servants, he jumped upon it crying, "I have won my wager; you cannot deceive me." But in reality it was he who had deceived himself. The soldiers, conceiving that their king was being attacked, seized the tanuki by the legs and flung him over into the river, and the water closed over him.

And the little tanuki saw it all, and rejoiced that his mother's death had been avenged. Then he went back to the forest, and if he has not found it too lonely, he is probably living there still.

## THE SLAYING OF THE TANUKI

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Lang, Andrew. *The Pink Fairy Book*. London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1897, 33–39.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Brauns, David. *Japanische Märchen und Sagen*. Leipzig: Verlag von Wilhelm Friedrich, 1885.

**National Origin:** Japan

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The hare is a prominent animal in Japanese folklore. The hare is one of the twelve animals of the Chinese cycle of years. Rather than the “man in the moon,” the Japanese see a “hare in the moon,” pounding rice with a mortar and pestle. The Japanese hare is not the common **trickster** figure that it is in other traditions; that role is generally played by the kitsune (fox), the tanuki, or the badger. In the following narrative of the tanuki’s malice, these roles are reversed.

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**N**ear a big river, and between two high mountains, a man and his wife lived in a cottage a long, long time ago. A dense forest lay all round the cottage, and there was hardly a path or a tree in the whole wood that was not familiar to the peasant from his boyhood. In one of his wanderings he had made friends with a hare, and many an hour the two passed together, when the man was resting by the roadside, eating his dinner.

Now this strange friendship was observed by the Tanuki, a wicked, quarrelsome beast, who hated the peasant, and was never tired of doing him an ill turn. Again and again he had crept to the hut, and finding some choice morsel put away for the little hare, had either eaten it if he thought it nice, or trampled it to pieces so that no one else should get it, and at last the peasant lost patience, and made up his mind he would have the Tanuki’s blood.

So for many days the man lay hidden, waiting for the Tanuki to come by, and when one morning he marched up the road thinking of nothing but the dinner he was going to steal, the peasant threw himself upon him and bound his four legs tightly, so that he could not move. Then he dragged his enemy joyfully to the house, feeling that at length he had got the better of the mischievous beast which had done him so many ill turns. “He shall pay for them with his skin,” he said to his wife. “We will first kill him, and then cook him.” So saying, he hanged the Tanuki, head downwards, to a beam, and went out to gather wood for a fire.

Meanwhile the old woman was standing at the mortar pounding the rice that was to serve them for the week with a pestle that made her arms ache with

its weight. Suddenly she heard something whining and weeping in the corner, and, stopping her work, she looked round to see what it was. That was all that the rascal wanted, and he put on directly his most humble air, and begged the woman in his softest voice to loosen his bonds, which her hurting him sorely. She was filled with pity for him, but did not dare to set him free, as she knew that her husband would be very angry. The Tanuki, however, did not despair, and seeing that her heart was softened, began his prayers anew. "He only asked to have his bonds taken from him," he said. "He would give his word not to attempt to escape, and if he was once set free he could soon pound her rice for her."

"Then you can have a little rest," he went on, "for rice pounding is very tiring work, and not at all fit for weak women." These last words melted the good woman completely, and she unfastened the bonds that held him. Poor foolish creature! In one moment the Tanuki had seized her, stripped off all her clothes, and popped her in the mortar. In a few minutes more she was pounded as fine as the rice; and not content with that, the Tanuki placed a pot on the hearth and made ready to cook the peasant a dinner from the flesh of his own wife!

When everything was complete he looked out of the door, and saw the old man coming from the forest carrying a large bundle of wood. Quick as lightning the Tanuki not only put on the woman's clothes, but, as he was a magician, assumed her form as well. Then he took the wood, kindled the fire, and very soon set a large dinner before the old man, who was very hungry, and had forgotten for the moment all about his enemy. But when the Tanuki saw that he had eaten his fill and would be thinking about his prisoner, he hastily shook off the clothes behind a door and took his own shape. Then he said to the peasant, "You are a nice sort of person to seize animals and to talk of killing them! You are caught in your own net. It is your own wife that you have eaten, and if you want to find her bones you have only to look under the floor." With these words he turned and made for the forest.

The old peasant grew cold with horror as he listened, and seemed frozen to the place where he stood. When he had recovered himself a little, he collected the bones of his dead wife, buried them in the garden, and swore over the grave to be avenged on the Tanuki. After everything was done he sat himself down in his lonely cottage and wept bitterly, and the bitterest thought of all was that he would never be able to forget that he had eaten his own wife.

While he was thus weeping and wailing his friend the hare passed by, and, hearing the noise, pricked up his ears and soon recognized the old man's voice. He wondered what had happened, and put his head in at the door and asked if anything was the matter. With tears and groans the peasant told him the whole dreadful story, and the hare, filled with anger and compassion, comforted him as best he could, and promised to help him in his revenge. "The false knave shall not go unpunished," said he.

So the first thing he did was to search the house for materials to make an ointment, which he sprinkled plentifully with pepper and then put in his pocket.



Next he took a hatchet, bade farewell to the old man, and departed to the forest. He bent his steps to the dwelling of the Tanuki and knocked at the door. The Tanuki, who had no cause to suspect the hare, was greatly pleased to see him, for he noticed the hatchet at once, and began to lay plots how to get hold of it.

To do this he thought he had better offer to accompany the hare, which was exactly what the hare wished and expected, for he knew all the Tanuki's cunning, and understood his little ways. So he accepted the rascal's company with joy, and made himself very pleasant as they strolled along. When they were wandering in this manner through the forest the hare carelessly raised his hatchet in passing, and cut down some thick boughs that were hanging over the path, but at length, after cutting down a good big tree, which cost him many hard blows, he declared that it was too heavy for him to carry home, and he must just leave it where it was. This delighted the greedy Tanuki, who said that they would be no weight for him, so they collected the large branches, which the hare bound tightly on his back. Then he trotted gaily to the house, the hare following after with his lighter bundle.

By this time the hare had decided what he would do, and as soon as they arrived, he quietly set on fire the wood on the back of the Tanuki. The Tanuki, who was busy with something else, observed nothing, and only called out to ask what was the meaning of the crackling that he heard. "It is just the rattle of the stones which are rolling down the side of the mountain," the hare said; and the Tanuki was content, and made no further remarks, never noticing that the noise really sprang from the burning boughs on his back, until his fur was in flames, and it was almost too late to put it out. Shrieking with pain, he let fall the burning wood from his back, and stamped and howled with agony. But the hare comforted him, and told him that he always carried with him an excellent plaster in case of need, which would bring him instant relief, and taking out his ointment he spread it on a leaf of bamboo, and laid it on the wound. No sooner did it touch him than the Tanuki leapt yelling into the air, and the hare laughed, and ran to tell his friend the peasant what a trick he had played on their enemy.

But the old man shook his head sadly, for he knew that the villain was only crushed for the moment, and that he would shortly be revenging himself upon them. No, the only way every to get any peace and quiet was to render the Tanuki harmless for ever. Long did the old man and the hare puzzle together how this was to be done, and at last they decided that they would make two boats, a small one of wood and a large one of clay. Then they fell to work at once, and when the boats were ready and properly painted, the hare went to the Tanuki, who was still very ill, and invited him to a great fish-catching.

The Tanuki was still feeling angry with the hare about the trick he had played him, but he was weak and very hungry, so he gladly accepted the proposal, and accompanied the hare to the bank of the river, where the two boats were moored, rocked by the waves. They both looked exactly alike, and the Tanuki only saw that one was bigger than the other, and would hold more fish,

so he sprang into the large one, while the hare climbed into the one which was made of wood. They loosened their moorings, and made for the middle of the stream, and when they were at some distance from the bank, the hare took his oar, and struck such a heavy blow at the other boat, that it broke in two. The Tanuki fell straight into the water, and was held there by the hare till he was quite dead. Then he put the body in his boat and rowed to land, and told the old man that his enemy was dead at last. And the old man rejoiced that his wife was avenged, and he took the hare into his house, and they lived together all their days in peace and quietness upon the mountain.

## THE CAT'S ELOPEMENT

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Lang, Andrew. *The Pink Fairy Book*. London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1897, 1–5.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Brauns, David. *Japanische Märchen und Sagen*. Leipzig: Verlag von Wilhelm Friedrich, 1885.

**National Origin:** Japan

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In a plot of true love and separation that is usually enacted by human characters, the heroic cat, Gon, gives up a life of luxury for true love. The ultimate success of the protagonist arises from Gon's rescue of a princess from a serpent (who ironically risked its life for love).

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Once upon a time there lived a cat of marvelous beauty, with a skin as soft and shining as silk, and wise green eyes, that could see even in the dark. His name was Gon, and he belonged to a music teacher, who was so fond and proud of him that he would not have parted with him for anything in the world.

Now not far from the music master's house there dwelt a lady who possessed a most lovely little pussy cat called Koma. She was such a little dear altogether, and blinked her eyes so daintily, and ate her supper so tidily, and when she had finished she licked her pink nose so delicately with her little tongue, that her mistress was never tired of saying, "Koma, Koma, what should I do without you?"

Well, it happened one day that these two, when out for an evening stroll, met under a cherry tree, and in one moment fell madly in love with each other. Gon had long felt that it was time for him to find a wife, for all the ladies in the neighborhood paid him so much attention that it made him quite shy; but he was not easy to please, and did not care about any of them. Now, before he

had time to think, Cupid had entangled him in his net, and he was filled with love towards Koma. She fully returned his passion, but, like a woman, she saw the difficulties in the way, and consulted sadly with Gon as to the means of overcoming them. Gon entreated his master to set matters right by buying Koma, but her mistress would not part from her. Then the music master was asked to sell Gon to the lady, but he declined to listen to any such suggestion, so everything remained as before.

At length the love of the couple grew to such a pitch that they determined to please themselves, and to seek their fortunes together. So one moonlight night they stole away, and ventured out into an unknown world. All day long they marched bravely on through the sunshine, till they had left their homes far behind them, and towards evening they found themselves in a large park. The wanderers by this time were very hot and tired, and the grass looked very soft and inviting, and the trees cast cool deep shadows, when suddenly an ogre appeared in this Paradise, in the shape of a big, big dog! He came springing towards them showing all his teeth, and Koma shrieked, and rushed up a cherry tree. Gon, however, stood his ground boldly, and prepared to give battle, for he felt that Koma's eyes were upon him, and that he must not run away. But, alas! His courage would have availed him nothing had his enemy once touched him, for he was large and powerful, and very fierce. From her perch in the tree Koma saw it all, and screamed with all her might, hoping that some one would hear, and come to help. Luckily a servant of the princess to whom the park belonged was walking by, and he drove off the dog, and picking up the trembling Gon in his arms, carried him to his mistress.

So poor little Koma was left alone, while Gon was borne away full of trouble, not in the least knowing what to do. Even the attention paid him by the princess, who was delighted with his beauty and pretty ways, did not console him, but there was no use in fighting against fate, and he could only wait and see what would turn up.

The princess, Gon's new mistress, was so good and kind that everybody loved her, and she would have led a happy life, had it not been for a serpent who had fallen in love with her, and was constantly annoying her by his presence. Her servants had orders to drive him away as often as he appeared; but as they were careless, and the serpent very sly, it sometimes happened that he was able to slip past them, and to frighten the princess by appearing before her. One day she was seated in her room, playing on her favorite musical instrument, when she felt something gliding up her sash, and saw her enemy making his way to kiss her cheek. She shrieked and threw herself backwards, and Gon, who had been curled up on a stool at her feet, understood her terror, and with one bound seized the snake by his neck. He gave him one bite and one shake, and flung him on the ground, where he lay, never to worry the princess any more. Then she took Gon in her arms, and praised and caressed him, and saw that he had the nicest bits to eat, and the softest mats to lie on; and he would have had nothing in the world to wish for if only he could have seen Koma again.

Time passed on, and one morning Gon lay before the house door, basking in the sun. He looked lazily at the world stretched out before him, and saw in the distance a big ruffian of a cat teasing and ill-treating quite a little one. He jumped up, full of rage, and chased away the big cat, and then he turned to comfort the little one, when his heart nearly burst with joy to find that it was Koma. At first Koma did not know him again, he had grown so large and stately; but when it dawned upon her who it was, her happiness knew no bounds. And they rubbed their heads and their noses again and again, while their purring might have been heard a mile off.

Paw in paw they appeared before the princess, and told her the story of their life and its sorrows. The princess wept for sympathy, and promised that they should never more be parted, but should live with her to the end of their days. By-and-by the princess herself got married, and brought a prince to dwell in the palace in the park. And she told him all about her two cats, and how brave Gon had been, and how he had delivered her from her enemy the serpent.

And when the prince heard, he swore they should never leave them, but should go with the princess wherever she went. So it all fell out as the princess wished; and Gon and Koma had many children, and so had the princess, and they all played together, and were friends to the end of their lives.

## **THE STONECUTTER**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Lang, Andrew. *The Crimson Fairy Book*. London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1903, 112–113.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Brauns, David. *Japanische Märchen und Sagen*. Leipzig: Verlag von Wilhelm Friedrich, 1885.

**National Origin:** Japan

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At the outset of this **fable**, a humble man is afflicted with envy when he sees a rich man's lifestyle. Its beginning is similar to "The Fisher and His Wife" (AT 555) because of the narrative's plot of a spirit granting a human increasingly outrageous wishes. The concluding episode, however, in which the protagonist returns full circle to his humble beginnings is reminiscent of "Stronger and Strongest" (AT 2031).

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Once upon a time there lived a stonemason, who went every day to a great rock in the side of a big mountain and cut out slabs for grave-stones 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 stonecutter, 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 stonecutter 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 stonecutter looked around, 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 stonecutter could scarcely breathe, and he determined he would stop 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 stonecutter to himself, as the carriage vanished around 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 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 his heart could desire was his. But yet it was not enough. He looked around still for something to wish for, and when he saw that in spite of the water he poured on the grass the rays of the sun scorched it, and that in spite of the umbrella held over his head each day his face grew browner and browner, 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 week 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 mountainside 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 stonecutter 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 did not have, or desired to be greater and mightier than other people, he was happy at last, and never again heard the voice of the mountain spirit.

# KORYAK

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## HOW A SMALL KAMAK WAS TRANSFORMED INTO A HARPOON LINE

**Tradition Bearer:** Anne

**Source:** Bogoras, Waldemar. *Koryak Texts, Publications of the American Ethnological Society* V. Leyden: E. J. Brill, Ltd., 1917, 35–40.

**Date:** ca. 1900

**Original Source:** Koryak

**National Origin:** Siberia

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Evil spirits are called kamak by the Koryak. These are the same beings that the Koryak's Chukchee neighbors call "ke'let" (see "The Youth Who Received Supernatural Powers from the Ke'let," page 36, for information on the Koryak environment and the ke'let). As in this Koryak **myth**, the kamaks live much like their human neighbors, but they are capable of changing their shapes and enjoy dining on human flesh. Big Raven is the supreme supernatural and **trickster** of Koryak myth. Miti' is Big Raven's wife. Eme'mqut is his son.

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**A** small kamak said to his mother, "I am hungry."  
She said to him, "Go and eat something in the storeroom behind the sleeping-room!"  
He said, "I do not want to. I want to, go to Big-Raven's house."  
The mother said, "Do not do it! You will die. You will be caught in a snare."  
She said, "Go to the upper storeroom (in the porch) and eat something!"

He said, "What for? Those provisions taste of the upper storeroom."

She said, "Go to the cache and eat something!" He said, "What for? Those provisions taste of the cache."

Big-Raven spread a snare close to his elevated storehouse (raised on supports). The small kamak ran there, and was caught in a snare. He began to whimper, "Oh, oh, I am caught, I am caught!"

Big-Raven said, "It came to my mind to go and to look at this snare." He came to it, and wanted to enter the storehouse, but stumbled over something lying in the way. "What now, what is it?"

"It is I. I am caught." The small kamak was crying, and brushing away his tears with his small fist.

"Stop blubbing! I will take you to Miti'." He brought the small kamak to his house, and said, "O, Miti'! Dance in honor of (our) catch!"

She began to dance, "We have a small kamak, we have a small kamak!"

Big-Raven said, "You dance in a wrong way. Ġa'na, step forth and dance in honor of (our) catch!"

She came out and began to dance, "We have a small ma'kak, we have a small ma'kak!"

Big-Raven said, "Really this is right."

They took him into the house. The house-master said, "What shall we make out of you, a cover for the roof-hole?"

"Not this. If I am made into a cover for the roof-hole, I shall feel smoky, I shall feel cold."

The house-master said, "What shall we make out of you, a plug for the vent-hole?"

"Not this. If I am made into a plug for the vent-hole, I shall be afraid of evil spirits passing by."

The house-master said, "What, then, do you wish us to make of you? Perhaps a work-bag for Miti'."

He said, "Not this. I shall feel smothered." The house-master said, "We shall make you into a thong."

The small kamak began to laugh and said, "Yes!"

They made him into a thong, they cut him duly, then they carried the line out and began to stretch it (tightly). Thus stretched, they (left it there). Big-Raven's people went to sleep. Frost-Man and his people said, "Big-Raven has caught a small kamak. They made him into a thong. Let us go and steal it!" They found it, and began to untie it.

Then it cried aloud, "Quick, get up! Already they are untying me!"

Big-Raven said, "What is the matter with our small line? It wants to awaken us. Quick, let us get up!" They woke up, and said to the small kamak, "What is the matter with you? Why were you crying so loudly?"

The small kamak said, "Frost-Man's people wanted to carry me away."



The people living down the coast heard (about the thing)—how Big-Raven caught a small kamak; and how they made him into a thong; and how no one succeeded in carrying it away, it was so watchful. Those people began to say, “We will go and carry it away.”

They said, “Surely we will carry it away.” Big-Raven’s people went to sleep. The people living down the coast came and took the line.

It wanted to awaken the other people, but it was unable to awaken them. “Oh, they are untying me already, they are carrying me away!” Indeed, they untied it and carried it away; they stole the line.

The others woke up, but there was no line whatever. It had been taken away. Big-Raven said, “People living down the coast have committed this theft. Indeed, they took it, nobody else.”

Eme’mqut said, “A very good line was taken away, still we will bring it back.” Eme’mqut made a wooden whale and entered it. He went away and came to the people living down the coast.

Those people were walking around. They were saying, “This is the first time that such a whale has come near to us. It is a very good whale.”

They attacked the whale, came near to it, and threw at it a harpoon with a new line. The small kamak lustily bit into the whale. Eme’mqut said to him under his breath, “Why are you biting me? I have come to fetch you home.” Eme’mqut threw into the boat of the whale-hunters some berries of *Rubus Arcticus*, and they began to eat them. Meanwhile Eme’mqut fled in all haste to his house. He carried away the new line, and took it home. They ceased carrying the line out of the house. They kept it always in the inner room, so the others could not steal it. That is all.

## **LITTLE-BIRD-MAN AND RAVEN-MAN**

**Tradition Bearer:** Pa’qa

**Source:** Borgas, Waldemar. *Koryak Texts, Publications of the American Ethnological Society* V. Leyden: E. J. Brill, Ltd., 1917, 12–23.

**Date:** ca. 1900

**Original Source:** Koryak

**National Origin:** Siberia

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Although the following **myth** appears unusual to the outsider, this narrative is consistent with indigenous Koryak conventions. Raven-Man is exposed as a **trickster**, liar and thief. Yini’a-ñawgüt rescues the sun from Raven-Man’s mouth, and Little-Bird-Man is transformed externally into the heroic figure that he is beneath his surface appearance.

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Raven-Man and Little-Bird-Man wooed (the daughter) of Big-Raven. Big-Raven preferred Little-Bird-Man. He said, "I will give my daughter to Little-Bird-Man." Miti' said, "I will give my daughter to Raven-Man." After that Raven-Man would go out secretly. He would eat excrement and dog-carrion. (In the morning) they would wake up, and several wolverine-skins and wolf-skins would be there. They would ask both of the suitors, "Who killed those?" and Raven-Man would answer, "I killed them."

Then a snow-storm broke out, and continued for a long time with unabated violence. Big-Raven said to the suitors, "Go and try to calm this storm! To the one who calms it, to that one will I give my daughter to wife." Raven-Man said, "I will calm the storm." He said, "Prepare some provisions for me." They prepared several pairs of boots. He went out, and staid near by under a cliff, eating. Little-Bird-Man went out, and there he stood eating of the provisions. Raven-Man gave to Little-Bird-Man a wicked look. Little-Bird-Man entered again, and did not say anything.

Raven-Man staid at the same place. The snow-storm continued with the same vigor, without abating. Oh, at last Raven-Man entered. His boots were all covered with ice, for he would make water in his boots. That is the reason why the boots had ice.

He said, "It is impossible! There is a crack in the heavens."

After a while they said to Little-Bird-Man, "Now, then, calm this storm!"

He said, "It is impossible. Shall I also go out and make water in my boots, like Raven-Man?"

Then Big-Raven said to both suitors, "Go away! None of you shall marry her."

Then Little-Bird-Man said, "All right! I will try." He took a round stopper, a shovel, and some fat, and went up to heaven. He flew up, and came to the crack in the heavens. He stopped it with a stopper, and threw the fat on the heavens all around it. For a while it grew calmer.

He came home, and the snow-storm broke out again. Even the stopper was thrust back into the house. It was too small. He said, "It is impossible. The heavens have a crack." Big-Raven made another stopper, a larger one, and gave it to Little-Bird-Man. He also gave him a larger piece of fat. Little-Bird-Man flew up to the same place and put this stopper into the crack. It fitted well. He drove it in with a mallet. He spread the fat around over the heavens, shoveled the snow around the hole, and covered it. Then it grew quite calm.

He came back, and then Raven-Man grew hateful to all of them. He took a place close to Miti'; and she said to him, "How is it that you smell of excrement?"

"Why! It is because I have had no bread [a delicacy among the Koryak] for a long time.

She said to him, "Enough, go away! You have done nothing to quiet this storm." He went away. Little-Bird-Man married Yini'a-ñawgut.

Summer came. It was raining hard. Then Raven-Man put the sun into his mouth; so it grew quite dark.

After that they said to Čan'ai', "Čan'ai', go and fetch water!"

"How shall I fetch water? (It is too dark)."

After a while they said to her, "Why, we are quite thirsty, We are going to die."

She went groping in the dark, then she stopped and began to sing. She sang, "Both small rivers are stingy (with their water)." Then a small river came to that place, bubbling. She filled her pail bought from the Russians (that is, an iron pail), and carried it on her back. (Suddenly) a man came to her. She could not carry the pail.

He said, "I will carry the pail (for you)." She came home in the dark. The man followed. It was River-Man. They said to her, "Who is this man?"

He said, "I am River-Man. I took pity on that singer." They scolded their daughter. Nevertheless River-Man married her.

After that they remained still in complete darkness. They said to River-Man, "Why are we living in darkness?"

He said, "Why, indeed?" He put on a headband of ringed-seal thong. He went out (and practiced magic). Then at least a little light appeared. The day dawned.

They spoke among themselves, "How shall we do it?"

Then Yini'a-ñawgüt prepared for a journey. She went to Raven-Man and asked, "Halloo! Is Raven-Man at home?"

Raven-Woman said, "He is."

She said to Raven-Man, "Since you went away, I have been feeling dull all the time." She found Raven-Man, and said to him, "Did not you feel dull (since that time)? Will you stay so?" He turned his back to her, but she wanted to turn him (so that he should look with) his face to her. But he turned his back to her. Then she tickled him under the arms. She put her hands under his armpits.

His sister said to him, "What is the matter with you? Stop it! This is good girl."

After that he began to make sounds in her direction, "Ġm, ġm, ġm!" She turned him around, and at last he laughed out, "Ha, ha, ha!" The sun jumped out and fastened itself to the sky. It grew daylight.

After that they slept together. She said to him, "Have you a tent?"

"No!"

"Have you a fork?"

"No!"

"Have you a plate?"

"No!"

She said, "Then let us go home! I have all those things at home." They moved on to Big-Raven's house. She said to Raven-Man, "Oh, you are a good man!" and he felt flattered.

Afterwards she killed him.

Yini'a-ñawgüt put Raven-Man's (head) on above. She said, "That spotted palate of yours, let it grow to be a fine cloudless sky!" [This is to serve as an incantation against bad weather].

She came home. And they said to her, "What have you been doing?"

She said, "I killed Raven-Man. He had the sun in his mouth."

From that time on it was quite calm.

Raven-Woman said, "Well, now, does my brother remember me? (Probably) he has plenty to eat."

She said, "Let me visit him." She visited him, and he was dead. Then she cried (and said), "He caused annoyance to the other people. (Therefore he is dead.)" She left him there. There was nothing else to do.

Then those people said to Little-Bird-Man, "Go home, both of you!"

They said to them, "Go away with a caravan of pack-sledges!"

He replied, "We will go on foot." They went away on foot, and came to a river. Little-Bird-Man said to the woman, "Let me carry you (across)!"

The woman said to him, "Do not do it!"

He said, "It is all right." He carried her, and in doing so he died.

Yini'a-nāwgut slept a night among stone-pines and was almost frozen to death. On the following morning it dawned, and close to that place a reindeer-herd was walking. All the reindeer had iron antlers. A man was walking there too. He said, "Oh, come here!"

She said, "I will not come. My husband has died."

He said to her, "I am he, I am your husband."

He took out his gloves. "These you made for me. I am your husband. I am Little-Bird-Man."

A house was there, also reindeer (for driving). He said to her, "Let us go to Big-Raven! Now let them say again that you have a bad husband!" They went with a caravan of pack-sledges, and they arrived.

The people said to Big-Raven, "Oh, your daughter has come with a caravan." Big-Raven said, "Our daughter went away on foot." She said, "Here I am, I have been brought home by Little-Bird-Man." Little-Bird-Man made numerous driving-sledges, all of silver. They lived there all together, and traveled about in all directions with a caravan of pack-sledges. They lived in joy. They stayed there.

## MITI' AND MAGPIE MAN

**Tradition Bearer:** Anne

**Source:** Borgas, Waldemar. *Koryak Texts, Publications of the American Ethnological Society* V. Leyden: E. J. Brill, Ltd., 1917, 35–40.

**Date:** ca. 1900

**Original Source:** Koryak

**National Origin:** Siberia

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This Koryak **myth** reflects both the major issues of human life and creation, but minor ones such as infidelity and "spousal revenge" can be seen in the following narrative.

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Big-Raven lived with his family. Oh, Big-Raven said, "I will (go and) fetch some willow-bark." Oh, Miti' went to feed the little puppies. Magpie-Man came to eat there. He pecked at Miti's face (to indicate his love), and her whole nose was covered with scratches.

Oh, that one (Big-Raven) comes home! He said to Miti', "What has happened to you? Your nose is scratched all over."

She said, "By hitting with my nose against the sharp ends of the door-shed corner I was scratched thus." Oh, Big-Raven cut away all the ends of the dog-shed corners. Then again he went for willow-bark. Miti' went out, perched on the top of the dog-shed, and began to sing, "I am walking along the cross beam!"

Then Magpie-Man came, and said, "Let us enter the sleeping-room! Big-Raven will not come back soon. He will not catch us."

She took him into (the house). Just as soon as they entered the sleeping-room and began to make love there, then Big-Raven came back, and called out, "Miti', take this load of willow!" Miti' said, "Let the I'kla [a magical effigy of a human being] bring it down! I am busy trampling a half-scraped skin with lily feet."

"Nay," said Big-Raven, "I want you to take it down."

Oh, Miti' took it, and with a violent pull drew it into the house.

Then Big-Raven entered the house and made a smoldering fire. He also stopped up the entrance-hole and the smoke-hole, so that the sleeping-room was full of smoke. Then a Magpie's voice was heard from the sleeping-room. That Magpie came out. He escaped through a narrow crack.

"(See) what (this) Magpie has done to me!" The Magpie, however, went home. Miti' was with child. After some time she brought forth two small eggs. (The two children) grew rapidly, and Big-Raven had a great love for them.

Big-Raven's people were storing their catch of fish. Those two said, "Mamma, we are hungry."

She said, "Go out and say to daddy, 'We are hungry.'" They went out, and were given two whole dried salmon. They entered, and nibbled up (the fish).

Then they said again, "We are hungry." Miti' said to them, "Go out and ask daddy (for more)."

They went out. "Daddy, we are hungry!"

"No wonder! Two thievish magpies!"

Those two sons began to weep. "Oh, he is reproaching us!"

Miti' said to them, "Go out and tell him, 'Our real daddy is herding reindeer (with the wealthy reindeer-breeders).'" (After that) they entered again, and Miti' put them into a grass bag, (placing) each in one of the (lower) corners. She went away, and came to Magpie-Man and flung (her bag right in).

Big-Raven said, "I feel lonely. I will go to Miti'." He went and came there.

(The people said,) "Miti', come out! Your old man has come to you."

Miti' said, "Has he no legs? Let him enter of his own accord!" He entered, and she gave him food. He began to eat, and was choking. Then he ran out of the house.

Miti' called to him. She said, "Big-Raven!"

"Oi!"

Then he could not help himself, and shouted, "Oi!" The piece that choked him flew out (of his mouth, and fell down) at a great distance. Then Big-Raven went home. That is all.

# TIBET

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## THE STORY OF THE TWO DEVILS

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Shelton, A. L. *Tibetan Folktales*. St. Louis, MO: United Christian Missionary Society, 1925, 70–75.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Tibet

**National Origin:** China (Tibet)

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Preceding the Buddhist philosophy and practices that most of the world associates with Tibet was an indigenous Himalayan belief system called Bön. This religious tradition was built on animism, and shamanistic practices were at the heart of the divination that determined the most important activities in daily life, including healing, as the following tale demonstrates. The shaman (who might be male or female) typically entered a trance state to receive the advice of the supernaturals. The sham diviner in “The Story of the Two Devils” plays the role well enough to convince the two shape-shifting devils of his abilities.

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“**T**he golden eagle flying high you are not able to bind, and great water running swiftly you are not able to dam.”

—Tibetan Proverb

A long time ago in a country so high that it would make most boys and girls tired if they tried to run and play, was a great flat table-land entirely surrounded by a forest. On this table-land was located one large city and several smaller ones, all ruled over by a king who had seven sons.

The sons went out in the forest to play one day and found a beautiful girl, who was herding a yak. She told them she was the daughter of the King of the west, that her yak had wandered away and she had come to hunt it. The seven sons thought that she was very pretty to look at, so they proposed to her that she become the wife of the seven, which was the custom of the country.

Now, in reality, the girl was a she-devil and the yak was her husband. They could change their form whenever they chose. She didn't tell the men that the yak was her husband, but drove it away and consented to become the wife of the brothers and went home with them.

Every year one of the sons died, beginning with the eldest, until all were dead except the youngest, and he became very ill and was about to die. The head-men of the villages got together and wondered and wondered what could be done, shaking their heads and muttering that this was a very queer affair, that these six sons, whom they had cared for and to whom they had given all the medicine they knew of, had all died. They thought the matter over and decided to send for a man who they knew could tell fortunes, and see if he could discover what was the matter. Four men were chosen to go and see him.

They traveled until they found him, told him all about the death of the six brothers, and asked him to cast lots and see what was the matter. He told them that he would lie down and sleep and receive a vision on the affair and tomorrow would relate it. Actually he didn't know what in the world to do nor what to say, for he was not a really-truly fortune teller at all, but only a quack.

That night he went to ask his wife what to do, and she said, "You've told a lot of lies about things before this, so it won't hurt you to lie some more. You came out fairly well the other times, so I think that you can fix up a plan for this affair."

The next morning when the four men came, he said, "My vision was fine, I will get out my black clothes and black hat and read prayers for you. We will all go back together and these charms that I read will make everything all right in the palace."

So he took a big rosary in one hand and the skull of a hog in the other and traveled along with them.

When they arrived the woman didn't know exactly what to think, and wondered if this fellow really did know her and her husband and what they had done. The fortune teller made a tsamba torma [ritual offering made from parched barley flour] and placed it at the head of the sick man, along with the hog's skull, and covered them both with a cloth. When the she-devil left the room the sick man got a little better and went to sleep.

This scared the fortune teller so badly he didn't know what to do. He thought the man was dying. Really the man's soul had been about half eaten up before the woman left, and when she went away it grew stronger. The fortune teller was badly scared and called out two or three times for help and began to think he had better step out and take his things and run off, but the door was locked and he couldn't get it open. He wondered if he could hide some place until he had a chance to slip away, so he sneaked upstairs to the top of the roof



and fell through the opening in the dark, astride the yak's horns, and the yak went bucking and tearing away with him on its head.

The she-devil was down there too, because she was afraid. The yak called out, "This man knows us all right, for he lit right on top of my head and knows I am the he-devil, for his charm is in his hand and he is beating me to death with it. What shall I do?"

His wife replied, "He knows me and I dare not come over and help you; and just as sure as can be in the morning he will call all the people together, and they will be planning some scheme to get rid of us."

They thought in their hearts that perhaps he would call all the women to carry wood and burn them in the fire, or kill them in some other dreadful way.

"Truly," she said, "to try and find out if we are real they will hit us with rocks to see if it will hurt, and cut us open to see what is inside of us and put us in the fire to see if it will burn us."

The man in the meantime had rolled off the yak and heard all this, so he knew now what to do. Slipping back upstairs he set up his tsamba torma and hog's skull and began to read prayers again.

The King's son was awake by this time and the fortune teller asked him if he wasn't better and he said, "Yes."

"Well then," the man said, "in the morning you must call your head-men together, have them tell all the people to bring their guns and swords and some of the women to bring wood."

The next morning they were all there with the wood piled around the center as if for an offering to an idol, as the fortune teller had commanded them. He asked that his saddle be put on the yak. He donned his black clothes and rode the yak all over the city until he came to the pile of wood. He now grabbed his hog's head and hit the yak three times saying, "I want to see the real body of this yak," and the yak turned at once into a he-devil with a hideous face, two of his upper teeth hanging down to his breast and two lower ones extending up to his forehead. The men standing around killed him with their swords and guns.

Then the fortune teller called for the woman to come. She came screaming, and he struck her with the hog's skull and she turned into a terrible thing, with a most ugly face, claw-like hands, a great long tongue and teeth like her husband's. The people killed her with rocks and knives and burned them both in the fire; then hastened to do great honor to the fortune teller, who had gone back to the sick man.

The King's son got well right away and was so pleased he said to the fortune teller, "Whatever you wish, ask, and I will give you."

"Well," said the fortune teller, "I would like some of those wooden rings that are used to lead the yak around by their noses." (The reason he wanted them was because his wife always said he couldn't make them properly.) So the son gave him one hundred rings and enough goods to make seven yak loads and he returned to his home.

His wife saw him coming, took some wine and went to meet him. That night she asked him all about his adventures and he told her about the death of the two devils and the recovery of the King's son.

"And is this all you have, some dried cheese and meat and a few rings for the yak?" she said, and scolded him soundly. "Tomorrow I will go and see the King's son." But she wrote a letter instead which said, "You have given my husband this little bit of stuff and the nose rings which can have but one meaning, which is, that perhaps your disease may return."

When the King's son received the letter he said, "That is all true. I gave him all he asked for, but perhaps I should have given him more." So the next day he went to visit the fortune teller and said to him, "You have saved my life and done so much for me, now I will make you ruler of half my kingdom." So he made him as powerful as himself.

## THE STORY OF THE PRINCE'S FRIEND

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Shelton, A. L. *Tibetan Folktales*. St. Louis, MO: United Christian Missionary Society, 1925, 94–102.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Tibet

**National Origin:** China (Tibet)

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Tibetans consider frogs to belong to the class of beings called "nagas," along with dragons, snakes, and other reptiles. The Lukhang ("Dragon House") is a temple that was built almost five centuries ago to pay homage to the nagas on a manmade island in a pond that, tradition claims, was once home to thousands of frogs. Centuries ago lamas made annual offerings to the naga kings to ensure prosperity. The following tale begins with a remembrance of the unique place frogs held as nagas for Tibetans. Other elements of the narrative are not exclusively Tibetan, however, for example, "Unjust Umpire Misappropriates Disputed Goods" (AT 518) provides the plot structure for the episodes in which the prince and his friend acquire magical objects.

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“A man without jewels in the mountain has no need to fear the robbers.”

—Tibetan Proverb

Away, away up in the mountains was a village, and in the village lived a very wise king and his only son. Near by flowed a river; up above was a big pond

from which came the water that irrigated their fields, and above the pond, in a crevice from which flowed the water, lived two big frogs, who belonged to the lower regions. To these frogs, every year, some person had to be sacrificed or the supply of water was cut off by them as they sat in the crevice, through which the supply came. Each family in turn had paid its tax of a child, until now it was the turn of the king to furnish the yearly sacrifice. So the old king began to think and wonder which had better go—he or his son—each one thinking he should be the one. The father said, “I’m an old man, and if I go and get eaten up it doesn’t matter, for I wouldn’t live much longer anyway. So, my son, when I’m gone you must be a good ruler and govern the people wisely.”

The prince said to his father, “This will never do; you are a good king to these people and you can get another wife and have more sons, so don’t say any more about it, for I’m going.”

One morning he started for the place. All the people went with him a little way and felt very bad to see him leave them and his father. After a while all of them returned home except one friend of his childhood, who still went on with him, crying and grieving.

The prince now turned to him and said, “You must go back and be a good son to your father and care for him when he is old.”

But his friend replied, “When I was a child and poor you cared for me, fed me and clothed me, now you must not go and let those frogs eat you up. I’ll go in your place.”

The prince would hear of no such plan, however, and as his friend refused to return, they both went on together and arrived at the mouth of the gorge where they saw one green frog and one yellow frog sitting together talking. The yellow one said to the green one, “Here comes the prince and his friend, and if they are wise they would take a clod and kill us, then they would have all the water they needed, and whenever they wished they could vomit gold and jewels. But they don’t understand frog talk, so they don’t know what we are saying.”

But the king’s son did understand, for in those days all kings and their sons understood what the animals said. So he told his friend and they each got a club, killed and ate the frogs, and plenty of water came through the crevices.

“Well,” the friend said, “now these frogs are eaten and out of the way, let’s go home.”

But the prince said, “No, it would be better if we go to a far country, as the people think we are eaten by those frogs, and if we return now, they will think we are ghosts and fear us exceedingly.”

So they crossed the mountain and went down on the other side, where they came to a wine shop kept by a woman and her daughter, and went in.

“Bring out your wine,” they said, “we wish to buy some. How much do you ask for it?” When brought they vomited a few jewels which they gave as pay for it.

The two women, when they saw how they got their money for the wine, said, “Drink some more, drink some more,” thinking that if they got them real

drunk they would throw up a lot of gold. They were soon very sick sure enough and threw up gold and jewels all over the room, and the woman and the girl got more than enough to make them wealthy.

When they began to sober up, they feared they had thrown up a lot of jewels, but were a bit ashamed to ask about it, as they weren't sure what they had done.

So they went on, coming to a big plain where a lot of children were playing. They were quarreling over something, each claiming it to be his. The travelers asked what they were quarreling about and the children replied, "We found a hat and whoever puts it on can't be seen, for he turns into a ghost, and we all want it."

The prince's friend said, "You needn't quarrel over that; you children all go down there and race up here to me; the one who gets to me first may have the hat. I will hold it."

Soon they came racing back, but the man put the hat on his head and when they arrived they could not find him or the hat, though they searched everywhere and finally had to go home without it. When they were gone the man removed the hat and put it in his bosom. He and the prince then went on and came to a place where a lot of monkeys were quarreling, and when they asked what they were fussing about, they answered, "We found a pair of boots, and whoever puts them on has only to wish where he wants to go and he will be there at once, so we all want them."

The prince's friend said, "Well, don't quarrel; give them to me and you all go and run a race, and the one who wins can have them. In the meantime, I'll hold the boots."

As soon as they were gone he jerked the hat out of his gown, put it on his head, and when they got back he wasn't to be seen. They hunted every place, but could not find him, and finally went away without their boots.

Then the prince and his friend put on a boot each, and the prince wished to find a place where the king was dead, where they wanted a new ruler; and they both went to sleep. Next morning they awakened to find themselves in the midst of a great hollow tree, and around it was a crowd of men who that day were to choose a new king.

While they stood there they prayed that the god of the sky would throw down a tsamba torma [offering cake made from parched barley] from the clouds and hit whoever was to be the king. So down it came, but instead of hitting any of them it hit the big tree. "This won't do at all," they said, "We haven't any such custom as having a tree for a king."

But an old man was there who said, "Let's see if some one isn't in the tree." They looked and found the prince and his friend inside. But the people were not at all pleased.

"This will not do at all," they said, "we don't know these men, we don't know their fathers and mothers and they are probably bad men. We won't have them now, but tomorrow we will have another test and whoever can vomit the most valuable things, he shall be king."

The next day one drank a lot of milk and threw up white every place he went, another ate something green and threw up green, and others different things.

The prince vomited gold and said, "You see, I am to be king."

The friend of the prince vomited jewels, and said, "You see, I am to be the prime minister." So they were made king and prime minister of the country.

The prince found a beautiful girl, whom he took to be his queen. Now the prince had two houses, one very high on the mountains and another in the city, and every day the queen went up to this high house for a little while, but he did not know she went there.

However, his friend did, and wondered and wondered why she went up to that house every day. "Somebody or something must be in there that she wants to see," he thought. So he put on his magic hat and went along behind her when she started for the mountain.

She went in through an open door, up a flight of stairs, through another door, and up another flight, and so on for five stories, until she reached the top of the house, which was beautifully fixed with rugs and hangings. She took off her everyday clothes and bathed and perfumed and gowned herself in silks and satins and lit incense. The prince's friend was sitting by, invisible of course! After two or three hours a beautiful bird flew down from heaven. The queen lighted a piece of incense and went before the bird with it, as it had perched itself on a rock near her on the top of the house. It really was the son of a god, disguised as a bird, with only feathers or bird's clothing on the outside. She fixed food for him, and he stepped out of his bird gown, and as he held her hands he said to her, "Your husband was chosen by the gods to be the king; is he a good or a bad ruler?"

The queen answered, "I'm very young, and whether he is good or bad I'm unable to say."

Then they said good-bye and she asked him to come again tomorrow morning. So he flew away in his bird gown and she donned her everyday clothes and went back to the palace.

Next morning it was the same thing, the minister of the king accompanying her, invisible again.

The god said to her, "I'm coming tomorrow in the king's palace as a bird and see for myself whether the king is good and wise and whether or not he is handsome."

Next day, before the queen came, the prime minister told the king all about his lady, that she went to this high house on the mountain every day to meet the son of a god, and that he had put on his invisible hat and gone along and had seen them, while they could not see him, and he knew all about it.

"So tomorrow," he said, "you make a big fire of charcoal on a 'hopan' and take a sword and kill him."

They were all sitting around a big fire next morning, the king, the prime minister and the court, when the bird came hopping up the stairs into the midst

of them. The minister had on his hat and couldn't be seen; he grabbed the bird by the tail, threw some fire on him and the king took his big sword to kill him, when the queen caught his arm and would not allow him to do it. The fire burned the bird on the back and wings a bit and he flew very quietly into heaven again.

The next day the queen went again to the high castle, and dressed once more in her beautiful clothes, and again the minister went. She waited a long time and felt dreadfully sad about the whole affair, but that day the bird did not come. One day after this he came flying down very slowly, for he was covered with burns and felt very ill. The queen took his hand and cried over him.

"You need not cry," he said, "the king is a very good and handsome man, but it is very queer he should throw fire all over me. I am very sick these days with all these burns and cannot fly very well, and will only come once a month to see you, not every day." And he flew slowly away.

The queen went back to her king and began to love him better, because the son of the god came only once a month to see her.

The prime minister one day put on his magic hat and his boots and wished himself back where he had drunk wine in the inn with the woman and her daughter. On the way he passed the door of a small lamasery and slipped up and looked in, where he saw two old men, caretakers of the place, drawing a donkey on a piece of paper; as they turned the paper over one of the men turned into a donkey, got up and rolled over and ran all over the lamasery, braying in a dreadful manner. It seemed that the drawing turned one way, changed the man into a donkey, and turned over, changed him back into a man. When the old man was tired of his queer piece of paper and the tricks it did, he rolled it up and put it behind the big idol.

The prince's friend, who had his magic hat on so that the old priest could not see him, slipped in and stole the paper, then went on to the wine shop and said, "I want to pay you for the wine you gave us; here is five tenths of an ounce of silver, and I will give you a paper, which, if you turn it over, it will bring you plenty of gold."

They said they would be very glad to have it if they could get hold of wealth that easily. So he gave them the paper, and as soon as they turned it over, they both turned into donkeys. Then he led them to the king who used them to carry wood and dirt to fix his houses, and they were half starved and were very bad off indeed. After working and carrying for three years they were very ill and their backs were terribly sore.

One day the king saw them with the tears rolling down their faces, and he asked, "What is the matter with these donkeys; why are they crying? Turn them out and don't make them work so hard"; but the minister had the paper and turned them back by turning the paper over and they returned to their homes. Then he told the king he had punished them for the way they had been treated so long ago.

## THE TIGER AND THE FROG

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Shelton, A. L. *Tibetan Folktales*. St. Louis, MO: United Christian Missionary Society, 1925, 21–25.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Tibet

**National Origin:** China (Tibet)

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Relying on his wits in the absence of strength, the frog plays the role of **trickster**. Among the traditional **motifs** in the frog's repertoire is "Weak animal makes large believe that he has killed and eaten many of the large one's companions" (K1715). The tale concludes with a **variant** of "Animal Allows Himself to be Tied to Another for Safety" (AT 78). The casting of the frog in the trickster role is not common cross-culturally. Frogs hold a special place in Tibetan tradition, however. See the introductory notes to "The Story of the Prince's Friend" (page 116).

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“**T**he tall strong pine is a great help, for with its support the weak vine may climb as high.”

—Tibetan Proverb

Once upon a time, in the days when the world was young and all animals understood each other's languages, an old, old tiger named Tsuden went out hunting for some food. As he was creeping quietly along the banks of a stream a frog saw him and was badly scared. He thought, "This tiger is coming to eat me up." He climbed up on a little bunch of sod and when the tiger came near, called out, "Hello, where are you going?"

The tiger answered, "I am going up into the forest to hunt something to eat. I haven't had any food for two or three days and I am very weak and hungry. I guess I'll eat you up. You're awfully small, but I can't find anything else. Who are you, anyway?"

The frog replied, swelling up as big as he could, "I am the king of the frogs. I can jump any distance and can do anything. Here's a river, let's see who can jump across."

The tiger answered, "All right," and as he crouched ready to jump, the frog slipped up and got hold of the end of his tail with his mouth, and when the tiger jumped he was thrown away up the bank across the river. After Tsuden got across he turned around and looked and looked into the river for the frog. But as the tiger turned, the frog let loose of his tail and said, "What are you looking for, old tiger, down there?"

The tiger whirled quickly, very much surprised to see the frog away up the bank behind him.

Said the frog, "Now I beat you in that test, let's try another. Suppose we both vomit." The tiger being empty could only throw up a little water, but the frog spit up some tiger hair.

The tiger much astonished asked, "How do you happen to be able to do that?"

The frog replied, "Oh, yesterday I killed a tiger and ate him, and these are just a few of the hairs that aren't yet digested."

The tiger began to think to himself, "He must be very strong. Yesterday he killed and ate a tiger, and now he has jumped farther than I did over the river. Guess I'd better slip away before he eats me." Then he sidled away a little piece, quickly turned and began to run away as fast as he could, up the mountain.

He met a fox coming down who asked, "What's the matter, why are you running away so fast?"

"Say," the old tiger said, "I met the king of all the frogs, who is very strong. Why, he has been eating tigers and he jumped across the river and landed farther up the bank than I did."

The fox laughed at him and said, "What, are you running away from that little frog? He is nothing at all. I am only a little fox, but I could put my foot on him and kill him."

The tiger answered, "I know what this frog can do, but if you think you can kill him, I'll go back with you. I am afraid you will get frightened and run away, however, so we must tie our tails together."

So they tied their tails fast in a lot of knots and went down to see the frog, who still sat on his piece of sod, looking as important as he could. He saw them coming and called out to the fox, "You're a great fox. You haven't paid your toll to the king today nor brought any meat either. Is that a dog you've got tied to your tail and are you bringing him for my dinner?"

Then the tiger was frightened, for he thought the fox was taking him to the king to be eaten. So he turned and ran and ran as fast as he could go, dragging the poor fox with him, and if they are not dead, they are still running today.

## **THE WICKED STEPMOTHER**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Shelton, A. L. *Tibetan Folktales*. St. Louis, MO: United Christian Missionary Society, 1925, 62–69.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Tibet

**National Origin:** China (Tibet)



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The following tale takes up the theme of tension between the generations and the conflict between obligation and ambition. The tsamba tormas mentioned in the narrative and the sacrifice to the snake deity are holdovers from the Tibetan religion of Bön. See introductory notes to “The Story of the Two Devils,” page 113, and “The Story of the Prince’s Friend,” page 116.

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“Eating much the tiger can swallow no more, so the vulture may safely come down.”

—Tibetan Proverb

Once upon a time, on the very tiptop of a big flat mountain, there was situated a country over which ruled a king named Genchog. He married a beautiful wife who gave him one son whom they named Nyema. In giving birth to him she died, but the baby lived. The king got him another wife and had another son whom they called Däwä. One day, thinking to herself, she said, “There is no chance for my son to be king, for the older son has the birthright and he is sure to be the ruler.”

So she began to plan and plot and see if she could think of some way to kill the older son and let her son rule the kingdom.

One day she feigned to be very ill and rolled over on the floor groaning and crying. The king saw her and very much alarmed exclaimed, “What is the matter with you?”

And she answered, “Oh, I have had this sickness since I was a little girl, but it has never been so hard as it is this time. There is a way to cure it, but it is too hard and bitter, so I will have to die this time.”

The king asked, “What is the way to heal you? I don’t want you to die, for it would break my heart and I wouldn’t want to be king any longer. You must tell me the remedy so I can save you.”

She demurred for some time but finally said, “Well, one of your sons must be killed and I must eat his heart with butter, but you see your older son is the prince and heir to the throne and the younger son is my own flesh and blood, so I could not eat his heart even if it were to save my life.”

The king was dreadfully grieved and finally said, “Well, I love one son as much as another and my heart would ache the same for each of them, but in a day or two I will kill the elder, as it would do no good to kill the younger.”

After a while the younger brother found out what was to be done and went to the older brother and told him, and asked, “What shall we do about it?”

The older brother said, “Little brother, you must stay with your father and become the king. He won’t kill you and I’ll run away.”

The younger brother felt very sorry about it and his heart was sore as he said, "If you are going away I want to go too. I don't want to stay here without you."

"Very well," answered the other, "you may go if you wish." So they arranged together to slip away that night at midnight and tell nobody of their going. They could take no tsamba [parched barley flour] for fear some one would find out they were going. They had some tsamba bags and in them were some dried tsamba tormas [offerings made from tsamba] that the lamas had been using. Now these tormas are little cone-shaped bodies made of tsamba and are used when the lamas are reading prayers. They are supposed to be full of devils, which the lamas coaxed into them when they read their holy books.

They started about midnight on the fifteenth of the month and traveled day and night, over the mountains and through the valleys, until their dried tsamba was all gone and they were very hungry and thirsty. They finally came to a village, but there was no water. The younger was getting weak now as they had had but little food and no water for some time.

So Nyema said to him, "Wait and rest here in this little village, and I will go and see if I can find some water." He kept on going until he had gone entirely around the mountain in his search for water, but found none. Going back to the place where he had left his younger brother, he saw that he was dead. He was very much grieved and built a tomb for him of prayer stones and prayed that in his next incarnation he would have a happy life and not have to have so much sorrow as he had had this time.

Nyema then left and, crossing two mountain ranges, came to a cliff in which was a big door through which he entered, and there found an old hermit lama in the cave.

When the old man saw him he said, "You are a good man, I know by looking at you. How did you happen to come here?"

Then Nyema told all that had happened to him and why he had run away from home, so the old man said, "You can stay here and be my son and I will pray to the gods to bring your younger brother to life again." In a few days the younger brother did come to life, and following his older brother's tracks came to the old hermit's house, and the two stayed there as the old lama's sons.

Below this cave, which was high up on the mountain, was a city where dwelt a very good king, and near the city was a big lake by which all the people watered their fields. Every year an offering had to be made to the snake god who dwelt in the lake, so that he wouldn't be angry and keep the water away. For this offering the people must sacrifice a human being who had been born in the tiger year. But the time came when all the people born in this year were dead and gone, and none was left to offer. One day the children, seeing the king, said to him, "Every day when we go up on the mountain to herd the cattle, we see a lama who lives up there. This lama has two sons, and the older one was born in the tiger year." So the king sent three men to see if it was true. The men went up to the cave and knocked on the door.

The lama opened it and asked, "What do you want?"

"The king has heard you have two sons and that one was born in the tiger year," answered the men, "and we need him for the offering to the god of the lake."

The lama answered, "I am a lama. How could I have two sons?" Then he shut the door in their faces and hid the boys in a big water cask. This treatment angered the men so they took some rocks and beat the door down. They looked everywhere for the boys, but they were so carefully hidden they couldn't be found, so in their disappointment they took some rocks and beat the old man.

The boys couldn't stand this, so they came out of their hiding-place and called, "Here we are, don't beat him any more." Then the men tied the older son and took him with them to the king. The lama and the younger brother felt very sad after he was gone. The men led Nyema to the king's palace, and since it wasn't quite time for the offering to be made, he was allowed his freedom in the courtyard of the palace. The king had a daughter, who fell violently in love with Nyema when she saw how handsome he was, and watched him wherever he went.

The day finally came and they took Nyema to the lake to throw him in. The king's daughter followed, saying pleadingly, "Please don't throw him into the lake, but if you must, throw me in too."

It made the king angry to see his daughter act in that manner, and he called out, "Throw her in too." So they threw them both in.

Nyema felt very sad and he thought, "It doesn't matter if I am thrown in, as I was born in the tiger year and the people will all starve if the snake god is angry, but it seems useless that the princess should die on my account."

The girl thought to herself, "I am only a girl and it doesn't matter if they do throw me in, but it is too bad to kill this handsome young man."

The god that ruled the lake thought it would be a pity that since they loved each other so much either should die, so when they were thrown into the water he carried them to the shore and neither of them was drowned. Then the god told the people it wasn't necessary to sacrifice any more, that he would see that there was plenty of water without it.

Nyema said to the princess, "You go to your father and tell him what the snake god says. I want to go see the lama and my brother for a little while. In a few days I will return and we will be married."

The princess went back to the palace and Nyema to the cave. When he knocked on the door a faint voice answered, and when he opened the door the old lama said weakly, "I had two sons, but the king took one away from me to sacrifice to the snake god and now myself and my other son are about to die."

Nyema said, "This is your son returned." Then he washed and fed them and they were soon better and very happy to have him with them again.

When the princess returned to the palace every one was glad to see her and rejoiced. Her father asked her if Nyema was dead and she answered, "No, and it is because of his goodness that I live. The snake god doesn't want any more

human sacrifices of the tiger year nor any other year, and the water will always come and will never be stopped.”

The king and his head-men thought it miraculous that they had been saved and that the god of the lake had been so kind. The king then ordered Nyema to be brought before him. So they sent messengers and this time invited the three to come down the mountain, and when they arrived the king set them on high benches to give them honor.

Then he said to Nyema, “You are a worker of wonders, are you really a son of this old hermit?”

Nyema answered, “No, I am the son of King Genchog. My brother and I ran away from the kingdom and from my father’s wife, who was not my real mother, to save our lives.” So the king, knowing him to be the son of a king, was much pleased to give him his daughter in marriage. Not only his daughter did he give him, but his scepter as well, and let him rule in his stead, for he was growing old.

Then Nyema made a feast for all the people and gave them a happy time for a period of seven days. When he had mounted the throne one day he said to Däwä, “Little brother, you must go back home and see your father and mother, as it has been a long time since we left them.”

The new king gave his brother jewels and gold and silver, and then decided they would all go. They took yak loads of goods, many presents, all their servants and the two sons with the princess, started on their way. About half way over the big mountains they wrote a letter and sent it on ahead by a runner, telling their father they were coming. When the father heard his two sons were still alive he was very happy and sent out people to meet them. When he had welcomed them and found his older son had a kingdom, he turned his crown over to the younger son, which was just what the mother wanted. After a visit the older son took his princess and went back to his kingdom, where the two ruled long and well and lived happily ever afterwards.

## **HOW A FOX FELL VICTIM TO HIS OWN DECEIT**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Shelton, A. L. *Tibetan Folktales*. St. Louis, MO: United Christian Missionary Society, 1925, 36–38.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Tibet

**National Origin:** China (Tibet)

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“How a Fox Fell Victim to His Own Deceit” provides a classic example of the **animal tale** functioning as a **fable** in the Tibetan corpus of folktales.

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“Between the official and his people is confidence if the head-man is skillful.”

—Tibetan Proverb

Once upon a time, away up in the corner of the mountains, in a little cave, lived a tiger and her baby cub. She had brought for this baby, one day when she was out hunting, a little fox to be his playmate. The fox had a happy time and an easy one, for he didn't have to work or hunt, but played all day and the mother tiger kept them all supplied with food.

One day she went out to hunt and found a little calf, which she took home to be another playmate for her son. But the fox was much displeased and became very jealous of the calf because he thought they all loved the calf better than he and that only the food that was left over was given to him. As a matter of fact, they treated him just the same as ever, but his heart was wrong and he began to plan how he might be revenged on the calf.

After a while, the mother tiger became very ill, and as she was about to die she called the calf and her son to her side and said, “Although you are not of the same father and mother, yet you are brothers. I don't want you to ever quarrel, but to live happily here together, and if any one should tell you lies don't pay any attention to them, but always be friends.” So saying, she died.

Now the fox saw his opportunity. Every morning the calf was in the habit of running and playing and jumping and shaking his horns in fun, bellowing and taking exercise, while the tiger preferred to lie and rest.

So one morning while the calf was skipping around, the fox slipped up to the tiger and said, “Although the calf says he is your friend, have you any idea what he is thinking about, when he runs and jumps and shakes his horns in that manner? In his heart he hates you, and in that manner is gaining strength in order that he may be able to kill you.”

This, of course, made the tiger suspicious and very angry. So daily he watched the calf very closely and became sour and surly.

Then the fox went to the calf and said, “You know your mother told you and the tiger that you were to be brothers, but see, he is growing larger and stronger every day and his heart has changed and he is preparing to kill and eat you.”

The tiger and the calf were now enemies and watched each other with a great deal of suspicion and were very unhappy. Finally one day the calf said to the tiger, “Why do you want to kill me and eat me? I have done you no harm and love you just as your mother said I should.”

The tiger replied, “I love you just the same and never thought of doing such a thing until the fox said you were preparing to kill me.”

Then they realized that the fox had been trying to make them enemies, and they decided on a plan to get even with the fox. The tiger said, “I'll tell you what we'll do. We'll have a sham fight saying we hate each other and we're

going to fight it out and see who wins. Ask him to be present and while we're in the midst of it, I'll attack him."

The day came and they began their fight. They maneuvered round and round and seemed to be fighting very fiercely until they came very near the fox, when the tiger made a jump, landed on him and killed him and sat down and had a feast of the carcass.

This shows what happens to those who try to make trouble between friends.

## THE CAT AND THE MICE

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** O'Connor, W. F. *Folk Tales from Tibet*. London: Hurst and Blackett, Ltd., 1906, 26–29.

**Date:** ca. 1904

**Original Source:** Tibet

**National Origin:** China

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The hungry cat as **trickster** and the clever mouse (or mice) are **stock characters** in traditional narratives. The following **animal tale** provides a classic example of this **tale type** (see "The Cat as Sham Holy Man," AT 113B). Other **variants** cast different predators and prey in the central roles, however, for example, the coyote and his intended victims in Native American traditions. In the related tale type, "The Fox Persuades the Cock to Crow with Closed Eyes" (AT 61), the subterfuge used by the fox to prevent the cock from detecting his attack is similar to the cat's use of a religious posture to hide his movements from the mice.

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Once upon a time there was a cat who lived in a large farmhouse in which there was a great number of mice. For many years the cat found no difficulty in catching as many mice as she wanted to eat, and she lived a very peaceful and pleasant life. But as time passed on she found that she was growing old and infirm, and that it was becoming more and more difficult for her to catch the same number of mice as before; so after thinking very carefully what was the best thing to do, she one day called all the mice together, and after promising not to touch them, she addressed them as follows, "Oh! mice," said she, "I have called you together in order to say something to you. The fact is that I have led a very wicked life, and now, in my old age, I repent of having caused you all so much inconvenience and annoyance. So I am going for the future to turn over a new leaf. It is my intention now to give myself up entirely to religious contemplation and no longer to molest you, so henceforth

you are at liberty to run about as freely as you will without fear of me. All I ask of you is that twice every day you should all file past me in procession and each one make an obeisance as you pass me by, as a token of your gratitude to me for my kindness.”

When the mice heard this they were greatly pleased, for they thought that now, at last, they would be free from all danger from their former enemy, the cat. So they very thankfully promised to fulfill the cat’s conditions, and agreed that they would file past her and make a *salaam* [a deep bow] twice every day.

So when evening came the cat took her seat on a cushion at one end of the room, and the mice all went by in single file, each one making a profound *salaam* as it passed.

Now the cunning old cat had arranged this little plan very carefully with an object of her own; for, as soon as the procession had all passed by with the exception of one little mouse, she suddenly seized the last mouse in her claws without anybody else noticing what had happened, and devoured it at her leisure. And so twice every day, she seized the last mouse of the series, and for a long time lived very comfortably without any trouble at all in catching her mice, and without any of the mice realizing what was happening.

Now it happened that amongst these mice there were two friends, whose names were Rambé and Ambé, who were very much attached to one another. Now these two were much cleverer and more cunning than most of the others, and after a few days they noticed that the number of mice in the house seemed to be decreasing very much, in spite of the fact that the cat had promised not to kill any more. So they laid their heads together and arranged a little plan for future processions. They agreed that Rambé was always to walk at the very front of the procession of the mice, and the Ambé was to bring up the rear, and that all the time the procession was passing, Rambé was to call to Ambé, and Ambé to answer Rambé at frequent intervals. So next evening, when the procession started as usual, Rambé marched along in front, and Ambé took up his position last of all.

As soon as Rambé had passed the cushion where the cat was seated and had made his *salaam*, he called out in a shrill voice, “Where are you, Brother Ambé?”

“Here I am, Brother Rambé,” squeaked the other from the rear of the procession.

And so they went on calling out and answering one another until they had all filed past the cat, who had not dared to touch Ambé as long as his brother kept calling to him.

The cat was naturally very much annoyed at having to go hungry that evening, and felt very cross all night. But she thought it was only an accident which had brought the two friends, one in front and one in rear of the procession, and she hoped to make up for her enforced abstinence by finding a particularly fat mouse at the end of the procession next morning. What, then, was her

amazement and disgust when she found that on the following morning the very same arrangement had been made, and that Rambé called to Ambé, and Ambé answered Rambé until all the mice had passed her by, and so, for the second time, she was foiled of her meal. However, she disguised her feelings of anger and decided to give the mice one more trial; so in the evening she took her seat as usual on the cushion and waited for the mice to appear.

Meanwhile, Rambé and Ambé had warned the other mice to be on the lookout, and to be ready to take flight the moment the cat showed any appearance of anger.

At the appointed time the procession started as usual, and as soon as Rambé had passed the cat he squeaked out, "Where are you, Brother Ambé?"

"Here I am, Brother Rambé," came the shrill voice from the rear.

This was more than the cat could stand. She made a fierce leap right into the middle of the mice, who, however, were thoroughly prepared for her, and in an instant they scuttled off in every direction to their holes. And before the cat had time to catch a single one, the room was empty and not a sign of a mouse was to be seen anywhere.

After this the mice were very careful not to put any further trust in the treacherous cat, who soon after died of starvation owing to her being unable to procure any of her customary food. But Rambé and Ambé lived for many years, and were held in high honor and esteem by all the other mice in the community.



# **SOUTH ASIA**



# INDIA

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## STORY OF SAVITRI

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Mackenzie, Donald A. *Indian Myth and Legend*. London: The Gresham Publishing Company Limited, 1913, 44–59.

**Date:** ca. 500 B.C.E.

**Original Source:** India

**National Origin:** India

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The following **myth** is drawn from the Hindu scriptures entitled *The Mahabharata*. According to Hindu theology, Brahma is God in his aspect of creator, and Yama is the Lord of Death and Justice. In her appeal to save her husband's life, Savitri's attempts to outwit Yama are cloaked in a series of appeals to statements of the law, a force to which even Yama was subservient. See also "Royal Rivals: The Pandavas and Kauravas" (page 141) for additional background on this lineage.

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**T**here was once a fair princess in the country of Madra, and her name was Savitri. Be it told how she obtained the exalted merit of chaste women by winning a great boon from Yama.

Savitri was the gift of the goddess Gayatri, wife of Brahma, the self-created, who had heard the prayers and received the offerings of Aswapati, the childless king of Madra, when he practiced austere penances so that he might have issue. The maiden grew to be beautiful and shapely like to a Celestial; her eyes had burning splendor, and were fair as lotus leaves; she resembled a golden image; she had exceeding sweetness and grace.

It came to pass that Savitri looked with eyes of love upon a youth named Satyavan "the Truthful." Although Satyavan dwelt in a hermitage, he was of royal birth. His father was a virtuous king, named Dyumatsena, who became blind, and was then deprived of his kingdom by an old enemy dwelling nigh to him. The dethroned monarch retired to the forest with his faithful wife and his only son, who in time grew up to be a comely youth.

When Savitri confessed her love to her sire, the great sage Narada, who sat beside him, spoke and said, "Alas! The princess hath done wrong in choosing for her husband this royal youth Satyavan. He is comely and courageous, he is truthful and magnanimous and forgiving, he is modest and patient and without malice; honor is seated upon his forehead; he is possessed of every virtue. But he hath one defect, and no other. He is endued with short life; within a year from this day he must die, for so hath it been decreed; within a year Yama, god of the dead, will come for him."

Said the king unto his daughter, "O Savitri, thou hast heard the words of Narada. Go forth, therefore, and choose for thyself another lord, for the days of Satyavan are numbered."

The beautiful maiden made answer unto her father the king, saying, "The die is cast; it can fall but once; once only can a daughter be given away by her sire; once only can a woman say, '*I am thine.*' I have chosen my lord; once have I chosen, nor can I make choice a second time. Let his life be brief or be long, I must now wed Satyavan."

Said Narada, "O king, the heart of thy daughter will not waver; she will not be turned aside from the path she hath selected. I therefore approve of the bestowal of Savitri upon Satyavan."

The king said, "As thou dost advise, so must I do ever, O Narada, because that thou art my preceptor. Thee I cannot disobey."

Then said Narada, "Peace be with Savitri! I must now depart. May blessings attend upon all of you!"

Thereafter Aswapati, the royal sire of Savitri, went to visit Dyumatsena, the blind sire of Satyavan, in the forest, and his daughter went with him.

Said Dyumatsena, "Why hast thou come hither?" Aswapati said, "O royal sage, this is my beautiful daughter Savitri. Take thou her for thy daughter-in-law."

Said Dyumatsena, "I have lost my kingdom, and with my wife and my son dwell here in the woods. We live as ascetics and perform great penances. How will thy daughter endure the hardships of a forest life?"

Aswapati said, "My daughter knoweth well that joy and sorrow come and go and that nowhere is bliss assured. Accept her therefore from me."

Then Dyumatsena consented that his son should wed Savitri, whereat Satyavan was made glad because he was given a wife who had every accomplishment. Savitri rejoiced also because she obtained a husband after her own heart, and she put off her royal garments and ornaments and clad herself in bark and red cloth.

So Savitri became a hermit woman. She honored Satyavan's father and mother, and she gave great joy to her husband with her sweet speeches, her skill at work, her subdued and even temper, and especially her love. She lived the life of the ascetics and practiced every austerity. But she never forgot the dread prophecy of Narada the sage; his sorrowful words were always present in her secret heart, and she counted the days as they went past.

At length the time drew nigh when Satyavan must cast off his mortal body. When he had but four days to live, Savitri took the *Tritatra* vow of three nights of sleepless penance and fast.

Said the blind Dyumatsena, "My heart is grieved for thee, O my daughter, because the vow is exceedingly hard."

Savitri said, "Be not sorrowful, saintly father, I must observe my vow without fail."

Said Dyumatsena, "It is not meet that one like me should say, 'Break thy vow,' rather should I counsel, 'Observe thy vow.'"

Then Savitri began to fast, and she grew pale and was much wasted by reason of her rigid penance. Three days passed away, and then, believing that her husband would die on the morrow, Savitri spent a night of bitter anguish through all the dark and lonely hours.

The sun rose at length on the fateful morning, and she said to herself, "*Today is the day.*" Her face was bloodless but brave; she prayed in silence and with fervor and offered oblations at the morning fire; then she stood before her father-in-law and her mother-in-law in reverent silence with joined hands, concentrating her senses. All the hermits of the forest blessed her and said, "Mayest thou never suffer widowhood."

Said Savitri in her secret heart, "So be it." Dyumatsena spoke to her then, saying, "Now that thy vow hath been completed thou mayest eat the morning meal."

Said Savitri, "I will eat when the sun goes down."

Hearing her words Satyavan rose, and taking his axe upon his shoulder, turned towards the distant jungle to procure fruits and herbs for his wife, whom he loved. He was strong and self-possessed and of noble seeming.

Savitri spoke to him sweetly and said, "Thou must not go forth alone, my husband. It is my heart's desire to go with thee. I cannot endure today to be parted from thee."

Said Satyavan, "It is not for thee to enter the dark-some jungle; the way is long and difficult, and thou art weak on account of thy severe penance. How canst thou walk so far on foot?"

Savitri laid her head upon his bosom and said, "I have not been made weary by my fast. Indeed I am now stronger than before. I will not feel tired when thou art by my side. I have resolved to go with thee: do not therefore seek to thwart my wish—the wish and the longing of a faithful wife to be with her lord."

Said Satyavan, "If it is thy desire to accompany me I cannot but gratify it. But thou must ask permission of my parents lest they find fault with me for taking thee through the trackless jungle."

Then Savitri spoke to the blind sage and her husband's mother and said, "Satyavan is going towards the deep jungle to procure fruits and herbs for me, and also fuel for the sacrificial fires. It is my heart's wish to go also, for today I cannot endure to be parted from him. Fain, too, would I behold the blossoming woods."

Said Dyumatsena, "Since thou hast come to dwell with us in our hermitage thou hast not before asked anything of us. Have thy desire therefore in this matter, but do not delay thy husband in his duties."

Having thus received permission to depart from the hermitage, Savitri turned towards the jungle with Satyavan, her beloved lord. Smiles covered her face, but her heart was torn with secret sorrow.

Peacocks fluttered in the green woodland through which they walked together, and the sun shone in all its splendor in the blue heaven.

Said Satyavan with sweet voice, "How beautiful are the bright streams and the blossoming trees!"

The heart of Savitri was divided into two parts: with one she held converse with her husband while she watched his face and followed his moods; with the other she awaited the dread coming of Yama, but she never uttered her fears.

Birds sang sweetly in the forest, but sweeter to Savitri was the voice of her beloved. It was very dear to her to walk on in silence, listening to his words.

Satyavan gathered fruits and stored them in his basket. At length he began to cut down the branches of trees. The sun was hot and he perspired. Suddenly he felt weary and he said, "My head aches; my senses are confused, my limbs have grown weak, and my heart is afflicted sorely. O silent one, a sickness hath seized me. My body seems to be pierced by a hundred darts. I would fain lie down and rest, my beloved; I would fain sleep even now."

Speechless and terror-stricken, the gentle Savitri wound her arms about her husband's body; she sat upon the ground and she pillowed his head upon her lap. Remembering the words of Narada, she knew that the dread hour had come; the very moment of death was at hand. Gently she held her husband's head with caressing hands; she kissed his panting lips; her heart was beating fast and loud. Darker grew the forest and it was lonesome indeed.

Suddenly an awful Shape emerged from the shadows. He was of great stature and sable hue; his raiment was blood-red; on his head he wore a gleaming diadem; he had red eyes and was fearsome to look upon; he carried a noose.... The Shape was Yama, god of death. He stood in silence, and gazed upon slumbering Satyavan.

Savitri looked up, and when she perceived that a Celestial had come nigh, her heart trembled with sorrow and with fear. She laid her husband's head upon the green sward and rose up quickly: then she spake, saying, "Who art thou, O divine One, and what is thy mission to me?"

Said Yama, "Thou dost love thy husband; thou art endued also with ascetic merit. I will therefore hold converse with thee. Know thou that I am the Monarch of Death. The days of this man, thy husband, are now spent, and I have come to bind him and take him away."

Savitri said, "Wise sages have told me that thy messengers carry mortals away. Why, then, O mighty King, hast thou thyself come hither?"

Said Yama, "This prince is of spotless heart; his virtues are without number; he is, indeed, an ocean of accomplishments. It would not be fitting to send messengers for him, so I myself have come hither."

The face of Satyavan had grown ashen pale. Yama cast his noose and tore out from the prince's body the soul-form, which was no larger than a man's thumb; it was tightly bound and subdued.

So Satyavan lost his life; he ceased to breathe; his body became unsightly; it was robbed of its luster and deprived of power to move.

Yama fettered the soul with tightness, and turned abruptly towards the south; silently and speedily he went upon his way....

Savitri followed him.... Her heart was drowned in grief. She could not desert her beloved lord.... She followed Yama, the Monarch of Death.

Said Yama, "Turn back, O Savitri. Do not follow me. Perform the funeral rites of thy lord.... Thine allegiance to Satyavan hath now come to an end; thou art free from all wifely duties. Dare not to proceed farther on this path."

Savitri said, "I must follow my husband whither he is carried or whither he goeth of his own will. I have undergone great penance. I have observed my vow, and I cannot be turned back.... I have already walked with thee seven paces, and the sages have declared that one who walketh seven paces with another becometh a companion. Being thus made thy friend, I must hold converse with thee, I must speak and thou must listen.... I have attained the perfect life upon earth by performing my vows and by reason of my devotion unto my lord. It is not meet that thou shouldest part me from my husband now, and prevent me from attaining bliss by saying that my allegiance to him hath ended and another mode of life is opened to me."

Said Yama, "Turn back now.... Thy words are wise and pleasing indeed; therefore, ere thou goest, thou canst ask a boon of me and I will grant it. Except the soul of Satyavan, I will give thee whatsoever thou dost desire."

Savitri said, "Because my husband's sire became blind, he was deprived of his kingdom. Restore his eyesight, O mighty One."

Said Yama, "The boon is granted. I will restore the vision of thy father-in-law.... But thou hast now grown faint on this toilsome journey. Turn back, therefore, and thy weariness will pass away."

Savitri said, "How can I be weary when I am with my husband? The fate of my husband will be my fate also; I will follow him even unto the place whither thou dost carry him.... Hear me, O mighty One, whose friendship I cherish! It is a blessed thing to behold a Celestial; still more blessed is it to hold converse with one; the friendship of a god must bear great fruit."

Said Yama, "Thy wisdom delighteth my heart. Therefore thou canst ask of me a second boon, except the life of thy husband, and it will be granted thee."

Savitri said, "May my wise and saintly father-in-law regain the kingdom he hath lost. May he become once again the protector of his people."

Said Yama, "The boon is granted. The king will return to his people and be their wise protector.... Turn back now, O princess; thy desire is fulfilled."

Savitri said, "All people must obey thy decrees; thou dost take away life in accordance with divine ordinances and not of thine own will. Therefore thou art called Yama—he that ruleth by decrees. Hear my words, O divine One. It is the duty of Celestials to love all creatures and to award them according to their merit. The wicked are without holiness and devotion, but the saintly protect all creatures and show mercy even unto their enemies."

Said Yama, "Thy wise words are like water to a thirsty soul. Ask of me therefore a third boon, except thy husband's life, and it will be granted unto thee."

Savitri said, "My sire, King Aswapati, hath no son. O grant that a hundred sons may be born unto him."

Said Yama, "A hundred sons will be born unto thy royal sire. Thy boon is granted.... Turn back, therefore, O princess; thou canst not come farther. Long is the path thou hast already traveled."

Savitri said, "I have followed my husband and the way hath not seemed long. Indeed, my heart desireth to go on much farther. Hear my words, O Yama, as thou dost proceed on thy journey. Thou art great and wise and powerful; thou dost deal equally with all human creatures; thou art the lord of justice.... One cannot trust oneself as one can trust a Celestial; therefore, one seeketh to win the friendship of a Celestial. It is meet that one who seeketh the friendship of a Celestial should make answer to his words."

Said Yama, "No mortal hath ever spoken unto me as thou hast spoken. Thy words are indeed pleasing, O princess. I will grant thee even a fourth boon, except thy husband's life, ere thou dost depart."

Savitri said, "May a century of sons be born unto my husband and me so that our race may endure. O grant me this, the fourth boon, thou Mighty One."

Said Yama, "I grant unto thee a century of sons, O princess; they will be wise and powerful and thy race will endure.... Be without weariness now, O lady, and turn back; thou hast come too far already."

Savitri said, "Those who are pious must practice eternal morality, O Yama. The pious uphold the universe. The pious hold communion with the pious only, and are never weary; the pious do good unto others nor ever expect any reward. A good deed done unto the righteous is never thrown away; such an act doth not entail loss of dignity nor is any interest impaired. Indeed, the doing of good is the chief office of the righteous, and the righteous therefore are the true protectors of all."

Said Yama, "The more thou dost speak, the more I respect thee, O princess. O thou who art so deeply devoted unto thy husband, thou canst now ask of me some incomparable boon."



Savitri said, "O mighty One, thou bestower of boons, thou hast already promised what cannot be fulfilled unless my husband is restored unto me; thou hast promised me a century of sons. Therefore, I ask thee, O Yama, to give me back Satyavan, my beloved, my lord. Without him, I am as one who is dead; without him, I have no desire for happiness; without him I have no longing even for Heaven; I will have no desire to prosper if my lord is snatched off; I cannot live without Satyavan. Thou hast promised me sons, O Yama, yet thou dost take away my husband from mine arms. Hear me and grant this boon: Let Satyavan be restored to life so that thy decree may be fulfilled."

Said Yama, "So be it. With cheerful heart I now unbind thy husband. He is free.... Disease cannot afflict him again and he will prosper. Together you will both have long life; you will live four hundred years; you will have a century of sons and they will be kings, and their sons will be kings also."

Having spoken thus, Yama, the lord of death, departed unto his own place. And Savitri returned to the forest where her husband's body lay cold and ashen-pale; she sat upon the ground and pillowed his head upon her lap. Then Satyavan was given back his life.... He looked upon Savitri with eyes of love; he was like to one who had returned from a long journey in a strange land.

Said Satyavan, "Long was my sleep; why didst thou not awaken me, my beloved? ... Where is that dark One who dragged me away?"

Savitri said, "Yama hath come and gone, and thou hast slept long, resting thy head upon my lap, and art now refreshed, O blessed one. Sleep hath forsaken thee, O son of a king. If thou canst rise up, let us now depart hence for the night is already dark."

Satyavan rose up refreshed and strong. He looked round about and perceived that he was in the midst of the forest. Then he said, "O fair one, I came hither to gather fruit for thee, and while I cut down branches from the trees a pain afflicted me. I grew faint, I sank upon the ground, I laid my head upon thy lap and fell into a deep slumber even whilst thou didst embrace me. Then it seemed to me that I was enveloped in darkness, and that I beheld a sable One amidst great effulgence.... Was this a vision or a reality, O fairest and dearest?"

Savitri said, "The darkness deepens.... I will tell thee all on the morrow.... Let us now find our parents, O prince. The beasts of the night come forth; I hear their awesome voices; they tread the forest in glee; the howl of the jackal maketh my heart afraid."

Said Satyavan, "Darkness hath covered the forest with fear; we cannot discover the path by which to return home."

Savitri said, "A withered tree burneth yonder. I will gather sticks and make a fire and we will wait here until day."

Said Satyavan, "My sickness hath departed and I would fain behold my parents again. Never before have I spent a night away from the hermitage. My mother is old and my father also, and I am their crutch. They will now be afflicted with sorrow because that I have not returned."

Satyavan lifted up his arms and lamented aloud, but Savitri dried his tears and said, "I have performed penances, I have given away in charity, I have offered up sacrifices, I have never uttered a falsehood. May thy parents be protected by virtue of the power which I have obtained, and may thou, O my husband, be protected also.

Said Satyavan, "O beautiful one, let us now return to the hermitage."

Savitri raised up her despairing husband. She then placed his left arm upon her left shoulder and wound her right arm about his body, and they walked on together.... At length the fair moon came out and shone upon their path.

Meanwhile Dyumatsena, the sire of Satyavan, had regained his sight, and he went with his wife to search for his lost son, but had to return to the hermitage sorrowing and in despair. The sages comforted the weeping parents and said, "Savitri hath practiced great austerities, and there can be no doubt that Satyavan is still alive."

In time Satyavan and Savitri reached the hermitage, and their own hearts and the hearts of their parents were freed from sorrow.

Then Savitri related all that had taken place, and the sages said, "O chaste and illustrious lady, thou hast rescued the race of Dyumatsena, the foremost of kings, from the ocean of darkness and calamity."

On the morning that followed messengers came to Dyumatsena and told that the monarch who had deprived him of his kingdom was dead, having fallen by the hand of his chief minister. All the people clamored for their legitimate ruler. Said the messengers, "Chariots await thee, O king. Return, therefore, unto thy kingdom."

Great was their wonder to find that Dyumatsena was no longer blind.

So the king was restored to his kingdom, in accordance with the boon which Savitri had obtained from Yama. And sons were in time born unto her father. Thus did the gentle Savitri, by reason of her great piety, raise from misery to high fortune the family of her husband and her own father also. She was the rescuer of all; the bringer of happiness and prosperity.... He who heareth the story of Savitri will never endure misery again....

The beauties of Yama's heaven are sung by the sage Narada in the great epic poem *Mahabharata*. "Listen to me," he says. "In that fair domain it is neither too hot nor too cold. Life there is devoid of sorrow; age does not bring frailties, and none ever hunger or thirst; it is without wretchedness, or fatigue, or evil feelings. Everything, whether celestial or human, that the heart seeks after is found there. Sweet are the juicy fruits, delicious the fragrance of flowers and tree blossoms, and waters are there, both cold and hot, to give refreshment and comfort. Nymphs dance and sing to the piping of celestial elves, and merry laughter ever blends with the strains of alluring music.

"The Assembly House of Yama, which was made by Twashtri, hath splendor equal to the sun; it shines like burnished gold. There the servants of the Lord of Justice measure out the allotted days of mortals. Great rishis and ancestors await

upon Yama, King of the Pitris (fathers), and adore him. Sanctified by holiness, their shining bodies are clad in swan-white garments, and decked with many-colored bracelets and golden ear-rings. Sweet sounds, alluring perfumes, and brilliant flower garlands make that building ever pleasant and supremely blest. Hundreds of thousands of saintly beings worship the illustrious King of the Pitris.

“The heaven of Indra was constructed by the great artisan-god himself. Like a chariot it can be moved anywhere at will. The Assembly House has many rooms and seats, and is adorned by celestial trees. Indra sits there with his beautiful queen, wearing his crown, with gleaming bracelets on his upper arms; he is decked with flowers, and attired in white garments. He is waited upon by brilliant Maruts, and all the gods and the rishis and saints, whose sins have been washed off their pure souls, which are resplendent as fire. There is no sorrow, or fear, or suffering in Indra’s abode, which is inhabited by the spirits of wind and thunder, fire and water, plants and clouds, and planets and stars, and the spirits also of Prosperity, Religion, Joy, Faith, and Intelligence. Fairies and elves (Apsaras and Gandharvas) dance and sing there to sweet music; feats of skill are performed by celestial battle heroes, auspicious rites are also practiced. Divine messengers come and go in celestial chariots, looking bright as Soma himself.

The heaven of Varuna was constructed by Vishwakarma (Twashtri) within the sea. Its walls and arches are of pure white, and they are surrounded by celestial trees, made of sparkling jewels, which always blossom and always bear fruit. In the many-colored bowers beautiful and variegated birds sing delightful melodies. In the Assembly House, which is also of pure white, there are many rooms and many seats. Varuna, richly decked with jewels and golden ornaments and flowers, is throned there with his queen. Adityas wait upon the lord of the waters, as also do hooded snakes (Nagas) with human heads and arms, and Daityas and Danavas (giants and demons) who have taken vows and have been rewarded with immortality. All the holy spirits of rivers and oceans are there, and the holy spirits of lakes and springs and pools, and the personified forms of the points of the heavens, the ends of the earth, and the great mountains. Music and dances provide entertainment, while sacred hymns are sung in praise of Varuna.”

## **ROYAL RIVALS: THE PANDAVAS AND KAURAVAS**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Mackenzie, Donald A. *Indian Myth and Legend*. London: The Gresham Publishing Company Limited, 1913, 173–194.

**Date:** ca. 500 B.C.E.

**Original Source:** India

**National Origin:** India

The following narrative is excerpted from *The Mahabharata (The Story of the Bharata)*, an epic that is eight times the length of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* combined. The heart of the work is devoted to the bitter rivalry and ultimately the war between two sets of cousins, the Pandavas and the Kauravas, over the kingdom of Bharata. In addition to this core narrative, *The Mahabharata* includes ethical, genealogical, and theological material that forms the core of Hindu religion. The following selection details the early history of the warring factions and culminates in the preliminary confrontation between the opposing champions Arjuna and Karna.

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**K**ing Pandu became a mighty monarch, and was renowned as a warrior and a just ruler of his kingdom. He married two wives: Pritha, who was chief rani, and Madri, whom he loved best.

Now Pritha was of celestial origin, for her mother was a nymph; her father was a holy Brahman, and her brother, Vasudeva, was the father of Krishna. When but a babe she had been adopted by the Rajah of Shurasena, whose kingdom was among the Vindhya mountains. She was of pious heart, and ever showed reverence towards holy men. Once there came to the palace the great Rishi Durvasas, and she ministered unto him faithfully by serving food at any hour he desired, and by kindling the sacred fire in the sacrificial chamber. After his stay, which was in length a full year, Durvasas, in reward for her services, imparted to Pritha a powerful charm, by virtue of which she could compel the love of a celestial being. One day she had a vision of Surya, god of the sun; she muttered the charm, and received him when he drew nigh in the attire of a rajah, wearing the celestial ear-rings. In secret she became in time the mother of his son, Karna, who was equipped at birth with celestial ear-rings and an invulnerable coat of mail, which had power to grow as the wearer increased in stature. The child had the eyes of a lion and the shoulders of a bull.

In her maidenly shame Pritha resolved to conceal her new-born babe. So she wrapped him in soft sheets and, laying under his head a costly pillow, placed him in a basket of wicker-work which she had smeared over with wax. Then, weeping bitterly, she set the basket afloat on the river, saying, "O my babe, be thou protected by all who are on land, and in the water, and in the sky, and in the celestial regions! May all who see thee love thee! May Varuna, god of the waters, shield thee from harm! May thy father, the sun, give thee warmth! ... I shall know thee in days to come, wherever thou mayst be, by thy coat of golden mail.... She who will find thee and adopt thee will be surely blessed.... O my son, she who will cherish thee will behold thee in youthful prime like to a maned lion in Himalayan forests."

The basket drifted down the River Aswa until it was no longer seen by that lotus-eyed damsel, and at length it reached the Jumna; the Jumna gave it to the

Ganges, and by that great and holy river it was borne unto the country of Anga.... The child, lying in soft slumber, was kept alive by reason of the virtues possessed by the celestial armor and the ear-rings.

Now there was a woman of Anga who was named Radha, and she had peerless beauty. Her husband was Shatananda, the charioteer. Both husband and wife had for long sorrowed greatly because that they could not obtain a son. One day, however, their wish was gratified. It chanced that Radha went down to the river bank, and she beheld the basket drifting on the waves. She caused it to be brought ashore; and when it was uncovered, she gazed with wonder upon a sleeping babe who was as fair as the morning sun. Her heart was immediately filled with great gladness, and she cried out, "The gods have heard me at length, and they have sent unto me a son." So she adopted the babe and cherished him. And the years went past, and Karna grew up and became a powerful youth and a mighty bowman.

Pritha, who was comely to behold, chose King Pandu at her swayamvara. Trembling with love, she placed the flower garland upon his shoulders.

Madri came from the country of Madra, and was black-eyed and dusky-complexioned. She had been purchased by Bhishma for the king with much gold, many jewels and elephants and horses, as was the marriage custom among her people.

The glories of King Bharata's reign were revived by Pandu, who achieved great conquests and extended his territory. He loved well to go a-hunting, and at length he retired to the Himalaya mountains with his two wives to pursue and slay deer. There, as fate had decreed, he met with dire misfortune. One day he shot arrows at two deer which he beheld sporting together; but they were, as he discovered to his sorrow, a holy Brahman and his wife in animal guise. The sage was wounded mortally, and ere he died he assumed his wonted form, and foretold that Pandu, whom he cursed, would die in the arms of one of his wives.

The king was stricken with fear; he immediately took vows of celibacy, and gave all his possessions to Brahmans; then he went away to live in a solitary place with his two wives.

Some have told that Pandu never had children of his own, and that the gods were the fathers of his wives' great sons. Pritha was mother of Yudhishtira, son of Dharma, god of justice, and of Bhima, son of Vayu, the wind god, and also of Arjuna, son of mighty Indra, monarch of heaven. Madri received from Pritha the charm which Durvasas had given her, and she became the mother of Nakula and Sahadeva, whose sires were the twin Aswins, sons of Surya, the sun god. These five princes were known as the Pandava brothers.

King Pandu was followed by his doom. One day, as it chanced, he met with Madri, his favorite wife; they wandered together in a forest, and when he clasped her in his arms he immediately fell dead as the Brahman had foretold.

His sons, the Pandava brothers, built his funeral pyre, so that his soul might pass to heaven. Both Pritha and Madri desired to be burned with him, and they

debated together which of them should follow her lord to the region of the dead.

Said Pritha, "I must go hence with my lord. I was his first wife and chief rani. O Madri, yield me his body and rear our children together. O let me achieve what must be achieved."

Madri said, "Speak not so, for I should be the chosen one. I was King Pandu's favorite wife, and he died because that he loved me. O sister, if I survived thee I should not be able to rear our children as thou canst rear them. Do not refuse thy sanction to this which is dear unto my heart."

So they held dispute, nor could agree; but the Brahmans, who heard them, said that Madri must be burned with King Pandu, having been his favorite wife. And so it came to pass that Madri laid herself on the pyre, and she passed in flames with her beloved lord, that bull among men.

Meanwhile King Pandu's blind brother, Dhritarashtra, had ascended the throne to reign over the kingdom of Bharatavarsha, with Bhishma as his regent, until the elder of the young princes should come of age.

Dhritarashtra had taken for wife fair Gándhári, daughter of the Rajah of Gándhârá. When she was betrothed she went unto the king with eyes blindfolded, and ever after-wards she so appeared in his presence. She became the mother of a hundred sons, the eldest of whom was Duryodhana. These were the princes who were named the Kauravas, after the country of Kuru-jangala.

The widowed Pritha returned to Hastinapur with her three sons and the two sons of Madri also. When she told unto Dhritarashtra that Pandu his brother had died, he wept and mourned greatly; then he bathed in holy waters and poured forth the funeral oblation. The blind King gave his protection to the five princes who were Pandu's heirs.

So the Pandavas and Kauravas were reared together in the royal palace at Hastinapur. Nor was favor shown to one cousin more than another. The young princes were trained to throw the stone and to cast the noose, and they engaged lustily in wrestling bouts and practiced boxing. As they grew up they shared work with the king's men; they marked the young calves, and every three years they counted and branded the cattle. Yet, despite all that could be done, the two families lived at enmity. Of all the young men Bhima, of the Pandavas, was the most powerful, and Duryodhana, the leader of the Kauravas, was jealous of him. Bhima was ever the victor in sports and contests. The Kauravas could ill endure his triumphs, and at length they plotted among themselves to accomplish his death.

It chanced that the young men had gone to dwell in a royal palace on the banks of the Ganges. One day, when they feasted together in the manner of warriors, Duryodhana put poison in the food of Bhima, who soon afterwards fell into a deep swoon and seemed to be dead. Then Duryodhana bound him hand and foot and cast him into the Ganges; his body was swallowed by the waters.

But it was not fated that Bhima should thus perish. As his body sank down, the fierce snakes, which are called Nagas, attacked him; but their poison counter-acted the poison he had already swallowed, so that he regained consciousness. Then, bursting his bonds, he scattered the reptiles before him, and they fled in terror.

Bhima found that he had sunk down to the city of serpents, which is in the underworld. Vasuki, king of the Nagas, having heard of his prowess, hastened towards the young warrior, whom he desired greatly to behold.

Bhima was welcomed by Aryaka, the great grandsire of Pritha, who was a dweller in the underworld. He was loved by Vasuki, who, for Aryaka's sake, offered great gifts to fearless Bhima. But Aryaka chose rather that the lad should be given a draught of strength which contained the virtues of a thousand Nagas. By the king of serpents was this great boon granted, and Bhima was permitted to drain the bowl eight times. He immediately fell into a deep slumber, which continued for the space of eight days. Then he awoke, and the Nagas feasted him ere he returned again unto his mother and his brethren, who were mourning for him the while. Thus it fell that Bhima triumphed over Duryodhana, for ever afterwards he possessed the strength of a mighty giant. He related unto his brothers all that had befallen him, but they counseled him not to reveal his secret unto the Kauravas, his cousins.

About this time the prudent Bhishma deemed that the young men should be trained to bear arms; so he searched far and wide for a preceptor who was at once a warrior and a scholar, a pious and lofty-minded man, and a lover of truth. Such was Drona, the brave and god-adoring son of Bharadwaja. He was well pleased to have care of the princes, and to give them instruction worthy of their rank and martial origin.

Drona had no mother: his miraculous birth was accomplished by a beautiful nymph, and his sire was Bharadwaja, a most pious Brahman. Of similar origin was Drupada, son of a rajah named Prishata. Drona and Drupada were reared together like brothers by the wise Bharadwaja, and it was the hope of both sires that their sons would repeat their own lifelong friendship. But when, after happy youth, they grew into manhood, fate parted them. The rajah retired from the throne, and Drupada ruled the kingdom of Panchala. Bharadwaja died soon afterwards, and Drona married a wife named Kripa, who became the mother of his son Ashwatthama. The child was so named because at birth he uttered a cry like to the neighing of a horse. Drona devoted himself to rearing his son, while he accumulated the wisdom of the sages and performed sacred rites with pious mind like to his holy sire.

When the sage Jamadagni, son of Bhrigu, closed his career, he bestowed his great wealth on the sons of Brahmans. Drona received heavenly weapons and power to wield them. Then he bethought him to visit Drupada, the friend of his youth, and share his inheritance with him. Drona stood before the rajah and exclaimed, "Behold thy friend."

But Drupada frowned; his eyes reddened with anger, and for a while he sat in silence. At length he spoke haughtily and said:

“Brahman, it is nor wise nor fitting that thou shouldst call me friend. What friendship can there be between a luckless beggar and a mighty rajah? ... I grant that in youth such a bond united us, one to another, but it has wasted away with the years. Do not think that the friendship of youth endures for ever in human hearts; it is weakened by time, and pride plucks it from one’s bosom. Friendship can exist only between equals as we two once were, but no longer chance to be. Hear and know! Rich and poor, wise and ignorant, warriors and cowards, can never be friends; it is for those who are of equal station to exercise mutual esteem.... Say, can a Brahman respect one who is ignorant of the Vedas? Can a warrior do other than despise one who cannot go forth to battle in his rumbling chariot? Say, can a monarch condescend to one who is far beneath him? ... Be gone, then, thou dreamer! Forget the days and the thoughts of the past.... I know thee not.”

Drona heard the harsh words of his old friend with mute amaze. For a moment he paused. Then abruptly he turned away, nor spake he in reply. His heart burned with indignation as he hastened out of the city.

In time he reached the city of Hastinapur, and Bhishma bade him welcome. When Drona undertook the training of the princes he said, “I will do as is thy desire, O Bhishma, but on condition that when the young men are become complete warriors they will help me to fight against mine enemy, Drupada, the Rajah of Panchala.”

Bhishma gave willing consent to this condition. Thereafter Drona abode with his wife in the royal palace, and his son Ashwatthama was trained with the Pandavas and Kauravas. He became the family priest as well as the instructor of the princes. And ere long the young men were accomplished warriors, and deeply learned in wisdom and in goodness.

Drona took most delight in the Pandavas. Yudhishtira was trained as a spearman, but he was more renowned as a scholar than for feats of arms. Arjuna surpassed all others in warrior skill; he was of noble bearing, and none like him could ride the steed, guide the elephant, or drive the rattling chariot, nor could any other prince withstand his battle charge or oppose him in single combat. He was unequalled with javelin or dart, with battleaxe or mace, and he became the most famous archer of his day. Strong Bhima learned to wield the club, Nakula acquired the secret of taming steeds, and Sahadeva became a mighty swordsman, and acquired great knowledge of astronomy.

Drona trained the Kauravas with diligence also, as well as his own son, who was wise and brave; but among all his pupils he loved Arjuna best, for he was the most modest and the most perfect, the most fearless, and yet the most obedient to his preceptor.

Duryodhana of the Kauravas was jealous of all the Pandavas, and especially of Arjuna.



The fame of Drona as a preceptor was spread far and wide, and the sons of many rajahs and warriors hastened to Hastinapur to be instructed by him. All were welcomed save one, and he was the son of the rajah of the robber Bhils. This young man pleaded that he might be trained as an archer, but without avail. Drona said, "Are not the Bhils highwaymen and cattle-lifters? It would be a sin, indeed, to impart unto one of them great knowledge in the use of weapons."

When he heard these words, the rajah's son was stricken with grief, and he turned homeward. But he resolved to become an accomplished warrior. So he fashioned a clay image of Drona and worshipped it, and wielded the bow before it until his fame as an archer was noised abroad.

One day Drona went forth with the princes to hunt in the Bhil kingdom. Their dog ran through the woods, and it beheld the dark son of the rajah of the Bhils and barked at him. Desiring to display his skill, the young man shot seven arrows into the dog's mouth ere it could be closed, and, moaning and bleeding, the animal returned thus to the princes.

Wondering greatly, the princes searched for the greatly-skilled archer, and found him busy with his how. They spoke, saying, "Who art thou?" And the Bhil made answer, "I am a pupil of Drona."

When Drona was brought to the place, the young man kissed his feet.

Said the wise preceptor, "If thou art my pupil, I must receive my reward."

The young man made answer, "Command me, and I will give thee whatsoever thou dost desire."

Said Drona, "I should like to have the thumb of thy right hand."

The faithful prince of the Bhils did not hesitate to obey his preceptor; with a cheerful face he severed his thumb from his right hand and gave it to Drona.

After his wound had healed, the young man began to draw his bow with his middle fingers, but found that he had lost his surpassing skill, whereat Arjuna was made happy.

All the other Bhil warriors who trained in archery followed the prince's example and drew the how with their middle fingers, and this custom prevailed ever afterwards amongst the tribe.

Now when all the Hastinapur princes had become expert warriors, Drona addressed the blind king, as he sat among his counselors, and said, "O mighty rajah, thy sons and the sons of thy brother Pandu have now attained surpassing skill in arms, and they are fit to enter the battlefield."

Said the king, who was well pleased, "So thy task is finished, O noble son of Bharadwaja? Let now a place be made ready, in accordance with thy desire, so that the princes may display their martial skill in the presence of their peers and the common people."

Then Drona, accompanied by Vidura, the king's brother, made choice of a wide and level plain on which the Pandavas and Kauravas might perform their mighty feats.

So be it next told of the great tournament on the plain, and of the coming of illustrious Karna.

On the day of the great tournament, vast multitudes of people from all parts of the kingdom assembled round the harriers on the wide plain. A scene of great splendor was unfolded to their eyes. At dawn many flags and garlands of flowers had been distributed round the enclosure; they adorned the stately royal pavilion, which was agleam with gold and jewels and hung with trophies of war; they fluttered above the side galleries for the lords and the ladies, and even among the clustering trees. White tents for the warriors occupied a broad green space. A great altar had been erected by Drona beside a cool, transparent stream, on which to offer up sacrifices to the gods.

From early morn the murmurous throng awaited the coming of king and counselors, and royal ladies, and especially the mighty princes who were to display their feats of arms and engage in mimic warfare. The bright sun shone in beauty on that festal day.

The clarion notes of the instruments of war proclaimed the coming of the king. Then entered the royal procession, and blind Dhritarashtra was led towards his throne in the gleaming pavilion. With him came the fair queen Gandhari, mother of the Kauravas, and stately Pritha, widow of King Pandu, the mother of the Pandavas. There followed in their train many high-born dames and numerous sweet maidens renowned for their beauty. When all these ladies, attired in many-colored robes and glittering with jewels and bright flowers, were mounting the decorated galleries, they seemed like to goddesses and heavenly nymphs ascending to the golden summit of the mountain of Meru.... The trumpets were sounding loud, and the clamor which arose from the surging multitude of people of every caste and every age and every tribe was like the voice of heaving ocean in sublime tempest.

Next came venerable and white-haired Drona, robed in white, with white sacrificial cord; his sandals were white, and the garlands he wore were white also. His valiant son, Aswatthama, followed him as the red planet Mars follows the white moon in cloudless heaven. The saintly preceptor advanced to the altar where the priestly choir gathered, and offered up sacrifices to the gods and chanted holy texts.

Then heralds sounded their trumpets as the youthful princes entered in bright array, bejeweled and lightly girded for exercise, their left arms bound with leather. They were wearing breastplates; their quivers were slung from their shoulders, and they carried stately bows and gleaming swords. The princes filed in according to their years, and Yudhishtira came first of all. Each saluted Drona in turn and awaited his commands.

One by one the youthful warriors displayed their skill at arms, while the vast crowd shouted their plaudits. The regent Bhishma, sitting on the right side of the throne, looked down with delight, and Vidura, sitting on the left side, informed the sightless king of all that took place.

The princes shot arrows at targets, first on foot and then mounted on rapid steeds, displaying great skill; they also rode on elephants and in chariots, and their arrows ever flew with unerring aim.

Next they engaged in mimic warfare, charging with chariots and on elephants: swords clamored on shields, ponderous maces were wielded, and falchions shimmered like to the flashes of lightning. The movements of the princes, mounted and on foot, were rapid and graceful; they were fearless in action and firm-footed, and greatly skilled in thrust and parry.

But ere long the conflict was waged with more than mimic fury. Proud Duryodhana and powerful Bhima had sought one another and were drawn apart from their peers. They towered on the plain with uplifted maces, and they seemed like two rival elephants about to fight for a mate. Then they charged with whirling weapons, and the combat was terrible to behold.

Vidura pictured the conflict to blind Dhritarashtra, as did Pritha also to the blindfolded Queen Gandhari. Round the barriers the multitudes swayed and clamored, some favoring Duryodhana and others mighty Bhima.

The princes fought on, and their fury increased until at length it seemed that one or the other would be slain. But while yet the issue hung doubtful, Drona, whose brow was troubled, marked with concern the menacing crowd, which was suspended with hope and fear, and seemed like an ocean shaken by fitful gusts of changing wind. Then he interposed, bidding his son to separate the angry combatants so that the turmoil might have end. The princes heard and obeyed, and they retired slowly like ocean billows, tempest-swollen, falling apart.

To allay excitement, trumpet and drum were sounded aloud. Then white-haired Drona stepped forward, and in a voice like thunder summoned brave Arjuna to come forth.

First of all the valiant hero performed a sacred rite. Thereafter he came before the multitude in all his splendor, clad in golden armor, like to a glorious evening cloud. Modestly he strode, while trumpets blared and the drums bellowed, and he seemed a very god. He was girdled with jewels, and he carried a mighty bow. As the people applauded and shouted his praises, Pritha, his mother, looked down, and tears dropped from her eyes. The blind king spake to Vidura, saying, "Why are the multitudes shouting now like to the tumultuous sea?"

Said Vidura, "The valiant son of Pritha hath come forth in golden armor, and the people hail him with joy.

The blind monarch said, "I am well pleased. The sons of Pritha sanctify the kingdom like to sacrificial fires."

Silence fell upon the people, and Drona bade his favorite pupil to display his skill. Arjuna performed wonders with magic arms; he created fire by the *Agneya* weapon, water by the *Varuna* weapon, wind by the *Vayavya* weapon, clouds by the *Paryanya* weapon, land by the *Bhanma* weapon, and he caused

mountains to appear by the *Parvatya* weapon. Then by the *Antardhyana* weapon he caused all these to vanish.

Arjuna then set up for his target an iron image of a great boar, and at one bending of the bow he shot five arrows into its gaping jaws. Wondrous was his skill. Next he suspended a cow horn, which swayed constantly in the wind, and discharged into its hollow with unerring aim twenty rapid arrows. Heaven and earth resounded with the plaudits of the people when he leapt into his chariot and discharged clouds of arrows as he was driven speedily round the grounds. Having thus displayed his accomplishments as an archer, he drew his sword, which he wielded so rapidly round and about that the people thought they beheld lightning and heard thunder. Ere he left the field he cast the noose with exceeding great skill, capturing horses and cows and scampering deer at a single throw. Then Drona embraced him, and the people shouted his praises.

Great was the joy of the Pandavas as they rested around Drona like to the stars that gather about the white moon in heaven. The Kauravas were grouped around Aswatthama as the gods gather beside Indra when the giant Daityas threaten to assail high heaven. Duryodhana's heart burned with jealous anger because of the triumph achieved by Arjuna.

Evening came on, and it seemed that the tournament was ended; the crowds began to melt away. Then, of a sudden, a mighty tumult of plaudits broke forth, and the loud din of weapons and clank of armor was heard all over the place. Every eye immediately turned towards the gate, and the warriors and the people beheld approaching an unknown warrior, who shook his weapons so that they rattled loudly.

So came mighty Karna, son of Surya, the sun god, and of Pritha, the mother of the three Pandavas—Arjuna, Bhima, and wise Yudhishtira. He was comely as a shining god, clad in golden armor, and wearing celestial earrings. In his right hand he carried a great many-colored bow; his gleaming falchion was on his thigh. Tall as a cliff he strode forward; he was an elephant in his fury, a lion in his wrath; stately as a palm tree was that tamer of foemen, so fearless and so proud, so dauntless and so self-possessed.

He paused in the center of the plain and surveyed the people with pride. Stiffly he paid homage to Drona and Kripa. Then he, the eldest son of Pritha, spake to Pritha's youngest son, Arjuna, the brothers being unknown one to another, and he said, "Whatever feats thou hast performed this day with vain boast, Arjuna, these will I accomplish and surpass, if Drona will permit me."

His voice was like to thunder in heaven, and the multitude of people sprang up and uttered cries of wonder. Duryodhana and the other sons of Kuru heard the challenge with glad hearts, but Arjuna remained silent, while his eyes flashed fire.

Then Drona gave the warrior permission to display his skill. Karna was well pleased, and he performed every feat which had given Arjuna fame on that great day.

Duryodhana proclaimed his joy with beaming countenance, and he embraced Karna, whom he hailed as “brother,” saying, “I bid thee welcome, thou mighty warrior. Thou hast won the honors of the field. Demand from me whatsoever thou dost desire in this kingdom, and it will be given unto thee.”

Said Karna, “Thy word is thy bond, O prince. All I seek is to combat against Arjuna, whom I have equaled so far. Fain would I win the victor’s renown.”

Duryodhana said, “Thou dost ask for a worthy boon indeed. Be our ally, and let the enemy fear thee.”

Arjuna was moved to great wrath, and cried out, “Uninvited chief! Boasting thus, thou wouldst fain be regarded as mine equal, but I will so deal with thee that thou wilt die the death of a braggart who cometh here an unbidden guest, speaking boastfully ere thou art spoken to.”

Said Karna, answering proudly and calm, “Waste not words, Arjuna, nor taunt me with coming hither uninvited. The field of combat is free to all warriors; they enter by their valor, and do not await until thou dost call them; they win their places by strength and skill, and their warrant is the sword. Wrathful speech is the weapon of a coward. Do not boast of thy pastimes or be vain of thy bloodless feats. Speak with thine arrows, O Arjuna, until, in Drona’s presence, mine will cause all men to wonder, flying towards thee.”

Drona was stirred to wrath, and spake to Arjuna, saying, “Canst thou hear him boast in this manner? I give thee leave to fight him here and now.”

Arjuna at once strode forward, fully armed, and he was supported by Drona and Bhishma. Duryodhana and his band stood by Karna. Then the two warriors prepared for single combat, but not in mimic warfare.

Thick clouds gathered in the sky; lightning flashed and thunder pealed; the mighty Indra guarded his son Arjuna, who stood in shadow. Surya, the sun god, cast a shaft of light athwart the darkening plain, and Karna’s golden armor gleamed bright and fair.

The noble dames looked on, and some praised Arjuna and others praised Karna. Pritha, the mother of both heroes, was alone divided in her love. She knew her firstborn by his voice and noble bearing and by his armor, and her heart was torn with grief to behold the two brothers ready to slay each other. A cloud blinded her eyes, and, uttering a low cry, she swooned where she sat. Vidura sprinkled water on her face, and she was revived. Then she wept bitterly because that she could not reveal the secret of Karna’s birth.

Kripa, the foster-brother of Bhishma, performed the duties of herald, and as Arjuna strode forth to combat he proclaimed, “Behold! This is mighty Arjuna, of Bharata’s great line, son of Pandu and of Pritha, a prince of valor and worth who will not shrink from battle. Unknown and long-armed chief,” he said unto Karna, “declare now thy name and lineage, the royal house thou dost adorn, and the names of thy sire and thy mother. Know thou that by the rules of single combat the sons of kings cannot contend against low-born or nameless rivals.”

Karna heard, but was silent. He hung his head like the dew-laden lotus bloom; he could claim nor lineage or high rank, as he believed, for he regarded the charioteer of Anga as his sire.

Duryodhana, perceiving his discomfiture, cried out to Kripa, saying, "Valor is not reckoned by birth but by deeds. Karna hath already shown himself to be the peer of princes. I now proclaim him the Rajah of Anga."

Having spoken thus, the elder of the Kauravas led Karna by the hand and placed him upon a throne, and the red umbrella was held above his head. Brahmans chanted the texts for the ceremony and anointed Karna as a king. Then the fan was waved and the royal umbrella raised on high, while the Kauravas shouted, "The rajah is crowned; blessings on the rajah; honor to the valorous warrior!"

Robed in royal attire, Karna then spake to Duryodhana and said, "With generous heart thou hast conferred upon me a kingdom. O prince, speak and say what service thou wouldst have me to render unto thee."

Said Duryodhana, "But one boon do I ask of thee, O king. Be my comrade and, O valiant warrior, be my helper also."

Karna said, "As thou desirest, so be it."

Then Duryodhana and Karna embraced one another to confirm their loyal friendship.

Lo! Now a charioteer drew nigh; he was a scantily-clad and wearied old man, and he stooped, leaning heavily upon his staff. He was the aged sire of Karna, and rejoiced in his heart to see his son so highly honored among princes. Karna cast aside his weapons, knelt down, and kissed the old man's feet. The happy sire embraced the crowned head of the warrior and wept tears of love.

The Pandava brothers gazed upon father and son, amused and scornful... Bhima spake to Karna, saying, "So thou, with such a sire, hast presumed to seek combat with a Pandava! ... Son of a charioteer, what hast thou to do with weapons of war? Better were it that thou shouldst find thee a goad and drive a bullock-cart behind thy sire."

Karna grew pale with wrath; his lips quivered, but he answered not a word. He heaved a deep sigh and looked towards the sun.

Then Duryodhana arose like a proud elephant and spake to Bhima, saying, "Seek not with insults to give sorrow unto a mighty hero. Taunts come ill from thee, thou tiger-like chief. The proudest warrior may contend against the most humble: a hero is known by his deeds. Of Karna's birth we care naught. Hath Drona other than humble lineage? 'Tis, said, too, that thou and thy brethren are not sons of Pandu, but of certain amorous deities.... Look upon Karna, adorned with jewels and in golden armor! Do hinds bring forth tigers? ... Karna was born to be a king; he hath come to rule by reason of his valor and his worth. If any prince or warrior among you will deny my words, hear and know, now, that I will meet him in deadly combat."

The assembled multitude heard these mighty words with joy and shouted loud applause.

But darkness came on, and lamps were lit upon the plain.... Drona and the sons of Pandu made offerings at the altar, and the king and his counselors, the noble dames and the high-born maids, departed in silence to their homes.... Then all the people deserted the harriers, some shouting, "Arjuna hath triumphed"; others, "Karna is victor"; and some also, "Duryodhana hath won."

Pritha had rejoiced in her heart to behold her noble son crowned king....

Duryodhana walked by Karna's side and took him away to his own palace, glad of heart, for he no longer feared Arjuna's valor and skill at arms.

Even Yudhishtira doubted Arjuna's worth; he feared that Karna was the greatest hero in the world of men.

## THE BRAHMAN, THE TIGER, AND THE SIX JUDGES

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Frere, Mary. *Old Deccan Days*. London: J. Murray, 1868, 135–138.

**Date:** ca. 1866

**Original Source:** India

**National Origin:** India

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The **formulaic** question-and-answer pattern upon which the following **animal tale** is structured is typical of "The Ungrateful Serpent [Animal] Returned to Captivity" (AT 155). The opinions of the various judges cite real human transgressions. Traditionally, in India, four primary caste divisions have been recognized: Brahmins (priests), Kshatriyas (kings and warriors), Vaisyas (traders and similar occupations), and Sudras (aborigines). The jackal is a common **trickster** figure in India—as elsewhere.

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Once upon a time a Brahman [member of the Hindu priestly caste], who was walking along the road, came upon an iron cage, in which a great tiger had been shut up by the villagers who caught him.

As the Brahman passed by, the tiger called out and said to him, "Brother Brahman, brother Brahman, have pity on me, and let me out of this cage for one minute only, to drink a little water, for I am dying of thirst."

The Brahman answered, "No, I will not; for if I let you out of the cage you will eat me."

"O father of mercy," answered the tiger, "in truth that will not. I will never be so ungrateful. Only let me out, that I may drink some water and return."

Then the Brahman took pity on him, and opened the cage door; but no sooner had he done so than the tiger, jumping out, said, "Now, I will eat you first, and drink the water afterwards."

But the Brahman said, "Only do not kill me hastily. Let us first ask the opinion of six, and if all of them say it is just and fair that you should put me to death, then I am willing to die."

"Very well," answered the tiger, "it shall be as you say. We will first ask the opinion of six."

So the Brahman and the tiger walked on till they came to a banyan tree; and the Brahman said to it, "Banyan tree, banyan tree, hear and give judgment."

"On what must I give judgment?" asked the banyan tree.

"This tiger," said the Brahman, "begged me to let him out of his cage to drink a little water, and he promised not to hurt me if I did so. But now that I have let him out he wishes to eat me. Is it just that he should do so, or no?"

The banyan tree answered, "Men often come to take refuge in the cool shade under my boughs from the scorching rays of the sun; but when they have rested, they cut and break my pretty branches, and wantonly scatter the leaves that sheltered them. Let the tiger eat the man, for men are an ungrateful race."

At these words the tiger would have instantly killed the Brahman; but the Brahman said, "Tiger, tiger, you must not kill me yet, for you promised that we should first hear the judgment of six."

"Very well," said the tiger, and they went on their way. After a little while they met a camel.

"Sir camel, sir camel," cried the Brahman, "hear and give judgment."

"On what shall I give judgment?" asked the camel.

And the Brahman related how the tiger had begged him to open the cage door, and promised not to eat him if he did so; and how he had afterwards determined to break his word, and asked if that were just or not.

The camel replied, "When I was young and strong, and could do much work, my master took care of me and gave me good food; but now that I am old, and have lost all my strength in his service, he overloads me, and starves me, and beats me without mercy. Let the tiger eat the man, for men are an unjust and cruel race."

The tiger would then have killed the Brahman, but the latter said, "Stop, tiger, for we must first hear the judgment of six."

So they both went again on their way. At a little distance they found a bullock lying by the roadside.

The Brahman said to him, "Brother bullock, brother bullock, hear and give judgment."

"On what must I give judgment?" asked the bullock.

The Brahman answered, "I found this tiger in a cage, and he prayed me to open the door and let him out to drink a little water, and promised not to kill



me if I did so; but when I had let him out he resolved to put me to death. Is it fair he should do so or not?"

The bullock said, "When I was able to work, my master fed me well and tended me carefully, but now I am old he has forgotten all I did for him, and left me by the roadside to die. Let the tiger eat the man, for men have no pity."

Three out of the six had given judgment against the Brahman, but still he did not lose all hope, and determined to ask the other three.

They next met an eagle flying through the air, to whom the Brahman cried, "O eagle, great eagle, hear and give judgment."

"On what must I give judgment?" asked the eagle.

The Brahman stated the case, but the eagle answered, "Whenever men see me they try to shoot me; they climb the rocks and steal away my little ones. Let the tiger eat the man, for men are the persecutors of the earth."

Then the tiger began to roar, and said, "The judgment of all is against you, O Brahman!"

But the Brahman answered, "Stay yet a little longer, for two others must first be asked."

After this they saw an alligator, and the Brahman related the matter to him, hoping for a more favorable verdict.

But the alligator said, "Whenever I put my nose out of the water, men torment me, and try to kill me. Let the tiger eat the man, for as long as men live we shall have no rest."

The Brahman gave himself up as lost; but once more he prayed the tiger to have patience, and to let him ask the opinion of the sixth judge. Now the sixth was a jackal.

The Brahman again told his story, and said to him, "Mama jackal, mama jackal, say what is your judgment?"

The jackal answered, "It is impossible for me to decide who is in the right and who in the wrong, unless I see the exact position in which you were when the dispute began. Show me the place."

So the Brahman and the tiger returned to the place where they first met, and the jackal went with them.

When they got there, the jackal said, "Now, Brahman, show me exactly where you stood."

"Here," said the Brahman, standing by the iron tiger cage.

"Exactly there, was it?" asked the jackal.

"Exactly here," replied the Brahman.

"Where was the tiger then?" asked the jackal.

"In the cage," answered the tiger.

"How do you mean?" said the jackal.

"How were you within the cage? Which way were you looking?"

"Why, I stood so," said the tiger, jumping into the cage, "and my head was on this side."

“Very good,” said the jackal. “But I cannot judge without understanding the whole matter exactly. Was the cage door open or shut?”

“Shut, and bolted,” said the Brahman.

“Then shut and bolt it,” said the jackal.

When the Brahman had done this, the jackal said, “Oh, you wicked and ungrateful tiger, when the good Brahman opened your cage door, is to eat him the only return you would make? Stay there, then, for the rest of your days, for no one will ever let you out again. Proceed on your journey, friend Brahman. Your road lies that way, and mine this.”

So saying, the jackal ran off in one direction, and the Brahman went rejoicing on his way in the other.

## THE DEMON WITH THE MATTED HAIR

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Jacobs, Joseph. *Indian Fairy Tales*. London: David Nutt, 1912, 40–45.

**Date:** 1912

**Original Source:** India

**National Origin:** India

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This tale of the prince of the five weapons is derived from the voluminous *Jataka*, a compendium of tales of the Buddha in his previous incarnations. Jamudipa was one of the four islands believed to comprise the inhabited world. Jamudipa included South Asia. The demon, *Āṅgulimāla*, was a bandit who wore a necklace of his victims' fingers and was converted by the Buddha and became an *Arahat*, one of the enlightened. Interesting comparisons can be made between this tale and “The Tarbaby and the Rabbit” (AT 175). (See, for example, the Caribbean tale “Brother Rabbit an’ Brother Tar-Baby,” Volume 4, page 414).

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**T**his story the Teacher told in Jetavana about a Brother who had ceased striving after’ righteousness. Said the Teacher to him, “Is it really true that you have ceased all striving?”

“Yes, Blessed One,” he replied.

Then the Teacher said, “O Brother, in former days wise men made effort in the place where effort should be made, and so attained unto royal power.” And he told a story of long ago.

Once upon a time, when Brahmadata was King of Benares, the Bodhisatta was born as son of his chief queen. On his name-day they asked eight hundred Brahmans, having satisfied them with all their desires, about his lucky marks.

The Brahmans who had skill in divining from such marks beheld the excellence of his, and made answer:

“Full of goodness, great King, is your son, and when you die he will become king; he shall be famous and renowned for his skill with the five weapons, and shall be the chief man in all India. On hearing what the Brahmans had to say, they gave him the name of the Prince of the Five Weapons, sword, spear, bow, battle-axe, and shield.

When he came to years of discretion, and had attained the measure of sixteen years, the King said to him:

“My son, go and complete your education.”

“Who shall be my teacher?” the lad asked.

“Go, my son; in the kingdom of Candahar, in the city of Takkasila, is a far-famed teacher from whom I wish you to learn. Take this, and give it him for a fee.” With that he gave him a thousand pieces of money, and dismissed him.

The lad departed and was educated by this teacher; he received the Five Weapons from him as a gift, bade him farewell, and leaving Takkasila, he began his journey to Benares, armed with the Five Weapons.

On his way he came to a forest inhabited by the Demon with the Matted Hair. At the entering of the forest some men saw him, and cried out:

“Hullo, young sir, keep clear of that wood! There’s a Demon in it called he of the Matted Hair: he kills every man he sees!” And they tried to stop him. But the Bodhisatta, having confidence in himself, went straight on, fearless as a maned lion.

When he reached mid-forest the Demon showed himself. He made himself as tall as a palm tree; his head was the size of a pagoda, his eyes as big as saucers, and he had two tusks all over knobs and bulbs; he had the face of a hawk, a variegated belly, and blue hands and feet.

“Where are you going?” he shouted. “Stop! You’ll make a meal for me!”

Said the Bodhisatta, “Demon, I came here trusting in myself. I advise you to be careful how you come near me. Here’s a poisoned arrow, which I’ll shoot at you and knock you down!” With this menace, he fitted to his bow an arrow dipped in deadly poison, and let fly. The arrow stuck fast in the Demon’s hair. Then he shot and shot, till he had shot away fifty arrows; and they all stuck in the Demon’s hair. The Demon snapped them all off short, and threw them down at his feet; then came up to the Bodhisatta, who drew his sword and struck the Demon, threatening him the while. His sword—it was three-and-thirty inches long—stuck in the Demon’s hair! The Bodhisatta struck him with his spear—that stuck too! He struck him with his club—and that stuck too!

When the Bodhisatta saw that this had stuck fast, he addressed the Demon. “You, Demon!” said he, “did you never hear of me before—the Prince of the Five Weapons? When I came into the forest which you live in

I did not trust to my bow and other weapons: This day will I pound you and grind you to powder!" Thus did he declare his resolve, and with a shout he hit at the Demon with his right hand. It stuck fast in his hair! He hit him with his left hand—that stuck too!' With his right foot he kicked him—that stuck too; then with his left—and that stuck too! Then he butted at him with his head, crying, "I'll pound you to powder!" and his head stuck fast like the rest.

Thus the Bodhisatta was five times snared, caught fast in five places, hanging suspended: yet he felt no fear—was not even nervous.

Thought the Demon to himself, "Here's a lion of a man! A noble man! More than man is he! Here he is, caught by a Demon like me; yet he will not fear a bit. Since I have ravaged this road, I never saw such a man. Now, why is it that he does not fear?" He was powerless to eat the man, but asked him, "Why is it, young sir, that you are not frightened to death?"

"Why should I fear, Demon?" replied he. "In one life a man can die but once. Besides, in my belly is a thunderbolt; if you eat me, you will never be able to digest it; this will tear your inwards into little bits, and kill you: so we shall both perish. That is why I fear nothing." (By this, the Bodhisatta meant the weapon of knowledge which he had within him.)

When he heard this, the Demon thought, "This young man speaks the truth. A piece of the flesh of such a lion-man as he would be too much for me to digest, if it were no bigger than a kidney-bean. I'll let him go!" So, being frightened to death, he let go the Bodhisatta, saying:

"Young sir, you are a lion of a man! I will not eat you up. I set you free from my hands, as the moon is disgorged from the jaws of Rahu after the eclipse. Go back to the company of your friends and relations!"

And the Bodhisatta said, "Demon, I will go, as you say. You were born a Demon, cruel, blood-bibbing, devourer of the flesh and gore of others, because you did wickedly in former lives. If you still go on doing wickedly, you will go from darkness to darkness. But now that you have seen me you will find it impossible to do wickedly. Taking the life of living creatures causes birth, as an animal, in the world of Petas, or, in the body of an Asura, or, if one is reborn as a man, it makes his life short." With this and the like monition he told him the disadvantage of the five kinds of wickedness, and the profit of the five kinds of virtue, and frightened the Demon in various ways, discoursing to him until he subdued him and made him self-denying, and established him in the five kinds of virtue; he made him worship the deity to whom offerings were made in that wood; and having carefully admonished him, departed out of it.

At the entrance of the forest he told all to the people thereabout; and went on to Benares, armed with his five weapons. Afterwards he became king, and ruled righteously; and after giving alms and doing good he passed away according to his deeds.

And the Teacher, when this tale was ended, became perfectly enlightened, and repeated this verse:

Whose mind and heart from all desire is free,  
 Who seeks for peace by living virtuously,  
 He in due time will sever all the bonds  
 That bind him fast to life, and cease to be.

Thus the Teacher reached the summit, through sainthood and the teaching of the law, and thereupon he declared the Four Truths. At the end of the declaring of the Truths, this Brother also attained to sainthood. Then the Teacher made the connotation, and gave the key to the birth-tale, saying, “At that time Angulimala was the Demon, but the Prince of the Five Weapons was I myself.”

## RAMA AND LUXMAN

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Frere, Mary. *Old Deccan Days*. London: J. Murray, 1868, 72–86.

**Date:** ca. 1866

**Original Source:** India

**National Origin:** India

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An **ordinary folktale**, “Rama and Luxman” bears a close resemblance to “Faithful John” (AT 516), a narrative built around the theme of a faithful servant who is repeatedly misjudged and underappreciated by his master. Although Rama is son of a rajah, he is like a brother to the vizier’s son Luxman. In spite of this, Luxman is saved from his sworn brother’s rash judgments, and ultimately from eternal enchantment, only through the intervention of fate and his own quick wits.

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Once upon a time there was a Rajah whose name was Chandra Rajah, and he had a learned Wuzeer [usually “vizier”] or Minister, named Butti. Their mutual love was so great that they were more like brothers than master and servant. Neither the Rajah nor the Wuzeer had any children, and both were equally anxious to have a son. At last, in one day and one hour~ the wife of the Rajah and the wife of the Wuzeer had each a little baby boy. They named the Rajah’s son Rama, and the son of the Wuzeer was called Luxman, and there were great rejoicings at the birth of both.

The boys grew up and loved each other tenderly; they were never happy unless together; together they went to daily school, together bathed and played,

and they would not eat except from off one plate. One day, when Rama Rajah was fifteen years, his mother, the Ranee, said to Chandra Rajah, "Husband, our son associates too much with low people; for instance, he is always at play with the Wuzeer's son, Luxman, which is not befitting his rank. I wish you would endeavor to put an end to their friendship, and find him better playmates."

Chandra Rajah replied, "I cannot do it; Luxman's father is a very good friend and Wuzeer, as his father's father was to my rather; let the sons be the same." This answer annoyed the Ranee, but she said no more to her husband; she sent, however, for all the wise people and seers and conjurors in the land, and inquired of them whether there existed no means of dissolving the children's affection for each other; they answered they knew of none.

At last one old Nautch [a woman who has been "married" to a temple or deity] woman came to the Ranee and said, "I can do this thing that you wish, but for it you must give me a great reward."

Then the Ranee gave the old woman an enormous bag full of gold mohurs, and said, "This I give you now, and if you succeed in the undertaking I will give you as much again."

So this wicked old woman disguised herself in a very rich dress, and went to a garden-house which Chandra Rajah had built for his son, and where Rama Rajah and Luxman, the young Wuzeer, used to spend the greater part of their playtime. Outside the house was a large well and a fine garden. When the old woman arrived, the two boys were playing cards together in the garden close to the well. She drew near, and began drawing water from it.

Rama Rajah, looking up, saw her, and said to Luxman, "Go, see who that richly dressed woman is, and bring me word." The Wuzeer's son did as he was bidden, and asked the woman what she wanted.

She answered, "Nothing, oh nothing," and nodding her head went away; then, returning to the Ranee, she said, "I have done as you wished, give me the promised reward," and the Ranee gave her the second bag of gold.

On Luxman's return, the young Rajah said to him, "What did the woman want?"

Luxman answered, "She told me she wanted nothing."

"It is not true," replied the other angrily, "I feel certain she must have told you something. Why should she come here for no purpose? It is some secret which you are concealing from me; I insist on knowing it." Luxman vainly protesting the contrary, they quarreled and then fought, and the young Rajah ran home very angry to his father.

"What is the matter, my son?" said he.

"Father," he answered, "I am angry with the Wuzeer's son. I hate that boy; kill him, and let his eyes be brought to me in proof of his death, or I will not eat my dinner." Chandra Rajah was very much grieved at this, but the young Rajah would eat no dinner, and at last his father said to the Wuzeer, "Take your son away, and hide him, for the boys have had a quarrel." Then he went out

and shot a deer, and showing its eyes to Rama, said to him, "See, my son, the good Wuzeer's son has by your order been deprived of life"; and Rama Rajah was merry, and ate his dinner.

But a while after he began to miss his kind playmate; there was nobody he cared for to tell him stories and amuse him. Then for four nights running he dreamed of a beautiful Glass Palace, in which dwelt a Princess white as marble, and he sent for all the wise people in the kingdom to interpret his dream, but none could do it; and, thinking upon this fair Princess and his lost friend, he got more and more sad, and said to himself, "There is nobody to help me in this matter. Ah! If my Wuzeer's son were here now, how quickly would he interpret the dream! O my friend, my friend, my dear lost friend!" and when Chandra Rajah, his father, came in, he said to him, "Show me the grave of Luxman, son of the Wuzeer, that I also may die there."

His father replied, "What a foolish boy you are! You first begged that the Wuzeer's son might be killed, and now you want to die on his grave. What is all this about?"

Rama Rajah replied, "Oh! Why did you give the order for him to be put to death? In him I have lost my friend and all my joy in life; show me now his grave, for thereon, I swear, will I kill myself."

When the Rajah saw that his son really grieved for the loss of Luxman, he said to him, "You have to thank me for disregarding your foolish wishes; your old playmate is living, therefore be friends again, for what you thought were his eyes were but the eyes of a deer."

So the friendship of Rama and Luxman was resumed on its former footing. Then Rama said to Luxman, "Four nights ago I dreamed a strange dream. I thought that for miles and miles I wandered through a dense jungle, after which I came upon a grove of Coconut trees, passing through which I reached one composed entirely of Guava trees, then one of Supari trees, and lastly one of Copal trees. Beyond this lay a garden of flowers, of which the Malee's wife gave me a bunch; round the garden ran a large river, and on the other side of this I saw a fair palace composed of transparent glass, and in the center of it sat the most lovely Princess I ever saw, white as marble, and covered with rich jewels; at the sight of her beauty I fainted—and so awoke. This has happened now four times, and as yet I have found no one capable of throwing any light on the vision."

Luxman answered, "I can tell you. There exists a Princess exactly like her you saw in your dreams, and, if you like, you can go and marry her."

"How can I?" said Rama, "and what is your interpretation of the dream?" The Wuzeer's son replied, "Listen to me, and I will tell you. In a country very far away from this, in the center of a great Rajah's kingdom, there dwells his daughter, a most fair Princess; she lives in a glass palace. Round this palace runs a large river, and round the river is a garden of flowers. Round the garden are four thick groves of trees, one of Copal trees, one of Supari trees, one of Guava

trees, and one of Cocoa-nut trees. The Princess is twenty-four years old, but she is not married, for she has determined only to marry whoever can jump this river and greet her in her crystal palace, and though many thousand kings have essayed to do so, they have all perished miserably in the attempt, having either been drowned in the river, or broken their necks by falling; thus all that you dreamed of is perfectly true.”

“Can we go to this country?” asked the young Rajah.

“Oh yes,” his friend replied, “this is what you must do. Go tell your father you wish to see the world. Ask him for neither elephants nor attendants, but beg him to lend you for the journey his old war-horse.”

Upon this Rama went to his father, and said, “Father, I pray you give me leave to go and travel with the Wuzeer’s son; I desire to see the world.”

“What would you have for the journey, my son?” said Chandra Rajah, “will you have elephants, and how many?—attendants, how many?”

“Neither, father,” he answered, “give me rather, I pray you, your old war-horse, that I may ride him during the journey.”

“So be it, my son,” he answered; and with that Rama Rajah and Luxman set forth on their travels. After going many, many thousands of miles, to their joy one day they came upon a dense grove of Coconut trees, and beyond that to a grove of Guava trees, then to one of Supari trees, and lastly to one of Copal trees; after which they entered a beautiful garden, where the Malee’s wife presented them with a large bunch of flowers. Then they knew that they had nearly reached the place where the fair Princess dwelt. Now it happened that, because many kings and great people had been drowned in trying to jump over the river that ran round the Glass Palace where the Princess lived, the Rajah, her father, had made a law that, in future, no aspirants to her hand were to attempt the jump, except at stated times, and with his knowledge and permission, and that any Rajahs or Princes found wandering there, contrary to this law, were to be imprisoned. Of this the young Rajah and the Wuzeer’s son knew nothing, and having reached the center of the garden they found themselves on the banks of a large river, exactly opposite the wondrous Glass Palace, and were just debating what further steps to take when they were seized by the Rajah’s guard, and hurried off to prison.

“This is a hard fate,” said Luxman.

“Yes,” sighed Rama Rajah, “a dismal end, in truth, to all our fine schemes. Would it be possible, think you, to escape?”

“I think so,” answered Luxman, “at all events I will try.” With that he turned to the sentry who was guarding them, and said, “We are shut in here and can’t get out; here is money for you if you will only have the goodness to call out that the Malee’s cow has strayed away.” The sentry thought this a very easy way of making a fortune, so he did as he was bidden, and took the money. The result answered Luxman’s anticipations.

The Malee’s wife hearing the sentry calling out, thought to herself, “What, sentries round the guard-room again! Then there must be prisoners: doubtless



they are those two young Rajah's I met in the garden this morning; I will at least endeavor to release them." So she asked two old beggars to accompany her, and, taking with her offerings of flowers and sweetmeats, started as if to go to a little temple which was built within the quadrangle where the prisoners were kept. The sentries, thinking she was only going with two old friends to visit the temple, allowed her to pass without opposition. As soon as she got within the quadrangle she unfastened the prison-door, and told the two young men (Rama Rajah and Luxman) to change clothes with the two old beggars, which they instantly did. Then leaving the beggars in the cell, she conducted Rama and Luxman safely to her house.

When they had reached it she said to them, "Young Princes, you must know that you did very wrong in going down to the river before having made a salaam to our Rajah, and gained his consent; and so strict is the law on this subject that had I not assisted your escape, you might have remained a long time in prison; though, as I felt certain you only erred through ignorance, I was the more willing to help you; but tomorrow morning early you must go and pay your respects at Court."

Next day the guards brought their two prisoners to the Rajah, saying, "See, O King, here are two young Rajahs whom we caught last night wandering near the river contrary to your law and commandment." But when they came to look at the prisoners, lo and behold! They were only two old beggars whom everybody knew and had often seen at the palace gate.

Then the Rajah laughed and said, "You stupid fellows, you have been over vigilant for once; see here your fine young Rajahs. Don't you yet know the looks of these old beggars?" Whereupon the guards went away much ashamed of themselves.

Having learnt discretion from the advice of the Malee's wife, Rama and Luxman went betimes that morning to call at the Rajah's palace. The Rajah received them very graciously, but when he heard the object of their journey he shook his head, and said, "My pretty fellows, far be it from me to thwart your intentions, if you are really determined to win my daughter the Princess Bargaruttee, but as a friend I would counsel you to desist from the attempt—you can find a hundred Princesses elsewhere willing to marry you; why, therefore, come here, where already a thousand Princes as fair as you have lost their lives? Cease to think of my daughter, she is a headstrong girl." But Rama Rajah still declared himself anxious to try and jump the dangerous river, whereupon the Rajah unwillingly consented to his attempting to do so, and caused it to be solemnly proclaimed round the town that another Prince was going to risk his life, begging all good men and true to pray for his success. Then Rama having dressed gorgeously, and mounted his father's stout war-horse, put spurs to it and galloped to the river. Up, up in the air, like a bird, jumped the good war-horse, right across the river and into the very center courtyard of the Glass Palace of the Princess Bargaruttee: and as if ashamed of so poor an exploit, this feat he accomplished three times.

At this the heart of the Rajah was glad, and he ran and patted the brave horse, and kissed Rama Rajah, and said, "Welcome, my son-in-law!" The wedding took place amid great rejoicings, with feasts, illuminations, and much giving of presents, and there Rama Rajah and his wife, the Ranee Bargaruttee, lived happily for some time. At last, one day, Rama Rajah said to his father-in-law, "Sire, I have been very happy here, but I have a great desire to see my father, and my mother, and my own land again."

To which the Rajah replied, "My son, you are free to go; but I have no son but you, nor daughter but your wife: therefore as it grieves me to lose sight of you, come back now and then to see me and rejoice my heart. My doors are ever open to you; you will be always welcome."

Rama Rajah promised to return occasionally; and then, being given many rich gifts by the old Rajah, and supplied with all things needful for the journey, he, with his beautiful wife Bargaruttee, his friend the young Wuzeer, and a great retinue, set out to return home.

Before going Rama Rajah and Luxman richly rewarded the kind Malee's wife, who had helped them so ably.

On the first evening of their march the travelers reached the borders of the Coconut grove, on the outskirts of the jungle; here they determined to halt and rest for the night. Rama Rajah and the Ranee Bargaruttee went to their tent; but Luxman (whose tender love for them was so great, that he usually watched all night through at their door) was sitting under a large tree close by, when two little owls flew over his head, and perching on one of the highest branches, began chatting to each other.

The Wuzeer's son, who was in many ways wiser than most men, could understand their language. To his surprise he heard the little lady owl say to her husband, "I wish you would tell me a story, my dear, it is such a long time since I have heard one."

To which her husband, the other little owl, answered, "A story! what story can I tell you? Do you see these people encamped under our tree? Would you like to hear their story?"

She assented; and he began, "See first this poor Wuzeer, he is a good and faithful man, and has done much for this young Rajah, but neither has that been to his advantage heretofore, nor will it be hereafter." At this Luxman listened more attentively, and taking out his writing tablets, determined to note down all he heard. The little owl commenced with the story of the birth of Rama and Luxman, of their friendship, their quarrel, the young Rajah's dream, and their reconciliation, and then told of their subsequent adventures in search of the Princess Bargaruttee, down to that very day on which they were journeying home.

"And what more has Fate in store for this poor Wuzeer?" asked the lady owl.

"From this place," replied her husband, "he will journey on with the young Rajah and Ranee, until they get very near Chandra Rajah's dominions; there, as

the whole cavalcade is about to pass under a large banyan tree, this Wuzeer Luxman will notice some of the topmost branches swaying about in a dangerous manner; he will hurry the Rajah and Ranee away from it, and the tree (which would otherwise have inevitably killed them) will fall to the ground with a tremendous crash; but even his having thus saved the Rajah's life shall not avert his fate." (All this the Wuzeer noted down.)

"And what next?" said the wife, "what next?"

"Next," continued the wise little storyteller, "next, just as the Rajah Rama and the Ranee Bargaruttee and all their suite are passing under the palace doorway, the Wuzeer will notice that the arch is insecure, and by dragging them quickly through prevent their being crushed in its fall."

"And what will he do after that, dear husband?" she asked.

"After that," he went on, "when the Rajah and Ranee are asleep, and the Wuzeer Luxman keeping guard over them, he will perceive a large cobra slowly crawling down the wall and drawing nearer and nearer to the Ranee. He will kill it with his sword, but a drop of the cobra's blood shall fall on the Ranee's white forehead. The Wuzeer will not dare to wipe the blood off her forehead with his hand, and shall instead cover his face with a cloth that he may lick it off with his tongue, but for this the Rajah will be angry with him, and his reproaches will turn this poor Wuzeer into stone."

"Will he always remain stone?" asked the lady owl.

"Not for ever," answered her husband, "but for eight long years he will remain so."

"And what then?" demanded she.

"Then," answered the other, "when the young Rajah and Ranee have a baby, it shall come to pass that one day the child shall be playing on the floor, and to help itself along shall clasp hold of the stony figure, and at that baby's touch the Wuzeer will come to life again. But I have told you enough for one night; come, let's catch mice—twit, two, two," and away flew the owls.

Luxman had written down all he heard, and it made him heavy-hearted, but he thought, "Perhaps, after all, this may not be true." So he said nothing about it to any living soul. Next day they continued their journey, and as the owl had prophesied, so events fell out. For whilst the whole party were passing under a large banyan tree, the Wuzeer noticed that it looked unsafe. "The owl spake truly," he thought to himself, and seizing the Rajah and Ranee he hurried them from under it, just as a huge limb of the tree fell prone with a fearful crash.

A little while after, having reached Chandra Rajah's dominions, they were going under the great arch of the palace court-yard when the Wuzeer noticed some of the stones tottering. "The owl was a true prophet," thought he again, and catching hold of the hands of Rama Rajah and Bargaruttee Ranee, he pulled them rapidly through, just in time to save their lives. "Pardon me," he said to the Rajah, "that unbidden I dared thus to touch your hand and that of the Ranee, but I saw the danger imminent." So they reached home, where they

were joyfully welcomed by Chandra Rajah, the Ranee, the Wuzeer (Luxman's father), and all the Court.

A few nights afterwards, when the Rajah and Ranee were asleep, and the young Wuzeer keeping guard over them as he was wont, he saw a large black cobra stealthily creeping down the wall just above the Ranee's head. "Alas!" he thought, "then such is my fate, and so it must be; nevertheless, I will do my duty"; and, taking from the folds of his dress the history of his and the young Rajah's life, from their boyhood down to that very time (as he had written it from the owl's narrative), he laid it beside the sleeping Rama, and, drawing his sword, killed the cobra. A few drops of the serpent's blood fell on the Ranee's forehead—the Wuzeer did not dare to touch it with his hand, but, that her sacred brow might not be defiled with the vile cobra's blood, he reverently covered his face and mouth with a cloth to lick the drops of blood away.

At this moment the Rajah started up, and seeing him, said, "O Wuzeer, Wuzeer, is this well done of you? O Luxman, who have been to me as a brother, who have saved me from so many difficulties, why do you treat me thus? To kiss her holy forehead. If indeed you loved her (as who could help it?), could you not have told me when we first saw her in that Glass Palace, and I would have exiled myself that she might be your wife. O my brother, my brother, why did you mock me thus?" The Rajah had buried his face in his hands; he looked up, he turned to the Wuzeer, but from him came neither answer nor reply. He had become a senseless stone. Then Rama for the first time perceived the roll of paper which Luxman had laid beside him, and when he read in it of what Luxman had been to him from boyhood, and of the end, his bitter grief broke through all bounds, and falling at the feet of the statue, he clasped its stony knees and wept aloud.

When daylight dawned Chandra Rajah and the Ranee found Rama still weeping and hugging the stone, asking its forgiveness with penitent cries and tears. Then they said to him, "What is this you have done?"

When he told them, the Rajah his father was very angry, and said, "Was it not enough that you should have once before unjustly desired the death of this good man, but that now by your rash reproaches you should have turned him into stone? Go to, you do but continually what is evil."

Now eight long years rolled by without the Wuzeer returning to his original form, although every day Rama Rajah and Bargaruttee Ranee would watch beside him, kissing his cold hands, and adjuring him by all endearing names to forgive them and return to them again. When eight years had expired, Rama and Bargaruttee had a child; and from the time it was nine months old and first began to try and crawl about, the father and mother would sit and watch beside it, placing it near the Wuzeer's statue, in hopes that the baby would some day touch it as the owl had foretold.

But for three months they watched in vain. At last, one day when the child was a year old, and was trying to walk, it chanced to be close to the statue, and

tottering on its unsteady feet, stretched out its tiny hands and caught hold of the foot of the stone. The Wuzeer instantly came back to life, and stooping down seized in his arms the little baby who had rescued him, and kissed it. It is impossible to describe the delight of Rama Rajah and his wife at regaining their long-lost friend. The old Rajah and Ranee rejoiced also, with the Wuzeer (Luxman Wuzeer's father), and his mother.

Then Chandra Rajah said to the Wuzeer, "Here is my boy happy with his wife and child, while your son has neither; go fetch him a wife, and we will have a right merry wedding." So the Wuzeer fetched for his son a kind and beautiful wife, and Chandra Rajah and Rama Rajah caused the wedding of Luxman to be grander than that of any great Rajah before or since, even as if he had been a son of the royal house, and they all lived very happy ever after, as all good fathers, and mothers, and husbands, and wives, and children do.

## **PUNCHKIN**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Frere, Mary. *Old Deccan Days*. London: J. Murray, 1868, 1–16.

**Date:** ca. 1866

**Original Source:** India

**National Origin:** India

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"Punchkin" attests to the wide distribution throughout Indo-European tradition of central **tale types** and **motifs**. The cruel stepmother, the precocious youngest sibling, the abandoned children, the spouse transformed by a sorcerer's power, and the external soul (*Motif* E710), in this instance encased in a parrot, are only a few of the familiar episodes and themes contained in this extremely complex folktale.

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Once upon a time there was a Rajah who had seven beautiful daughters. They were all good girls; but the youngest, named Balna, was more clever than the rest. The Rajah's wife died when they were quite little children, so these seven poor Princesses were left with no mother to take care of them.

The Rajah's daughters took it by turns to cook their father's dinner every day, whilst he was absent deliberating with his Ministers on the affairs of the nation.

About this time the Prudhan [prime minister] died, leaving a widow and one daughter; and every day, every day, when the seven Princesses were preparing their father's dinner, the Prudhan's widow and daughter would come and

beg for a little fire from the hearth. Then Balna used to say to her sisters, "Send that woman away; send her away. Let her get the fire at her own house. What does she want with ours? If we allow her to come here we shall suffer for it some day." But the other sisters would answer, "Be quiet Balna; why must you always be quarreling with this poor woman? Let her take some fire if she likes." Then the Prudhan's widow used to go to the hearth and take a few sticks from it and whilst no one was looking, she would quickly throw some mud into the midst of the dishes which were being prepared for the Rajah's dinner.

Now the Rajah was very fond of his daughters. Ever since their mother's death they had cooked his dinner with their own hands, in order to avoid the danger of his being poisoned by his enemies. So, when he found the mud mixed up with his dinner, he thought it must arise from their carelessness, as it appeared improbable that any one should have put mud there on purpose; but being very kind he did not like to reprove them for it, although this spoiling of the curry was repeated many successive days.

At last, one day, he determined to hide, and watch his daughters cooking, and see how it all happened; so he went into the next room, and watched them through a hole in the wall.

There he saw his seven daughters carefully washing the rice and preparing the curry, and as each dish was completed they put it by the fire ready to be cooked. Next he noticed the Prudhan's widow come to the door, and beg for a few sticks from the fire to cook her dinner with. Balna turned to her angrily and said, "Why don't you keep fuel in your own house, and not come here every day and take ours?—Sisters, don't give this woman any more wood; let her buy it for herself."

Then the eldest sister answered, "Balna, let the poor woman take the wood and the fire; she does us no harm." But Balna replied, "If you let her come here so often, may be she will do w some harm, and make us sorry for it some day."

The Rajah then saw the Prudhan's widow go to the place where all his dinner was nicely prepared, and, as she took the wood, she threw a little mud into each of the dishes.

At this he was very angry, and sent to have the woman seized and brought before him. But when the widow came, she told him she had played this trick because she wanted to gain an audience with him; and she spoke so cleverly, and pleased him so well with her cunning words, that instead of punishing her, the Rajah married her, and made her his Ranee, and she and her daughter came to live in the palace.

Now the new Ranee hated the seven poor Princesses, and wanted to get them, if possible, out of the way, in order that her daughter might have all their riches, and live in the palace as Princess in their place; and instead of being grateful to them for their kindness to her she did all she could to make them miserable. She gave them nothing but bread to eat, and very little of that, and very little water to drink; so these seven poor little Princesses, who had been

accustomed to have everything comfortable about them, and good food and good clothes all their lives long, were very miserable and unhappy; and they used to go out every day and sit by their dead mother's tomb and cry—and say—“Oh mother, mother! Cannot you see your poor children, how unhappy we are, and how we are starved by our cruel stepmother?”

One day, whilst they were thus sobbing and crying, lo and behold! a beautiful pomelo tree grew up out of the grave, covered with fresh ripe pomeloes, and the children satisfied their hunger by eating some of the fruit, and every day after this, instead of trying to eat the, bad dinner their stepmother provided for them, they used to go out to their mother's grave and eat the pomeloes which grew there on the beautiful tree.

Then the Ranee said to her daughter, “I cannot tell how it is, every day those seven girls say they don't want any dinner, and won't eat any; and yet they never grow thin nor look ill; they look better than you do. I cannot tell how it is”—and she bade her watch the seven Princesses, and see if any one gave them anything to eat.

So next day when the Princesses went to their mother's grave, and were eating the beautiful pomeloes, the Prudhan's daughter followed them, and saw them gathering the fruit.

Then Balna said to her sisters, “Do you not see that girl watching us? Let us drive her away, or hide the pomeloes, else she will go and tell her mother all about it, and that will be very bad for us.”

But the other sisters said, “Oh no, do not be unkind, Balna. The girl would never be so cruel as to tell her mother. Let us rather invite her to come and have some of the fruit,”—and, calling her to them, they gave her one of the pomeloes.

No sooner had she eaten it, however, than the Prudhan's daughter went home and said to her mother, “I do not wonder the seven Princesses will not eat the dinner you prepare for them, for by their mother's grave there grows a beautiful pomelo tree, and they go there every day and eat the pomeloes. I ate one, and it was the nicest I have ever tasted.”

The cruel Ranee was much vexed at hearing this, and all next day she stayed in her room, and told the Rajah that she had a very bad headache. The Rajah was deeply grieved, and said to his wife, “What can I do for you?” She answered, “There is only one thing that will make my headache well. By your dead wife's tomb there grows a fine pomelo tree; you must bring that here, and boil it, root and branch, and put a little of the water in which it has been boiled on my forehead, and that will cure my headache.” So the Rajah sent his servants, and had the beautiful pomelo tree pulled up by the roots, and did as the Ranee desired; and when some of the water in which it had been boiled was put on her forehead, she said her headache was gone and she felt quite well.

Next day, when the seven Princesses went as usual to the grave of their mother, the pomelo tree had disappeared. Then they all began to cry very bitterly.

Now there was by the Ranee's tomb a small tank, and, as they were crying, they saw that the tank was filled with a rich cream-like substance, which quickly hardened into a thick white cake. At seeing this all the Princesses were very glad, and they ate some of the cake, and liked it; and next day the same thing happened, and so it went on for many days. Every morning the Princesses went to their mother's grave, and found the little tank filled with the nourishing cream-like cake. Then the cruel stepmother said to her daughter, "I cannot tell how it is, I have had the pomelo tree which used to grow by the Ranee's grave destroyed, and yet the Princesses grow no thinner, nor look more sad, though they never eat the dinner I give them. I cannot tell how it is!"

And her daughter said, "I will watch."

Next day while the Princesses were eating the cream cake, who should come by but their stepmother's daughter! Balna saw her first, and said, "See, sisters, there comes that girl again. Let us sit round the edge of the tank and not allow her to see it, for if we give her some of our cake, she will go and tell her mother; and that will be very unfortunate for us."

The other sisters, however, thought Balna unnecessarily suspicious, and instead of following her advice, they gave the Prudhan's daughter some of the cake, and she went home and told her mother all about it.

The Ranee, on hearing how well the Princesses fared, was exceedingly angry, and sent her servants to pull down the dead Ranee's tomb, and fill the little tank with the ruins. And not content with this, she next day pretended to be very, very ill—in fact, at the point of death—and when the Rajah was much grieved, and asked her whether it was in his power to procure her any remedy, she said to him, "Only one thing can save my life, but I know you will not do it." He replied, "Yes, whatever it is, I will do it." She then said, "To save my life, you must kill the seven daughters of your first wife, and put some of their blood on my forehead and on the palms of my hands, and their death will be my life." At these words the Rajah was very sorrowful; but because he feared to break his word, he went out with a heavy heart to find his daughters.

He found them crying by the ruins of their mother's grave.

Then, feeling he could not kill them, the Rajah spoke kindly to them, and told them to come out into the jungle with him; and there he made a fire and cooked some rice, and gave it to them. But in the afternoon, it being very hot, the seven Princesses all fell asleep, and when he saw they were fast asleep, the Rajah, their father, stole away and left them (for he feared his wife), saying to himself, "It is better my poor daughters should die here, than be killed by their stepmother."

He then shot a deer, and, returning home, put some of its blood on the forehead and hands of the Ranee, and she thought then that he had really killed the Princesses, and said she felt quite well.

Meantime the seven Princesses awoke, and when they found themselves all alone in the thick jungle they were much frightened, and began to call out as loud as they could, in hopes of making their father hear; but he was by that time



far away, and would not have been able to hear them even had their voices been as loud as thunder.

It so happened that this very day the seven young Sons of a neighboring Rajah chanced to be hunting in that same jungle, and as they were returning home, after the day's sport was over, the youngest Prince said to his brothers, "Stop, I think I hear some one crying and calling out. Do you not hear voices? Let us go in the direction of the sound, and find out what it is."

So the seven Princes rode through the wood until they came to the place where the seven Princesses sat crying and wringing their hands. At the sight of them the young Princes were very much astonished, and still more so on learning their story: and they settled that each should take one of these poor forlorn ladies home with him, and marry her.

So the first and eldest Prince took the eldest Princess home with him, and married her;

And the second took the second;

And the third took the third;

And the fourth took the fourth;

And the fifth took the fifth;

And the sixth took the sixth;

And the seventh, and handsomest of all, took the beautiful Balna.

And when they got to their own land, there was great rejoicing throughout the kingdom, at the marriage of the seven young Princes to seven such beautiful Princesses.

About a year after this Balna had a little son, and his uncles and aunts were so fond of the boy that it was as if he had seven fathers and seven mothers. None of the other Princes and Princesses had any children, so the son of the seventh Prince and Balna was acknowledged their heir by all the rest.

They had thus lived very happily for some time, when one fine day the seventh Prince (Balna's husband) said he would go out hunting, and away he went; and they waited long for him, but he never came back.

Then his six brothers said they would go and see what had become of him; and they went away, but they also did not return.

And the seven Princesses grieved very much, for they feared that their kind husbands must have been killed.

One day, not long after this happened, as Balna was rocking her baby's cradle, and whilst her sisters were working in the room below, there came to the palace-door a man in a long black dress, who said that he was a Fakeer [usually spelled "fakir," a Hindu mystic capable of performing apparent miracles], and came to beg. The servants said to him, "You cannot go into the palace—the Rajah's sons have all gone away; we think they must be dead, and their widows cannot be interrupted by your begging." But he said, "I am a holy man, you must let me in." Then the stupid servants let him walk through the palace, but they did not know that this was no Fakeer, but a wicked Magician named Punchkin.

Punchkin Fakeer wandered through the palace, and saw many beautiful things there, till at last he reached the room where Balna sat singing beside her little boy's cradle. The Magician thought her more beautiful than all the other beautiful things he had seen, insomuch, that he asked her to go home with him and to marry him. But she said, "My husband, I fear, is dead, but my little boy is still quite young; I will stay here and teach him to grow up a clever man, and when he is grown up he shall go out into the world, and try and learn tidings of his father. Heaven forbid that I should ever leave him, or marry you!"

At these words the Magician was very angry, and turned her into a little black dog, and led her away, saying, "Since you will not come with me of your own free will, I will make you." So the poor Princess was dragged away, without any power of effecting an escape, or of letting her sisters know what had become of her. As Punchkin passed through the palace-gate the servants said to him, "Where did you get that pretty little dog?" And he answered, "One of the Princesses gave it to me as a present." At hearing which they let him go without further questioning.

Soon after this, the six elder Princesses heard the little baby, their nephew, begin to cry, and when they went upstairs they were much surprised to find him all alone, and Balna nowhere to be seen. Then they questioned the servants, and when they heard of the Fakeer and the little black dog, they guessed what had happened, and sent in every direction seeking them, but neither the Fakeer nor the dog was to be found. What could six poor women do? They gave up all hopes of ever seeing their kind husbands, and their sister, and her husband, again, and devoted themselves thenceforward to teaching and taking care of their little nephew.

Thus time went on, till Balna's son was fourteen years old. Then, one day, his aunts told him the history of the family; and no sooner did he hear it, than he was seized with a great desire to go in search of his father and mother and uncles, and if he could find them alive to bring them home again. His aunts, on learning his determination, were much alarmed, and tried to dissuade him, saying, "We have lost our husbands, and our sister, and her husband, and you are now our sole hope; if you go away, what shall we do?" But he replied, "I pray you not to be discouraged; I will return soon, and if it is possible bring my father and mother and uncles with me." So he set out on his travels; but for some months he could learn nothing to help him in his search.

At last, after he had journeyed many hundreds of weary miles, and become almost hopeless of ever hearing anything further of his parents, he one day came to a country that seemed full of stones, and rocks, and trees, and there he saw a large palace, with a high tower, hard by which was a Malee's little house.

As he was looking about, the Malee's wife saw him, and ran out of the house and said, "My dear boy, who are you that dare venture to this dangerous place?"

He answered, "I am a Rajah's son, and I come in search of my father, and my uncles, and my mother whom a wicked enchanter bewitched."

Then the Malee's wife said, "This country and this palace belong to a great enchanter; he is all-powerful, and if any one displeases him, he can turn them into stones and trees. All the rocks and trees you see here were living people once, and the Magician turned them to what they now are. Some time ago a Rajah's son came here, and shortly afterwards came his six brothers, and they were all turned into stones and trees; and these are not the only unfortunate ones, for up in that tower lives a beautiful Princess, whom the Magician has kept prisoner there for twelve years, because she hates him and will not marry him."

Then the little Prince thought, "These must be my parents and my uncles. I have found what I seek at last." So he told his story to the Malee's wife, and begged her to help him to remain in that place a while and inquire further concerning the unhappy people she mentioned; and she promised to befriend him, and advised his disguising himself lest the Magician should see him, and turn him likewise into stone. To this the Prince agreed. So the Malee's wife dressed him up in a saree [sari], and pretended that he was her daughter.

One day, not long after this, as the Magician was walking in his garden, he saw the little girl (as he thought) playing about, and asked her who she was. She told him she was the Malee's daughter, and the Magician said, "You are a pretty little girl, and tomorrow you shall take a present of flowers from me to the beautiful lady who lives in the tower."

The young Prince was much delighted at hearing this, and went immediately to inform the Malee's wife; after consultation with whom he determined that it would be more safe for him to retain his disguise, and trust to the chance of a favorable opportunity for establishing some communication with his mother, if it were indeed she.

Now it happened that at Balna's marriage her husband had given her a small gold ring on which her name was engraved, and she had put it on her little son's finger when he was a baby, and afterwards when he was older his aunts had had it enlarged for him, so that he was still able to wear it. The Malee's wife advised him to fasten the well-known treasure to one of the bouquets he presented to his mother, and trust to her recognizing it. This was not to be done without difficulty, as such a strict watch was kept over the poor Princess (for fear of her ever establishing communication with her friends), that though the supposed Malee's daughter was permitted to take her flowers every day, the Magician or one of his slaves was always in the room at the time. At last, one day, however, opportunity favored him, and when no one was looking, the boy tied the ring to a nosegay, and threw it at Balna's feet. It fell with a clang on the floor, and Balna, looking to see what made the strange sound, found the little ring tied to the flowers. On recognizing it, she at once believed the story her son told her of his long search, and begged him to advise her as to what she had better do; at the same time entreating him on no account to endanger his life by trying to rescue her. She told him that, for twelve long years, the Magician

had kept her shut up in the tower because she refused to marry him, and she was so closely guarded that she saw no hope of release.

Now Balna's son was a bright, clever boy, so he said, "Do not fear, dear mother; the first thing to do is to discover how far the Magician's power extends, in order that we may be able to liberate my father and uncles, whom he has imprisoned in the form of rocks and trees. You have spoken to him angrily for twelve long years; now rather speak kindly. Tell him you have given up all hopes of again seeing the husband you have so long mourned; and say you are willing to marry him. Then endeavor to find out what his power consists in, and whether he is immortal, or can be put to death."

Balna determined to take her son's advice, and the next day sent for Punchkin, and spoke to him as had been suggested.

The Magician, greatly delighted, begged her to allow the wedding to take place as soon as possible.

But she told him that before she married him he must allow her a little more time, in which she might make his acquaintance—and that, after being enemies so long, their friendship could but strengthen by degrees. "And do tell me," she said, "are you quite immortal? Can death never touch you? And are you too great an enchanter ever to feel human suffering?"

"Why do you ask?" said he.

"Because," she replied, "if I am to be your wife, I would fain know all about you, in order, if any calamity threatens you, to overcome, or if possible to avert it."

"It is true," he said, "that I am not as others. Far, far away, hundreds of thousands of miles from this, there lies a desolate country covered with thick jungle. In the midst of the jungle grows a circle of palm trees, and in the center of the circle stand six chattees full of water, piled one above another: below the sixth chattee is a small cage which contains a little green parrot—on the life of the parrot depends my life—and if the parrot is killed I must die. It is, however," he added, "impossible that the parrot should sustain any injury, both on account of the inaccessibility of the country, and because, by my appointment, many thousand genii surround the palm trees, and kill all who approach the place."

Balna told her son what Punchkin had said; but at the same time implored him to give up all idea of getting the parrot.

The Prince, however, replied, "Mother, unless I can get hold of that parrot, you, and my father, and uncles, cannot be liberated; be not afraid, I will shortly return. Do you, meantime, keep the Magician in good humor—still putting off your marriage with him on various pretexts; and before he finds out the cause of delay, I will be here." So saying, he went away.

Many, many weary miles did he travel, till at last he came to a thick jungle; and, being very tired, sat down under a tree and fell asleep. He was awakened by a soft rustling sound; and looking about him, saw a large serpent which was making its way to an eagle's nest built in the tree under which he lay; and in the nest were two young eagles. The Prince seeing the danger of the young

birds, drew his sword, and killed the serpent; at the same moment a rushing sound was heard in the air, and the two old eagles, who had been out hunting for food for their young ones, returned. They quickly saw the dead serpent and the young Prince standing over it; and the old mother eagle said to him, "Dear boy, for many years all our young ones have been devoured by that cruel serpent: you have now saved the lives of our children; whenever you are in need, therefore, send to us and we will help you; and as for these little eagles, take them, and let them be your servants."

At this the Prince was very glad, and the two eaglets crossed their wings, on which he mounted; and they carried him far, far away over the thick jungles, until he came to the place where grew the circle of palm trees: in the midst of which stood the six chattees full of water. It was the middle of the day, and the heat was very great. All round the trees were the genii, fast asleep: nevertheless, there were such countless thousands of them, that it would have been quite impossible for any one to walk through their ranks to the place; down swooped the strong-winged eaglets—down jumped the Prince: in an instant he had overthrown the six chattees full of water, and seized the little green parrot, which he rolled up in his cloak; while, as he mounted again into the air, all the genii below awoke, and finding their treasure gone, set up a wild and melancholy howl.

Away, away flew the little eagles, till they came to their home in the great tree; then the Prince said to the old eagles, "Take back your little ones; they have done me good service; if ever again I stand in need of help, I will not fail to come to you." He then continued his journey on foot till he arrived once more at the Magician's palace; where he sat down at the door and began playing with the parrot. Punchkin saw him, and came to him quickly, and said, "My boy, where did you get that parrot? Give it to me, I pray you." But the Prince answered, "Oh no, I cannot give away my parrot, it is a great pet of mine; I have had it many years." Then the Magician said, "If it is an old favorite, I can understand your not caring to give it away—but come, what will you sell it for?"

"Sir," replied the Prince, "I will not sell my parrot."

Then Punchkin got frightened, and said, "Anything, anything; name what price you will, and it shall be yours." The Prince answered, "Let the seven Rajah's sons whom you turned into rocks and trees be instantly liberated."

"It is done as you desire," said the Magician, "only give me my parrot." And with that, by a stroke of his wand, Balna's husband and his brothers resumed their natural shapes. "Now give me my parrot," repeated Punchkin.

"Not so fast, my master," rejoined the Prince, "I must first beg that you will restore to life all whom you have thus imprisoned."

The Magician immediately waved his wand again; and whilst he cried, in an imploring voice, "Give me my parrot!" the whole garden became suddenly alive: where rocks, and stones, and trees had been before, stood Rajah's, and Punts, and Sirdars, and mighty men on prancing horses, and jeweled pages, and troops of armed attendants.

“Give me my parrot!” cried Punchkin. Then the boy took hold of the parrot, and tore off one of his wings; and as he did so the Magician’s right arm fell off.

Punchkin then stretched out his left arm, crying, “Give me my parrot!” The Prince pulled off the parrot’s second wing, and the Magician’s left arm tumbled off.

“Give me my parrot!” cried he, and fell on his knees. The Prince pulled off the parrot’s right leg, the Magician’s right leg fell off: the Prince pulled off the parrot’s left leg, down fell the Magician’s left.

Nothing remained of him save the limbless body and the head; but still he rolled his eyes, and cried, “Give me my parrot!”

“Take your parrot, then,” cried the boy, and with that he wrung the bird’s neck, and threw it at the Magician; and, as he did so, Punchkin’s head twisted round, and, with a fearful groan, he died!

Then they let Balna out of the tower; and she, her son, and the seven Princes went to their own country, and lived very happily ever afterwards. And as to the rest of the world, every one went to his own house.

## THE CHARMED RING

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Jacobs, Joseph. *Indian Fairy Tales*. London: David Nutt, 1912, 90–99.

**Date:** 1912

**Original Source:** India

**National Origin:** India

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The following **ordinary folktale** is categorized by the Aarne-Thompson system as a member of a large class of **tale type** plots (“The Magic Object Is Stolen from the Hero but He Forces Its Return,” AT 560-568). The specific type is “The Magic Ring” (AT 560). In most **variants**, the protagonist finds the ring or is given it as a gift from a man whose son he has saved. In this case, the grateful father is Raja Indrasha, King Snake. “Animals Grateful for Rescue from Peril of Death” (*Motif* B360) figures prominently in the tale.

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**A** merchant started his son in life with three hundred rupees, and bade him go to another country and try his luck in trade. The son took the money and departed. He had not gone far before he came across some herdsmen quarreling over a dog, that some of them wished to kill. “Please do not kill the dog,” pleaded the young and tender-hearted fellow, “I will give you one hundred rupees for it.” Then and there, of course, the bargain was

concluded, and the foolish fellow took the dog, and continued his journey. He next met with some people fighting about a cat. Some of them wanted to kill it, but others not. "Oh! Please do not kill it," said he, "I will give you one hundred rupees for it." Of course they at once gave him the cat and took the money. He went on till he reached a village, where some folk were quarreling over a snake that had just been caught. Some of them wished to kill it, but others did not. "Please do not kill the snake," said he, "I will give you one hundred rupees." Of course the people agreed, and were highly delighted.

What a fool the fellow was! What would he do now that all his money was gone? What could he do except return to his father? Accordingly he went home.

"You fool! You scamp!" exclaimed his father when he had heard how his son had wasted all the money that had been given to him. "Go and live in the stables and repent of your folly. You shall never again enter my house."

So the young man went and lived in the stables. His bed was the grass spread for the cattle, and his companions were the dog, the cat, and the snake, which he had purchased so dearly. These creatures got very fond of him, and would follow him about during the day, and sleep by him at night; the cat used to sleep at his feet, the dog at his head, and the snake over his body, with its head hanging on one side and its tail on the other.

One day the snake in course of conversation said to its master, "I am the son of Raja Indrasha. One day, when I had come out of the ground to drink the air, some people seized me, and would have slain me had you not most opportunely arrived to my rescue. I do not know how I shall ever be able to repay you for your great kindness to me. Would that you knew my father! How glad he would be to see his son's preserver!"

"Where does he live? I should like to see him, if possible," said the young man.

"Well said!" continued the snake. "Do you see yonder mountain? At the bottom of that mountain there is a sacred spring. If you will come with me and dive into that spring, we shall both reach my father's country. Oh! How glad he will be to see you! He will wish to reward you, too. But how can he do that? However, you may be pleased to accept something at his hand. If he asks you what you would like, you would, perhaps, do well to reply, "The ring on your right hand, and the famous pot and spoon which you possess. With these in your possession, you would never need anything, for the ring is such that a man has only to speak to it, and immediately a beautiful furnished mansion will be provided for him, while the pot and the spoon will supply him with all manner of the rarest and most delicious foods."

Attended by his three companions the man walked to the well and prepared to jump in, according to the snake's directions. "O master!" exclaimed the cat and dog, when they saw what he was going to do. "What shall we do? Where shall we go?"

“Wait for me here,” he replied. “I am not going far. I shall not be long away.” On saying this, he dived into the water and was lost to sight.

“Now what shall we do?” said the dog to the cat.

“We must remain here,” replied the cat, “as our master ordered. Do not be anxious about food. I will go to the people’s houses and get plenty of food for both of us.” And so the cat did, and they both lived very comfortably till their master came again and joined them.

The young man and the snake reached their destination in safety; and information of their arrival was sent to the Raja. His highness commanded his son and the stranger to appear before him. But the snake refused, saying that it could not go to its father till it was released from this stranger, who had saved it from a most terrible death, and whose slave it therefore was. Then the Raja went and embraced his son, and saluting the stranger welcomed him to his dominions. The young man stayed there a few days, during which he received the Raja’s right-hand ring, and the pot and spoon, in recognition of His Highness’s gratitude to him for having delivered his son. He then returned. On reaching the top of the spring he found his friends, the dog and the cat, waiting for him. They told one another all they had experienced since they had last seen each other, and were all very glad. Afterwards they walked together to the river side, where it was decided to try the powers of the charmed ring and pot and spoon.

The merchant’s son spoke to the ring, and immediately a beautiful house and a lovely princess with golden hair appeared. He spoke to the pot and spoon, also, and the most delicious dishes of food were provided for them. So he married the princess, and they lived very happily for several years, until one morning the princess, while arranging her toilet, put the loose hairs into a hollow bit of reed and threw them into the river that flowed along under the window. The reed floated on the water for many miles, and was at last picked up by the prince of that country, who curiously opened it and saw the golden hair. On finding it the prince rushed off to the palace, locked himself up in his room, and would not leave it. He had fallen desperately in love with the woman whose hair he had picked up, and refused to eat, or drink, or sleep, or move, till she was brought to him. The king, his father, was in great distress about the matter, and did not know what to do. He feared lest his son should die and leave him without an heir: At last he determined to seek the counsel of his aunt, who was an ogress. The old woman consented to help him, and bade him not to be anxious, as she felt certain that she would succeed in getting the beautiful woman for his son’s wife.

She assumed the shape of a bee and went along buzzing, and buzzing, and buzzing. Her keen sense of smell soon brought her to the beautiful princess, to whom she appeared as an old hag, holding in one hand a stick by way of support. She introduced herself to the beautiful princess and said, “I am your aunt, whom you have never seen before, because I left the country just after your



birth.” She also embraced and kissed the princess by way of adding force to her words. The beautiful princess was thoroughly deceived. She returned the ogress’s embrace, and invited her to come and stay in the house as long as she could, and treated her with such honor and attention, that the ogress thought to herself, “I shall soon accomplish my errand.” When she had been in the house three days, she began to talk of the charmed ring, and advised her to keep it instead of her husband, because the latter was constantly out shooting and on other such-like expeditions, and might lose it. Accordingly the beautiful princess asked her husband for the ring, and he readily gave it to her.

The ogress waited another day before she asked to see the precious thing. Doubting nothing, the beautiful princess complied, when the ogress seized the ring, and reassuming the form of a bee flew away with it to the palace, where the prince was lying nearly on the point of death. “Rise up. Be glad. Mourn no more,” she said to him. “The woman for whom you yearn will appear at your summons. See, here is the charm, whereby you may bring her before you.”

The prince was almost mad with joy when he heard these words, and was so desirous of seeing the beautiful princess, that he immediately spoke to the ring, and the house with its fair occupant descended in the midst of the palace garden. He at once entered the building, and telling the beautiful princess of his intense love, entreated her to be his wife. Seeing no escape from the difficulty, she consented on the condition that he would wait one month for her.

Meanwhile the merchant’s son had returned from hunting and was terribly distressed not to find his house and wife. There was the place only, just as he knew it before he had tried the charmed ring, which Raja Indrasha had given him. He sat down and determined to put an end to himself. Presently the cat and dog came up. They had gone away and hidden themselves, when they saw the house and everything disappear. “O master,” they said, “stay your hand. Your trial is great, but it can be remedied. Give us one month, and we will go and try to recover your wife and house.”

“Go,” said he, “and may the great God aid your efforts. Bring back my wife, and I shall live.”

So the cat and dog started off at a run, and did not stop till they reached the place whither their mistress and the house had been taken. “We may have some difficulty here,” said the cat. “Look, the king has taken our master’s wife and house for himself. You stay here. I will go to the house and try to see her.” So the dog sat down, and the cat climbed up to the window of the room, wherein the beautiful princess was sitting, and entered. The princess recognized the cat, and informed it of all that had happened to her since she had left them.

“But is there no way of escape from the hands of these people?” she asked.

“Yes,” replied the cat, “if you can tell me where the charmed ring is.”

“The ring is in the stomach of the ogress,” she said.

“All right,” said the cat, “I will recover it. If we once get it, everything is ours.” Then the cat descended the wall of the house, and went and laid down

by a rat's hole and pretended she was dead. Now at that time a great wedding chanced to be going on among the rat community of that place, and all the rats of the neighborhood were assembled in that one particular mine by which the cat had lain down. The eldest son of the king of the rats was about to be married. The cat got to know of this, and at once conceived the idea of seizing the bridegroom and making him render the necessary help. Consequently, when the procession poured forth from the hole squealing and jumping in honor of the occasion, it immediately spotted the bridegroom and pounced down on him. "Oh! let me go, let me go," cried the terrified rat. "Oh! let him go," squealed all the company. "It is his wedding day."

"No, no," replied the cat. "Not unless you do something for me. Listen. The ogress, who lives in that house with the prince and his wife, has swallowed a ring, which I very much want. If you will procure it for me, I will allow the rat to depart unharmed. If you do not, then your prince dies under my feet."

"Very well, we agree," said they all. "Nay, if we do not get the ring for you, devour us all."

This was rather a bold offer. However, they accomplished the thing. At midnight, when the ogress was sound asleep, one of the rats went to her bedside, climbed up on her face, and, inserted its tail into her throat; whereupon the ogress coughed violently, and the ring came out and rolled on to the floor. The rat immediately seized the precious thing and ran off with it to its king, who was very glad, and went at once to the cat and released its son.

As soon as the cat received the ring, she started back with the dog to go and tell their master the good tidings. All seemed safe now. They had only to give the ring to him, and he would speak to it, and the house and beautiful princess would again be with them, and everything would go on as happily as before. "How glad master will be!" they thought, and ran as fast as their legs could carry them. Now, on the way they had to cross a stream. The dog swam, and the cat sat on its back. Now the dog was jealous of the cat, so he asked for the ring, and threatened to throw the cat into the water if it did not give it up; whereupon the cat gave up the ring. Sorry moment, for the dog at once dropped it, and a fish swallowed it.

"Oh! What shall I do? What shall I do?" said the dog. "What is done is done," replied the cat. "We must try to recover it, and if we do not succeed we had better drown ourselves in this stream. I have a plan. You go and kill a small lamb, and bring it here to me."

"All right," said the dog, and at once ran off. He soon came back with a dead lamb, and gave it to the cat. The cat got inside the lamb and lay down, telling the dog to go away a little distance and keep quiet. Not long after this a nadhar, a bird whose look can break the bones of a fish, came and hovered over the lamb, and eventually pounced down on it to carry it away. On this the cat came out and jumped on to the bird, and threatened to kill it if it did not recover the lost ring. This was most readily promised by the nadhar, who

immediately flew off to the king of the fishes, and ordered it to make inquiries and to restore the ring. The king of the fishes did so, and the ring was found and carried back to the cat.

“Come along now; I have got the ring,” said the cat to the dog.

“No, I will not,” said the dog, unless you let me have the ring. I can carry it as well as you. Let me have it or I will kill you.” So the cat was obliged to give up the ring. The careless dog very soon dropped it again. This time it was picked up and carried off by a kite.

“See, see, there it goes—away to that big tree,” the cat exclaimed.

“Oh! Oh! what have I done?” cried the dog.

“You foolish thing, I knew it would be so,” said the cat. “But stop your barking, or you will frighten away the bird to some place where we shall not be able to trace it.”

The cat waited till it was quite dark, and then climbed the tree, killed the kite, and recovered the ring. “Come along,” it said to the dog when it reached the ground. “We must make haste now. We have been delayed. Our master will die from grief and suspense. Come on.”

The dog, now thoroughly ashamed of itself, begged the cat’s pardon for all the trouble it had given. It was afraid to ask for the ring the third time, so they both reached their sorrowing master in safety and gave him the precious charm. In a moment his sorrow was turned into joy. He spoke to the ring, and his beautiful wife and house reappeared, and he and everybody were as happy as ever they could be.

## THE MAGIC FIDDLE

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Jacobs, Joseph. *Indian Fairy Tales*. London: David Nutt, 1912, 40–45.

**Date:** 1912

**Original Source:** India

**National Origin:** India

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The following tale is a **variant** of “The Singing Bone” (AT 780), a plot in which the remains of a murder victim literally cry out for justice. Compare this narrative to “Under the Green Old Oak Tree” (Volume 4, page 412). According to the religion of the Santals from whom this tale was originally obtained, spirits (*bonga*) handle the daily affairs of the world and must be propitiated by prayer, rituals, and offerings. The Doma and Hadi mentioned in the tale are outcastes who practice unclean occupations, including the occupation of musician.

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Once upon a time there lived seven brothers and a sister. The brothers were married, but their wives did not do the cooking for the family. It was done by their sister, who stopped at home to cook. The wives for this reason bore their sister-in-law much ill will, and at length they combined together to oust her from the office of cook and general provider, so that one of themselves might obtain it. They said, "She does not go out to the fields to work, but remains quietly at home, and yet she has not the meals ready at the proper time."

They then called upon their bonga, and vowing vows unto him they secured his goodwill and assistance; then they said to the bonga, "At midday, when our sister-in-law goes to bring water, cause it thus to happen, that on seeing her pitcher, the water shall vanish, and again slowly reappear. In this way she will be delayed. Let the water not flow into her pitcher, and you may keep the maiden as your own."

At noon when she went to bring water, it suddenly dried up before her, and she began to weep. Then after a while the water began slowly to rise. When it reached her ankles she tried to fill her pitcher, but it would not go under the water. Being frightened she began to wail and cry to her brother:

Oh! my brother, the water reaches to my ankles,  
Still, Oh! my brother, the pitcher will not dip.  
The water continued to rise until it reached her knee, when she began to wail again:  
Oh! my brother, the water reaches to my knee,  
Still, Oh! my brother, the pitcher will not dip.  
The water continued to rise, and when it reached her waist, she cried again:  
Oh! my brother, the water reaches to my waist,  
Still, Oh! my brother, the pitcher will not dip.

The water still rose, and when it reached her neck she kept on crying:

Oh! my brother, the water reaches to my neck,  
Still, Oh! my brother, the pitcher will not dip.  
At length the water became so deep that she felt herself drowning, then she cried aloud:  
Oh! my brother, the water measures a man's height,  
Oh! my brother, the pitcher begins to fill.

The pitcher filled with water, and along with it she sank and was drowned. The bonga then transformed her into a bonga like himself, and carried her off.

After a time she reappeared as a bamboo growing on the embankment of the tank in which she had been drowned. When the bamboo had grown to an

immense size, a jogi [yogi], who was in the habit of passing that way, seeing it, said to himself, "This will make a splendid fiddle."

So one day he brought an ax to cut it down; but when he was about to begin, the bamboo called out, "Do not cut at the root, cut higher up." When he lifted his ax to cut high up the stem, the bamboo cried out, "Do not cut near the top, cut at the root." When the jogi again prepared himself to cut at the root as requested, the bamboo said, "Do not cut at the root, cut higher up"; and when he was about to cut higher up, it again called out to him, "Do not cut high up, cut at the root." The jogi by this time felt sure that a bonga was trying to frighten him, so becoming angry he cut down the bamboo at the root, and taking it away made a fiddle out of it. The instrument had a superior tone and delighted all who heard it. The jogi carried it with him when he went a begging, and through the influence of its sweet music he returned home every evening with a full wallet.

He now and then visited, when on his rounds, the house of the bonga girl's brothers, and the strains of the fiddle affected them greatly. Some of them were moved even to tears, for the fiddle seemed to wail as one in bitter anguish. The elder brother wished to purchase it, and offered to support the jogi for a whole year if he would consent to part with his wonderful instrument. The jogi, however, knew its value, and refused to sell it.

It so happened that the jogi some time after went to the house of a village chief, and after playing a tune or two on his fiddle asked for something to eat. They offered to buy his fiddle and promised a high price for it, but he refused to sell it, as his fiddle brought to him his means of livelihood. When they saw that he was not to be prevailed upon, they gave him food and a plentiful supply of liquor. Of the latter he drank so freely that he presently became intoxicated. While he was in this condition, they took away his fiddle, and substituted their own old one for it. When the jogi recovered, he missed his instrument, and suspecting that it had been stolen asked them to return it to him. They denied having taken it, so he had to depart, leaving his fiddle behind him. The chief's son, being a musician, used to play on the jogi's fiddle, and in his hands the music it gave forth delighted the ears of all who heard it.

When all the household were absent at their labors in the fields, the bonga girl used to come out of the bamboo fiddle, and prepared the family meal. Having eaten her own share, she placed that of the chief's son under his bed, and covering it up to keep off the dust, reentered the fiddle. This happening every day, the other members of the household thought that some girl friend of theirs was in this manner showing her interest in the young man, so they did not trouble themselves to find out how it came about.

The young chief, however, was determined to watch, and see which of his girl friends was so attentive to his comfort. He said in his own mind, "I will catch her today, and give her a sound beating; she is causing me to be ashamed before the others." So saying, he hid himself in a corner in a pile of firewood. In

a short time the girl came out of the bamboo fiddle, and began to dress her hair. Having completed her toilet, she cooked the meal of rice as usual, and having eaten some herself, she placed the young man's portion under his bed, as before, and was about to enter the fiddle again, when he, running out from his hiding-place, caught her in his arms. The bonga girl exclaimed, "Fie! Fie! You may be a dom, or you may be a hadi of some other caste with whom I cannot marry."

He said, "No. But from today, you and I are one." So they began lovingly to hold converse with each other. When the others returned home in the evening, they saw that she was both a human being and a bonga, and they rejoiced exceedingly.

Now in course of time the bonga girl's family became very poor, and her brothers on one occasion came to the chief's house on a visit. The bonga girl recognized them at once, but they did not know who she was. She brought them water on their arrival, and afterwards set cooked rice before them. Then sitting down near them, she began in wailing tones to upbraid them on account of the treatment she had been subjected to by their wives. She related all that had befallen her, and wound up by saying, "You must have known it all, and yet you did not interfere to save me." And that was all the revenge she took.

## THE PRINCE'S ELOPEMENT

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Ryder, Arthur W., trans. [author unknown, Sanskrit title *Vetalapañchavimsati*]. *Twenty-Two Goblins*. London: J.M. Dent, 1917, 1–18.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** India

**National Origin:** India

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The *Twenty-Two Goblins*, from which the following two tales "The Prince's Elopement" and "The Father and Son Who Married Mother and Daughter" are taken, is an anonymous **frame** tale that serves as a device for organizing a series of traditional Sanskrit narratives. A similar structure is used for the Arabian classic *One Thousand and One Nights* (see "The Fisherman and the Jinn," Volume 1, page 220 for a discussion of that work and an example of the tales included therein). The interrelated tales of *Twenty-Two Goblins* operate within a plot that is resolved at the end. To illustrate this device, one that has been used often to provide a frame for individual traditional narratives, the opening and the concluding "goblin tales" are presented below. There are obvious relationships between the individual tales and the frame story, a story that is built on a king's being duped by a corrupt monk. Given this frame, there is irony in the king's solution to the puzzle posed in "The Prince's

Elopement”: “[T]he king knew the law-books very well, and he had spies to find out the facts among the people. And he knew about the doings of rascals. So he acted without thinking” (page 191). Compare this collection and its individual tales to “A Man Deceives a Woman” (page 203), “Many Wise Fools” (page 221), and “The Vampire Puzzles Raja Vikram” (page 233) drawn from *Vikram and the Vampire*.

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On the bank of the Godavari River is a kingdom called the Abiding Kingdom. There lived the son of King Victory, the famous King Triple-victory, mighty as the king of the gods. As this king sat in judgment, a monk called Patience brought him every day one piece of fruit as an expression of homage. And the king took it and gave it each day to the treasurer who stood near. Thus twelve years passed.

Now one day the monk came to court, gave the king a piece of fruit as usual, and went away. But on this day the king gave the fruit to a pet baby monkey that had escaped from his keepers, and happened to wander in. And as the monkey ate the fruit, he split it open, and a priceless, magnificent gem came out. When the king saw this, he took it and asked the treasurer, “Where have you been keeping the fruits which the monk brought? I gave them to you.”

When the treasurer heard this, he was frightened and said, “Your Majesty, I have thrown them all through the window. If your Majesty desires, I will look for them now.” And when the king had dismissed him, he went, but returned in a moment, and said again, “Your Majesty, they were all smashed in the treasury, and in them I see heaps of dazzling gems.”

When he heard this, the king was delighted, and gave the jewels to the treasurer. And when the monk came the next day, he asked him, “Monk, why do you keep honoring me in such an expensive way? Unless I know the reason, I will not take your fruit.”

Then the monk took the king aside and said, “O hero, there is a business in which I need help. So I ask for your help in it, because you are a brave man.” And the king promised his assistance. Then the monk was pleased, and said again, “O King, on the last night of the waning moon, you must go to the great cemetery at nightfall, and come to me under the fig tree.”

Then the king said, “Certainly,” and Patience, the monk, went home well pleased.

So when the night came, the mighty king remembered his promise to the monk, and at dusk he wrapped his head in a black veil, took his sword in his hand, and went to the great cemetery without being seen. When he got there, he looked about, and saw the monk standing under the fig tree and making a magic circle.

So he went up and said, “Monk, here I am. Tell me what I am to do for you.”

And when the monk saw the king, he was delighted and said, "O King, if you wish to do me a favor, go south from here some distance all alone, and you will see a sissoo tree and a dead body hanging from it. Be so kind as to bring that here."

When the brave king heard this, he agreed, and, true to his promise, turned south and started. And as he walked with difficulty along the cemetery road, he came upon the sissoo tree at some distance, and saw a body hanging on it. So he climbed the tree, cut the rope, and let it fall to the ground. And as it fell, it unexpectedly cried aloud, as if alive. Then the king climbed down, and thinking it was alive, he mercifully rubbed its limbs. Then the body gave a loud laugh.

So the king knew that a goblin lived in it, and said without fear, "What are you laughing about? Come, let us be off."

But then he did not see the goblin on the ground any longer. And when he looked up, there he was, hanging in the tree as before. So the king climbed the tree again, and carefully carried the body down. A brave man's heart is harder than a diamond, and nothing makes it tremble.

Then he put the body with the goblin in it on his shoulder, and started off in silence. And as he walked along, the goblin in the body said, "O King, to amuse the journey, I will tell you a story. Listen."

### **First Goblin: The Prince's Elopement—Whose Fault Was the Resulting Death of His Parents-in-Law?**

There is a city called Benares where Shiva lives. It is loved by pious people like the soil of Mount Kailasa. The river of heaven shines there like a pearl necklace. And in the city lived a king called Valor who burned up all his enemies by his valor, as a fire burns a forest. He had a son named Thunderbolt who broke the pride of the love-god by his beauty, and the pride of men by his bravery. This prince had a clever friend, the son of a counselor.

One day the prince was enjoying himself with his friend hunting, and went a long distance. And so he came to a great forest. There he saw a beautiful lake, and being tired, he drank from it with his friend the counselor's son, washed his hands and feet, and sat down under a tree on the bank.

And then he saw a beautiful maiden who had come there with her servants to bathe. She seemed to fill the lake with the stream of her beauty, and seemed to make lilies grow there with her eyes, and seemed to shame the lotuses with a face more lovely than the moon. She captured the prince's heart the moment that he saw her. And the prince took her eyes captive.

The girl had a strange feeling when she saw him, but was too modest to say a word. So she gave a hint of the feeling in her heart. She put a lotus on her ear, laid a lily on her head after she had made the edge look like a row of teeth, and placed her hand on her heart. But the prince did not understand her signs, only the clever counselor's son understood them all.



A moment later the girl went away, led by her servants. She went home and sat on the sofa and stayed there. But her thoughts were with the prince.

The prince went slowly back to his city, and was terribly lonely without her, and grew thinner every day. Then his friend the son of the counselor took him aside and told him that she was not hard to find. But he had lost all courage and said, "My friend, I don't know her name, nor her home, nor her family. How can I find her? Why do you vainly try to comfort me?"

Then the counselor's son said, "Did you not see all that she hinted with her signs? When she put the lotus on her ear, she meant that she lived in the kingdom of a king named Ear-lotus. And when she made the row of teeth, she meant that she was the daughter of a man named Bite there. And when she laid the lily on her head, she meant that her name was Lily. And when she placed her hand on her heart, she meant that she loved you. And there is a king named Ear-lotus in the Kalinga country. There is a very rich man there whom the king likes. His real name is Battler, but they call him Bite. He has a pearl of a girl whom he loves more than his life, and her name is Lily. This is true, because people told me. So I understood her signs about her country and the other things." When the counselor's son had said this, the prince was delighted to find him so clever, and pleased because he knew what to do.

Then he formed a plan with the counselor's son, and started for the lake again, pretending that he was going to hunt, but really to find the girl that he loved. On the way he rode like the wind away from his soldiers, and started for the Kalinga country with the counselor's son.

When they reached the city of King Ear-lotus, they looked about and found the house of the man called Bite, and they went to a house near by to live with an old woman. And the counselor's son said to the old woman, "Old woman, do you know anybody named Bite in this city?"

Then the old woman answered him respectfully, "My son, I know him well. I was his nurse. And I am a servant of his daughter Lily. But I do not go there now because my dress is stolen. My naughty son is a gambler and steals my clothes."

Then the counselor's son was pleased and satisfied her with his own cloak and other presents. And he said, "Mother, you must do very secretly what we tell you. Go to Bite's daughter Lily, and tell her that the prince whom she saw on the bank of the lake is here, and sent you with a love-message to her."

The old woman was pleased with the gifts and went to Lily at once. And when she got a chance, she said, "My child, the prince and the counselor's son have come to take you. Tell me what to do now." But the girl scolded her and struck her cheeks with both hands smeared with camphor.

The old woman was hurt by this treatment, and came home weeping, and said to the two men, "My sons, see how she left the marks of her fingers on my face."

And the prince was hopeless and sad, but the very clever counselor's son took him aside and said, "My friend, do not be sad. She was only keeping the

secret when she scolded the old woman, and put ten fingers white with camphor on her face. She meant that you must wait before seeing her, for the next ten nights are bright with moonlight.”

So the counselor’s son comforted the prince, took a little gold ornament and sold it in the market, and bought a great dinner for the old woman. So they two took dinner with the old woman. They did this for ten days, and then the counselor’s son sent her to Lily again, to find out something more.

And the old woman was eager for dainty food and drink. So to please him she went to Lily’s house, and then came back and said, “My children, I went there and stayed with her for some time without speaking. But she spoke herself of my naughtiness in mentioning you, and struck me again on the chest with three fingers stained red. So I came back in disgrace.”

Then the counselor’s son whispered to the prince, “Don’t be alarmed, my friend. When she left the marks of three red fingers on the old woman’s heart, she meant to say very cleverly that there were three dangerous days coming.” So the counselor’s son comforted the prince.

And when three days were gone, he sent the old woman to Lily again. And this time she went and was very respectfully entertained, and treated to wine and other things the whole day. But when she was ready to go back in the evening, a terrible shouting was heard outside. They heard people running and crying, “Oh, oh! A mad elephant has escaped from his stable and is running around and stamping on people.”

Then Lily said to the old woman, “Mother, you must not go through the street now where the elephant is. I will put you in a swing and let you down with ropes through this great window into the garden. Then you can climb into a tree and jump on the wall, and go home by way of another tree.” So she had her servants let the old woman down from the window into the garden by a rope-swing. And the old woman went home and told the prince and the counselor’s son all about it.

Then the counselor’s son said to the prince, “My friend, your wishes are fulfilled. She has been clever enough to show you the road. So you must follow that same road this very evening to the room of your darling.”

So the prince went to the garden with the counselor’s son by the road that the old woman had shown them. And there he saw the rope-swing hanging down, and servants above keeping an eye on the road. And when he got into the swing, the servants at the window pulled at the rope and he came to his darling. And when he had gone in, the counselor’s son went back to the old woman’s house.

But the prince saw Lily, and her face was beautiful like the full moon, and the moonlight of her beauty shone forth, like the night when the moon shines in secret because of the dark. And when she saw him, she threw her arms around his neck and kissed him. So he married her and stayed hidden with her for some days.

One day he said to his wife, "My dear, my friend the counselor's son came with me, and he is staying all alone at the old woman's house. I must go and see him, then I will come back."

But Lily was shrewd and said, "My dear, I must ask you something. Did you understand the signs I made, or was it the counselor's son?"

And the prince said to her, "My dear, I did not understand them all, but my friend has wonderful wisdom. He understood everything and told me." Then the sweet girl thought, and said, "My dear, you did wrong not to tell me before. Your friend is a real brother to me. I ought to have sent him some nuts and other nice things at the very first."

Then she let him go, and he went to his friend by night by the same road, and told all that his wife had said. But the counselor's son said, "That is foolish," and did not think much of it. So they spent the night talking.

Then when the time for the twilight sacrifice came, a friend of Lily's came there with cooked rice and nuts in her hand. She came and asked the counselor's son about his health and gave him the present. And she cleverly tried to keep the prince from eating. "Your wife is expecting you to dinner," she said, and a moment later she went away.

Then the counselor's son said to the prince, "Look, your Majesty. I will show you something curious." So he took a little of the cooked rice and gave it to a dog that was there. And the moment he ate it, the dog died. And the prince asked the counselor's son what this strange thing could mean.

And he replied, "Your Majesty, she knew that I was clever because I understood her signs, and she wanted to kill me out of love for you. For she thought the prince would not be all her own while I was alive, but would leave her for my sake and go back to his own city. So she sent me poisoned food to eat. But you must not be angry with her. I will think up some scheme."

Then the prince praised the counselor's son, and said, "You are truly the body of wisdom." And then suddenly a great wailing of grief-stricken people was heard, "Alas! Alas! The king's little son is dead."

When he heard this, the counselor's son was delighted, and said, "Your Majesty, go tonight to Lily's house, and make her drink wine until she loses her senses and seems to be dead. Then as she lies there, make a mark on her hip with a red-hot fork, steal her jewels, and come back the old way through the window. After that I will do the right thing."

Then he made a three-pronged fork and gave it to the prince. And the prince took the crooked, cruel thing, hard as the weapon of Death, and went by night as before to Lily's house. "A king," he thought, "ought not to disregard the words of a high-minded counselor." So when he had stupefied her with wine, he branded her hip with the fork, stole her jewels, returned to his friend, and told him everything, showing him the jewels.

Then the counselor's son felt sure his scheme was successful. He went to the cemetery in the morning, and disguised himself as a hermit, and the prince as

his pupil. And he said, "Take this pearl necklace from among the jewels. Go and sell it in the market-place. And if the policemen arrest you, say this: It was given to me to sell by my teacher."

So the prince went to the market-place and stood there offering the pearl necklace for sale, and he was arrested while doing it by the policemen. And as they were eager to find out about the theft of the jewels from Bite's daughter, they took the prince at once to the chief of police. And when he saw that the culprit was dressed like a hermit, he asked him very gently, "Holy sir, where did you get this pearl necklace? It belongs to Bite's daughter and was stolen." Then the prince said to them, "Gentlemen, my teacher gave it to me to sell. You had better go and ask him."

Then the chief of police went and asked him, "Holy sir, how did this pearl necklace come into your pupil's hand?"

And the shrewd counselor's son whispered to him, "Sir, as I am a hermit, I wander about all the time in this region. And as I happened to be here in this cemetery, I saw a whole company of witches who came here at night. And one of the witches split open the heart of a king's son, and offered it to her master. She was mad with wine, and screwed up her face most horribly. But when she impudently tried to snatch my rosary as I prayed, I became angry, and branded her on the hip with a three-pronged fork which I had made red-hot with a magic spell. And I took this pearl necklace from her neck. Then, as it was not a thing for a hermit, I sent it to be sold."

When he heard this, the chief of police went and told the whole story to the king. And when the king heard and saw the evidence, he sent the old woman, who was reliable, to identify the pearl necklace. And he heard from her that Lily was branded on the hip.

Then he was convinced that she was really a witch and had devoured his son. So he went himself to the counselor's son, who was disguised as a hermit, and asked how Lily should be punished. And by his advice, she was banished from the city, though her parents wept. So she was banished naked to the forest and knew that the counselor's son had done it all, but she did not die.

And at nightfall the prince and the counselor's son put off their hermit disguise, mounted on horseback, and found her weeping. They put her on a horse and took her to their own country. And when they got there, the prince lived most happily with her.

But Bite thought that his daughter was eaten by wild beasts in the wood, and he died of grief. And his wife died with him.

When he had told this story, the goblin asked the king, "O King, who was to blame for the death of the parents: the prince, or the counselor's son, or Lily? You seem like a very wise man, so resolve my doubts on this point. If you know and do not tell me the truth, then your head will surely fly into a hundred pieces. And if you give a good answer, then I will jump from your shoulder and go back to the sissou tree."

Then King Triple-victory said to the goblin, “You are a master of magic. You surely know yourself, but I will tell you. It was not the fault of any of the three you mentioned. It was entirely the fault of King Ear-lotus.”

But the goblin said, “How could it be the king’s fault? The other three did it. Are the crows to blame when the geese eat up the rice?”

Then the king said, “But those three are not to blame. It was right for the counselor’s son to do his master’s business. So he is not to blame. And Lily and the prince were madly in love and could not stop to think. They only looked after their own affairs. They are not to blame.

“But the king knew the law-books very well, and he had spies to find out the facts among the people. And he knew about the doings of rascals. So he acted without thinking. He is to blame.”

When the goblin heard this, he wanted to test the king’s constancy. So he went back by magic in a moment to the sissoo tree. And the king went back fearlessly to get him.

## THE FATHER AND SON WHO MARRIED MOTHER AND DAUGHTER

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Ryder, Arthur W., trans. [author unknown, Sanskrit title *Vetalapañchavimsati*]. *Twenty-Two Goblins*. London: J.M. Dent, 1917, 209–220.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** India

**National Origin:** India

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Throughout the twenty-two tales of this anthology, Shiva appears here and there. In this final tale, he appears to reward the valor and integrity of King Triple-victory.

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**T**he king paid no attention to the terrible witch of night, clad in black darkness, with the funeral piles as flaming eyes. He bravely went through the dreadful cemetery to the sissoo tree, put the goblin on his shoulder, and started as before. And as he walked along, the goblin said to him, “O King, I am very tired with these comings and goings, but you do not seem to be. So I will tell you my Great Puzzle. Listen.”

Long ago there was a king named Virtue in the southern country. He was the best of righteous men, and was born in a great family. His wife came from the Malwa country, and her name was Moonlight. And they had one daughter, whom they named Beauty.

When this daughter was grown up, the relatives conspired to wreck the kingdom and drive King Virtue out. But he escaped by night, took a great many jewels, and fled from his kingdom with his beautiful wife and his daughter. He started for his father-in-law's house in Malwa, and came with his wife and daughter to the Vindhya forest. There they spent a weary night.

In the morning the blessed sun arose in the east, stretching out his rays like hands to warn the king not to go into the forest where robbers lived. The king went on foot with his trembling daughter and his wife, and their feet were wounded by the thorny grass. So they came to a fortified village. It was like the city of Death; for there were no righteous people there, and it was filled with robber-men who killed and robbed other people.

As the king drew near with his fine garments and his gems, many robbers saw him from a distance, and ran out armed to rob him. When the king saw them coming, he said to his wife and daughter, "These are wild men. They must not touch you. Go into the thick woods." So the queen with her daughter Beauty fled in fear into the middle of the forest.

But the brave king took his sword and shield and killed many of the wild men as they charged down, raining arrows on him. Then their leader gave an order, and all the robbers fell on the king at once, wounded every limb in his body, and killed him; for he was all alone. So the robbers took the jewels and went away.

Now the queen had hidden in a thicket, and had seen her husband killed. Then she fled a long distance in fear and came with her daughter into another thick wood. The rays of the midday sun were so fierce that travelers had to sit in the shade. So Queen Moonlight and Princess Beauty sat down under an ashoka tree near a lotus pond in terrible weariness and fear and grief.

Now a gentleman named Fierce-lion who lived near came on horseback with his son into that wood to hunt. The son's name was Strong-lion. And the father saw the footprints of the queen and the princess, and he said to his son, "My son, these footprints are clean-cut and ladylike. Let us follow them. And if we find two women, you shall marry one of them, whichever you choose."

And the son Strong-lion said, "Father, the one who has the little feet in this line of footprints, seems to be the wife for me. The one with the bigger feet must be older. She is the wife for you."

But Fierce-lion said, "My son, what do you mean? Your mother went to heaven before your eyes. When so good a wife is gone, how could I think of another?"

But his son said, "Not so, Father. A householder's house is an empty place without a wife. Besides, you have surely heard what the poet says:

What fool would go into a house?  
Tis a prisoner's abode,  
Unless a buxom wife is there,  
Looking down the road.

So, Father, I beg you on my life to marry the second one, whom I have chosen for you.”

Then Fierce-lion said “Very well,” and went on slowly with his son, following the footprints. And when he came to the pond, he saw Queen Moonlight, radiant with beauty and charm. And with his son he eagerly approached her. But when she saw him, she rose in terror, fearing that he was a robber.

But her sensible daughter said, “There is no reason to fear. These two men are not robbers. They are two well-dressed gentlemen, who probably came here to hunt.” Still the queen swung in doubt.

Then Fierce-lion dismounted and stood before her. And he said, “Beautiful lady, do not be frightened. We came here to hunt. Pluck up heart and tell me without fear who you are. Why have you come into this lonely wood? For your appearance is that of ladies who wear gems and sit on pleasant balconies. And why should feet fit to saunter in a court, press this thorny ground? It is a strange sight. For the wind-blown dust settles on your faces and robs them of beauty. It hurts us to see the fierce rays of the sun fall upon such figures. Tell us your story. For our hearts are sadly grieved to see you in such a plight. And we cannot see how you could live in a forest filled with wild beasts.”

Then the queen sighed, and between shame and grief she stammered out her story. And Fierce-lion saw that she had no husband to care for her. So he comforted her and soothed her with tender words, and took care of her and her daughter. His son helped the two ladies on horseback and led them to his own city, rich as the city of the god of wealth. And the queen seemed to be in another life. She was helpless and widowed and miserable. So she consented. What could she do, poor woman?

Then, because the queen had smaller feet, the son Strong-lion married Queen Moonlight. And Fierce-lion, the father, married her daughter, the princess Beauty, because of the bigness of her feet. Who would break a promise that had been made solemnly?

Thus, because of their inconsistent feet, the daughter became the wife of the father and the mother-in-law of her own mother. And the mother became the wife of the son and the daughter-in-law of her own daughter. And as time passed, sons and daughters were born to each pair.

When the goblin had told this story, he asked the king, “O King, when children were born to the father and daughter, and other children to the son and mother, what relation were those children to one another? If you know and do not tell, then remember the curse I spoke of before?”

When the king heard the goblin’s question, he turned the thing this way and that, but could not say a word. So he went on in silence. And when the goblin saw that he could not answer the question, he laughed in his heart and thought, “This king cannot give an answer to my Great Puzzle. So he just walks on in silence. And he cannot deceive me because of the power of the curse.

Well, I am pleased with his wonderful character. So I will cheat that rogue of a monk, and give the magic power he is striving after to this king.”

So the goblin said aloud, “O King, you are weary with your comings and goings in this dreadful cemetery in the black night, yet you seem happy, and never hesitate at all. I am astonished and pleased at your perseverance. So now you may take the dead body and go ahead. I will leave the body. And I will tell you something that will do you good, and you must do it. The monk for whom you are carrying this body, is a rogue. He will call upon me and worship me, and he will try to kill you as a sacrifice. He will say, ‘Lie flat on the ground in an attitude of reverence.’ O King, you must say to that rascal: ‘I do not know this attitude of reverence. Show me first, and then I will do likewise.’ Then when he lies on the ground to show you the attitude of reverence, cut off his head with your sword. Then you will get the kingship over the fairies which he is trying to get. Otherwise, the monk will kill you and get the magic power. That is why I have delayed you so long. Now go ahead, and win magic power.”

So the goblin left the body on the king’s shoulder and went away. And the king reflected how the monk Patience was planning to hurt him. He took the body and joyfully went to the fig tree.

So King Triple-victory came to the monk Patience with the body on his shoulder. And he saw the monk along in the dark night, sitting under the cemetery tree and looking down the road. He had made a magic circle with yellow powdered bones in a spot smeared with blood. In it he had put a jug filled with blood and lamps with magic oil. He had kindled a fire and brought together the things he needed for worship.

The monk rose to greet the king who came carrying the body, and he said, “O King, you have done me a great favor, and a hard one. This is a strange business and a strange time and place for such as you. They say truly that you are the best of kings, for you serve others without thinking of yourself. This is the very thing that makes the greatness of a great man, when he does not give a thing up, though it costs his very life.”

So the monk felt sure the he was quite successful, and he took the body from the king’s shoulder. He bathed it and put garlands on it, and set it in the middle of the circle. Then he smeared his own body with ashes, put on a cord made of human hair, wrapped himself in dead man’s clothes, and stood a moment, deep in thought. And the goblin was attracted by his thought into the body, and the monk worshipped him.

First he offered liquor in a skull, then he gave him human teeth carefully cleaned, and human eyes and flesh. So he completed his worship, then he said to the king, “O King, fall flat on the ground before this master magician in an attitude of reverence, so that he may give you what you want.”

And the king remembered the words of the goblin. He said to the monk, “Holy sir, I do not know that attitude of reverence. Do you show me first, and afterwards I will do it in the same way.”



And when the monk fell on the ground to show the attitude of reverence, the king cut off his head with a sword, and cut out his heart and split it open. And he gave the head and the heart to the goblin.

Then all the little gods were delighted and cried, "Well done!" And the goblin was pleased and spoke to the king from the body he was living in, "O King, this monk was trying to become king of the fairies. But you shall be that when you have been king of the whole world."

And the king answered the goblin, "O magic creature, if you are pleased with me, I have nothing more to wish for. Yet I ask you to make me one promise, that these twenty-two different, charming puzzle-stories shall be known all over the world and be received with honor."

And the goblin answered, "O King, so be it. And I will tell you something more. Listen. When anyone tells or hears with proper respect even a part of these puzzle-stories, he shall be immediately free from sin. And wherever these stories are told, elves and giants and witches and goblins and imps shall have no power."

Then the goblin left the dead body by magic, and went where he wanted to. Then Shiva appeared there with all the little gods, and he was well pleased. When the king bowed before him, he said, "My son, you did well to kill this sham monk who tried by force to become king of the fairies. Therefore you shall establish the whole earth, and then become king of the fairies yourself. And when you have long enjoyed the delights of heaven and at last give them up of your own accord, then you shall be united with me. So receive from me this sword called Invincible. While you have it, everything you say will come true."

So Shiva gave him the magic sword, received his flowery words of worship, and vanished with the gods.

## HOW THE RAJA'S SON WON THE PRINCESS LABAM

**Tradition Bearer:** Mániyá

**Source:** Jacobs, Joseph. *Indian Fairy Tales*. London: David Nutt, 1912, 40–45.

**Date:** 1912

**Original Source:** India

**National Origin:** India

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The episodes that comprise the following folktale are internationally distributed **tale types**. Among them are "The Grateful Animals" (AT 554) and "The Judge Appropriates the Object of Dispute" (AT 926D). The success of the hero attained by the use of magical objects and the tasks required to win the bride's hand and avoid death are encountered equally as often in the world's narrative traditions.

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In a country there was a Raja who had an only son who every day went out to hunt. One day the Rani, his mother, said to him, "You can hunt wherever you like on these three sides; but you must never go to the fourth side." This she said because she knew if he went on the fourth side he would hear of the beautiful Princess Labam, and that then he would leave his father and mother and seek for the princess.

The young prince listened to his mother, and obeyed her for some time; but one day, when he was hunting on the three sides where he was allowed to go, he remembered what she had said to him about the fourth side, and he determined to go and see why she had forbidden him to hunt on that side. When he got there, he found himself in a jungle, and nothing in the jungle but a quantity of parrots, who, lived in it. The young Raja shot at some of them, and at once they all flew away up to the sky. All, that is, but one, and this was their Raja, who was called HIRAMAN parrot [parrot species also called Alexandrine parrot].

When HIRAMAN parrot found himself left alone, he called out to the other parrots, "Don't fly away and leave me alone when the Raja's son shoots. If you desert me like this, I will tell the Princess Labam."

Then the parrots all flew back to their Raja, chattering. The prince was greatly surprised, and said, "Why, these birds can talk!" Then he said to the parrots, "Who is the Princess Labam? Where does she live?" But the parrots would not tell him where she lived. "You can never get to the Princess Labam's country." That is all they would say.

The prince grew very sad when they would not tell him anything more; and he threw his gun away and went home. When he got home, he would not speak or eat, but lay on his bed for four or five days, and seemed very ill.

At last he told his father and mother that he wanted to go and see the Princess Labam. "I must go," he said, "I must see what she is like. Tell me where her country is."

"We do not know where it is," answered his father and mother.

"Then I must go and look for it," said the prince.

"No, no," they said, "you must not leave us. You are our only son. Stay with us. You will never find the Princess Labam."

"I must try and find her," said the prince. "Perhaps God will show me the way. If I live and I find her, I will come back to you; but perhaps I shall die, and then I shall never see you again. Still I must go."

So they had to let him go, though they cried very much at parting with him. His father gave him fine clothes to wear, and a fine horse. And he took his gun, and his bow and arrows, and a great many other weapons; "for," he said, "I may want them." His father too, gave him plenty of rupees.

Then he himself got his horse all ready for the journey, and he said good-bye to his father and mother; and his mother took her handkerchief and wrapped some sweetmeats in it, and gave it to her son. "My child," she said to him, "when you are hungry eat some of these sweetmeats."

He then set out on his journey, and rode on and on till he came to a jungle in which were a tank and shady trees. He bathed himself and his horse in the tank, and then sat down under a tree.

"Now," he said to himself, "I will eat some of the sweetmeats my mother gave me, and I will drink some water, and then I will continue my journey." He opened his handkerchief and took out a sweetmeat. He found an ant in it. He took out another. There was an ant in that one too. So he laid the two sweetmeats on the ground, and he took out another, and another, and another, until he had taken them all out; but in, each he found an ant. "Never mind," he said, "I won't eat the sweetmeats; the ants shall eat them." Then the Ant-Raja came and stood before him and said, "You have been good to us. If ever you are in trouble, think of me and we will come to you."

The Raja's son thanked him, mounted his horse and continued his journey. He rode on and on until he came to another jungle, and there he saw a tiger who had a thorn in his foot, and was roaring loudly from the pain.

"Why do you roar like that?" said the young Raja. "What is the matter with you?"

"I have had a thorn in my foot for twelve years," answered the tiger, "and it hurts me so; that is why I roar."

"Well," said the Raja's son, "I will take it out for you. But perhaps, as you are a tiger, when I have made you well, you will eat me?"

"Oh no," said the tiger, "I won't eat you. Do make me well."

Then the prince took a little knife from his pocket and cut the thorn out of the tiger's foot; but when he cut, the tiger roared louder than ever—so loud that his wife heard him in the next jungle, and came bounding along to see what was the matter. The tiger saw her coming, and hid the prince in the jungle, so that she should not see him.

"What man hurt you that you roared so loud?" said the wife.

"No one hurt me," answered the husband, "but a Raja's son came and took the thorn out of my foot."

"Where is he? Show him to me," said his wife.

"If you promise not to kill him, I will call him," said the tiger.

"I won't kill him; only let me see him," answered his wife.

Then the tiger called the Raja's son, and when he came the tiger and his wife made him a great many salaams [low bows]. Then they gave him a good dinner, and he stayed with them for three days. Every day he looked at the tiger's foot, and the third day it was quite healed. Then he said good-bye to the tigers, and the tiger said to him, "If ever you are in trouble, think of me, and we will come to you."

The Raja's son rode on and on till he came to a third jungle. Here he found four fakirs whose teacher and master had died, and had left four things—a bed, which carried whoever sat on it whithersoever he wished to go; a bag, that gave its owner whatever he wanted, jewels, food or clothes; a stone bowl that gave its

owner as much water as he wanted, no matter how far he might be from a tank; and a stick and rope, to which its owner had only to say, if any one came to make war on him, "Stick, beat as many men and soldiers as are here," and the stick would beat them and the rope would tie them up.

The four fakirs were quarreling over these four things. One said, "I want this"; another said, "You cannot have it, for I want it"; and so on.

The Raja's son said to them, "Do not quarrel for these things. I will shoot four arrows in four different directions. Whichever of you gets to my first arrow, shall have the first thing—the bed. Whosoever gets to the second arrow, shall have the second thing—the bag. He who gets to the third arrow, shall have the third thing—the bowl. And he who gets to the fourth arrow, shall have the last things—the stick and rope." To this they agreed. And the prince shot off his first arrow. Away raced the fakirs to get it. When they brought it back to him he shot off the second, and when they had found and brought it to him he shot off his third, and when they had brought him the third he shot off the fourth.

While they were away looking for the fourth arrow the Raja's son let his horse loose in the jungle and sat on the bed, taking the bowl, the stick and rope, and the bag with him. Then he said, "Bed, I wish to go to the Princess Labam's country." The little bed instantly rose up into the air and began to fly, and it flew and flew till it came to the Princess Labam's country, where it settled on the ground. The Raja's son asked some men he saw, "Whose country is this?"

"The Princess Labam's country," they answered. Then the prince went on till he came to a house where he saw an old woman.

"Who are you?" she said. "Where do you come from?"

"I come from a far country," he said, "do let me stay with you tonight."

"No," she answered, "I cannot let you stay with me; for our king has ordered that men from other countries may not stay in his country. You cannot stay in my house."

"You are my aunty," said the prince, "let me remain with you for this one night. You see it is evening, and if I go into the jungle, then the wild beasts will eat me."

"Well," said the old woman, "you may stay here tonight; but tomorrow morning you must go away, for if the king hears you have passed the night in my house, he will have me seized and put into prison."

Then she took him into her house, and the Raja's son was very glad. The old woman began preparing dinner, but he stopped her. "Aunty," he said, "I will give you food." He put his hand into his bag, saying, "Bag, I want some dinner," and the bag gave him instantly a delicious dinner, served up on two gold plates. The old woman and the Raja's son then dined together.

When they had finished eating, the old woman said, "Now I will fetch some water."

"Don't go," said the prince. "You shall have plenty of water directly." So he took his bowl and said to it, "Bowl, I want some water," and then it filled with

water. When it was full, the prince cried out, "Stop, bowl!" and the bowl stopped filling. "See, aunty," he said, "with this bowl I can always get as much water as I want."

By this time night had come. "Aunty," said the Raja's son, "why don't you light a lamp?"

"There is no need," she said. "Our king has forbidden the people in his country to light any lamps; for, as soon as it is dark, his daughter, the Princess Labam, comes and sits on her roof, and she shines so that she lights up all the country and our houses, and we can see to do our work as if it were day."

When it was quite black night the princess got up. She dressed herself in her rich clothes and jewels, and rolled up her hair, and across her head she put a band of diamonds and pearls. Then she shone like the moon and her beauty made night day. She came out of her room and sat on the roof of her palace. In the daytime she never came out of her house; she only came out at night. All the people in her father's country then went about their work and finished it.

The Raja's son watched the princess quietly, and was very happy. He said to himself, "How lovely she is!"

At midnight, when everybody had gone to bed, the princess came down from her roof and went to her room; and when she was in bed and asleep, the Raja's son got up softly and sat on his bed. "Bed," he said to it, "I want to go to the Princess Labam's bed-room." So the little bed carried him to the room where she lay fast asleep.

The young Raja took his bag and said, "I want a great deal of betel-leaf," and it at once gave him quantities of betel-leaf. This he laid near the princess's bed, and then his little bed carried him back to the old woman's house.

Next morning all the princess's servants found the betel-leaf, and began to eat it.

"Where did you get all that betel-leaf?" asked the princess.

"We found it near your bed," answered the servants. Nobody knew the prince had come in the night and put it all there.

In the morning the old woman came to the Raja's son. "Now it is morning," she said, "and you must go; for if the king finds out all I have done for you, he will seize me."

"I am ill today, dear aunty," said the prince, "do let me stay till tomorrow morning."

"Good," said the old woman. So he stayed, and they took their dinner out of the bag, and the bowl gave them water.

When night came the princess got up and sat on her roof, and at twelve o'clock, when every one was in bed, she went to her bed-room, and was soon fast asleep. Then the Raja's son sat on his bed, and it carried him to the princess. He took his bag and said, "Bag, I want a most lovely shawl"; It gave him a splendid shawl, and he spread it over the princess as she lay asleep. Then he went back to the old woman's house and slept till morning.

In the morning, when the princess saw the shawl she was delighted. "See, mother," she said, "Khuda [God] must have given me this shawl, it is so beautiful."

Her mother was very glad too. "Yes, my child," she said, "Khuda must have given you this splendid shawl."

When it was morning the old woman said to the Raja's son, "Now you must really go."

"Aunty," he answered, "I am not well enough yet. Let me stay a few days longer. I will remain hidden in your house, so that no one may see me." So the old woman let him stay.

When it was black night, the princess put on her lovely clothes and jewels and sat on her roof. At midnight she went to her room and went to sleep. Then the Raja's son sat on his bed and flew to her bed-room. There he said to his bag, "Bag, I want a very, very beautiful ring." The bag gave him a glorious ring. Then he took the Princess Labam's hand gently to put on the ring, and she started up very much frightened.

"Who are you?" she said to the prince. "Where do you come from? Why do you come to my room?"

"Do not be afraid, princess," he said, "I am no thief. I am a great Raja's son. Hiranman parrot, who lives in the jungle where I went to hunt, told me your name, and then I left my father and mother and came to see you."

"Well," said the princess, "as you are the son of such a great Raja, I will not have you killed, and I will tell my father and mother that I wish to marry you."

The prince then returned to the old woman's house; and when morning came the princess said to her mother, "The son of a great Raja has come to this country, and I wish to marry him." Her mother told this to the king.

"Good," said the king, "but if this Raja's son wishes to marry my daughter, he must first do whatever I bid him. If he fails I will kill him. I will give him eighty pounds weight of mustard seed, and out of this he must crush the oil in one day. If he cannot do this he shall die."

In the morning the Raja's son told the old woman that he intended to marry the princess. "Oh," said the old woman, "go away from this country, and do not think of marrying her. A great many Rajas and Rajas' sons have come here to marry her, and her father has had them all killed. He says whoever wishes to marry his daughter must first do whatever he bids him. If he can, then he shall marry the princess; if he cannot, the king will have him killed. But no one can do the things the king tells him to do; so all the Rajas and Rajas' sons who have tried have been put to death. You will be killed too, if you try. Do go away." But the prince would not listen to anything she said.

The king sent for the prince to the old woman's house, and his servants brought the Raja's son to the king's courthouse to the king. There the king gave him eighty pounds of mustard seed, and told him to crush all the oil out of it

that day, and bring it next morning to him to the courthouse. "Whoever wishes to marry my daughter," he said to the prince, "must first do all I tell him. If he cannot, then I have him killed. So if you cannot crush all the oil out of this mustard seed you will die."

The prince was very sorry when he heard this. "How can I crush the oil out of all this mustard seed in one thy?" he said to himself, "and if I do not, the king will kill me." He took the mustard seed to the old woman's house, and did not know what to do. At last he remembered the Ant-Raja, and the moment he did so, the Ant-Raja and his ants came to him. "Why do you look so sad?" said the Ant-Raja.

The prince showed him the mustard seed, and said to him, "How can I crush the oil out of all this mustard seed in one day? And if I do not take the oil to the king tomorrow morning, he will kill me."

"Be happy," said the Ant-Raja, "lie down and sleep; we will crush all the oil out for you during the day, and tomorrow morning you shall take it to the king." The Raja's son lay down and slept, and the ants crushed out the oil for him. The prince was very glad when he saw the oil.

The next morning he took it to the court-house to the king. But the king said, "You cannot yet marry my daughter. If you wish to do so, you must first fight with my two demons, and kill them." The king a long time ago had caught two demons, and then, as he did not know what to do with them, he had shut them up in a cage. He was afraid to let them loose for fear they would eat up all the people in his country; and he did not know how to kill them. So all the kings and kings' sons who wanted to marry the Princess Labam had to fight with these demons, "for," said the king to himself, "perhaps the demons may be killed, and then I shall be rid of them."

When he heard of the demons the Raja's son was very sad. "What can I do?" he said to himself. "How can I fight with these two demons?"

Then he thought of his tiger: and the tiger and his wife came to him and said, "Why are you so sad?"

The Raja's son answered, "The king has ordered me to fight with his two demons and kill them. How can I do this?"

"Do not be frightened," said the tiger. "Be happy. I and my wife will fight with them for you."

Then the Raja's son took out of his bag two splendid coats. They were all gold and silver, and covered with pearls and diamonds. These he put on the tigers to make them beautiful, and he took them to the king, and said to him, "May these tigers fight your demons for me?"

"Yes," said the king, who did not care in the least who killed his demons, provided they were killed.

"Then call your demons," said the Raja's son, "and these tigers will fight them." The king did so, and the tigers and the demons fought and fought until the tigers had killed the demons.

“That is good,” said the king. “But you must do something else before I give you my daughter. Up in the sky I have a kettle-drum. You must go and beat it. If you cannot do this, I will kill you.”

The Raja’s son thought of his little bed; so he went to the old woman’s house and sat on his bed. “Little bed!” he said, “up in the sky is the king’s kettle-drum. I want to go to it.” The bed flew up with him, and the Raja’s son beat the drum, and the king heard him.

Still, when he came down, the king would not give him his daughter. “You have,” he said to the prince, “done the three things I told you to do; but you must do one thing more.”

“If I can, I will,” said the Raja’s son.

Then the king showed him the trunk of a tree that was lying near his court-house. It was a very, very, thick trunk. He gave the prince a wax hatchet, and said, “Tomorrow morning you must cut this trunk in two with this wax hatchet.”

The Raja’s son went back to the old woman’s house. He was very sad, and thought that now the Raja would certainly kill him. “I had his oil crushed out by the ants,” he said to himself. “I had his demons killed by the tigers. My bed helped me to beat his kettle-drum. But now what can I do? How can I cut that thick tree-trunk in two with a wax hatchet?”

At night he went on his bed to see the princess. “To morrow,” he said to her, “your father will kill me.”

“Why?” asked the princess.

“He has told me to cut a thick tree-trunk in two with a wax hatchet. How can I ever do that?” said the Raja’s son.

“Do not be afraid,” said the princess, “do as I bid you, and you will cut it in two quite easily.”

Then she pulled out a hair from her head and gave it to the prince. “Tomorrow,” she said, “when no one is near you, you must say to the tree-trunk, ‘The Princess Labam commands you to let yourself be cut in two by this hair.’ Then stretch the hair down the edge of the wax hatchet’s blade.”

The prince next day did exactly as the princess had told him; and the minute the hair that was stretched down the edge of the hatchet-blade touched the tree-trunk it split into two pieces.

The king said, “Now you can marry my daughter.” Then the wedding took place. All the Rajas and kings of the countries round were asked to come to it, and there were great rejoicings.

After a few days the prince’s son said to his wife, “Let us go to my father’s country.” The Princess Labam’s father gave them a quantity of camels and horses and rupees and servants; and they traveled in great state to the prince’s country, where they lived happily.

The prince always kept his bag, bowl, bed, and stick; only, as no one ever came to make war on him, he never needed to use the stick.



## A MAN DECEIVES A WOMAN

**Tradition Bearer:** Bhavabhuti

**Source:** Burton, Richard. "The Vampire's First Story in Which a Man Deceives a Woman." *Vikram and the Vampire*, ed. Elizabeth Burton. London: Tylston and Edwards, 1893, 41–73.

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The following three tales "A Man Deceives a Woman," "Many Wise Fools" (page 221), and "The Vampire Puzzles Raja Vikram" (page 233) are drawn from *Vikram and the Vampire*, another Indian collection whose **framing** device closely resembles *Twenty-Two Goblins*. The framing device in both collections hinges on a sham holy man who extricates a promise from a king to enter a place of death and engage in a contest of wits with supernatural creatures. The tales in both cases are intended to teach moral lessons to those who listen carefully. For example, the first tale revolves around deceit, the crime of the yogi who has sent King Vikram, a man of high moral character, on this errand. The tales are told by the vampire Vikram has captured and carries in a bag on his back.

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**I**n Benares once reigned a mighty prince, by name Pratapamukut, to whose eighth son Vajramukut happened the strangest adventure. One morning, the young man, accompanied by the son of his father's pradhan or prime minister, rode out hunting, and went far into the jungle. At last the twain unexpectedly came upon a beautiful "tank" [pond] of a prodigious size. It was surrounded by short thick walls of fine baked brick; and flights and ramps of cut-stone steps, half the length of each face, and adorned with turrets, pendants, and finials, led down to the water. The substantial plaster work and the masonry had fallen into disrepair, and from the crevices sprang huge trees, under whose thick shade the breeze blew freshly, and on whose balmy branches the birds sang sweetly; the grey squirrels chirruped joyously as they coursed one another up the gnarled trunks, and from the pendent lianas the longtailed monkeys were swinging sportively. The bountiful hand of Sravana had spread the earthen rampart with a carpet of the softest grass and many-hued wild flowers, in which were buzzing swarms of bees and myriads of bright winged insects; and flocks of water fowl, wild geese Brahmini ducks, bitterns, herons, and cranes, male and female, were feeding on the narrow strip of brilliant green that belted the long deep pool, amongst the broad-leaved lotuses with the lovely blossoms, splashing through the pellucid waves, and basking happily in the genial sun.

The prince and his friend wondered when they saw the beautiful tank in the midst of a wild forest, and made many vain conjectures about it. They dismounted, tethered their horses, and threw their weapons upon the ground; then, having washed their hands and faces, they entered a shrine dedicated to Mahadeva, and there began to worship the presiding deity.

Whilst they were making their offerings, a bevy of maidens, accompanied by a crowd of female slaves, descended the opposite flight of steps. They stood there for a time, talking and laughing and looking about them to see if any alligators infested the waters. When convinced that the tank was safe, they disrobed themselves in order to bathe. It was truly a splendid spectacle

“Concerning which the less said the better,” interrupted Raja Vikram in an offended tone—but did not last long. The Raja’s daughter—for the principal maiden was a princess—soon left her companions, who were scooping up water with their palms and dashing it over one another’s heads, and proceeded to perform the rites of purification, meditation, and worship. Then she began strolling with a friend under the shade of a small mango grove.

The prince also left his companion sitting in prayer, and walked forth into the forest. Suddenly the eyes of the Raja’s son and the Raja’s daughter met. She started back with a little scream. He was fascinated by her beauty, and began to say to himself, “O thou vile Karma, why worriest thou me?”

Hearing this, the maiden smiled encouragement, but the poor youth, between palpitation of the heart and hesitation about what to say, was so confused that his tongue craved to his teeth. She raised her eyebrows a little. There is nothing which women despise in a man more than modesty, for modesty—

A violent shaking of the bag which hung behind Vikram’s royal back broke off the end of this offensive sentence. And the warrior king did not cease that discipline till the Baital promised him to preserve more decorum in his observations.

Still the prince stood before her with downcast eyes and suffused cheeks: even the spur of contempt failed to arouse his energies. Then the maiden called to her friend, who was picking jasmine flowers so as not to witness the scene, and angrily asked why that strange man was allowed to stand and stare at her? The friend, in hot wrath, threatened to call the slave, and throw Vajramukut into the pond unless he instantly went away with his impudence. But as the prince was rooted to the spot, and really had not heard a word of what had been said to him, the two women were obliged to make the first move.

As they almost reached the tank, the beautiful maiden turned her head to see what the poor modest youth was doing.

Vajramukut was formed in every way to catch a woman’s eye. The Raja’s daughter therefore half forgave him his offense of mod. Again she sweetly smiled, disclosing two rows of little opals. Then descending to the water’s edge, she stooped down and plucked a lotus. This she worshipped; next she placed it in her hair, then she put it in her ear, then she bit it with her teeth, then she

trod upon it with her foot, then she raised it up again, and lastly she stuck it in her bosom. After which she mounted her conveyance and went home to her friends; whilst the prince, having become thoroughly desponding and drowned in grief at separation from her, returned to the minister's son.

"Females!" ejaculated the minister's son, speaking to himself in a careless tone, when, his prayer finished, he left the temple, and sat down upon the tank steps to enjoy the breeze. He presently drew a roll of paper from under his waist-belt, and in a short time was engrossed with his study. The women seeing this conduct, exerted themselves in every possible way of wile to attract his attention and to distract his soul. They succeeded only so far as to make him roll his head with a smile, and to remember that such is always the custom of man's bane; after which he turned over a fresh page of manuscript. And although he presently began to wonder what had become of the prince his master, he did not look up even once from his study.

He was a philosopher, that young man. But after all, Raja Vikram, what is mortal philosophy? Nothing but another name for indifference! Who was ever philosophical about a thing truly loved or really hated?—no one! Philosophy, says Shankharacharya, is either a gift of nature or the reward of study. But I, the Baital, the devil, ask you, what is a born philosopher, save a man of cold desires? And what is a bred philosopher but a man who has survived his desires? A young philosopher? A cold-blooded youth! An elderly philosopher? A leucophlegmatic old man! Much nonsense, of a verity, ye hear in praise of nothing from your Rajaship's Nine Gems of Science, and from sundry other such wise fools.

Then the prince began to relate the state of his case, saying, "O friend, I have seen a damsel, but whether she be a musician from Indra's heaven, a maiden of the sea, a daughter of the serpent kings, or the child of an earthly Raja, I cannot say."

"Describe her," said the statesman in embryo.

"Her face," quoth the prince, "was that of the full moon, her hair like a swarm of bees hanging from the blossoms of the acacia, the corners of her eyes touched her ears, her lips were sweet with lunar ambrosia, her waist was that of a lion, and her walk the walk of a king goose. As a garment, she was white; as a season, the spring; as a flower, the jasmine; as a speaker, the kokila bird; as a perfume, musk; as a beauty, Kamadeva; and as a being, Love. And if she does not come into my possession I will not live; this I have certainly determined upon."

The young minister, who had heard his prince say the same thing more than once before, did not attach great importance to these awful words. He merely remarked that, unless they mounted at once, night would surprise them in the forest. Then the two young men returned to their horses, untethered them, drew on their bridles, saddled them, and catching up their weapons, rode slowly towards the Raja's palace. During the three hours of return hardly a word passed

between the pair. Vajramukut not only avoided speaking; he never once replied till addressed thrice in the loudest voice.

The young minister put no more questions, “for,” quoth he to himself, “when the prince wants my counsel, he will apply for it.” In this point he had borrowed wisdom from his father, who held in peculiar horror the giving of unasked-for advice. So, when he saw that conversation was irksome to his master, he held his peace and meditated upon what he called his “day-thought.” It was his practice to choose every morning some tough food for reflection, and to chew the cud of it in his mind at times when, without such employment, his wits would have gone wool-gathering. You may imagine, Raja Vikram, that with a few years of this head work, the minister’s son became a very crafty young person.

After the second day the Prince Vajramukut, being restless from grief at separation, fretted himself into a fever. Having given up writing, reading, drinking, sleeping, the affairs entrusted to him by his father, and everything else, he sat down, as he said, to die. He used constantly to paint the portrait of the beautiful lotus gatherer, and to lie gazing upon it with tearful eyes; then he would start up and tear it to pieces and beat his forehead, and begin another picture of a yet more beautiful face.

At last, as the *pradhan*’s son had foreseen, he was summoned by the young Raja, whom he found upon his bed, looking yellow and complaining bitterly of headache. Frequent discussions upon the subject of the tender passion had passed between the two youths, and one of them had ever spoken of it so very disrespectfully that the other felt ashamed to introduce it. But when his friend, with a view to provoke communicativeness, advised a course of boiled and bitter herbs and great attention to diet, quoting the hemistich attributed to the learned physician Charndatta.

A fever starve, but feed a cold, the unhappy Vajramukut’s fortitude abandoned him; he burst into tears, and exclaimed, “Whosoever enters upon the path of love cannot survive it; and if (by chance) he should live, what is life to him but a prolongation of his misery?”

“Yea,” replied the minister’s son, “the sage hath said—

The road of love is that which hath no beginning nor end; Take thou heed of thyself, man I ere thou place foot upon it.

And the wise, knowing that there are three things whose effect upon himself no man can foretell—namely, desire of woman, the dice-box, and the drinking of ardent spirits—find total abstinence from them the best of rules. Yet, after all, if there is no cow, we must milk the bull.”

The advice was, of course, excellent, but the hapless lover could not help thinking that on this occasion it came a little too late. However, after a pause he returned to the subject and said, “I have ventured to tread that dangerous way, be its end pain or pleasure, happiness or destruction.” He then hung down his head and sighed from the bottom of his heart.

“She is the person who appeared to us at the tank?” asked the pradhan’s son, moved to compassion by the state of his master.

The prince assented.

“O great king,” resumed the minister’s son, “at the time of going away had she said anything to you? Or had you said anything to her?”

“Nothing!” replied the other laconically, when he found his friend beginning to take an interest in the affair.

“Then,” said the minister’s son, “it will be exceedingly difficult to get possession of her.”

“Then,” repeated the Raja’s son, “I am doomed to death; to an early and melancholy death!”

“Humph!” ejaculated the young statesman rather impatiently, “did she make any sign, or give any hint? Let me know all that happened: half confidences are worse than none.”

Upon which the prince related everything that took place by the side of the tank, bewailing the false shame which had made him dumb, and concluding with her pantomime.

The pradhan’s son took thought for a while. He thereupon seized the opportunity of representing to his master all the evil effects of bashfulness when women are concerned, and advised him, as he would be a happy lover, to brazen his countenance for the next interview.

Which the young Raja faithfully promised to do.

“And, now,” said the other, “be comforted, O my master! I know her name and her dwelling-place. When she suddenly plucked the lotus flower and worshipped it, she thanked the gods for having blessed her with a sight of your beauty.”

Vajramukut smiled, the first time for the last month.

“When she applied it to her ear, it was as if she would have explained to thee, ‘I am a daughter of the Carnatic,’ and when she bit it with her teeth, she meant to say that ‘My father is Raja Dantawat,’ who, by the by, has been, is, and ever will be, a mortal foe to thy father.”

Vajramukut shuddered.

“When she put it under her foot it meant, ‘My name is Padmavati.’”

Vajramukut uttered a cry of joy.

“And when she placed it in her bosom, ‘You are truly dwelling in my heart’ was meant to be understood.”

At these words the young Raja started up full of new life, and after praising with enthusiasm the wondrous sagacity of his dear friend, begged him by some contrivance to obtain the permission of his parents, and to conduct him to her city. The minister’s son easily got leave for Vajramukut to travel, under pretext that his body required change of water, and his mind change of scene. They both dressed and armed themselves for the journey, and having taken some jewels, mounted their horses and followed the road in that direction in which the princess had gone.

Arrived after some days at the capital of the Carnatic, the minister's son having disguised his master and himself in the garb of traveling traders, alighted and pitched his little tent upon a clear bit of ground in one of the suburbs. He then proceeded to inquire for a wise woman, wanting, he said, to have his fortune told. When the prince asked him what this meant, he replied that elderly dames who professionally predict the future are never above [ministering to the present, and therefore that, in such circumstances, they are the properest persons to be consulted.

"Is this a treatise upon the subject of immorality, devil?" demanded the King Vikram ferociously. The Baital declared that it was not, but that he must tell his story.

The person addressed pointed to an old woman who, seated before the door of her hut, was spinning at her wheel. Then the young men went up to her with polite salutations and said, "Mother, we are traveling traders, and our stock is coming after us; we have come on in advance for the purpose of finding a place to live in. If you will give us a house, we will remain there and pay you highly."

The old woman, who was a physiognomist as well as a fortune-teller, looked at the faces of the young men and liked them, because their brows were wide, and their mouths denoted generosity. Having listened to their words, she took pity upon them and said kindly, "This hovel is yours, my masters, remain here as long as you please." Then she led them into an inner room, again welcomed them, lamented the poorness of her abode, and begged them to lie down and rest themselves.

After some interval of time the old woman came to them once more, and sitting down began to gossip. The minister's son upon this asked her, "How is it with thy family, thy relatives, and connections; and what are thy means of subsistence?" She replied, "My son is a favorite servant in the household of our great king Dantawat, and your slave is the wet-nurse of the Princess Padmavati, his eldest child. From the coming on of old age," she added, "I dwell in this house, but the king provides for my eating and drinking. I go once a day to see the girl, who is a miracle of beauty and goodness, wit and accomplishments, and returning thence, I bear my own grief at home."

In a few days the young Vajramukut had, by his liberality, soft speech, and good looks, made such progress in nurse Lakshmi's affections that, by the advice of his companion, he ventured to broach the subject ever nearest his heart. He begged his hostess, when she went on the morrow to visit the charming Padmavati, that she would be kind enough to slip a bit of paper into the princess's hand.

"Son," she replied, delighted with the proposal—and what old woman would not be? "There is no need for putting off so urgent an affair till the morrow. Get your paper ready, and I will immediately give it."

Trembling with pleasure, the prince ran to find his friend, who was seated in the garden reading, as usual, and told him what the old nurse had engaged to

do. He then began to debate about how he should write his letter, to cull sentences and to weigh phrases; whether “light of my eyes” was not too trite, and “blood of my liver” rather too forcible. At this the minister’s son smiled, and bade the prince not trouble his head with composition. He then drew his inkstand from his waist shawl, nibbed a reed pen, and choosing a piece of pink and flowered paper, he wrote upon it a few lines. He then folded it, gummed it, sketched a lotus flower upon the outside, and handing it to the young prince, told him to give it to their hostess, and that all would be well.

The old woman took her staff in her hand and hobbled straight to the palace. Arrived there, she found the Raja’s daughter sitting alone in her apartment. The maiden, seeing her nurse, immediately arose, and making a respectful bow, led her to a seat and began the most affectionate inquiries. After giving her blessing and sitting for some time and chatting about indifferent matters, the nurse said, “O daughter! In infancy I reared and nourished thee, now the Bhagwan (Deity) has rewarded me by giving thee stature, beauty, health, and goodness. My heart only longs to see the happiness of thy womanhood, after which I shall depart in peace. I implore thee read this paper, given to me by the handsomest and the properest young man that my eyes have ever seen.”

The princess, glancing at the lotus on the outside of the note, slowly unfolded it and perused its contents, which were as follows:

She was to me the pearl that clings  
To sands all hid from mortal sight, Yet  
fit for diadems of kings,  
The pure and lovely light.

She was to me the gleam of sun  
That breaks the gloom of wintry day; One  
moment shone my soul upon,  
Then passed—how soon!—away.

She was to me the dreams of bliss  
That float the dying eyes before, For one  
short hour shed happiness,  
And fly to bless no more.

O light, again upon me shine; O pearl, again delight my eyes; O dreams of bliss, again be mine!—No! Earth may not be Paradise.

I must not forget to remark, parenthetically, that the minister’s son, in order to make these lines generally useful, had provided them with a last stanza in triplicate. “For lovers,” he said sagely, “are either in the optative mood, the desperate, or the exultative.” This time he had used the optative. For the desperate he would substitute:

The joys of life lie dead, lie dead,  
The light of day is quenched in gloom  
The spark of hope my heart hath fled—  
What now withholds me from the tomb?

And this was the termination exultative, as he called it:

O joy I the pearl is mine again,  
Once more the day is bright and clear,  
And now ‘tis real, then ‘twas vain,  
My dream of bliss—O heaven is here!

The Princess Padmavati having perused this doggerel with a contemptuous look, tore off the first word of the last line, and said to the nurse, angrily, “Get thee gone, O mother of Yama, O unfortunate creature, and take back this answer”—giving her the scrap of paper—“to the fool who writes such bad verses.

I wonder where he studied the humanities. Be gone, and never do such an action again!”

The old nurse, distressed at being so treated, rose up and returned home. Vajramukut was too agitated to await her arrival, so he went to meet her on the way. Imagine his disappointment when she gave him the fatal word and repeated to him exactly what happened, not forgetting to describe a single look! He felt tempted to plunge his sword into his bosom; but Fortune interfered, and sent him to consult his confidant.

“Be not so hasty and desperate, my prince,” said the pradhan’s son, seeing his wild grief, “you have not understood her meaning. Later in life you will be aware of the fact that, in nine cases out of ten, a woman’s ‘no’ is a distinct ‘yes.’ This morning’s work has been good; the maiden asked where you learnt the humanities, which being interpreted signifies ‘Who are you?’”

On the next day the prince disclosed his rank to old Lakshmi, who naturally declared that she had always known it. The trust they reposed in her made her ready to address Padmavati once more on the forbidden subject. So she again went to the palace, and having lovingly greeted her nursling, said to her, “The Raja’s son, whose heart thou didst fascinate on the brim of the tank, on the fifth day of the moon, in the light half of the month Yeth, has come to my house, and sends this message to thee, “Perform what you promised; we have now come”; and I also tell thee that this prince is worthy of thee: just as thou art beautiful, so is he endowed with all good qualities of mind and body.”

When Padmavati heard this speech she showed great anger, and, rubbing sandal on her beautiful hands, she slapped the old woman’s cheeks, and cried, “Wretch, Daina (witch)! get out of my house; did I not forbid thee to talk such folly in my presence?”

The lover and the nurse were equally distressed at having taken the advice of the young minister, till he explained what the crafty damsel meant. “When she smeared the sandal on her ten fingers,” he explained, “and struck the old woman on the face, she signified that when the remaining ten moonlight nights shall have passed away she will meet you in the dark.” At the same time he warned his master that to all appearances the lady Padmavati was far too clever to make a comfortable wife. The minister’s son especially hated talented intellectual, and strong-minded women; he had been heard to describe the torments of Naglok as the compulsory companionship of a polemical divine and a learned authoress, well stricken in years and of forbidding aspect, as such persons mostly are. Amongst womankind he admired—theoretically, as became a philosopher—the small, plump, laughing, chattering, unintellectual, and material-minded. And therefore—excuse the digression, Raja Vikram—he married an old maid, tall, thin, yellow, strictly proper, cold-mannered, a conversationist, and who prided herself upon spirituality. But more wonderful still, after he did marry her, he actually loved her—what an incomprehensible being is man in these matters!



To return, however. The pradhan's son, who detected certain symptoms of strong-mindedness in the Princess Padmavati, advised his lord to be wise whilst wisdom availed him. This sage counsel was, as might be guessed, most ungraciously rejected by him for whose benefit it was intended. Then the sensible young statesman rated himself soundly for having broken his father's rule touching advice, and atoned for it by blindly forwarding the views of his master.

After the ten nights of moonlight had passed, the old nurse was again sent to the palace with the usual message. This time Padmavati put saffron on three of her fingers, and again left their marks on the nurse's cheek. The minister's son explained that this was to crave delay for three days, and that on the fourth the lover would have access to her.

When the time had passed the old woman again went and inquired after her health and well-being. The princess was as usual very wroth, and having personally taken her nurse to the western gate, she called her "Mother of the elephant's trunk," and drove her out with threats of the bastinado if she ever came back. This was reported to the young statesman, who, after a few minutes' consideration, said, "The explanation of this matter is, that she has invited you tomorrow, at nighttime, to meet her at this very gate.

"When brown shadows fell upon the face of earth, and here and there a star spangled the pale heavens, the minister's son called Vajramukut, who had been engaged in adorning himself at least half that day. He had carefully shaved his cheeks and chin; his mustachio was trimmed and curled; he had arched his eyebrows by plucking out with tweezers the fine hairs around them; he had trained his curly musk-colored love-locks to hang gracefully down his face; he had drawn broad lines of antimony along his eyelids, a most brilliant sectarian mark was affixed to his forehead, the color of his lips had been heightened by chewing betel-nut—

"One would imagine that you are talking of a silly girl, not of a prince, fiend!" interrupted Vikram, who did not wish his son to hear what he called these fopperies and frivolities.

—and whitened his neck by having it shaved (continued the Baital, speaking quickly, as if determined not to be interrupted), and reddened the tips of his ears by squeezing them, and made his teeth shine by rubbing copper powder into the roots, and set off the delicacy of his fingers by staining the tips with henna. He had not been less careful with his dress: he wore a well-arranged turban, which had taken him at least two hours to bind, and a rich suit of brown stuff chosen for the adventure he was about to attempt, and he hung about his person a number of various weapons, so as to appear a hero—which young damsels admire.

Vajramukut asked his friend how he looked, and smiled happily when the other replied "Admirable!" His happiness was so great that he feared it might not last, and he asked the minister's son how best to conduct himself?

"As a conqueror, my prince!" answered that astute young man, "if it so be that you would be one. When you wish to win a woman, always impose upon

her. Tell her that you are her master, and she will forthwith believe herself to be your servant. Inform her that she loves you, and forthwith she will adore you. Show her that you care nothing for her, and she will think of nothing but you. Prove to her by your demeanor that you consider her a slave, and she will become your pariah. But above all things—excuse me if I repeat myself too often—beware of the fatal virtue which men call modesty and women sheepishness. Recollect the trouble it has given us, and the danger which we have incurred: all this might have been managed at a tank within fifteen miles of your royal father's palace. And allow me to say that you may still thank your stars: in love a lost opportunity is seldom if ever recovered. The time to woo a woman is the moment you meet her, before she has had time to think; allow her the use of reflection and she may escape the net. And after avoiding the rock of Modesty, fall not, I conjure you, into the gulf of Security. I fear the lady Padmavati, she is too clever and too prudent. When damsels of her age draw the sword of Love, they throw away the scabbard of Precaution. But you yawn—I weary you—it is time for us to move.”

Two watches of the night had passed, and there was profound stillness on earth. The young men then walked quietly through the shadows, till they reached the western gate of the palace, and found the wicket ajar. The minister's son peeped in and saw the porter dozing, stately as a Brahman deep in the Vedas, and behind him stood a veiled woman seemingly waiting for somebody. He then returned on tiptoe to the place where he had left his master, and with a parting caution against modesty and security, bade him fearlessly glide through the wicket. Then having stayed a short time at the gate listening with anxious ear, he went back to the old woman's house.

Vajramukut penetrating to the staircase, felt his hand grasped by the veiled figure, who motioning him to tread lightly, led him quickly forwards. They passed under several arches, through dim passages and dark doorways, till at last running up a flight of stone steps they reached the apartments of the princess.

Vajramukut was nearly fainting as the flood of splendor broke upon him. Recovering himself he gazed around the rooms, and presently a tumult of delight invaded his soul, and his body bristled with joy. The scene was that of fairyland. Golden censers exhaled the most costly perfumes, and gemmed vases bore the most beautiful flowers; silver lamps containing fragrant oil illuminated doors whose panels were wonderfully decorated, and walls adorned with pictures in which such figures were formed that on seeing them the beholder was enchanted. On one side of the room stood a bed of flowers and a couch covered with brocade of gold, and strewn with freshly-culled jasmine flowers. On the other side, arranged in proper order, were attar holders, betel-boxes, rose-water bottles, trays, and silver cases with four partitions for essences compounded of rose leaves, sugar, and spices, prepared sandal wood, saffron, and pods of musk. Scattered about a stuccoed floor white as crystal, were colored caddies of exquisite confections, and in others sweetmeats of various kinds. Female attendants

clothed in dresses of various colors were standing each according to her rank, with hands respectfully joined. Some were reading plays and beautiful poems, others danced and others performed with glittering fingers and flashing arms on various instruments—the ivory lute, the ebony pipe and the silver kettledrum. In short, all the means and appliances of pleasure and enjoyment were there; and any description of the appearance of the apartments, which were the wonder of the age, is impossible.

Then another veiled figure, the beautiful Princess Padmavati, came up and disclosed herself, and dazzled the eyes of her delighted Vajramukut. She led him into an alcove, made him sit down, rubbed sandal powder upon his body, hung a garland of jasmine flowers round his neck, sprinkled rose-water over his dress, and began to wave over his head a fan of peacock feathers with a golden handle.

Said the prince, who despite all efforts could not entirely shake off his unhappy habit of being modest, “Those very delicate hands of yours are not fit to ply the pankha. Why do you take so much trouble? I am cool and refreshed by the sight of you. Do give the fan to me and sit down.”

“Nay, great king!” replied Padmavati, with the most fascinating of smiles, “you have taken so much trouble for my sake in coming here, it is right that I perform service for you.”

Upon which her favorite slave, taking the pankha from the hand of the princess, exclaimed, “This is my duty. I will perform the service; do you two enjoy yourselves!”

The lovers then began to chew betel, which, by the by, they disposed of in little agate boxes which they drew from their pockets, and they were soon engaged in the tenderest conversation.

Here the Baital paused for a while, probably to take breath. Then he resumed his tale as follows:

In the meantime, it became dawn; the princess concealed him; and when night returned they again engaged in the same innocent pleasures. Thus, day after day sped rapidly by. Imagine, if you can, the youth’s felicity; he was of an ardent temperament, deeply enamored, barely a score of years old, and he had been strictly brought up by serious parents. He therefore resigned himself entirely to the siren for whom he willingly forgot the world, and he wondered at his good fortune, which had thrown in his way a conquest richer than all the mines of Meru.[65] He could not sufficiently admire his Padmavati’s grace, beauty, bright wit, and numberless accomplishments. Every morning, for vanity’s sake, he learned from her a little useless knowledge in verse as well as prose, for instance, the saying of the poet—

Enjoy the present hour, ‘tis shine; be this, O man, thy law; Who e’er re sew the yester? Who the morrow e’er foresaw?

And this highly philosophical axiom:

“Eat, drink, and love—the rest’s not worth a fillip.”

“By means of which he hoped, Raja Vikram!” said the demon, not heeding his royal carrier’s “ughs” and “poohs,” “to become in course of time almost as clever as his mistress.”

Padmavati, being, as you have seen, a maiden of superior mind, was naturally more smitten by her lover’s dullness than by any other of his qualities; she adored it, it was such a contrast to herself. At first she did what many clever women do—she invested him with the brightness of her own imagination. Still water, she pondered, runs deep; certainly under this disguise must lurk a brilliant fancy, a penetrating but a mature and ready judgment—are they not written by nature’s hand on that broad high brow? With such lovely mustachios can he be aught but generous, noble-minded, magnanimous? Can such eyes belong to any but a hero? And she fed the delusion. She would smile upon him with intense fondness, when, after wasting hours over a few lines of poetry, he would misplace all the adjectives and barbarously entreat the meter. She laughed with gratification, when, excited by the bright sayings that fell from her lips, the youth put forth some platitude, dim as the lamp in the expiring fire-fly. When he slipped in grammar she saw malice under it, when he retailed a borrowed jest she called it a good one, and when he used—as princes sometimes will—bad language, she discovered in it a charming simplicity.

At first she suspected that the stratagems which had won her heart were the results of a deep-laid plot proceeding from her lover. But clever women are apt to be rarely sharp-sighted in every matter which concerns themselves. She frequently determined that a third was in the secret. She therefore made no allusion to it. Before long the enamored Vajramukut had told her everything, beginning with the diatribe against love pronounced by the minister’s son, and ending with the solemn warning that she, the pretty princess, would some day or other play her husband a foul trick.

“If I do not revenge myself upon him,” thought the beautiful Padmavati, smiling like an angel as she listened to the youth’s confidence, “may I become a gardener’s ass in the next birth!”

Having thus registered a vow, she broke silence, and praised to the skies the young pradhan’s wisdom and sagacity; professed herself ready from gratitude to become his slave, and only hoped that one day or other she might meet that true friend by whose skill her soul had been gratified in its dearest desire. “Only,” she concluded, “I am convinced that now my Vajramukut knows every corner of his little Padmavati’s heart, he will never expect her to do anything but love, admire, adore and kiss him!” Then suiting the action to the word, she convinced him that the young minister had for once been too crabbed and cynic in his philosophy.

But after the lapse of a month Vajramukut, who had eaten and drunk and slept a great deal too much, and who had not once hunted, became bilious in body and in mind melancholic. His face turned yellow, and so did the whites of his eyes; he yawned, as liver patients generally do, complained occasionally of

sick headaches, and lost his appetite; he became restless and anxious, and once when alone at night he thus thought aloud, "I have given up country, throne, home, and everything else, but the friend by means of whom this happiness was obtained I have not seen for the long length of thirty days. What will he say to himself, and how can I know what has happened to him?"

In this state of things he was sitting, and in the meantime the beautiful princess arrived. She saw through the matter, and lost not a moment in entering upon it. She began by expressing her astonishment at her lover's fickleness and fondness for change, and when he was ready to wax wrath, and quoted the words of the sage, "A barren wife may be superseded by another in the eighth year; she whose children all die, in the tenth; she who brings forth only daughters, in the eleventh; she who scolds, without delay," thinking that she alluded to his love, she smoothed his temper by explaining that she referred to his forgetting his friend. "How is it possible, O my soul," she asked with the softest of voices, that thou canst happiness here whilst thy heart is wandering there? Why didst thou conceal this from me, O astute one? Was it for fear of distressing me? Think better of thy wife than to suppose that she would ever separate thee from one to whom we both owe so much!

"After this Padmavati advised, nay ordered, her lover to go forth that night, and not to return till his mind was quite at ease, and she begged him to take a few sweetmeats and other trifles as a little token of her admiration and regard for the clever young man of whom she had heard so much.

Vajramukut embraced her with a transport of gratitude, which so inflamed her anger, that fearing lest the cloak of concealment might fall from her countenance, she went away hurriedly to find the greatest delicacies which her comfit boxes contained. Presently she returned, carrying a bag of sweetmeats of every kind for her lover, and as he rose up to depart, she put into his hand a little parcel of sugar-plums especially intended for the friend; they were made up with her own delicate fingers, and they would please, she flattered herself, even his discriminating palate.

The young prince, after enduring a number of farewell embraces and hopings for a speedy return, and last words ever beginning again, passed safely through the palace gate, and with a relieved aspect walked briskly to the house of the old nurse. Although it was midnight his friend was still sitting on his mat.

The two young men fell upon one another's bosoms and embraced affectionately. They then began to talk of matters nearest their hearts. The Raja's son wondered at seeing the jaded and haggard looks of his companion, who did not disguise that they were caused by his anxiety as to what might have happened to his friend at the hand of so talented and so superior a princess. Upon which Vajramukut, who now thought Padmavati an angel, and his late abode a heaven, remarked with formality—and two blunders to one quotation—that abilities properly directed win for a man the happiness of both worlds.

The pradhan's son rolled his head.

"Again on your hobby-horse, nagging at talent whenever you find it in others!" cried the young prince with a pun, which would have delighted Padmavati. "Surely you are jealous of her!" he resumed, anything but pleased with the dead silence that had received his joke, "jealous of her cleverness, and of her love for me. She is the very best creature in the world. Even you, woman-hater as you are, would own it if you only knew all the kind messages she sent, and the little pleasant surprise that she has prepared for you. There! Take and eat; they are made by her own dear hands!" cried the young Raja, producing the sweetmeats. "As she herself taught me to say:

'Thank God I am a man, Not a philosopher!'"

"The kind messages she sent me! The pleasant surprise she has prepared for me!" repeated the minister's son in a hard, dry tone. "My lord will be pleased to tell me how she heard of my name?"

"I was sitting one night," replied the prince, "in anxious thought about you, when at that moment the princess coming in and seeing my condition, asked, 'Why are you thus sad? Explain the cause to me.' I then gave her an account of your cleverness, and when she heard it she gave me permission to go and see you, and sent these sweetmeats for you: eat them and I shall be pleased."

"Great king!" rejoined the young statesman, "one thing vouchsafe to hear from me. You have not done well in that you have told my name. You should never let a woman think that your left hand knows the secret which she confided to your right, much less that you have shared it to a third person. Secondly, you did evil in allowing her to see the affection with which you honor your unworthy servant—a woman ever hates her lover's or husband's friend."

"What could I do?" rejoined the young Raja, in a querulous tone of voice. "When I love a woman I like to tell her everything—to have no secrets from her—to consider her another self"

"Which habit," interrupted the pradhan's son, "you will lose when you are a little older, when you recognize the fact that love is nothing but a bout, a game of skill between two individuals of opposite sexes: the one seeking to gain as much, and the other striving to lose as little as possible; and that the sharper of the twain thus met on the chessboard must, in the long run, win. And reticence is but a habit. Practice it for a year, and you will find it harder to betray than to conceal your thoughts. It hath its joy also. Is there no pleasure, think you, when suppressing an outbreak of tender but fatal confidence in saying to yourself, 'O, if she only knew this?' 'O, if she did but suspect that?' Returning, however, to the sugar-plums, my life to a pariah's that they are poisoned!"

"Impossible!" exclaimed the prince, horror-struck at the thought, "what you say, surely no one ever could do. If a mortal fears not his fellow-mortal, at least he dreads the Deity."

"I never yet knew," rejoined the other, "what a woman in love does fear. However, prince, the trial is easy. Come here, Muti!" cried he to the old

woman's dog, "and off with thee to that three-headed kinsman of shine, that attends upon his amiable-looking master."

Having said this, he threw one of the sweetmeats to the dog; the animal ate it, and presently writhing and falling down, died.

"The wretch! O the wretch!" cried Vajramukut, transported with wonder and anger. "And I loved her! But now it is all over. I dare not associate with such a calamity!"

"What has happened, my lord, has happened!" quoth the minister's son calmly. "I was prepared for something of this kind from so talented a princess. None commit such mistakes, such blunders, such follies as your clever women; they cannot even turn out a crime decently executed. O give me dullness with one idea, one aim, one desire. O thrice blessed dullness that combines with happiness, power."

This time Vajramukut did not defend talent.

"And your slave did his best to warn you against perfidy. But now my heart is at rest. I have tried her strength. She has attempted and failed; the defeat will prevent her attempting again—just yet. But let me ask you to put to yourself one question. Can you be happy without her?"

"Brother!" replied the prince, after a pause, "I cannot"; and he blushed as he made the avowal.

"Well," replied the other, "better confess than conceal that fact; we must now meet her on the battle-field, and beat her at her own weapons—cunning. I do not willingly begin treachery with women, because, in the first place, I don't like it; and secondly, I know that they will certainly commence practicing it upon me, after which I hold myself justified in deceiving them. And probably this will be a good wife; remember that she intended to poison me, not you. During the last month my fear has been lest my prince had run into the tiger's brake. Tell me, my lord, when does the princess expect you to return to her?"

"She bade me," said the young Raja, "not to return till my mind was quite at ease upon the subject of my talented friend."

"This means that she expects you back tomorrow night, as you cannot enter the palace before. And now I will retire to my cot, as it is there that I am wont to ponder over my plans. Before dawn my thought shall mature one which must place the beautiful Padmavati in your power."

"A word before parting," exclaimed the prince "you know my father has already chosen a spouse for me; what will he say if I bring home a second?"

"In my humble opinion," said the minister's son rising to retire, "woman is a monogamous, man a polygamous, creature, a fact scarcely established in physiological theory, but very observable in everyday practice for what said the poet?—Divorce, friend! Re-wed thee! The spring draweth near, and a wife's but an almanac—good for the year.

If your royal father say anything to you, refer him to what he himself does."

Reassured by these words, Vajramukut bade his friend a cordial good-night and sought his cot, where he slept soundly, despite the emotions of the last few

hours. The next day passed somewhat slowly. In the evening, when accompanying his master to the palace, the minister's son gave him the following directions.

"Our object, dear my lord, is how to obtain possession of the princess. Take, then, this trident, and hide it carefully when you see her show the greatest love and affection. Conceal what has happened, and when she, wondering at your calmness, asks about me, tell her that last night I was weary and out of health, that illness prevented my eating her sweetmeats, but that I shall eat them for supper tonight. When she goes to sleep, then, taking off her jewels and striking her left leg with the trident, instantly come away to me. But should she lie awake, rub upon your thumb a little of this—do not fear, it is only a powder of grubs fed on verdigris—and apply it to her nostrils. It would make an elephant senseless, so be careful how you approach it to your own face."

Vajramukut embraced his friend, and passed safely through the palace gate. He found Padmavati awaiting him; she fell upon his bosom and looked into his eyes, and deceived herself, as clever women will do. Overpowered by her joy and satisfaction, she now felt certain that her lover was hers eternally, and that her treachery had not been discovered; so the beautiful princess fell into a deep sleep.

Then Vajramukut lost no time in doing as the minister's son had advised, and slipped out of the room, carrying off Padmavati's jewels and ornaments. His counselor having inspected them, took up a sack and made signs to his master to follow him. Leaving the horses and baggage at the nurse's house, they walked to a burning-place outside the city. The minister's son there buried his dress, together with that of the prince, and drew from the sack the costume of a religious ascetic: he assumed this himself, and gave to his companion that of a disciple. Then quoth the guru (spiritual preceptor) to his chela (pupil), "Go, youth, to the bazaar, and sell these jewels, remembering to let half the jewelers in the place see the things, and if any one lay hold of thee, bring him to me."

Upon which, as day had dawned, Vajramukut carried the princess's ornaments to the market, and entering the nearest goldsmith's shop, offered to sell them, and asked what they were worth. As your majesty well knows, gardeners, tailors, and goldsmiths are proverbially dishonest, and this man was no exception to the rule. He looked at the pupil's face and wondered, because he had brought articles whose value he did not appear to know. A thought struck him that he might make a bargain which would fill his coffers, so he offered about a thousandth part of the price. This the pupil rejected, because he wished the affair to go further. Then the goldsmith, seeing him about to depart, sprang up and stood in the door way, threatening to call the officers of justice if the young man refused to give up the valuables which he said had lately been stolen from his shop. As the pupil only laughed at this, the goldsmith thought seriously of executing his threat, hesitating only because he knew that the officers of justice would gain more than he could by that proceeding. As he was still in doubt a



shadow darkened his shop, and in entered the chief jeweler of the city. The moment the ornaments were shown to him he recognized them, and said, "These jewels belong to Raja Dantawat's daughter; I know them well, as I set them only a few months ago!" Then he turned to the disciple, who still held the valuables in his hand, and cried, "Tell me truly whence you received them?"

While they were thus talking, a crowd of ten or twenty persons had collected, and at length the report reached the superintendent of the archers. He sent a soldier to bring before him the pupil, the goldsmith, and the chief jeweler, together with the ornaments. And when all were in the hall of justice, he looked at the jewels and said to the young man, "Tell me truly, whence have you obtained these?"

"My spiritual preceptor," said Vajramukut, pretending great fear, "who is now worshipping in the cemetery outside the town, gave me these white stones, with an order to sell them. How know I whence he obtained them? Dismiss me, my lord, for I am an innocent man."

"Let the ascetic be sent for," commanded the kotwal. Then, having taken both of them, along with the jewels, into the presence of King Dantawat, he related the whole circumstances.

"Master," said the king on hearing the statement, "whence have you obtained these jewels?"

The spiritual preceptor, before deigning an answer, pulled from under his arm the hide of a black antelope, which he spread out and smoothed deliberately before using it as an asan. He then began to finger a rosary of beads each as large as an egg, and after spending nearly an hour in mutterings and in rollings of the head, he looked fixedly at the Raja, and repined:

"By Shiva! Great king, they are mine own. On the fourteenth of the dark half of the moon at night, I had gone into a place where dead bodies are burned, for the purpose of accomplishing a witch's incantation. After long and toilsome labor she appeared, but her demeanor was so unruly that I was forced to chastise her. I struck her with this, my trident, on the left leg, if memory serves me. As she continued to be refractory, in order to punish her I took off all her jewels and clothes, and told her to go where she pleased. Even this had little effect upon her—never have I looked upon so perverse a witch. In this way the jewels came into my possession."

Raja Dantawat was stunned by these words. He begged the ascetic not to leave the palace for a while, and forthwith walked into the private apartments of the women. Happening first to meet the queen dowager, he said to her, "Go, without losing a minute, O my mother, and look at Padmavati's left leg, and see if there is a mark or not, and what sort of a mark!" Presently she returned, and coming to the king said, "Son, I find thy daughter lying upon her bed, and complaining that she has met with an accident; and indeed Padmavati must be in great pain. I found that some sharp instrument with three points had wounded her. The girl says that a nail hurt her, but I never yet heard of a nail making

three holes. However, we must all hasten, or there will be erysipelas, tumefaction, gangrene, mortification, amputation, and perhaps death in the house," concluded the old queen, hurrying away in the pleasing anticipation of these ghastly consequences.

For a moment King Dantawat's heart was ready to break. But he was accustomed to master his feelings; he speedily applied the reins of reflection to the wild steed of passion. He thought to himself, "The affairs of one's household, the intentions of one's heart, and whatever one's losses may be, should not be disclosed to any one. Since Padmavati is a witch, she is no longer my daughter. I will verily go forth and consult the spiritual preceptor."

With these words the king went outside, where the guru was still sitting upon his black hide, making marks with his trident on the floor. Having requested that the pupil might be sent away, and having cleared the room, he said to the jogi, "O holy man! What punishment for the heinous crime of witchcraft is awarded to a woman in the Dharma-Shastra?"

"Greet king!" replied the devotee, "in the Dharma Shastra it is thus written: 'If a Brahman, a cow, a woman, a child, or any other person whatsoever who may be dependent on us, should be guilty of a perfidious act, their punishment is that they be banished the country.' However much they may deserve death, we must not spill their blood, as Lakshmi flies in horror from the deed."

Hearing these words the Raja dismissed the guru with many thanks and large presents. He waited till nightfall and then ordered a band of trusty men to seize Padmavati without alarming the household, and to carry her into a distant jungle full of fiends, tigers, and bears, and there to abandon her.

In the meantime, the ascetic and his pupil hurrying to the cemetery resumed their proper dresses; they then went to the old nurse's house, rewarded her hospitality till she wept bitterly, girt on their weapons, and mounting their horses, followed the party which issued from the gate of King Dantawat's palace. And it may easily be believed that they found little difficulty in persuading the poor girl to exchange her chance in the wild jungle for the prospect of becoming Vajramukut's wife—lawfully wedded at Benares. She did not even ask if she was to have a rival in the house—a question which women, you know, never neglect to put under usual circumstances. After some days the two pilgrims of one love arrived at the house of their fathers, and to all, both great and small, excess in joy came.

"Now, Raja Vikram!" said the Baital, "you have not spoken much; doubtless you are engrossed by the interest of a story wherein a man beats a woman at her own weapon—deceit. But I warn you that you will assuredly fall into Narak (the infernal regions) if you do not make up your mind upon and explain this matter. Who was the most to blame amongst these four? The lover the lover's friend, the girl, or the father?"

"For my part I think Padmavati was the worst, she being at the bottom of all their troubles," cried Dharma Dhvaj. The king said something about young

people and the two senses of seeing and hearing, but his son's sentiment was so sympathetic that he at once pardoned the interruption. At length, determined to do justice despite himself, Vikram said, "Raja Dantawat is the person most at fault."

"In what way was he at fault?" asked the Baital curiously.

King Vikram gave him this reply, "The Prince Vajramukut being tempted of the love-god was insane, and therefore not responsible for his actions. The minister's son performed his master's business obediently, without considering causes or asking questions—a very excellent quality in a dependent who is merely required to do as he is bid. With respect to the young woman, I have only to say that she was a young woman, and thereby of necessity a possible murderess. But the Raja, a prince, a man of a certain age and experience, a father of eight! He ought never to have been deceived by so shallow a trick, nor should he, without reflection, have banished his daughter from the country."

"Gramercy to you!" cried the Vampire, bursting into a discordant shout of laughter, "I now return to my tree. By my tail! I never yet heard a Raja so readily condemn a Raja." With these words he slipped out of the cloth, leaving it to hang empty over the great king's shoulder.

Vikram stood for a moment, fixed to the spot with blank dismay. Presently, recovering himself, he retraced his steps, followed by his son, ascended the sires tree, tore down the Baital, packed him up as before, and again set out upon his way.

Soon afterwards a voice sounded behind the warrior king's back, and began to tell another true story.

## **MANY WISE FOOLS**

**Tradition Bearer:** Bhavabhuti

**Source:** Burton, Richard. "The Vampire's Seventh Story in Showing the Folly of Many Wise Fools." *Vikram and the Vampire*, ed. Elizabeth Burton. London: Tylston and Edwards, 1893, 159–180.

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In the following tale, the tone and style is as revealing as the content. Inflated terms and contorted sentences delivered in the vampire's sardonic tones expose the folly of the "wise fools." In the course of answering the vampire's response, undoubtedly Vikram is led to consider his own folly.

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The Baital resumed.

Of all the learned Brahmans in the learnedest university of Gaur (Bengal) none was so celebrated as Vishnu Swami. He could write verse as well as prose in dead languages, not very correctly, but still, better than all his fellows—which constituted him a distinguished writer. He had history, theosophy, and the four Vedas of Scriptures at his fingers' ends, he was skilled in the argute science of Nyasa or Disputation, his mind was a mine of Pauranic or cosmogonico-traditional lore, handed down from the ancient fathers to the modern fathers: and he had written bulky commentaries, exhausting all that tongue of man has to say, upon the obscure text of some old philosopher whose works upon ethics, poetry, and rhetoric were supposed by the sages of Gaur to contain the germs of everything knowable. His fame went over all the country; yea, from country to country. He was a sea of excellent qualities, the father and mother of Brahmans, cows, and women, and the horror of loose persons, cut-throats, courtiers, and courtesans. As a benefactor he was equal to Karna, most liberal of heroes. In regard to truth he was equal to the veracious king Yudhishtira.

True, he was sometimes at a loss to spell a common word in his mother tongue, and whilst he knew to a fingerbreadth how many palms and paces the sun, the moon, and all the stars are distant from the earth, he would have been puzzled to tell you where the region called Yavana lies. Whilst he could enumerate, in strict chronological succession, every important event that happened five or six million years before he was born, he was profoundly ignorant of those that occurred in his own day. And once he asked a friend seriously, if a cat let loose in the jungle would not in time become a tiger.

Yet did all the members of alma mater Kasi, Pandits as well as students, look with awe upon Vishnu Swami's livid cheeks, and lack-luster eyes, grimed hands and soiled cottons.

Now it so happened that this wise and pious Brahmanic peer had four sons, whom he brought up in the strictest and most serious way. They were taught to repeat their prayers long before they understood a word of them, and when they reached the age of four they had read a variety of hymns and spiritual songs. Then they were set to learn by heart precepts that inculcate sacred duties, and arguments relating to theology, abstract and concrete.

Their father, who was also their tutor, sedulously cultivated, as all the best works upon education advise, their implicit obedience, humble respect, warm attachment, and the virtues and sentiments generally. He praised them secretly and reprehended them openly, to exercise their humility. He derided their looks, and dressed them coarsely, to preserve them from vanity and conceit. Whenever they anticipated a "treat," he punctually disappointed them, to teach them self-denial. Often when he had promised them a present, he would revoke, not break his word, in order that discipline might have a name and habitat in his household. And knowing by experience how much stronger than love is fear, he

frequently threatened, browbeat, and overawed them with the rod and the tongue, with the terrors of this world, and with the horrors of the next, that they might be kept in the right way by dread of falling into the bottomless pits that bound it on both sides.

At the age of six they were transferred to the *Chatushpati* or school. Every morning the teacher and his pupils assembled in the hut where the different classes were called up by turns. They labored till noon, and were allowed only two hours, a moiety of the usual time, for bathing, eating, sleep, and worship, which took up half the period. At 3 P.M. they resumed their labors, repeating to the tutor what they had learned by heart, and listening to the meaning of it: this lasted till twilight. They then worshipped, ate and drank for an hour: after which came a return of study, repeating the day's lessons, till 10 P.M.

In their rare days of ease—for the learned priest, mindful of the words of the wise, did not wish to dull them by everlasting work—they were enjoined to disport themselves with the gravity and the decorum that befit young *Samditats*, not to engage in night frolics, not to use free jests or light expressions, not to draw pictures on the walls, not to eat honey, flesh, and sweet substances turned acid, not to talk to little girls at the well-side, on no account to wear sandals, carry an umbrella, or handle a die even for love, and by no means to steal their neighbors' mangoes.

As they advanced in years their attention during work time was unremittingly directed to the Vedas. Worldly studies were almost excluded, or to speak more correctly, whenever worldly studies were brought upon the carpet, they were so evil entreated, that they well nigh lost all form and feature. History became "The Annals of India on Brahminical Principles," opposed to the Buddhistical; geography "The Lands of the Vedas," none other being deemed worthy of notice; and law, "The Institutes of Manu," then almost obsolete, despite their exceeding sanctity.

But *Jatu-harini* [a trickster goddess] had evidently changed these children before they were born; and *Shani* [the planet Saturn] must have been in the ninth mansion when they came to light.

Each youth as he attained the mature age of twelve was formally entered at the University of Kasi, where, without loss of time, the first became a gambler, the second a confirmed libertine, the third a thief, and the fourth a high Buddhist, or in other words an utter atheist.

Here King Vikram frowned at his son, a hint that he had better not behave himself as the children of highly moral and religious parents usually do. The young prince understood him, and briefly remarking that such things were common in distinguished Brahman families, asked the Baital what he meant by the word "Atheist."

Of a truth (answered the Vampire) it is most difficult to explain. The sages assign to it three or four several meanings: first, one who denies that the gods

exist secondly, one who owns that the gods exist but denies that they busy themselves with human affairs; and thirdly, one who believes in the gods and in their providence, but also believes that they are easily to be set aside. Similarly some atheists derive all things from dead and unintelligent matter; others from matter living and energetic but without sense or will: others from matter with forms and qualities generable and conceptible; and others from a plastic and methodical nature. Thus the Vishnu Swamis of the world have invested the subject with some confusion. The simple, that is to say, the mass of mortality, have confounded that confusion by reproachfully applying the word atheist to those whose opinions differ materially from their own.

But I being at present, perhaps happily for myself, a Vampire, and having, just now, none of these human or inhuman ideas, meant simply to say that the pious priest's fourth son being great at second and small in the matter of first causes, adopted to their fullest extent the doctrines of the philosophical Bud-dhas. Nothing according to him exists but the five elements, earth, water, fire, air (or wind), and vacuum, and from the last proceeded the penultimate, and so forth. With the sage Patanjali, he held the universe to have the power of perpetual progression. He called that Matra (matter), which is an eternal and infinite principle, beginningless and endless. Organization, intelligence, and design, he opined, are inherent in matter as growth is in a tree. He did not believe in soul or spirit, because it could not be detected in the body, and because it was a departure from physiological analogy. The idea "I am," according to him, was not the identification of spirit with matter, but a product of the mutation of matter in this cloud-like, error-formed world. He believed in Substance (Sat) and scoffed at Unsubstance (Asat). He asserted the subtlety and globularity of atoms which are uncreated. He made mind and intellect a mere secretion of the brain, or rather words expressing not a thing, but a state of things. Reason was to him developed instinct, and life an element of the atmosphere affecting certain organisms. He held good and evil to be merely geographical and chronological expressions, and he opined that what is called Evil is mostly an active and transitive form of Good. Law was his great Creator of all things, but he refused a creator of law, because such a creator would require another creator, and so on in a quasi-interminable series up to absurdity. This reduced his law to a manner of haphazard. To those who, arguing against it, asked him their favorite question, How often might a man after he had jumbled a set of letters in a bag fling them out upon the ground before they would fall into an exact poem? he replied that the calculation was beyond his arithmetic, but that the man had only to jumble and fling long enough inevitably to arrive at that end. He rejected the necessity as well as the existence of revelation, and he did not credit the miracles of Krishna, because, according to him, nature never suspends her laws, and, moreover, he had never seen aught supernatural. He ridiculed the idea of Mahapralaya, or the great destruction, for as the world had no beginning, so it will have no end. He objected to absorption, facetiously observing with the sage

Jamadagni, that it was pleasant to eat sweetmeats, but that for his part he did not wish to become the sweetmeat itself. He would not believe that Vishnu had formed the universe out of the wax in his ears. He positively asserted that trees are not bodies in which the consequences of merit and demerit are received. Nor would he conclude that to men were attached rewards and punishments from all eternity. He made light of the Sanskara, or sacrament. He admitted Satwa, Raja, and Tama, but only as properties of matter. He acknowledged gross matter (Sthulasharir), and atomic matter (Shukshma-sharir), but not Linga-sharir, or the archetype of bodies. To doubt all things was the foundation of his theory, and to scoff at all who would not doubt was the cornerstone of his practice. In debate he preferred logical and mathematical grounds, requiring a categorical “because” in answer to his “why?” He was full of morality and natural religion, which some say is no religion at all. He gained the name of atheist by declaring with Gotama that there are innumerable worlds, that the earth has nothing beneath it but the circumambient air, and that the core of the globe is incandescent. And he was called a practical atheist—a worse form apparently—for supporting the following dogma, “that though creation may attest that a creator has been, it supplies no evidence to prove that a creator still exists.” On which occasion, Shiromani, a nonplussed theologian, asked him, “By whom and for what purpose wast thou sent on earth?” The youth scoffed at the word “sent,” and replied, “Not being thy Supreme Intelligence, or Infinite Nihilism, I am unable to explain the phenomenon.” Upon which he quoted—

How sunk in darkness Gaur must be Whose guide is blind Shiromani!

At length it so happened that the four young men, having frequently been surprised in flagrant delict, were summoned to the dread presence of the university Gurus, who addressed them as follows:

“There are four different characters in the world: he who perfectly obeys the commands; he who practices the commands, but follows evil; he who does neither good nor evil; and he who does nothing but evil. The third character, it is observed, is also an offender, for he neglects that which he ought to observe. But ye all belong to the fourth category.” Then turning to the elder they said:

“In works written upon the subject of government it is advised, ‘Cut off the gambler’s nose and ears, hold up his name to public contempt, and drive him out of the country, that he may thus become an example to others. For they who play must more often lose than win; and losing, they must either pay or not pay. In the latter case they forfeit caste, in the former they utterly reduce themselves. And though a gambler’s wife and children are in the house, do not consider them to be so, since it is not known when they will be lost. Thus he is left in a state of perfect not-twoness (solitude), and he will be reborn in hell.’ O young man! thou hast set a bad example to others, therefore shalt thou immediately exchange this university for a country life.”

Then they spoke to the second offender thus:

“The wise shun woman, who can fascinate a man in the twinkling of an eye; but the foolish, conceiving an affection for her, forfeit in the pursuit of pleasure their truthfulness, reputation, and good disposition, their way of life and mode of thought, their vows and their religion. And to such the advice of their spiritual teachers comes amiss, whilst they make others as bad as themselves. For it is said, ‘He who has lost all sense of shame, fears not to disgrace another; ‘and there is the proverb, ‘A wild cat that devours its own young is not likely to let a rat escape; ‘ therefore must thou too, O young man! Quit this seat of learning with all possible expedition.”

The young man proceeded to justify himself by quotations from the Lila-shastra, his text-book, by citing such lines as—

“Fortune favors folly and force, and by advising the elderly professors to improve their skill in the peace and war of love.”

But they drove him out with execrations.

As sagely and as solemnly did the Pandits and the Gurus reprove the thief and the atheist, but they did not dispense the words of wisdom in equal proportions. They warned the former that petty larceny is punishable with fine, theft on a larger scale with mutilation of the hand, and robbery, when detected in the act, with loss of life; that for cutting purses, or for snatching them out of a man’s waistcloth ‘the first penalty is chopping off the fingers, the second is the loss of the hand, and the third is death. Then they call him a dishonor to the college, and they said, “Thou art as a woman, the greatest of plunderers; other robbers purloin property which is worthless, thou stealest the best; they plunder in the night, thou in the day,” and so forth. They told him that he was a fellow who had read his Chauriya Vidya to more purpose than his ritual. And they drove him from the door as he in his shamelessness began to quote texts about the four approved ways of housebreaking, namely, picking out burnt bricks, cutting through unbaked bricks, throwing water on a mud wall, and boring one of wood with a center-bit.

But they spent six mortal hours in convicting the atheist, whose abominations they refuted by every possible argumentation: by inference, by comparison, and by sounds, by Sruti and Smriti, that is, revelational and traditional, rational and evidential, physical and metaphysical, analytical and synthetical, philosophical and philological, historical, and so forth. But they found all their endeavors vain. “For,” it is said, “a man who has lost all shame, who can talk without sense, and who tries to cheat his opponent, will never get tired, and will never be put down.” He declared that a non-ad was far more probable than a monad (the active principle), or the duad (the passive principle or matter.) He compared their faith with a bubble in the water, of which we can never predicate that it does exist or it does not. It is, he said, unreal, as when the thirsty mistakes the meadow mist for a pool of water. He proved the eternity of sound. He impudently recounted and justified all the villanies of the Vamachari or left-handed sects. He told them that they had taken up an ass’s load of religion, and had better apply to honest



industry. He fell foul of the gods; accused Yama of kicking his own mother, Indra of tempting the wife of his spiritual guide, and Shiva of associating with low women. Thus, he said, no one can respect them. Do not we say when it thunders awfully, “the rascally gods are dying!” And when it is too wet, “these villain gods are sending too much rain”? Briefly, the young Brahman replied to and harangued them all so impertinently, if not pertinently, that they, waxing angry, fell upon him with their staves, and drove him out of assembly.

Then the four thriftless youths returned home to their father, who in his just indignation had urged their disgrace upon the Pandits and Gurus, otherwise these dignitaries would never have resorted to such extreme measures with so distinguished a house. He took the opportunity of turning them out upon the world, until such time as they might be able to show substantial signs of reform. “For,” he said, “those who have read science in their boyhood, and who in youth, agitated by evil passions, have remained in the insolence of ignorance, feel regret in their old age, and are consumed by the fire of avarice.” In order to supply them with a motive for the task proposed, he stopped their monthly allowance. But he added, if they would repair to the neighboring university of Jayasthal, and there show themselves something better than a disgrace to their family, he would direct their maternal uncle to supply them with all the necessaries of food and raiment.

In vain the youths attempted, with sighs and tears and threats of suicide, to soften the paternal heart. He was inexorable, for two reasons. In the first place, after wondering away the wonder with which he regarded his own failure, he felt that a stigma now attached to the name of the pious and learned Vishnu Swami, whose lectures upon “Management during Teens,” and whose “Brahman Young Man’s Own Book,” had become standard works. Secondly, from a sense of duty, he determined to omit nothing that might tend to reclaim the reprobates. As regards the monthly allowance being stopped, the reverend man had become every year a little fonder of his purse; he had hoped that his sons would have qualified themselves to take pupils, and thus achieve for themselves, as he phrased it, “A genteel independence”; whilst they openly derided the career, calling it “an admirable provision for the more indigent members of the middle classes.” For which reason he referred them to their maternal uncle, a man of known and remarkable penuriousness.

The four ne’er-do-wells, foreseeing what awaited them at Jayasthal, deferred it as a last resource; determining first to see a little life, and to push their way in the world, before condemning themselves to the tribulations of reform.

They tried to live without a monthly allowance, and notably they failed; it was squeezing, as men say, oil from sand. The gambler, having no capital, and, worse still, no credit, lost two or three suvernas at play, and could not pay them; in consequence of which he was soundly beaten with iron-shod staves, and was nearly compelled by the keeper of the hell to sell himself into slavery. Thus he became disgusted; and telling his brethren that they would find him at Jayasthal, he departed, with the intention of studying wisdom.

A month afterwards came the libertine's turn to be disappointed. He could no longer afford fine new clothes; even a well-washed coat was beyond his means. He had reckoned upon his handsome face, and he had matured a plan for laying various elderly conquests under contribution. Judge, therefore, his disgust when all the women—high and low, rich and poor, old and young, ugly and beautiful—seeing the end of his waistcloth thrown empty over his shoulder, passed him in the streets without even deigning a look. The very shopkeepers' wives, who once had adored his mustachio and had never ceased talking of his "elegant" gait, despised him; and the wealthy old person who formerly supplied his small feet with the choicest slippers, left him to starve. Upon which he also in a state of repentance, followed his brother to acquire knowledge.

"Am I not," quoth the thief to himself, "a cat in climbing, a deer in running, a snake in twisting, a hawk in pouncing, a dog in scenting?—keen as a hare, tenacious as a wolf, strong as a lion?—a lamp in the night, a horse on a plain, a mule on a stony path, a boat in the water, a rock on land?" The reply to his own questions was of course affirmative. But despite all these fine qualities, and notwithstanding his scrupulous strictness in invoking the house-breaking tool and in devoting a due portion of his gains to the gods of plunder, he was caught in a store-room by the proprietor, who inexorably handed him over to justice. As he belonged to the priestly caste, the fine imposed upon him was heavy. He could not pay it, and therefore he was thrown into a dungeon, where he remained for some time. But at last he escaped from jail, when he made his parting bow to Kartikeya, stole a blanket from one of the guards, and set out for Jayasthal, cursing his old profession.

The atheist also found himself in a position that deprived him of all his pleasures. He delighted in after dinner controversies, and in bringing the light troops of his wit to bear upon the unwieldy masses of lore and logic opposed to him by polemical Brahmans who, out of respect for his father, did not lay an action against him for overpowering them in theological disputation. In the strange city to which he had removed no one knew the son of Vishnu Swami, and no one cared to invite him to the house. Once he attempted his usual trick upon a knot of sages who, sitting round a tank, were recreating themselves with quoting mystical Sanskrit shlokas of abominable long-windedness. The result was his being obliged to ply his heels vigorously in flight from the justly incensed literati, to whom he had said "tush" and "pish," at least a dozen times in as many minutes. He therefore also followed the example of his brethren, and started for Jayasthal with all possible expedition.

Arrived at the house of their maternal uncle, the young men, as by one assent, began to attempt the unloosening of his purse-strings. Signally failing in this and in other notable schemes, they determined to lay in that stock of facts and useful knowledge which might reconcile them with their father, and restore them to that happy life at Gaur which they then despised, and which now brought tears into their eyes.

Then they debated with one another what they should study

That branch of the preternatural, popularly called “white magic,” found with them favor.

They chose a Guru or teacher strictly according to the orders of their faith, a wise man of honorable family and affable demeanor, who was not a glutton nor leprous, nor blind of one eye, nor blind of both eyes, nor very short, nor suffering from whitlows, asthma, or other disease, nor noisy and talkative, nor with any defect about the fingers and toes, nor subject to his wife.

A grand discovery had been lately made by a certain physiologico-philosophico-psychologico-materialist, a Jayasthalian. In investigating the vestiges of creation, the cause of causes, the effect of effects, and the original origin of that Matra (matter) which some regard as an entity, others as a non-entity, others self-existent, others merely specious and therefore nonexistent, he became convinced that the fundamental form of organic being is a globule having another globule within itself. After inhabiting a garret and diving into the depths of his self-consciousness for a few score years, he was able to produce such complex globule in triturated and roasted flint by means of—I will not say what. Happily for creation in general, the discovery died a natural death some centuries ago. An edifying spectacle, indeed, for the world to see; a cross old man sitting amongst his gallipots and crucibles, creating animalculae, providing the corpses of birds, beasts, and fishes with what is vulgarly called life, and supplying to epigenesis all the latest improvements!

In those days the invention, being a novelty, engrossed the thoughts of the universal learned, who were in a fever of excitement about it. Some believed in it so implicitly that they saw in every experiment a hundred things which they did not see. Others were so skeptical and contradictory that they would not perceive what they did see. Those blended with each fact their own deductions, whilst these span round every reality the web of their own prejudices. Curious to say, the Jayasthalian, amongst whom the luminous science arose, hailed it with delight, whilst the Gaurians derided its claim to be considered an important addition to human knowledge.

Let me try to remember a few of their words.

“Unfortunate human nature,” wrote the wise of Gaur against the wise of Jayasthal, “wanted no crowning indignity but this! You had already proved that the body is made of the basest element—earth. You had argued away the immovability, the ubiquity, the permanency, the eternity, and the divinity of the soul, for is not your favorite axiom, It is the nature of limbs which thinketh in man? The immortal mind is, according to you, an ignoble viscous; the god-like gift of reason is the instinct of a dog somewhat highly developed. Still you left us something to hope. Still you allowed us one boast. Still life was a thread connecting us with the Giver of Life. But now, with an impious hand, in blasphemous rage ye have rent asunder that last frail tie.” And so forth.

“Welcome! Thrice welcome! This latest and most admirable development of human wisdom,” wrote the sage Jayasthalian against the sage Gaurians, “which has assigned to man his proper state and status and station in the magnificent scale of being. We have not created the facts which we have investigated, and which we now proudly publish. We have proved materialism to be nature’s own system. But our philosophy of matter cannot overturn any truth, because, if erroneous, it will necessarily sink into oblivion; if real, it will tend only to instruct and to enlighten the world. Wise are ye in your generation, O ye sages of Gaur, yet withal wondrous illogical.” And much of this kind.

Concerning all which, mighty king! I, as a Vampire, have only to remark that those two learned bodies, like your Rajaship’s Nine Gems of Science, were in the habit of talking most about what they least understood.

The four young men applied the whole force of their talents to mastering the difficulties of the life-giving process; and in due time, their industry obtained its reward.

Then they determined to return home. As with beating hearts they approached the old city, their birthplace, and gazed with moistened eyes upon its tall spires and grim pagodas, its verdant meads and venerable groves, they saw a Kanjar, who, having tied up in a bundle the skin and bones of a tiger which he had found dead, was about to go on his way. Then said the thief to the gambler, “Take we these remains with us, and by means of them prove the truth of our science before the people of Gaur, to the offense of their noses.” Being now possessed of knowledge, they resolved to apply it to its proper purpose, namely, power over the property of others. Accordingly, the wench, the gambler, and the atheist kept the Kanjar in conversation whilst the thief vivified a shank bone; and the bone thereupon stood upright, and hopped about in so grotesque and wonderful a way that the man, being frightened, fled as if I had been close behind him.

Vishnu Swami had lately written a very learned commentary on the mystical words of Lokakshi:

“The Scriptures are at variance—the tradition is at variance. He who gives a meaning of his own, quoting the Vedas, is no philosopher.

“True philosophy, through ignorance, is concealed as in the fissures of a rock.

“But the way of the Great One—that is to be followed.”

And the success of his book had quite effaced from the Brahman mind the holy man’s failure in bringing up his children. He followed up this by adding to his essay on education a twentieth tome, containing recipes for the “Reformation of Prodigals.”

The learned and reverend father received his sons with open arms. He had heard from his brother-in-law that the youths were qualified to support themselves, and when informed that they wished to make a public experiment of their science, he exerted himself, despite his disbelief in it, to forward their views.

The Pandits and Gurus were long before they would consent to attend what they considered dealings with Yama (the Devil). In consequence, however, of Vishnu Swami's name and importunity, at length, on a certain day, all the pious, learned, and reverend tutors, teachers, professors, prolocutors, pastors, spiritual fathers, poets, philosophers, mathematicians, schoolmasters, pedagogues, bear-leaders, institutors, gerund-grinders, preceptors, dominies, brushers, coryphaei, dry-nurses, coaches, mentors, monitors, lecturers, prelectors, fellows, and heads of houses at the university at Gaur, met together in a large garden, where they usually diverted themselves out of hours with ball-tossing, pigeon-tumbling, and kite-flying.

Presently the four young men, carrying their bundle of bones and the other requisites, stepped forward, walking slowly with eyes downcast, like shrinking cattle: for it is said, the Brahman must not run, even when it rains.

After pronouncing an impromptu speech, composed for them by their father, and so stuffed with erudition that even the writer hardly understood it, they announced their wish to prove, by ocular demonstration, the truth of a science upon which their short-sighted rivals of Jayasthal had cast cold water, but which, they remarked in the eloquent peroration of their discourse, the sages of Gaur had welcomed with that wise and catholic spirit of inquiry which had ever characterized their distinguished body.

Huge words, involved sentences, and the high-flown compliment, exceedingly undeserved, obscured, I suppose, the bright wits of the intellectual convocation, which really began to think that their liberality of opinion deserved all praise.

None objected to what was being prepared, except one of the heads of houses; his appeal was generally scouted, because his Sanskrit style was vulgarly intelligible, and he had the bad name of being a practical man. The metaphysician Rashik Lall sneered to Vaiswata the poet, who passed on the look to the theo-philosopher Vardhaman. Haridatt the antiquarian whispered the metaphysician Vasudeva, who burst into a loud laugh; whilst Narayan, Jagasharma, and Devaswami, all very learned in the Vedas, opened their eyes and stared at him with well-simulated astonishment. So he, being offended, said nothing more, but arose and walked home.

A great crowd gathered round the four young men and their father, as opening the bundle that contained the tiger's remains, they prepared for their task.

One of the operators spread the bones upon the ground and fixed each one into its proper socket, not forgetting even the teeth and tusks.

The second connected, by means of a marvelous unguent, the skeleton with the muscles and heart of an elephant, which he had procured for the purpose.

The third drew from his pouch the brain and eyes of a large tom-cat, which he carefully fitted into the animal's skull, and then covered the body with the hide of a young rhinoceros.

Then the fourth—the atheist—who had been directing the operation, produced a globule having another globule within itself. And as the crowd pressed

on them, craning their necks, breathless with anxiety, he placed the Principle of Organic Life in the tiger's body with such effect that the monster immediately heaved its chest, breathed, agitated its limbs, opened its eyes, jumped to its feet, shook itself, glared around, and began to gnash its teeth and lick its chops, lashing the while its ribs with its tail.

The sages sprang back, and the beast sprang forward. With a roar like thunder during Elephanta-time, it flew at the nearest of the spectators, flung Vishnu Swami to the ground and clawed his four sons. Then, not even stopping to drink their blood, it hurried after the flying herd of wise men. Jostling and tumbling, stumbling and catching at one another's long robes, they rushed in hottest haste towards the garden gate. But the beast, having the muscles of an elephant as well as the bones of a tiger, made a few bounds of eighty or ninety feet each, easily distanced them, and took away all chance of escape. To be brief: as the monster was frightfully hungry after its long fast, and as the imprudent young men had furnished it with admirable implements of destruction, it did not cease its work till one hundred and twenty-one learned and highly distinguished Pandits and Gurus lay upon the ground chewed, clawed, sucked dry, and in most cases stone-dead. Amongst them, I need hardly say, were the sage Vishnu Swami and his four sons.

Having told this story the Vampire hung silent for a time. Presently he resumed—

“Now, heed my words, Raja Vikram! I am about to ask thee, Which of all those learned men was the most finished fool? The answer is easily found, yet it must be distasteful to thee. Therefore mortify thy vanity, as soon as possible, or I shall be talking, and thou wilt be walking through this livelong night, to scanty purpose. Remember! Science without understanding is of little use; indeed, understanding is superior to science, and those devoid of understanding perish as did the persons who revived the tiger. Before this, I warned thee to beware of thyself, and of shine own conceit. Here, then, is an opportunity for self-discipline—which of all those learned men was the greatest fool?”

The warrior king mistook the kind of mortification imposed upon him, and pondered over the uncomfortable nature of the reply—in the presence of his son.

Again the Baital taunted him.

“The greatest fool of all,” at last said Vikram, in slow and by no means willing accents, “was the father. Is it not said, ‘There is no fool like an old fool?’”

“Gramercy!” cried the Vampire, bursting out into a discordant laugh, “I now return to my tree. By this head! I never before heard a father so readily condemn a father.” With these words he disappeared, slipping out of the bundle.

The Raja scolded his son a little for want of obedience, and said that he had always thought more highly of his acuteness—never could have believed that he would have been taken in by so shallow a trick. Dharma Dhvaj answered not a word to this, but promised to be wiser another time.

Then they returned to the tree, and did what they had so often done before. And, as before, the Baital held his tongue for a time. Presently he began as follows.

## THE VAMPIRE PUZZLES RAJA VIKRAM

**Tradition Bearer:** Bhavabhuti

**Source:** Burton, Richard. "The Vampire's Eleventh Story Which Puzzles Raja Vikram." *Vikram and the Vampire*, ed. Elizabeth Burton. London: Tylston and Edwards, 1893, 221–243.

**Date:** Unavailable

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Compare the final tale and conclusion of *Vikram and the Vampire* to the conclusion of *Twenty-Two Goblins* (page 191). The two narratives are **variants** of the same core tale plot.

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**T**here is a queer time coming, O Raja Vikram!—a queer time coming (said the Vampire), a queer time coming. Elderly people like you talk abundantly about the good old days that were, and about the degeneracy of the days that are. I wonder what you would say if you could but look forward a few hundred years.

Brahmans shall disgrace themselves by becoming soldiers and being killed, and Serviles (Shudras) shall dishonor themselves by wearing the thread of the twice-born, and by refusing to be slaves; in fact, society shall be all "mouth" and mixed castes. The courts of justice shall be disused; the great works of peace shall no longer be undertaken; wars shall last six weeks, and their causes shall be clean forgotten; the useful arts and great sciences shall die starved; there shall be no Gems of Science; there shall be a hospital for destitute kings, those, at least, who do not lose their heads, and no Vikrama—

A severe shaking [of the bag by Vikram] stayed for a moment the Vampire's tongue.

He presently resumed. Briefly, building tanks feeding Brahmans; lying when one ought to lie; suicide, the burning of widows, and the burying of live children, shall become utterly unfashionable.

The consequence of this singular degeneracy, O mighty Vikram, will be that strangers shall dwell beneath the roof tree in Bharat Khanda (India), and impure barbarians shall call the land their own. They come from a wonderful country, and I am most surprised that they bear it. The sky which ought to be gold and

blue is there grey, a kind of dark white; the sun looks deadly pale, and the moon as if he were dead. The sea, when not dirty green, glistens with yellowish foam, and as you approach the shore, tall ghastly cliffs, like the skeletons of giants, stand up to receive or ready to repel. During the greater part of the sun's Dakshinayan (southern declination) the country is covered with a sort of cold white stuff which dazzles the eyes; and at such times the air is obscured with what appears to be a shower of white feathers or flocks of cotton. At other seasons there is a pale glare produced by the mist clouds which spread themselves over the lower firmament. Even the faces of the people are white; the men are white when not painted blue; the women are whiter, and the children are whitest: these indeed often have white hair.

"Truly," exclaimed Dharma Dhvaj, "says the proverb, 'Whoso seeth the world telleth many a lie'."

At present (resumed the Vampire, not heeding the interruption), they run about naked in the woods, being merely Hindu outcastes. Presently they will change—the wonderful white Pariahs! They will eat all food indifferently, domestic fowls, onions, hogs fed in the street, donkeys, horses, hares, and (most horrible!) the flesh of the sacred cow. They will imbibe what resembles meat of colocynth, mixed with water, producing a curious frothy liquid, and a fiery stuff which burns the mouth, for their milk will be mostly chalk and pulp of brains; they will ignore the sweet juices of fruits and sugar-cane, and as for the pure element they will drink it, but only as medicine, They will shave their beards instead of their heads, and stand upright when they should sit down, and squat upon a wooden frame instead of a carpet, and appear in red and black like the children of Yama. They will never offer sacrifices to the manes of ancestors, leaving them after their death to fry in the hottest of places. Yet will they perpetually quarrel and fight about their faith; for their tempers are fierce, and they would burst if they could not harm one another. Even now the children, who amuse themselves with making puddings on the shore, that is to say, heaping up the sand, always end their little games with "punching," which means shutting the hand and striking one another's heads, and it is soon found that the children are the fathers of the men.

These wonderful white outcastes will often be ruled by female chiefs, and it is likely that the habit of prostrating themselves before a woman who has not the power of cutting off a single head, may account for their unusual degeneracy and uncleanness. They will consider no occupation so noble as running after a jackal; they will dance for themselves, holding on to strange women, and they will take a pride in playing upon instruments, like young music girls.

The women, of course, relying upon the aid of the female chieftains, will soon emancipate themselves from the rules of modesty. They will eat with their husbands and with other men, and yawn and sit carelessly before them showing the backs of their heads. They will impudently quote the words, "By confinement at home, even under affectionate and observant guardians, women are not



secure, but those are really safe who are guarded by their own inclinations”; as the poet sang—

“Woman obeys one only word, her heart.”

They will not allow their husbands to have more than one wife, and even the single wife will not be his slave when he needs her services, busying herself in the collection of wealth, in ceremonial purification, and feminine duty; in the preparation of daily food and in the superintendence of household utensils. What said Rama of Sita his wife? “If I chanced to be angry, she bore my impatience like the patient earth without a murmur; in the hour of necessity she cherished me as a mother does her child; in the moments of repose she was a lover to me; in times of gladness she was to me as a friend.” And it is said, “A religious wife assists her husband in his worship with a spirit as devout as his own. She gives her whole mind to make him happy; she is as faithful to him as a shadow to the body, and she esteems him, whether poor or rich, good or bad, handsome or deformed. In his absence or his sickness she renounces every gratification; at his death she dies with him, and he enjoys heaven as the fruit of her virtuous deeds. Whereas if she be guilty of many wicked actions and he should die first, he must suffer much for the demerits of his wife.”

But these women will talk aloud, and scold as the braying ass, and make the house a scene of variance, like the snake with the ichneumon, the owl with the crow, for they have no fear of losing their noses or parting with their ears. They will (O my mother!) converse with strange men and take their hands; they will receive presents from them, and, worst of all, they will show their white faces openly without the least sense of shame; they will ride publicly in chariots and mount horses, whose points they pride themselves upon knowing, and eat and drink in crowded places—their husbands looking on the while, and perhaps even leading them through the streets. And she will be deemed the pinnacle of the pagoda of perfection, that most excels in wit and shamelessness, and who can turn to water the livers of most men. They will dance and sing instead of minding their children, and when these grow up they will send them out of the house to shift for themselves, and care little if they never see them again. But the greatest sin of all will be this: when widowed they will ever be on the lookout for a second husband, and instances will be known of women fearlessly marrying three, four, and five times. You would think that all this license satisfies them. But no! The more they have the more their weak minds covet. The men have admitted them to an equality, they will aim at an absolute superiority, and claim respect and homage; they will eternally raise tempests about their rights, and if anyone should venture to chastise them as they deserve, they would call him a coward and run off to the judge.

The men will, I say, be as wonderful about their women as about all other matters. The sage of Bharat Khanda guards the frail sex strictly, knowing its frailty, and avoids teaching it to read and write, which it will assuredly use for a bad purpose. For women are ever subject to the god with the sugar-cane bow

and string of bees, and arrows tipped with heating blossoms, and to him they will ever surrender man, dhan, tan—mind, wealth, and body. When, by exceeding cunning, all human precautions have been made vain, the wise man bows to Fate, and he forgets, or he tries to forget, the past. Whereas this race of white Pariahs will purposely lead their women into every kind of temptation, and, when an accident occurs, they will rage at and accuse them, killing ten thousand with a word, and cause an uproar, and talk scandal and be scandalized, and go before the magistrate, and make all the evil as public as possible. One would think they had in every way done their duty to their women!

And when all this change shall have come over them, they will feel restless and take flight, and fall like locusts upon the Aryavartta (land of India). Starving in their own country, they will find enough to eat here, and to carry away also. They will be mischievous as the saw with which ornament-makers trim their shells, and cut ascending as well as descending. To cultivate their friendship will be like making a gap in the water, and their partisans will ever fare worse than their foes. They will be selfish as crows, which, though they eat every kind of flesh, will not permit other birds to devour that of the crow.

In the beginning they will hire a shop near the mouth of mother Ganges, and they will sell lead and bullion, fine and coarse woolen cloths, and all the materials for intoxication. Then they will begin to send for soldiers beyond the sea, and to enlist warriors in Zambudwipa (India). They will from shopkeepers become soldiers: they will beat and be beaten; they will win and lose; but the power of their star and the enchantments of their Queen Kompani, a daina or witch who can draw the blood out of a man and slay him with a look, will turn everything to their good. Presently the noise of their armies shall be as the roaring of the sea; the dazzling of their arms shall blind the eyes like lightning; their battle-fields shall be as the dissolution of the world; and the slaughter-ground shall resemble a garden of plantain trees after a storm. At length they shall spread like the march of a host of ants over the land. They will swear, “Dehar Ganga!” and they hate nothing so much as being compelled to destroy an army, to take and loot a city, or to add a rich slip of territory to their rule. And yet they will go on killing and capturing and adding region to region, till the Abode of Snow (Himalaya) confines them to the north, the Sindhu-naddi (Incus) to the west, and elsewhere the sea. Even in this, too, they will demean themselves as lords and masters, scarcely allowing poor Samudradevta to rule his own waves.

Raja Vikram was in a silent mood, otherwise he would not have allowed such ill-omened discourse to pass uninterrupted. Then the Baital, who in vain had often paused to give the royal carrier a chance of asking him a curious question, continued his recital in a dissonant and dissatisfied tone of voice.

By my feet and your head, O warrior king, it will fare badly in those days for the Rajas of Hindustan, when the red-coated men of Shaka shall come amongst them! Listen to my words.

In the Vindhya Mountain there will be a city named Dharmapur, whose king will be called Mahabul. He will be a mighty warrior, well-skilled in the dhanur-veda (art of war), and will always lead his own armies to the field. He will duly regard all the omens, such as a storm at the beginning of the march, an earthquake, the implements of war dropping from the hands of the soldiery, screaming vultures passing over or walking near the army, the clouds and the sun's rays waxing red, thunder in a clear sky, the moon appearing small as a star, the dropping of blood from the clouds, the falling of lightning bolts, darkness filling the four quarters of the heavens, a corpse or a pan of water being carried to the right of the army, the sight of a female beggar with disheveled hair, dressed in red, and preceding the vanguard, the starting of the flesh over the left ribs of the commander-in-chief, and the weeping or turning back of the horses when urged forward.

He will encourage his men to single combats, and will carefully train them to gymnastics. Many of the wrestlers and boxers will be so strong that they will often beat all the extremities of the antagonist into his body, or break his back, or rend him into two pieces. He will promise heaven to those who shall die in the front of battle and he will have them taught certain dreadful expressions of abuse to be interchanged with the enemy when commencing the contest. Honors will be conferred on those who never turn their backs in an engagement, who manifest a contempt of death, who despise fatigue, as well as the most formidable enemies, who shall be found invincible in every combat, and who display a courage which increases before danger, like the glory of the sun advancing to his meridian splendor.

But King Mahabul will be attacked by the white Pariahs, who, as usual, will employ against him gold, fire, and steel. With gold they will win over his best men, and persuade them openly to desert when the army is drawn out for battle. They will use the terrible "fire weapon," large and small tubes, which discharge flame and smoke, and bullets as big as those hurled by the bow of Bharata. And instead of using swords and shields, they will fix daggers to the end of their tubes, and thrust with them like lances.

Mahabul, distinguished by valor and military skill, will march out of his city to meet the white foe. In front will be the ensigns, bells, cows'-tails, and flags, the latter painted with the bird Garura, the bull of Shiva, the Bauhinia tree, the monkey-god Hanuman, the lion and the tiger, the fish, an alms-dish, and seven palm trees. Then will come the footmen armed with fire-tubes, swords and shields, spears and daggers, clubs, and bludgeons. They will be followed by fighting men on horses and oxen, on camels and elephants. The musicians, the water-carriers, and lastly the stores on carriages, will bring up the rear.

The white outcastes will come forward in a long thin red thread, and vomiting fire like the Jwalamukhi. King Mahabul will receive them with his troops formed in a circle; another division will be in the shape of a halfmoon; a third like a cloud, whilst others shall represent a lion, a tiger, a carriage, a lily, a giant,

and a bull. But as the elephants will all turn round when they feel the fire, and trample upon their own men, and as the cavalry defiling in front of the host will openly gallop away; Mahabul, being thus without resource, will enter his palanquin, and accompanied by his queen and their only daughter, will escape at night-time into the forest.

The unfortunate three will be deserted by their small party, and live for a time on jungle food, fruits and roots; they will even be compelled to eat game. After some days they will come in sight of a village, which Mahabul will enter to obtain victuals. There the wild Bhils, famous for long years, will come up, and surrounding the party, will bid the Raja throw down his arms. Thereupon Mahabul, skillful in aiming, twanging and wielding the bow on all sides, so as to keep off the bolts of the enemy, will discharge his bolts so rapidly, that one will drive forward another, and none of the barbarians will be able to approach. But he will have failed to bring his quiver containing an inexhaustible store of arms, some of which, pointed with diamonds, shall have the faculty of returning again to their case after they have done their duty. The conflict will continue three hours, and many of the Bhils will be slain: at length a shaft will cleave the king's skull, he will fall dead, and one of the wild men will come up and cut off his head.

When the queen and the princess shall have seen that Mahabul fell dead, they will return to the forest weeping and beating their bosoms. They will thus escape the Bhils, and after journeying on for four miles, at length they will sit down wearied, and revolve many thoughts in; their minds.

They are very lovely (continued the Vampire), as I see them with the eye of clear-seeing. What beautiful hair! It hangs down like the tail of the cow of Tartary, or like the thatch of a house; it is shining as oil, dark as the clouds, black as blackness itself. What charming faces! likest to water-lilies, with eyes as the stones in unripe mangos, noses resembling the beaks of parrots, teeth like pearls set in corals, ears like those of the redthroated vulture, and mouths like the water of life. What excellent forms! Breasts like boxes containing essences, the unopened fruit of plantains or a couple of crabs; loins the width of a span, like the middle of the viol; legs like the trunk of an elephant, and feet like the yellow lotus.

And a fearful place is that jungle, a dense dark mass of thorny shrubs, and ropy creepers, and tall canes, and tangled brake, and gigantic gnarled trees, which groan wildly in the night wind's embrace. But a wilder horror urges the unhappy women on; they fear the polluting touch of the Bhils; once more they rise and plunge deeper into its gloomy depths.

The day dawns. The white Pariahs have done their usual work. They have cut off the hands of some, the feet and heads of others, whilst many they have crushed into shapeless masses, or scattered in pieces upon the ground. The field is strewed with corpses, the river runs red, so that the dogs and jackals swim in blood; the birds of prey sitting on the branches, drink man's life from the stream, and enjoy the sickening smell of burnt flesh.

Such will be the scenes acted in the fair land of Bharat.

Perchance two white outcastes, father and son, who with a party of men are scouring the forest and slaying everything, fall upon the path which the women have taken shortly before. Their attention is attracted by footprints leading towards a place full of tigers, leopards, bears, wolves, and wild dogs. And they are utterly confounded when, after inspection, they discover the sex of the wanderers.

“How is it,” shall say the father, “that the footprints of mortals are seen in this part of the forest?”

The son shall reply, “Sir, these are the marks of women’s feet: a man’s foot would not be so small.”

“It is passing strange,” shall rejoin the elder white Pariah, “but thou speakest truth. Certainly such a soft and delicate foot cannot belong to anyone but a woman.”

“They have only just left the track,” shall continue the son, “and look, this is the step of a married woman. See how she treads on the inside of her sole, because of the bending of her ankles.” And the younger white outcaste shall point to the queen’s footprints.

“Come, let us search the forest for them,” shall cry the father, “what an opportunity of finding wives fortune has thrown in our hands. But no thou art in error,” he shall continue, after examining the track pointed out by his son, “in supposing this to be the sign of a matron. Look at the other, it is much longer; the toes have scarcely touched the ground, whereas the marks of the heels are deep. Of a truth this must be the married woman.” And the elder white outcaste shall point to the footprints of the princess.

“Then,” shall reply the son, who admires the shorter foot, “let us first seek them, and when we find them, give to me her who has the short feet, and take the other to wife thyself.”

Having made this agreement they shall proceed on their way, and presently they shall find the women lying on the earth, half dead with fatigue and fear. Their legs and feet are scratched and torn by brambles, their ornaments have fallen off, and their garments are in strips. The two white outcastes find little difficulty, the first surprise over, in persuading the unhappy women to follow them home, and with great delight, conformably to their arrangement, each takes up his prize on his horse and rides back to the tents. The son takes the queen, and the father the princess.

In due time two marriages come to pass; the father, according to agreement, espouses the long foot, and the son takes to wife the short foot. And after the usual interval, the elder white outcaste, who had married the daughter, rejoices at the birth of a boy, and the younger white outcaste, who had married the mother, is gladdened by the sight of a girl.

Now then, by my feet and your head, O warrior king Vikram, answer me one question. What relationship will there be between the children of the two white Pariahs?

Vikram's brow waxed black as a charcoal-burner's, when he again heard the most irreverent oath ever proposed to mortal king. The question presently attracted his attention, and he turned over the Baital's words in his head, confusing the ties of filiality, brotherhood, and relationship, and connection in general.

"Hem!" said the warrior king, at last perplexed, and remembering, in his perplexity, that he had better hold his tongue, "ahem!"

"I think your majesty spoke?" asked the Vampire, in an inquisitive and insinuating tone of voice.

"Hem!" ejaculated the monarch.

The Baital held his peace for a few minutes, coughing once or twice impatiently. He suspected that the extraordinary nature of this last tale, combined with the use of the future tense, had given rise to a taciturnity so unexpected in the warrior king. He therefore asked if Vikram the Brave would not like to hear another little anecdote.

"This time the king did not even say 'hem!' Having walked at an unusually rapid pace, he distinguished at a distance the fire kindled by the devotee, and he hurried towards it with an effort which left him no breath wherewith to speak, even had he been so inclined.

"Since your majesty is so completely dumbfounded by it, perhaps this acute young prince may be able to answer my question?" insinuated the Baital, after a few minutes of anxious suspense.

But Dharma Dhvaj answered not a syllable.

At Raja Vikram's silence the Baital was greatly surprised, and he praised the royal courage and resolution to the skies. Still he did not give up the contest at once.

"Allow me, great king," pursued the Demon, in a dry tone of voice, "to wish you joy. After so many failures you have at length succeeded in repressing your loquacity. I will not stop to enquire whether it was humility and self-restraint which prevented your answering my last question, or whether Rajait was mere ignorance and inability. Of course I suspect the latter, but to say the truth your condescension in at last taking a Vampire's advice, flatters me so much, that I will not look too narrowly into cause or motive."

Raja Vikram winced, but maintained a stubborn silence, squeezing his lips lest they should open involuntarily.

"Now, however, your majesty has mortified, we will suppose, a somewhat exacting vanity, I also will in my turn forego the pleasure which I had anticipated in seeing you a corpse and in entering your royal body for a short time, just to know how queer it must feel to be a king. And what is more, I will now perform my original promise, and you shall derive from me a benefit which none but myself can bestow. First, however, allow me to ask you, will you let me have a little more air?"

Dharma Dhvaj pulled his father's sleeve, but this time Raja Vikram required no reminder: wild horses or the executioner's saw, beginning at the shoulder,

would not have drawn a word from him. Observing his obstinate silence, the Baital, with an ominous smile, continued:

“Now give ear, O warrior king, to what I am about to tell thee, and bear in mind the giant’s saying, ‘A man is justified in killing one who has a design to kill him.’ The young merchant Mal Deo, who placed such magnificent presents at your royal feet, and Shanta-Shil the devotee saint, who works his spells, incantations, and magical rites in a cemetery on the banks of the Godavari river, are, as thou knowest, one person—the terrible Jogi, whose wrath your father aroused in his folly, and whose revenge your blood alone can satisfy. With regard to myself, the oilman’s son, the same Jogi, fearing lest I might interfere with his projects of universal dominion, slew me by the power of his penance, and has kept me suspended, a trap for you, head downwards from the sires tree.

“That Jogi it was, you now know, who sent you to fetch me back to him on your back. And when you cast me at his feet he will return thanks to you and praise your valor, perseverance and resolution to the skies. I warn you to beware. He will lead you to the shrine of Durga, and when he has finished his adoration he will say to you, ‘O great king, salute my deity with the eight-limbed reverence.’”

Here the Vampire whispered for a time and in a low tone, lest some listening goblin might carry his words if spoken out loud to the ears of the devotee Shanta-Shil.

At the end of the monologue a rustling sound was heard. It proceeded from the Baital, who was disengaging himself from the dead body in the bundle, and the burden became sensibly lighter upon the monarch’s back.

The departing Baital, however, did not forget to bid farewell to the warrior king and to his son. He complimented the former for the last time, in his own way, upon the royal humility and the prodigious self-mortification which he had displayed—qualities, he remarked, which never failed to ensure the proprietor’s success in all the worlds.

Raja Vikram stepped out joyfully, and soon reached the burning ground. There he found the Jogi, dressed in his usual habit, a deerskin thrown over his back, and twisted reeds instead of a garment hanging round his loins. The hair had fallen from his limbs and his skin was bleached ghastly white by exposure to the elements. A fire seemed to proceed from his mouth, and the matted locks dropping from his head to the ground were changed by the rays of the sun to the color of gold or saffron. He had the beard of a goat and the ornaments of a king; his shoulders were high and his arms long, reaching to his knees: his nails grew to such a length as to curl round the ends of his fingers, and his feet resembled those of a tiger. He was drumming upon a skull, and incessantly exclaiming, “Ho, Kali! Ho, Durga! Ho, Devi!”

As before, strange beings were holding their carnival in the Jogi’s presence. Monstrous Asuras, giant goblins, stood grimly gazing upon the scene with fixed eyes and motionless features. Rakshasas and messengers of Yama, fierce and

hideous, assumed at pleasure the shapes of foul and ferocious beasts. Nagas and Bhutas, partly human and partly bestial, disported themselves in throngs about the upper air, and were dimly seen in the faint light of the dawn. Mighty Daityas, Bramba-daityas, and Pretas, the size of a man's thumb, or dried up like leaves, and Pisachas of terrible power guarded the place. There were enormous goats, vivified by the spirits of those who had slain Brahmans; things with the bodies of men and the faces of horses, camels and monkeys; hideous worms containing the souls of those priests who had drunk spirituous liquors; men with one leg and one ear, and mischievous blood-sucking demons, who in life had stolen church property. There were vultures, wretches that had violated the beds of their spiritual fathers, restless ghosts that had loved low-caste women, shades for whom funeral rites had not been performed, and who could not cross the dread Vaitarani stream, and vital souls fresh from the horrors of Tamisra, or utter darkness, and the Usipatra Vana, or the sword-leaved forest. Pale spirits, Alayas, Gumas, Baitals, and Yakshas, beings of a base and vulgar order, glided over the ground, amongst corpses and skeletons animated by female fiends, Dakinis, Yoginis, Hakinis, and Shankinis, which were dancing in frightful revelry. The air was filled with supernatural sights and sounds, cries of owls and jackals, cats and crows, dogs, asses, and vultures, high above which rose the clashing of the bones with which the Jogi sat drumming upon the skull before him, and tending a huge cauldron of oil whose smoke was of blue fire. But as he raised his long lank arm, silver-white with ashes, the demons fled, and a momentary silence succeeded to their uproar. The tigers ceased to roar and the elephants to scream; the bears raised their snouts from their foul banquets, and the wolves dropped from their jaws the remnants of human flesh. And when they disappeared, the hooting of the owl, and ghastly "Ha! Ha!" of the curlew, and the howling of the jackal died away in the far distance, leaving a silence still more oppressive.

As Raja Vikram entered the burning-ground, the hollow sound of solitude alone met his ear. Sadly wailed the wet autumnal blast. The tall gaunt trees groaned aloud, and bowed and trembled like slaves bending before their masters. Huge purple clouds and patches and lines of glaring white mist coursed furiously across the black expanse of firmament, discharging threads and chains and lozenges and balls of white and blue, purple and pink lightning, followed by the deafening crash and roll of thunder, the dreadful roaring of the mighty wind, and the torrents of plashing rain. At times was heard in the distance the dull gurgling of the swollen river, interrupted by explosions, as slips of earth-bank fell headlong into the stream. But once more the Jogi raised his arm and all was still: nature lay breathless, as if awaiting the effect of his tremendous spells.

The warrior king drew near the terrible man, unstrung his bundle from his back, untwisted the portion which he held, threw open the cloth, and exposed to Shanta-Shil's glittering eyes the corpse, which had now recovered its proper form—that of a young child. Seeing it, the devotee was highly pleased, and



thanked Vikram the Brave, extolling his courage and daring above any monarch that had yet lived. After which he repeated certain charms facing towards the south, awakened the dead body, and placed it in a sitting position. He then in its presence sacrificed to his goddess, the White One, all that he had ready by his side—betel leaf and flowers, sandal wood and unbroken rice, fruits, perfumes, and the flesh of man untouched by steel. Lastly, he half filled his skull with burning embers, blew upon them till they shot forth tongues of crimson light, serving as a lamp, and motioning the Raja and his son to follow him, led the way to a little fane of the Destroying Deity erected in a dark clump of wood, outside and close to the burning ground.

They passed through the quadrangular outer court of the temple whose piazza was hung with deep shade. In silence they circumambulated the small central shrine, and whenever Shanta-Shil directed, Raja Vikram entered the Sabha, or vestibule, and struck three times upon the gong, which gave forth a loud and warning sound.

They then passed over the threshold, and looked into the gloomy inner depths. There stood Smashana-Kali, the goddess, in her most horrid form. She was a naked and very black woman, with half-severed head, partly cut and partly painted, resting on her shoulder; and her tongue lolled out from her wide yawning mouth; her eyes were red like those of a drunkard; and her eyebrows were of the same color: her thick coarse hair hung like a mantle to her heels. She was robed in an elephant's hide, dried and withered, confined at the waist with a belt composed of the hands of the giants whom she had slain in war: two dead bodies formed her earrings, and her necklace was of bleached skulls. Her four arms supported a scimitar, a noose, a trident, and a ponderous mace. She stood with one leg on the breast of her husband, Shiva, and she rested the other on his thigh. Before the idol lay the utensils of worship, namely, dishes for the offerings, lamps, jugs, incense, copper cups, conches and gongs; and all of them smelt of blood.

As Raja Vikram and his son stood gazing upon the hideous spectacle, the devotee stooped down to place his skull-lamp upon the ground, and drew from out his ochre-colored cloth a sharp sword which he hid behind his back.

“Prosperity to shine and thy son's for ever and ever, O mighty Vikram!” exclaimed Shanta-Shil, after he had muttered a prayer before the image. “Verily thou hast right royally redeemed thy pledge, and by the virtue of thy presence all my wishes shall presently be accomplished. Behold! The Sun is about to drive his car over the eastern hills, and our task now ends. Do thou reverence before this my deity, worshipping the earth through thy nose, and so prostrating thyself that thy eight limbs may touch the ground. Thus shall thy glory and splendor be great; the Eight Powers and the Nine Treasures shall be thine, and prosperity shall ever remain under thy roof-tree.”

Raja Vikram, hearing these words, recalled suddenly to mind all that the Vampire had whispered to him. He brought his joined hands open up to his

forehead, caused his two thumbs to touch his brow several times, and replied with the greatest humility,

“O pious person! I am a king ignorant of the way to do such obeisance. Thou art a spiritual preceptor: be pleased to teach me and I will do even as thou desirest.”

Then the Jogi, being a cunning man, fell into his own net. As he bent him down to salute the goddess, Vikram, drawing his sword, struck him upon the neck so violent a blow, that his head rolled from his body upon the ground. At the same moment Dharma Dhvaj, seizing his father’s arm, pulled him out of the way in time to escape being crushed by the image, which fell with the sound of thunder upon the floor of the temple.

A small thin voice in the upper air was heard to cry, “A man is justified in killing one who has the desire to kill him.” Then glad shouts of triumph and victory were heard in all directions. They proceeded from the celestial choristers, the heavenly dancers, the mistresses of the gods, and the nymphs of Indra’s Paradise, who left their beds of gold and precious stones, their seats glorious as the meridian sun, their canals of crystal water, their perfumed groves, and their gardens where the wind ever blows in softest breezes, to applaud the valor and good fortune of the warrior king. At last the brilliant god, Indra himself, with the thousand eyes, rising from the shade of the Parigat tree, the fragrance of whose flowers fills the heavens, appeared in his car drawn by yellow steeds and cleaving the thick vapors which surround the earth—whilst his attendants sounded the heavenly drums and rained a shower of blossoms and perfumes—bade the Vikramajit the Brave ask a boon.

The Raja joined his hands and respectfully replied, “O mighty ruler of the lower firmament, let this my history become famous throughout the world!”

“It is well,” rejoined the god. “As long as the sun and moon endure, and the sky looks down upon the ground, so long shall this thy adventure be remembered over all the earth. Meanwhile rule thou mankind.”

Thus saying, Indra retired to the delicious Amrawati Vikram took up the corpses and threw them into the cauldron which Shanta-Shil had been tending. At once two heroes started into life, and Vikram said to them, “When I call you, come!”

With these mysterious words the king, followed by his son, returned to the palace unmolested. As the Vampire had predicted, everything was prosperous to him, and he presently obtained the remarkable titles, Sakaro, or foe of the Sakas, and Sakadhipati-Vikramaditya.

And when, after a long and happy life spent in bringing the world under the shadow of one umbrella, and in ruling it free from care, the warrior king Vikram entered the gloomy realms of Yama, from whom for mortals there is no escape, he left behind him a name that endured amongst men like the odor of the flower whose memory remains long after its form has mingled with the dust.

## EIGHT BROTHERS

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Sarma, Bagwhan Das. "A Folktale from Kumaon State." *Folklore* 8 (1897): 181–184.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** India

**National Origin:** India

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The following tale is a **variant** of "The Rich and the Poor Peasant" (AT 1535). A common European **trickster** tale, the Indian version pits a clever younger brother against seven abusive elder brothers. The major **motifs** of the tale, however, remain close to European versions.

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Once in a town lived eight brothers. The youngest of them looked a silly sort of fellow, and his brothers thought him a fool. Their father died, and they divided the patrimony among themselves, and gave the youngest much less than his due. He bought a bull-buffalo, while they bought cow-buffaloes.

Every night he carried the buffalo on his shoulders to his brothers' field and grazed him there. In the morning, when the brothers came to the field, they found the plants eaten. But as there were no marks of an animal's feet in the field they could not detect the poacher. One day the animal drank too much water, and became so heavy that he could not carry it. He left him in the field, and allowed him to graze there at large. The brothers had watered the field that very day, and the soil was so moist that the feet of the buffalo left deep marks in the field. When they went there next morning they saw the plants eaten, and the deep marks of the buffalo's feet.

Straightway they ran to their youngest brother, and showered blows on his poor buffalo till it died. He begged his brothers to leave the carcass of his dear beast for him. He then pulled off the skin and turned it into a hide, and putting it on his shoulders started for a neighboring market-town to sell it. On his way he was caught in the rain, and the hide became dripping wet.

At length he reached a sort of cave, and, feeling tired, put the hide at the mouth of it. Inside the cave were robbers who had come there to divide their booty. The hide was wet, and when he put it at the mouth of the cave it made a noise and darkened the cave. The robbers thought they had been found out, and ran away, leaving the booty to the lucky man. Entering the cave, he found gold and silver and precious stones. At once he put them all into a bundle, and, leaving the hide there, took his way home with his newly-gained riches.

Now he was a rich man, and his brothers were very jealous of him. One day they went to him, and asked him what he had done with the hide. He told them that he had sold it at a very high price to a man who lived in the Brahmans' quarter in a neighboring town. They ran home at once and killed their buffaloes, and, carrying their hides on their shoulders, went to sell them in the Brahmans' quarter their brother had pointed out. Arriving there they called out loudly, "Buffalo-hides for sale!" Great was the surprise of the Brahmans on hearing such words, and coming out of their houses they gave them a sound beating for bringing such unclean things near their houses.

They were very angry with their brother, and hurried back as fast as they could, and going straight to his house set fire to it. The house was soon reduced to ashes, but the brother escaped with his life. He collected the ashes in a bag, and putting the bag on his head made his way to a neighboring town.

He went to the palace of the Raja, and after exchanging greetings with the porter at the gate, said to him, "I have brought jewels and other valuable presents from our Raja to your Raja; please look after the bag, I am going out to wash, and shall come back very soon. But pray, allow no one to touch the bag in my absence, or the valuables will turn into ashes." Having said this, he went away, and after strolling about for some time came back and opened the bag. He had scarcely half-opened it when he began to cry "I am ruined, I am ruined. I told you beforehand that if any body touched it in my absence it would turn into ashes, and so it has happened, Now what shall I do? I have lost thousands of rupees' worth; somebody must repay me."

A crowd soon gathered on the spot, but the man would not listen to any one; and as the crowd increased his cries became more piteous, and with sobs he told the multitude how he had been ruined. At length the affair reached the ears of the Raja, who was very kind-hearted and generous. He ordered the whole amount to be paid to the man. He quickly put the money in the bag, and throwing it on his shoulders hastened home. The brothers heard of his wealth, and came to ask him how he got it.

"I sold the bag of ashes," said he, "to a merchant who deals in flour. He stood in great need of ashes, as he adulterates his flour with ashes, and thus makes a great profit." Hardly had he uttered these words before his brothers ran home and set their houses on fire. They then gathered the ashes, put them in bags, and each one carrying a bag on his shoulders went to the neighboring market. At a grocer's shop they opened the bags and began to pour out the contents into the heaps of flour exposed for sale. When the grocer saw it he was very angry, and cried, "Why, fools! What are you doing?"

"We are mixing ashes with your flour," said they. Whereupon the grocer got up and, rushing upon them, kicked them out of his shop. They were now full of wrath against their brother, and determined to put an end to his life. Hurrying to his house, they caught hold of him and shut him up in a sack. They put the sack on their shoulders and carried it to the Ganges.

When they reached the middle of the stream they threw the sack down into the river. By the man's good luck the sack floated ashore and rested against a bridge by the public way. A banker's son mounted on a good horse was going home with a bag full of jewels and gold and silver coins. When he approached the sack he heard a voice, saying, "Oh! I enjoy the sight of the three worlds."

The banker's son advancing nearer, said, "My friend, can I enjoy the sight too?"

"Yes," said the voice.

"How?" asked the banker's son.

"If you only come here," was the reply The banker's son opened the mouth of the sack and the man came out.

"Go into the sack," said he to the banker's son, and when he had got in he closed up its mouth. He then mounted the horse and galloped home with his treasure. The brothers were amazed to see him, and asked him where he got the horse.

"Our parents," said he, "gave me the horse; they live inside the Ganges. They love you much more than me because you are their elder children, and would give you immense riches if you were to see them."

"How can we see them?" asked they.

"It is very easy," said he. "I will be your guide. Take a dog with you and let him go into the Ganges in front of you; follow the dog to the spot he leads you to and you will see our parents." They all left the house taking their dog with them. When they reached the bridge the youngest brother pointed out to them with his hand the spot where he said he met his parents. First the dog went into the stream and then the seven brothers. The youngest remained on the bank. The dog continued moving his legs all the while he was swimming, and the brothers followed him till they were drowned.

## HARISARMAN

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Jacobs, Joseph. *Indian Fairy Tales*. London: David Nutt, 1912, 85–89.

**Date:** ca. 1880

**Original Source:** India

**National Origin:** India

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The folktale labeled "Dr. Know All" (AT 1641), the story of a sham wise man who is saved from exposure by a lucky accident, enjoys a broad international distribution. For an African American example, see "Coon in the Box" (Volume 4, page 183).

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There was a certain Brahman in a certain village, named Harisarman. He was poor and foolish and in evil case for want of employment, and he had very many children, that he might reap the fruit of his misdeeds in a former life. He wandered about begging with his family, and at last he reached a certain city, and entered the service of a rich householder called Sthuladatta. His sons became keepers of Sthuladatta's cows and other property, and his wife a servant to him, and he himself lived near his house, performing the duty of an attendant.

One day there was a feast on account of the marriage of the daughter of Sthuladatta, largely attended by many friends of the bridegroom, and merry-makers. Harisarman hoped that he would be able to fill himself up to the throat with ghee [clarified butter] and flesh and other dainties, and get the same for his family, in the house of his patron. While he was anxiously expecting to be fed, no one thought of him.

Then he was distressed at getting nothing to eat, and he said to his wife at night, "It is owing to my poverty and stupidity that I am treated with such disrespect here; so I will pretend by means of an artifice to possess a knowledge of magic, so that I may become an object of respect to this Sthuladatta; so, when you get an opportunity, tell him that I possess magical knowledge." He said this to her, and after turning the matter over in his mind, while people were asleep he took away from the house of Sthuladatta a horse on which his master's son-in-law rode. He placed it in concealment at some distance, and in the morning the friends of the bridegroom could not find the horse, though they searched in every direction.

Then, while Sthuladatta was distressed at the evil omen, and searching for the thieves who had carried off the horse, the wife of Harisarman came and said to him, "My husband is a wise man, skilled in astrology and magical sciences. He can get the horse back for you. Why do you not ask him?"

When Sthuladatta heard that, he called Harisarman, who said, "Yesterday I was forgotten, but today, now the horse is stolen, I am called to mind," and Sthuladatta then propitiated the Brahman with these words, "I forgot you, forgive me," and asked him to tell him who had taken away their horse. Then Harisarman drew all kinds of pretended diagrams, and said, "The horse has been placed by thieves on the boundary line south from this place. It is concealed there, and before it is carried off to a distance, as it will be at close of day, go quickly and bring it." When they heard that, many men ran and brought the horse quickly, praising the discernment of Harisarman. Then Harisarman was honored by all men as a sage, and dwelt there in happiness, honored by Sthuladatta.

Now, as days went on, much treasure, both of gold and jewels, had been stolen by a thief from the palace of the king. As the thief was not known, the king quickly summoned Harisarman on account of his reputation for knowledge of magic. And he, when summoned, tried to gain time, and said, "I will tell you

tomorrow,” and then he was placed in a chamber by the king, and carefully guarded. And he was sad because he had pretended to have knowledge. Now in that palace there was a maid named Jihva (which means tongue), who, with the assistance of her brother, had stolen that treasure from the interior of the palace. She, being alarmed at Harisarman’s knowledge, went at night and applied her ear to the door of that chamber in order to find out what he was about. And Harisarman, who was alone inside, was at that very moment blaming his own tongue, that had made a vain assumption of knowledge. He said, “Oh tongue, what is this that you have done through your greediness? Wicked one, you will soon receive punishment in full.”

When Jihva heard this, she thought, in her terror, that she had been discovered by this wise man, and she managed to get in where he was, and falling at his feet, she said to the supposed wizard, “Brahman, here I am, that Jihva whom you have discovered to be the thief of the treasure, and after I took it I buried it in the earth in a garden behind the palace, under a pomegranate tree. So spare me, and receive the small quantity of gold which is in my possession.”

When Harisarman heard that, he said to her proudly, “Depart, I know all this; I know the past, present and future; but I will not denounce you, being a miserable creature that has implored my protection. But whatever gold is in your possession you must give back to me.”

When he said this to the maid, she consented, and departed quickly. But Harisarman reflected in his astonishment, “Fate brings about, as if in sport, things impossible, for when calamity was so near, who would have thought chance would have brought us success? While I was blaming my jihva, the thief Jihva suddenly flung herself at my feet. Secret crimes manifest themselves by means of fear.” Thus thinking, he passed the night happily in the chamber. And in the morning he brought the king, by some skillful parade of pretended knowledge into the garden, and led him up to the treasure, which was buried under the pomegranate tree, and said that the thief had escaped with a part of it. Then the king was pleased, and gave him the revenue of many villages.

But the minister, named Devajnanin, whispered in the king’s ear, “How can a man possess such knowledge unattainable by men, without having studied the books of magic. You may be certain that this is a specimen of the way he makes a dishonest livelihood, by having a secret intelligence with thieves. It will be much better to test him by some new artifice.”

Then the king of his own accord brought a covered pitcher into which he had thrown a frog, and said to Harisarman, “Brahman, if you can guess what there is in this pitcher, I will do you great honor today.” When the Brahman Harisarman heard that, he thought that his last hour had come, and he called to mind the pet name of “Froggie” which his father had given him in his childhood in sport, and, impelled by luck, he called to himself by his pet name, lamenting his hard fate, and suddenly called out, “This is a fine pitcher for you, Froggie; it will soon become the swift destroyer of your helpless self.”

The people there, when they heard him say that, raised a shout of applause, because his speech chimed in so well with the object presented to him, and murmured, “Ah! A great sage, he knows even about the frog!”

Then the king, thinking that this was all due to knowledge of divination, was highly delighted, and gave Harisarman the revenue of more villages, with gold, an umbrella, and state carriages of all kinds. So Harisarman prospered in the world.

## **THE KING AND THE FOUR GIRLS**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Swynnerton, Charles. *Indian Nights' Entertainment: Folk-Tales from the Upper Indus*. London: Elliot Stock, 1892, 56–62.

**Date:** ca. 1890

**Original Source:** India

**National Origin:** India

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The following folktale represents the **formulaic** patterns of traditional narrative: four girls make four answers to the same question. Each is summoned before the king and interrogated in the same manner. The first three respond verbally. The fourth and most successful, however, turns the tables on the king in a variation of the well-known tale “The King’s [Emperor’s] New Clothes” (AT 1620).

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**T**here was once a king who, during the day, used to sit on his throne and dispense justice, but who at night was accustomed to disguise himself and to wander about the streets of his city looking for adventures.

One evening he was passing by a certain garden when he observed four young girls sitting under a tree, and conversing together in earnest tones. Curious to overhear the subject of their discourse, he stopped to listen.

The first said, “I think of all tastes the pleasantest in the world is the taste of meat.”

“I do not agree with you,” said the second. “There is nothing so good as the taste of wine.”

“No, no,” cried the third, “you are both mistaken, for of all tastes the sweetest is the taste of love.”

“Meat and wine and love are all doubtless sweet,” remarked the fourth girl. “But in my opinion nothing can equal the taste of telling lies.”

The girls then separated and went to their homes. And the king, who had listened to their remarks with lively interest and with much wonder, took note



of the houses into which they went, and, having marked each of the doors with chalk, he returned to his palace.

The next morning he called his vizier, and said to him, "Send to the narrow street, and bring before me the owners of the four houses, the doors of which have a round mark in chalk upon them."

The vizier at once went in person, and brought to the court the four men who lived in the houses to which the king had referred. Then said the king to them, "Have not you four men four daughters?"

"We have," answered they.

"Bring the girls hither before me," said the king.

But the men objected, saying, "It would be very wrong that our daughters should approach the palace of the king."

"Nay," said the king, "if the girls are your daughters, they are mine too, besides which, you can bring them privately."

So the king sent four separate litters, curtained in the usual manner, and the four girls were thus brought to the palace and conducted into a large reception room. Then he summoned them one by one to his presence as he required them.

To the first girl he said, "O daughter, what were you talking about last night when you sat with your companions under the tree?"

"I was not telling tales against you, O king," answered she.

"I do not mean that," said the king. "But I wish to know what you were saying."

"I merely said," replied she, "that the taste of meat was the pleasantest."

"Whose daughter, then, are you?" inquired the king.

"I am the daughter of a Bhábrá," answered she.

"But," said the king, "if you are one of the Bhábrá tribe, who never touch meat, what do you know of the taste of it? So strict are they, that when they drink water they put a cloth over the mouth of the vessel, lest they should swallow even an insect."

Then said the girl, "Yes, that is quite true, but, from my own observation, I think meat must be exceedingly pleasant to the palate. Near our house there is a butcher's shop, and I often notice that when people buy meat, none of it is wasted or thrown away. Therefore it must be precious. I also notice that, when people have eaten the flesh, the very bones are greedily seized upon by the dogs, nor do they leave them until they have picked them as clean as a lance head. And even after that, the crows come and carry them off, and when the crows have done with them, the very ants assemble together and swarm over them. Those are the reasons which prove that the taste of flesh-meat must be exceedingly pleasant."

The king, hearing her argument, was pleased, and said, "Yes, daughter, meat is very pleasant as food. Everyone likes it." And he sent her away with a handsome present.

The second girl was then introduced, and of her the king inquired likewise, "What were you talking about last night under the tree?"

"I said nothing about you, O king," answered she.

"That is true, but what did you say?" asked the king.

"What I said," replied she, "was that there was no taste like the taste of wine."

"But whose daughter are you?" continued the king.

"I am," said she, "the daughter of a priest."

"A good joke, forsooth," said the king, smiling. "Priests hate the very name of wine. Then, what do you know of the taste of it?"

Then said the girl, "It is true I never touch wine, but I can easily understand how pleasant it is. I learn my lessons on the top of my father's house. Below are the wine shops. One day I saw two men nicely dressed, who came with their servants to buy wine at those shops, and there they sat and drank. After a time they got up and went away, but they staggered about from side to side, and I thought to myself, 'Here are these fellows rolling about, knocking themselves against the wall on this side, and falling against the wall on that. Surely they will never drink wine again!' However, I was mistaken, for the next day they came again and did the very same thing, and I considered, 'Wine must be very delicious to the taste, or else these persons would never have returned for more of it.'"

Then said the king, "Yes, O daughter, you are right. The taste of wine is very pleasant." And, giving her also a handsome present, he sent her home.

When the third girl entered the room, the king asked her in like manner, "O daughter, what were you talking about last night under the tree?"

"O king," answered she, "I made no reference to you."

"Quite so," said the king, "but tell me what it was you were saying."

"I was saying," replied she, "that there is no taste in the world so sweet at the taste of love-making."

"But," said the king, "you are a very young girl. What can you know about love-making? Whose daughter are you?"

"I am the daughter of a bard," answered she. "It is true I am very young, but somehow I guess that love-making must be pleasant. My mother suffered so much when my little brother was born that she never expected to live. Yet, after a little time, she went back to her old ways and welcomed her lovers just the same as before. That is the reason I think that love-making must be so pleasant."

"What you say," observed the king, "cannot, O daughter, be justly denied." And he gave her a present equal in value to those of her friends and sent her, also, away.

When the fourth girl was introduced, the king put the same question to her, "Tell me what you and your companions talked about under the tree last night."

"It was not about the king," answered she.

“Nevertheless,” asked he, “what was it you said?”

“Those who tell lies, said I, must tell them because they find the practice agreeable,” replied she.

“Whose daughter are you?” inquired the king.

“I am the daughter of a farmer,” answered the girl.

“And what made you think there was pleasure in telling lies?” asked the king.

The girl answered saucily, “Oh, you yourself will tell lies someday!”

“How?” said the king. “What can you mean?”

The girl answered, “If you will give me two lacs of rupees, and six months to consider, I will promise to prove my words.”

So the king gave the girl the sum of money she asked for, and agreed to her conditions, sending her away with a present similar to those of the others.

After six months he called her to his presence again, and reminded her of her promise. Now, in the interval the girl had built a fine palace far away in the forest, upon which she had expended the wealth which the king had given to her. It was beautifully adorned with carvings and paintings, and furnished with silk and satin. So she now said to the king, “Come with me, and you shall see God.”

Taking with him two of his ministers, the king went out, and by the evening they all arrived at the palace.

“This palace is the abode of God,” said the girl. “But he will reveal himself only to one person at a time, and he will not reveal himself even to him unless he was born in lawful wedlock. Therefore, while the rest remain without, let each of you enter in order.”

“Be it so,” said the king. “But let my ministers precede me. I shall go in last.”

So the first minister passed through the door and at once found himself in a noble room, and as he looked around he said to himself, “Who knows whether I shall be permitted to see God or not? I may be a bastard. And yet this place, so spacious and so beautiful, is a fitting dwelling place even for the deity.” With all his looking and straining, however, he quite failed to see God anywhere. Then said he to himself, “If now I go out and declare that I have not seen God, the king and the other minister will throw it in my teeth that I am base-born. I have only one course open, therefore, which is to say that I have seen him.”

So he went out, and when the king asked, “Have you seen God?” he answered at once, “Of course I have seen God.”

“But have you really seen him?” continued the king.

“Really and truly,” answered the minister.

“And what did he say to you?” inquired the king further.

“God commanded me not to divulge his words,” readily answered the minister.

Then said the king to the other minister, “Now you go in.”

The second minister lost no time in obeying his master's order, thinking in his heart as he crossed the threshold, "I wonder if I am base-born?" Finding himself in the midst of the magnificent chamber, he gazed about him on all sides, but failed to see God. Then said he to himself, "It is very possible I am base-born, for no God can I see. But it would be a lasting disgrace that I should admit it. I had better make out that I also have seen God."

Accordingly, he returned to the king, who said to him, "Well, have you seen God?" when the minister asserted that he had not only seen him, but that he had spoken with him too.

It was now the turn of the king, and he entered the room confident that he would be similarly favored. But he gazed around in dismay, perceiving no sign of anything which could even represent the Almighty. Then began he to think to himself, "This God, wherever he is, has been seen by both my ministers, and it cannot be denied, therefore, that their birthright is clear. Is it possible that I, the king, am a bastard, seeing that no God appears to me? The very thought is confusion, and necessity will compel me to assert that I have seen him too."

Having formed this resolution, the king stepped out and joined the rest of his party.

"And now, O king," asked the cunning girl, "have you also seen God?"

"Yes," answered he with assurance, "I have seen God."

"Really?" asked she again.

"Certainly," asserted the king.

Three times the girl asked the same question, and three times the king unblushingly lied. Then said the girl, "O king, have you never a conscience? How could you possibly see God, seeing that God is a spirit?"

Hearing this reproof, the king recalled to mind the saying of the girl that one day he would lie too, and, with a laugh, he confessed that he had not seen God at all. The two ministers, beginning to feel alarmed, confessed the truth as well.

Then said the girl, "O king, we poor people may tell lies occasionally to save our lives, but what had you to fear? Telling lies, therefore, for many has its own attractions, and to them at least the taste of lying is sweet."

Far from being offended at the stratagem which the girl had practiced on him, the king was so struck with her ingenuity and assurance that he married her forthwith, and in a short time she became his confidential adviser in all his affairs, public as well as private. Thus this simple girl came to great honor and renown, and so much did she grow in wisdom that her fame spread through many lands.

## **DIAMOND CUT DIAMOND**

**Tradition Bearer:** Major Campbell Feroshepore

**Source:** Lang, Andrew. *The Olive Fairy Book*. London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1907, 144–151.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** India

**National Origin:** India

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The title “Diamond Cut Diamond” of the following tale is roughly equivalent to the English proverb: “It takes a thief to catch a thief.” The tale is similar to “The Youth in the Land of Cheaters” (AT 978) by virtue of the fact that not only the villain of the narrative, Beeka Mull, but also the shop owners and even the victim’s savior Kooshy Ram are rascals. The Punjab area from which the tale was collected lies on the border between Pakistan and India. The name Kooshy Ram suggests an Indian (Hindu) rather than Pakistani (Muslim) setting for the tale.

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**I**n a village in Hindustan there once lived a merchant who, although he rose early, worked hard, and rested late, remained very poor; and ill-luck so dogged him that he determined at last to go to some distant country and there to try his fortune. Twelve years passed by; his luck had turned, and now he had gathered great wealth, so that having plenty to keep him in comfort for the rest of his days, he thought once more of his native village, where he desired to spend the remainder of his life among his own people. In order to carry his riches with him in safety over the many weary miles that lay between him and his home, he bought some magnificent jewels, which he locked up in a little box and wore concealed upon his person; and, so as not to draw the attention of the thieves who infested the highways and made their living by robbing travelers, he started off in the poor clothes of a man who has nothing to lose.

Thus prepared, he traveled quickly, and within a few days’ journey from his own village came to a city where he determined to buy better garments and—now that he was no longer afraid of thieves—to look more like the rich man he had become. In his new raiment he approached the city, and near the great gate he found a bazaar where, amongst many shops filled with costly silks, and carpets, and goods of all countries, was one finer than all the rest. There, amidst his goods, spread out to the best advantage, sat the owner smoking a long silver pipe, and thither the merchant bent his steps, and, saluting the owner politely, sat down also and began to make some purchases.

Now, the proprietor of the shop, Beeka Mull by name, was a very shrewd man, and as he and the merchant conversed, he soon felt sure that his customer was richer than he seemed, and was trying to conceal the fact. Certain purchases having been made, he invited the new-corner to refresh himself, and in a short time they were chatting pleasantly together. In the course of the conversation

Beeka Mull asked the merchant whither he was traveling, and hearing the name of the village, he observed,

“Ah, you had better be careful on that road—it’s a very bad place for thieves.”

The merchant turned pale at these words. It would be such a bitter thing, he thought, just at the end of his journey to be robbed of all the fortune he had heaped up with such care.

But this bland and prosperous Beeka Mull must surely know best, so presently he said, “Lala-ji, [a complimentary title equivalent to “Dear sir”] could you oblige me by locking up for me a small box for a short while? When once I get to my village I could bring back half-a-dozen sturdy men of my own kinsfolk and claim it again.”

The Lala shook his head. “I could not do it,” replied he. “I am sorry; but such things are not my business. I should be afraid to undertake it.”

“But,” pleaded the merchant, “I know no one in this city, and you must surely have some place where you keep your own precious things. Do this, I pray you, as a great favor.”

Still Beeka Mull politely but firmly refused; but the merchant, feeling that he had now betrayed the fact that he was richer than he seemed, and being loath to make more people aware of it by inquiring elsewhere, continued to press him, until at last he consented. The merchant produced the little box of jewels, and Beeka Mull locked it up for him in a strong chest with other precious stones; and so, with many promises and compliments, they parted.

In a place like an Eastern bazaar, where the shops lie with wide open fronts, and with their goods displayed not only within but without on terraces and verandahs raised a few feet above the public roadway, such a long talk as that between Beeka Mull and the merchant could not but attract some attention from the other shop-keepers in the narrow street. If the merchant had but known it, nearly every shop-owner in that district was a thief, and the cleverest and biggest of all was Beeka Mull. But he did not know it, only he could not help feeling a little uneasy at having thus parted with all his wealth to a stranger. And so, as he wandered down the street, making a purchase here and there, he managed in one way and another to ask some questions about the honesty of Beeka Mull, and each rascal whom he spoke to, knowing that there was some good reason in the question, and hoping to get in return some share of the spoils, replied in praise of Beeka Mull as a model of all the virtues.

In this way the merchant’s fears were stilled, and, with a comparatively light heart, he traveled on to his village; and within a week or so returned to the city with half-a-dozen sturdy young nephews and friends whom he had enlisted to help him carry home his precious box.

At the great market-place in the center of the city the merchant left his friends, saying that he would go and get the box of jewels and rejoin them, to which they consented, and away he went. Arrived at the shop of Beeka Mull, he went up and saluted him.

“Good-day, Lala-ji,” said he. But the Lala pretended not to see him. So he repeated the salutation.

“What do you want?” snapped Beeka Mull, “you’ve said your “good-day” twice, why don’t you tell me your business?”

“Don’t you remember me?” asked the merchant.

“Remember you?” growled the other, “no, why should I? I have plenty to do to remember good customers without trying to remember every beggar who comes whining for charity.”

When he heard this the merchant began to tremble. “Lala-ji!” he cried, “surely you remember me and the little box I gave you to take care of? And you promised—yes, indeed, you promised very kindly—that I might return to claim it, and ...”

“You scoundrel,” roared Beeka Mull, “get out of my shop! Be off with you, you impudent scamp! Every one knows that I never keep treasures for anyone; I have trouble enough to do to keep my own! Come, off with you!” With that he began to push the merchant out of the shop; and, when the poor man resisted, two of the bystanders came to Beeka Mull’s help, and flung the merchant out into the road, like a bale of goods dropped from a camel. Slowly he picked himself up out of the dust, bruised, battered, and bleeding, but feeling nothing of the pain in his body, nothing but a dreadful numbing sensation that, after all, he was ruined and lost! Slowly he dragged himself a little further from where the fat and furious Beeka Mull still stood amongst his disordered silks and carpets, and coming to a friendly wall he crouched and leant against it, and putting his head into his hands gave himself up to an agony of misery and despair.

There he sat motionless, like one turned to stone, whilst darkness fell around him; and when, about eleven o’clock that night, a certain gay young fellow named Kooshy Ram passed by with a friend, he saw the merchant sitting hunched against the wall, and remarked, “A thief, no doubt.”

“You are wrong,” returned the other, “thieves don’t sit in full view of people like that, even at night.” And so the two passed on, and thought no more of him. About five o’clock next morning Kooshy Ram was returning home again, when, to his astonishment, he saw the miserable merchant still sitting as he had seen him sit hours before. Surely something must be the matter with a man who sat all night in the open street, and Kooshy Ram resolved to see what it was; so he went up and shook the merchant gently by the shoulder. “Who are you?” asked he “and what are you doing here—are you ill?”

“Ill?” said the merchant in a hollow voice, “yes; ill with a sickness for which there is no medicine.”

“Oh, nonsense!” cried Kooshy Ram. “Come along with me, I know a medicine that will cure you, I think.” So the young man seized the merchant by the arm, and hoisting him to his feet, dragged him to his own lodging; where he first of all gave him a large glass of wine, and then, after he had refreshed him with food, bade him tell his adventures.

Meanwhile the merchant's companions in the market-place, being dull-witted persons, thought that as he did not return he must have gone home by himself; and as soon as they were tired of waiting they went back to their village and left him to look after his own affairs. He would therefore have fared badly had it not been for his rescuer, Kooshy Ram, who, whilst still a boy, had been left a great deal of money with no one to advise him how to spend it. He was high-spirited, kind-hearted, and shrewd into the bargain; but he threw away his money like water, and generally upon the nearest thing or person in his way, and that, alas! Most often was himself! Now, however, he had taken it into his head to befriend this miserable merchant, and he meant to do it; and on his side the merchant felt confidence revive, and without further ado told all that had happened.

Kooshy Ram laughed heartily at the idea of any stranger entrusting his wealth to Beeka Mull.

"Why, he is the greatest rascal in the city," he cried, "unless you believe what some of them say of me! Well, there is nothing to be done for the present, but just to stay here quietly, and I think that at the end of a short time I shall find a medicine which will heal your sickness." At this the merchant again took courage, and a little ease crept into his heart as he gratefully accepted his new friend's invitation.

A few days later Kooshy Ram sent for some friends to see him, and talked with them long, and, although the merchant did not hear the conversation, he did hear shouts of laughter as though at some good joke; but the laughter echoed dully in his own heart, for the more he considered the more he despaired of ever recovering his fortune from the grasp of Beeka Mull.

One day, soon after this, Kooshy Ram came to him and said, "You remember the wall where I found you that night, near Beeka Mull's shop?"

"Yes, indeed I do," answered the merchant.

"Well," continued Kooshy Ram, "this afternoon you must go and stand in that same spot and watch; and when someone gives you a signal, you must go up to Beeka Mull and salute him and say, 'Oh, Lala-ji, will you kindly let me have back that box of mine which you have on trust?'"

"What's the use of that?" asked the merchant. "He won't do it any more now than he would when I asked him before."

"Never mind!" replied Kooshy Ram, "do exactly what I tell you, and repeat exactly what I say, word for word, and I will answer for the rest."

So, that afternoon, the merchant at a certain time went and stood by the wall as he was told. He noticed that Beeka Mull saw him, but neither took any heed of the other. Presently up the bazaar came a gorgeous palanquin like those in which ladies of rank are carried about. It was borne by four bearers well dressed in rich liveries, and its curtains and trappings were truly magnificent. In attendance was a grave-looking personage whom the merchant recognized as one of the friends who visited Kooshy Ram; and behind him came a servant with a box covered with a cloth upon his head.



The palanquin was borne along at a smart pace and was set down at Beeka Mull's shop. The fat shop-keeper was on his feet at once, and bowed deeply as the gentleman in attendance advanced.

"May I inquire," he said, "who this is in the palanquin that deigns to favor my humble shop with a visit? And what may I do for her?"

The gentleman, after whispering at the curtain of the palanquin, explained that this was a relative of his who was traveling, but as her husband could go no further with her, she desired to leave with Beeka Mull a box of jewels for safe custody. Lala bowed again to the ground. "It was not," he said, "quite in his way of business; but of course, if he could please the lady, he would be most happy, and would guard the box with his life." Then the servant carrying the box was called up; the box was unlocked, and a mass of jeweler laid open to the gaze of the enraptured Lala, whose mouth watered as he turned over the rich gems.

All this the merchant had watched from the distance, and now he saw—could he be mistaken? No, he distinctly saw a hand beckoning through the curtain on that side of the palanquin away from the shop. "The signal! Was this the signal?" thought he. The hand beckoned again, impatiently it seemed to him. So forward he went, very quietly, and saluting Beeka Mull, who was sitting turning over the contents of this amazing box of jewels which fortune and some fools were putting into his care, he said:

"Oh, Lala-ji, will you kindly let me have back that box of mine which you have on trust?"

The Lala looked up as though he had been stung; but quickly the thought flashed through his mind that if this man began making a fuss again he would lose the confidence of these new and richer customers; so he controlled himself, and answered:

"Dear me, of course, yes! I had forgotten all about it." And he went off and brought the little box and put it into the merchant's trembling hands. Quickly the latter pulled out the key, which hung by a string round his neck, and opened the box; and when he saw that his treasures were all there he rushed into the road, and, with the box under his arm, began dancing like a madman, with great shouts and screams of laughter. Just then a messenger came running up and, saluting the gentleman attending the palanquin, he said, "The lady's husband has returned, and is prepared to travel with her, so that there is no necessity to deposit the jewels." Whereat the gentleman quickly closed and re-locked the box, and handed it back to the waiting servant.

Then from the palanquin came a yell of laughter, and out jumped—not a lady—but Kooshy Ram, who immediately ran and joined the merchant in the middle of the road and danced as madly as he. Beeka Mull stood and stared stupidly at them; then, with a shrill cackle of laughter, he flung off his turban, bounced out into the road with the other two, and fell to dancing and snapping his fingers until he was out of breath.

“Lala-ji,” said the gentleman who had played the part of the relative attendant on the palanquin, “why do you dance? The merchant dances because he has recovered his fortune; Kooshy Ram dances because he is a madman and has tricked you; but why do you dance?”

“I dance,” panted Beeka Ram, glaring at him with a bloodshot eye, “I dance because I knew thirteen different ways of deceiving people by pretending confidence in them. I didn’t know there were any more, and now here’s a fourteenth! That’s why I dance!”

# NAGA

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## WHY MEN AND TIGERS ARE ENEMIES

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Hutton, H. "Folktales of the Angami Nagas of Assam." *Folklore* 25 (1914): 486–487.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Angami

**National Origin:** Nagaland (India)

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The Angami are one of the major tribes of Nagaland, India. Nagaland is located in far northeastern India, on the border of Myanmar (Burma) and India. Statehood was officially to Nagaland in 1963. The Angamis are farmers raising their rice cops on irrigated terraces. The following **myth** explains the nature and origin of the relationships among human beings, the spirits that populate their cultural landscape, and tigers.

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**M**an, the tiger, and the spirit (*terhuma*) were brothers, sons of one woman. The man used to attend on his mother and bathe her, but the tiger was always grumbling in the house and giving trouble to everyone. The man used to cook his food, the tiger ate his raw, and the spirit merely had his smoke-dried.

At last the mother was tired of these family squabbles and set up a mark made of grass in the jungle. She said, "Whoever touches the mark first shall live in villages, the loser in the jungle."

Then the spirit said to the man, "I will shoot over the mark with an arrow, and you can say that you touched it first." So when they had run a little way, the man called out, "I am touching the mark," and just then the spirit shot an

arrow and made the mark move. Thus the tiger was deceived and went off to the jungle, where he lives to this day.

After this the man sent the cat to the tiger to say, "At all events you are my brother. Whenever you kill a deer put aside a leg for me."

But the cat muddled the message, and said, "Whenever you kill a deer put it aside for the man."

The tiger was angry, and since that time men and tigers are at enmity. All the same, they are brothers, and when a man happens to kill a tiger, he will say in his village, "The gods have killed a tiger in the jungle"; not "I have killed it." If he said he had killed it, all the other tigers would say, "This man has killed his brother," and would try to devour him. What makes the tiger eat men is that when he sees them lifting great stones, which he cannot do, he thinks they must be mightily strong.

Among the Angamis old men and some young men eat the flesh of tigers and leopards. But a Sema Naga will not touch it, as he looks on men and tigers as of one blood.

## **THE TALE OF AN OGRESS**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Hutton, H. "Folktales of the Angami Nagas of Assam." *Folklore* 25 (1914): 492–493.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Angami

**National Origin:** Nagaland (India)

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In the following tale, the boys fall into their desperate situation because they violate the norms of Angami society. They are orphans living apart from the village in the bush. In addition, rather than farming, they snare wild animal food. Only magic saves them in the end. Therefore, the narrative serves a **cautionary** function.

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Once upon a time there were two orphan boys who did not know how to till the fields and lived by snaring birds. An ogress used to come and eat the birds' heads. One day they saw her and asked her why she did this.

She answered, "I had forgotten you. Come and live with me and I will treat you kindly." Now the land of these cannibals is surrounded by a deep river, but the ogress knew a charm by which she crossed it, and so they came to her home. She left the elder boy outside, but she put the younger in the room where she kept her charms.

When the boys went to sleep the husband of the ogress said, “Let us kill and eat.”

But she felt the little boy and said, “He is not fat enough.”

This happened on several nights, and the boy heard what she said. So one morning he said to his brother, “Her husband wants to eat us. He must be a cannibal.”

But the elder brother said that the pair loved them, and would do them no harm.

The little boy said, “You tell her husband that you have such a bad stomach ache that you cannot sleep outside.” So that night the elder boy slept in the house. In the night he heard the ogress discussing whether the boys were fat enough to eat. So the boys arranged to escape.

The younger took the charm of the ogress, and by this means they succeeded in crossing the river. As the ogress had lost her charm she could not pursue them and they got home safely.

## THE CLEVER ORPHAN

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Hutton, H. “Folktales of the Angami Nagas of Assam.” *Folklore* 25 (1914): 496–497.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Angami

**National Origin:** Nagaland (India)

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The “orphan boy” serves as a **trickster** figure in many Angami tales. His tricks often involve a play-on-words such as his calling his fireplace “grandmother.” This trick is an allusion to an Angami maxim that “The sky is my father and the earth my mother.” The Angami fireplace is only three rough stones that support the cooking pot. Hutton suggests that the tales of the orphan boy were adapted from Hindu sources rather than being indigenous to the Nagas (497).

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Once there was an orphan boy who was very poor. He went to the Chief’s village and heard that he had a daughter fit to be married.

So he said to the Chief, “How dark your house is!”

The Chief asked, “What is your house like?”

“Mine,” he said, “is transparent, and I can see the sky from anywhere inside.”

When the Chief was eating his dinner the boy asked, “Is that the only dish you have?”

“Yes,” said the Chief, “but what about yours?”

“When I have done eating,” said the boy, “I throw away the old dish and get a new one every time.”

Then he asked the Chief, “Are these the only cows you have?”

“Yes,” he replied, “and how many have you?”

“My house is so full of cattle that some of them have to stay outside.”

Then the boy saw the Chief’s grandmother riding a horse. “Why do you let your grandmother get so cold?”

“What do you do with your grandmother?” asked the Chief.

“Oh! She always sits warming herself at the fire.”

The Chief was convinced that he was a great man, so he gave him his daughter, and she went home with her husband.

But when she saw his house she laughed, and said, “Why, this house is not transparent. We can’t see the sky from inside!”

“Oh, yes, we can,” and he pointed to the holes in the roof.

“And what about your plates?”

“I have none, but I make a new leaf platter every time I dine.”

“And what about your cattle?”

“I have only one cow, and she lies half inside the house and half outside!”

“And your grandmother!”

“My grandmother is my fire-place,” he answered.

Then his wife was so ashamed at the way she had been taken in, that she wrote to her father not to come to visit her for seven years. She sent her husband to her father to borrow some money. When he got the money he purchased a lot of rubbish and stored it in his house.

“What is the use of that?” asked his wife.

“You will see by and by,” he replied, and went and borrowed more money, which he spent in the same way. The third time he brought gold, made a number of sling-pellets of clay and gilded them all over. These he sold to the people from whom he had bought the rubbish. After a time they found they had been cheated, and complained to the Chief. He sent for his son-in-law and asked him what he meant.

“Yes, O Chief, I did what they say, but when I borrowed money from you they sold me rubbish for it. So I in turn sold them mud-pellets covered with gold.”

The Chief asked the people, “Did you really sell him rubbish for gold?”

They admitted the fact, and the Chief said, “Serve you right!” So the orphan boy prospered and became in time a wealthy man.

## **THE RAT PRINCESS AND THE GREEDY MAN**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Hutton, H. “Folktales of the Angami Nagas of Assam.” *Folklore* 25 (1914): 494–495.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Angami

**National Origin:** Nagaland (India)

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The following narrative is an Angami **variant** of the internationally distributed “Stronger and Strongest” (AT 2031).

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One day a man was going to his field, and on the way he caught a rat. He brought it home and put it in a box, and when later on he went to look at it he found the rat had turned into a beautiful girl.

When he saw her he said to himself, “If I could marry her to the richest man in the world I should become a rich man myself.” So he went to find the greatest man in the world, and he came to the Chief.

He said, “You are the greatest man in the world, and you had better marry her.”

But the Chief said, “I should like to marry her, but you say that she must marry the greatest man in the world. Now I am weaker than water, because if I go into a river in flood it carries me away. Hence water is stronger than I am.”

The man went to Water, and spoke to it as he had spoken to the Chief. But Water said, “I am not the strongest, for when I am still Wind comes and blows me into waves. Wind is greater than I am.” So the man went to Wind,

But Wind said, “Mountain is stronger than I, because, blow as hard as I can, I cannot stir it.” So he went to Mountain, who said, “Yes, I am stronger than most things, but even a rat can pierce my side when he pleases. Hence the rat is greater than I.” The man knew no where else to go, so he came home, and he found the girl turned into a rat as she was before.

## ANIMAL TALES

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Hutton, H. “Folktales of the Angami Nagas of Assam.” *Folklore* 25 (1914): 490–529.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Angami

**National Origin:** Nagaland (India)

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Commonly, **animal tales** serve as **fables**. They convey a moral, in many cases as a succinct statement at the tale’s conclusion. Of the Naga examples below, “A Tale of a Snake” and “The Boiled Crab” clearly fulfill

this expectation. The “Monkey and the Jackal” operates as a **trickster** tale, with the two central characters alternating the roles of trickster and dupe. “The Birds and the Snakes,” however, seems neither to teach nor to allow tricksters to show their skills. The author suggests that the tale is a borrowed fragment from the anthology of Buddhist fables *The Jataka*.

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## A Tale of a Snake

One day a girl went to work in the field, and on her way she met a snake on the path. The snake would not let her pass until she said, “Do not bite me and I will marry you.” So at last she said it, and the snake let her go and afterwards married her.

Then he bit her in the breast and ornaments grew there, and he bit her in the leg and she got leggings. Another girl saw this, and she too met a snake.

To him she said Let us marry.” So she took him and put him in her basket, but he said nothing, and bit her in the arm so that she died.

## The Boiled Crab

One day a little bird went to work in her field, and called all her companions to help her. Among them came the crab. At noon the little bird called her friends from the field to the field-house. She put a pot on the fire, and perching on the rim laid an egg into the pot for each of her friends to eat.

The next day they all went to work in the crab’s field. He brought nothing for dinner, because he had seen what the little bird had done, and meant to imitate her. When the pot was boiling in the field-house, he perched on the rim and tried to lay an egg, but he fell in and was boiled to death.

Meanwhile his friends were hoping he would ask them to dinner. But as they got tired of waiting, one of them went into the field-house and saw the crab boiled in the pot. He went and told the others. So they all came and ate the crab.

## The Birds and the Snakes

Once upon a time a lizard and a little bird went shares in a well. Whenever the lizard went to draw water he used to make the well muddy. The bird complained, but the lizard would not listen to him.

At last the lizard said, “Go and call all your birds, and I will go and call all the reptiles under yon tree.” So they each called their people, and there was a great fight. The birds flew down and carried away all the snakes, save one, a big fellow, whom they feared. Now he was the priest of the snakes. The crow caught him in his beak, but he dropped him on a stone, and immediately a lot of snakes were produced.



The birds were afraid, but the little bird went to the biggest of all birds and said, "Come and kill the priest snake."

He said, "But who will feed my young?"

"I will," said the little bird. Then the big bird swooped and killed the snake.

## The Monkey and the Jackal

One day a monkey and a jackal met in the jungle, and the jackal said, "I wish I were a monkey, able to climb trees and get any fruit I like."

The monkey replied, "I wish I were a jackal, and able to go into men's houses and get rice and meat and chickens and anything else I wanted."

Then the monkey said, "Let us each bring the best food we can get, and see whose is the better."

When they met the monkey said, "Please give me your food first." The jackal put it into the monkey's hand, and he ran up the tree, ate it all, and gave nothing in return to the jackal.

The jackal was very angry, and went off muttering, "I will make you pay for that." So he went and stopped at a patch of wild yams which looked very tasty.

The monkey came up and asked, "What are you doing?"

"I am only eating the Sahib's [used as a respectful term for a male European in colonial India] sugar cane, and it is very sweet."

"Please give me some," said the monkey.

"But the Sahib will be angry."

"Oh, no, he won't," said the monkey.

"Well, come and pick some for yourself." He picked a yam, peeled it, and began to eat it. But it burnt his mouth, and his lips swelled so that he could hardly speak.

Then the monkey went to a bees' nest and said to the jackal, "Don't bite that."

But the jackal would not mind, and the monkey said, "All right! But don't touch it till I get behind the hill."

When the monkey was out of sight, the jackal bit the nest, and the bees came out and stung him badly. Then the jackal went and lay down in some reeds which concealed a stream of water.

"What are you doing?" asked the monkey.

"I am watching the Sahib's clothes."

"I am coming to help you," said the monkey.

"Don't," said the jackal.

But the monkey jumped down and fell into the water under the reeds and was drowned.

# PAKISTAN

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## RAJA RASALU

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Jacobs, Joseph. *Indian Fairy Tales*. London: David Nutt, 1912, 136–149.

**Date:** 1912

**Original Source:** Punjabi

**National Origin:** Pakistan

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Raja Rasalu is the chief hero of Punjabi **legend**. According to popular tradition, he was the son of Sâlivâhana (Salabhan in the following tale) who established the Saka (Scythians of east central Asia) in the first century C.E. According to the legend **cycle** that grew up around Raja Rasalu, he had a brother (Puran) who was killed by a wicked step-mother. The familiar **motifs** of the helpful dead man, the grateful animals, gambling for life, and the magical objects that appear in this narrative are internationally distributed. The sections of verse that are interspersed throughout the following account give the tale an epic tone.

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Once there lived a great Raja, whose name was Salabhan, and he had a Queen, by name Lona, who, though she wept and prayed at many a shrine, had never a child to gladden her eyes. After a long time, however, a son was promised to her.

Queen Lona returned to the palace, and when the time for the birth of the promised son drew nigh, she inquired of three Jogis [yogis] who came begging to her gate, what the child's fate would be, and the youngest of them answered and said, "Oh, Queen! The child will be a boy, and he will live to be a great man.

But for twelve years you must not look upon his face, for if either you or his father see it before the twelve years are past, you will surely die! This is what you must do; as soon as the child is born you must send him away to a cellar underneath the ground, and never let him see the light of day for twelve years. After they are over, he may come forth, bathe in the river, put on new clothes, and visit you. His name shall be Raja Rasalu, and he shall be known far and wide.”

So, when a fair young Prince was in due time born into the world, his parents hid him away in an underground palace, with nurses, and servants, and everything else a King’s son might desire. And with him they sent a young colt, born the same day, and sword, spear, and shield, against the day when Raja Rasalu should go forth into the world.

So there the child lived, playing with his colt, and talking to his parrot, while the nurses taught him all things needful for a King’s son to know.

Young Rasalu lived on, far from the light of day, for eleven long years, growing tall and strong, yet contented to remain playing with his colt, and talking to his parrot; but when the twelfth year began, the lad’s heart leapt up with desire for change, and he loved to listen to the sounds of life which came to him in his palace-prison from the outside world.

“I must go and see where the voices come from!” he said; and when his nurses told him he must not go for one year more, he only laughed aloud, saying, “Nay! I stay no longer here for any man!”

Then he saddled his Arab horse Bhaunr, put on his shining armor, and rode forth into the world; but, mindful of what his nurses had oft told him, when he came to the river, he dismounted, and, going into the water, washed himself and his clothes.

Then, clean of raiment, fair of face, and brave of heart, he rode on his way until he reached his father’s city. There he sat down to rest awhile by a well, where the women were drawing water in earthen pitchers. Now, as they passed him, their full pitchers poised upon their heads, the gay young prince flung stones at the earthen vessels, and broke them all. Then the women, drenched with water, went weeping and wailing to the palace, complaining to the King that a mighty young Prince in shining armor, with a parrot on his wrist and a gallant steed beside him, sat by the well, and broke their pitchers.

Now, as soon as Raja Salabhan heard this, he guessed at once that it was Prince Rasalu come forth before the time, and, mindful of the Jogis’ words that he would die if he looked on his son’s face before twelve years were past, he did not dare to send his guards to seize the offender and bring him to be judged. So he bade the women be comforted, and take pitchers of iron and brass, giving new ones from the treasury to those who did not possess any of their own.

But when Prince Rasalu saw the women returning to the well with pitchers of iron and brass, he laughed to himself, and drew his mighty bow till the sharp-pointed arrows pierced the metal vessels as though they had been clay.

Yet still the King did not send for him, so he mounted his steed and set off in the pride of his youth and strength to the palace. He strode into the audience hall, where his father sat trembling, and saluted him with all reverence; but Raja Salabhan, in fear of his life, turned his back hastily and said never a word in reply.

Then Prince Rasalu called scornfully to him across the hall:

I came to greet thee, King, and not to harm thee!  
What have I done that thou shouldst turn away?  
Scepter and empire have no power to charm me—  
I go to seek a worthier prize than they!

Then he strode away, full of bitterness and anger; but as he passed under the palace windows, he heard his mother weeping, and the sound softened his heart, so that his wrath died down, and a great loneliness fell upon him, because he was spurned by both father and mother.

So he cried sorrowfully,

Oh heart crown'd with grief, hast thou nought  
But tears for thy son?  
Art mother of mine? Give one thought  
To my life just begun!

And Queen Lona answered through her tears:

Yea! mother am I, though I weep,  
So hold this word sure—  
Go, reign king of all men, but keep  
Thy heart good and pure!

So Raja Rasalu was comforted, and began to make ready for fortune. He took with him his horse Bhaunr and his parrot, both of whom had lived with him since he was born. So they made a goodly company, and Queen Lona, when she saw them going, watched them from her window till she saw nothing but a cloud of dust on the horizon; then she bowed her head on her hands and wept, saying:

Oh! son who ne'er gladdened mine eyes,  
Let the cloud of thy going arise,  
Dim the sunlight and darken the day;  
For the mother whose son is away  
Is as dust!

Rasalu had started off to play chaupur [a game essentially like pachisi] with King Sarkap. And as he journeyed there came a fierce storm of thunder and

lightning, so that he sought shelter, and found none save an old graveyard, where a headless corpse lay upon the ground; So lonesome was it that even the corpse seemed company, and Rasalu, sitting down beside it, said:

There is no one here, nor far nor near,  
 Save this breathless corpse so cold and grim;  
 Would God he might come to life again,  
 'Twould be less lonely to talk to him.

And immediately the headless corpse arose and sat beside Raja Rasalu. And he, nothing astonished, said to it:

The storm beats fierce and loud,  
 The clouds rise thick in the west;  
 What ails thy grave and shroud,  
 Oh corpse! That thou canst not rest?

Then the headless corpse replied:

On earth I was even as thou,  
 My turban awry like a king,  
 My head with the highest, I trow,  
 Having my fun and my fling,  
 Fighting my foes like a brave,  
 Living my life with a swing.  
 And, now I am dead,  
 Sins, heavy as lead,  
 Will give me no rest in my grave!

So the night passed on, dark and dreary, while Rasalu sat in the graveyard and talked to the headless corpse. Now when morning broke and Rasalu said he must continue his journey, the headless corpse asked him whither he was going, and when he said "to play chaupur with King Sarkap," the corpse begged him to give up the idea saying, "I am King Sarkap's brother, and I know his ways. Every day, before breakfast, he cuts off the heads of two or three men, just to amuse himself. One day no one else was at hand, so he cut off mine, and he will surely cut off yours on some pretence or another. However, if you are determined to go and play chaupur with him, take some of the bones from this graveyard, and make your dice out of them, and then the enchanted dice with which my brother plays will lose their virtue. Otherwise he will always win."

So Rasalu took some of the bones lying about, and fashioned them into dice, and these he put into his pocket. Then, bidding adieu to the headless corpse, he went on his way to play chaupur with the King.

Now, as Raja Rasalu, tender-hearted and strong, journeyed along to play chaupur with the King, he came to a burning forest, and a voice rose from the fire saying, "Oh, traveler! for God's sake save me from the fire!"

Then the Prince turned towards the burning forest, and, lo! the voice was the voice of a tiny cricket. Nevertheless, Rasalu, tender-hearted and strong, snatched it from the fire and set it at liberty. Then the little creature, full of gratitude, pulled out one of its feelers, and giving it to its preserver, said, "Keep this, and should you ever be in trouble, put it into the fire, and instantly I will come to your aid."

The Prince smiled, saying, "What help could *you* give *me*?" Nevertheless, he kept the hair and went on his way.

Now, when he reached the city of King Sarkap, seventy maidens, daughters of the King, came out to meet him—seventy fair maidens, merry and careless, full of smiles and laughter; but one, the youngest of them all, when she saw the gallant young Prince riding on Bhaunr Iraqi, going gaily to his doom, was filled with pity, and called to him saying:

Fair Prince, on the charger so gray,  
Turn thee back! Turn thee back!  
Or lower thy lance for the fray;  
Thy head will be forfeit today!  
Dost love life? Then, stranger, I pray,  
Turn thee back! Turn thee back!

But he, smiling at the maiden, answered lightly:

Fair maiden, I come from afar,  
Sworn conqueror in love and in war!  
King Sarkap my coming will rue,  
His head in four pieces I'll hew;  
Then forth as a bridegroom I'll ride,  
With you, little maid, as my bride!

Now when Rasalu replied so gallantly, the maiden looked in his face, and seeing how fair he was, and how brave and strong, she straightway fell in love with him, and would gladly have followed him through the world.

But the other sixty-nine maidens, being jealous, laughed scornfully at her, saying, "Not so fast, oh gallant warrior! If you would marry our sister you must first do our bidding, for you will be our younger brother."

"Fair sisters!" quoth Rasalu gaily, "give me my task and I will perform it."

So the sixty-nine maidens mixed a hundredweight of millet seed with a hundredweight of sand, and giving it to Rasalu, bade him separate the seed from the sand.

Then he bethought him of the cricket, and drawing, the feeler from his pocket, thrust it into the fire. And immediately there was a whirring noise in the air, and a great flight of crickets alighted beside him, and amongst them the cricket whose life he had saved.

Then Rasalu said, "Separate the millet seed from the sand."

"Is that all?" quoth the cricket, "had I known how small a job you wanted me to do, I would not have assembled so many of my brethren."

With that the flight of crickets set to work, and in one night they separated the seed from the sand.

Now when the sixty-nine fair maidens, daughters of the king, saw that Rasalu had performed his task, they set him another, bidding him swing them all, one by one, in their swings, until they were tired.

Whereupon he laughed, saying, "There are seventy of you, counting my little bride yonder, and I am not going to spend my life swinging girls! Why, by the time I have given each of you a swing, the first will be wanting another! No! If you want a swing, get in, all seventy of you, into one swing, and then I'll see what can be done."

So the seventy maidens climbed into one swing, and Raja Rasalu, standing in his shining armor, fastened the ropes to his mighty bow, and drew it up to its fullest bent. Then he let go, and like an arrow the swing shot into the air, with its burden of seventy fair maidens, merry and careless, full of smiles and laughter.

But as it swung back again, Rasalu, standing there in his shining armor, drew his sharp sword and severed, the ropes. Then the seventy fair maidens fell to the ground headlong; and some were bruised and some broken, but the only one who escaped unhurt was the maiden who loved Rasalu, for she fell out last, on the top of the others, and so came to no harm.

After this, Rasalu strode on fifteen paces, till he came to the seventy drums, that every one who came to play chaupur with the King had to beat in turn; and he beat them so loudly that he broke them all. Then he came to the seventy gongs, all in a row, and he hammered them so hard that they cracked to pieces.

Seeing this, the youngest Princess, who was the only one who could run, fled to her father the King in a great fright, saying:

A mighty Prince, Sarkap! making havoc, rides along,  
He swung us, seventy maidens fair, and threw us out headlong;  
He broke the drums you placed there and the gongs too in his pride,  
Sure, he will kill thee, father mine, and take me for his bride!

But King Sarkap replied scornfully:

Silly maiden, thy words make a lot  
Of a very small matter;

For fear of my valor, I wot,  
His armor will clatter.  
As soon as I've eaten my bread  
I'll go forth and cut off his head!

Notwithstanding these brave and boastful words, he was in reality very much afraid, having heard of Rasalu's renown. And learning that he was stopping at the house of an old woman in the city, till the hour for playing chaupur arrived, Sarkap sent slaves to him with trays of sweetmeats and fruit, as to an honored guest. But the food was poisoned. Now when the slaves brought the trays to Raja Rasalu, he rose up haughtily, saying, "Go, tell your master I have nought to do with him in friendship. I am his sworn enemy, and I eat not of his salt!"

So saying, he threw the sweetmeats to Raja Sarkap's dog, which had followed the slave, and lo! The dog died.

Then Rasalu was very wroth, and said bitterly, "Go back to Sarkap, slaves! And tell him that Rasalu deems it no act of bravery to kill even an enemy by treachery."

Now, when evening came, Raja Rasalu went forth to play chaupur with King Sarkap, and as he passed some potters' kilns he saw a cat wandering about restlessly; so he asked what ailed her, that she never stood still, and she replied, "My kittens are in an unbaked pot in the kiln yonder. It has just been set alight, and my children will be baked alive; therefore I cannot rest!"

Her words moved the heart of Raja Rasalu, and, going to the potter, he asked him to sell the kiln as it was; but the potter replied that he could not settle a fair price till the pots were burnt, as he could not tell how many would come out whole. Nevertheless, after some bargaining, he consented at last to sell the kiln, and Rasalu, having searched all the pots, restored the kittens to their mother, and she, in gratitude for his mercy, gave him one of them, saying, "Put it in your pocket, for it will help you when you are in difficulties." So Raja Rasalu put the kitten in his pocket, and went to play chaupur with the King.

Now, before they sat down to play, Raja Sarkap fixed his stakes—on the first game, his kingdom; on the second, the wealth of the whole world; and, on the third, his own head. So, likewise, Raja Rasalu fixed his stakes—on the first game, his arms; on the second, his horse; and, on the third, his own head.

Then they began to play, and it fell to Rasalu's lot to make the first move. Now he, forgetful of the dead man's warning, played with the dice given him by Raja Sarkap, besides which, Sarkap let loose his famous rat, Dhol Raja, and it ran about the board, upsetting the chaupur pieces on the sly, so that Rasalu lost the first game, and gave up his shining armor.

Then the second game began, and once more Dhol Raja, the rat, upset the pieces; and Rasalu, losing the game, gave up his faithful steed. Then Bhaunr, the Arab steed, who stood by, found voice, and cried to his master,



Sea-born am I, bought with much gold;  
 Dear Prince! Trust me now as of old.  
 I'll carry you far from these wiles—  
 My flight, all unspurr'd, will be swift as a bird,  
 For thousands and thousands of miles!  
 Or if needs you must stay; ere the next game you play,  
 Place hand in your pocket, I pray!

Hearing this, Raja Sarkap frowned, and bade his slaves, remove Bhaunr, the Arab steed, since he gave his master advice in the game. Now, when the slaves came to lead the faithful steed away, Rasalu could not refrain from tears, thinking over the long years during which Bhaunr, the Arab steed, had been his companion. But the horse cried out again,

Weep not, dear Prince! I shall not eat my bread  
 Of stranger hands, nor to strange stall be led.  
 Take thy right hand, and place it as I said.

These words roused some recollection in Rasalu's mind, and when, just at this moment, the kitten in his pocket began to struggle, he remembered all about the warning, and the dice made from dead men's bones. Then his heart rose up once more, and he called boldly to Raja Sarkap, "Leave my horse and arms here for the present. Time enough to take them away when you have won my head!"

Now, Raja Sarkap, seeing Rasalu's confident bearing, began to be afraid, and ordered all the women of his palace to come forth in their gayest attire and stand before Rasalu, so as to distract his attention from the game. But he never even looked at them, and throwing the dice from his pocket, said to Sarkap, "We have played with your dice all this time; now we will play with mine."

Then the kitten went and sat at the window through which the rat Dhol Raja used to come, and the game began.

After a while, Sarkap, seeing Raja Rasalu was winning, called to his rat, but when Dhol Raja saw the kitten he was afraid, and would not go further. So Rasalu won, and took back his arms. Next he played for his horse, and once more Raja Sarkap called for his rat; but Dhol Raja, seeing the kitten keeping watch, was afraid. So Rasalu won the second stake, and took back Bhaunr, the Arab steed.

Then Sarkap brought all his skill to bear on the third and last game, saying,

Oh molded pieces! Favor me today!  
 For sooth this is a man with whom I play.  
 No paltry risk—but life and death at stake;  
 As Sarkap does, so do, for Sarkap's sake!

But Rasalu answered back,

Oh molded pieces! Favor me today!  
For sooth it is a man with whom I play.  
No paltry risk—but life and death at stake;  
As Heaven does, so do, for Heaven's sake!

So they began to play, whilst the women stood round in a circle, and the kitten watched Dhol Raja from the window. Then Sarkap lost, first his kingdom, then the wealth of the whole world, and lastly his head.

Just then, a servant came in to announce the birth of a daughter to Raja Sarkap, and he, overcome by misfortunes, said, "Kill her at once! for she has been born in an evil moment, and has brought her father ill luck!"

But Rasalu rose up in his shining armor, tender-hearted and strong, saying, "Not so, oh king! She has done no evil. Give me this child to wife; and if you will vow, by all you hold sacred, never again to play chaupur for another's head, I will spare yours now!"

Then Sarkap vowed a solemn vow never to play for another's head; and after that he took a fresh mango branch, and the new-born babe, and placing them on a golden dish gave them to Rasalu.

Now, as he left the palace, carrying with him the new-born babe and the mango branch, he met a band of prisoners, and they called out to him,

A royal hawk art thou, oh King, the rest  
But timid wild-fowl. Grant us our request—  
Unloose these chains, and live for ever blest!

And Raja Rasalu hearkened to them, and bade King Sarkap set them at liberty.

Then he went to the Murti Hills, and placed the new-born babe, Kokilan, in an underground palace, and planted the mango branch at the door, saying, "In twelve years the mango tree will blossom; then will I return and marry Kokilan."

And after twelve years, the mango tree began to flower, and Raja Rasalu married the Princess Kokilan, whom he won from Sarkap when he played chaupur with the King.

## **THE YOUNG MAN AND THE SNAKE**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Swynnerton, Charles. *Indian Nights' Entertainment: Folk-Tales from the Upper Indus*. London: Elliot Stock, 1892, 133–138.

**Date:** ca. 1890

**Original Source:** Pakistan

**National Origin:** Pakistan

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In this **variant** of “Ungrateful Serpent Returned to Captivity” (AT 155), the serpent is not merely placed in peril again, he is destroyed by his benefactor’s clever wife. As is the case with other variants of this **tale type**, the ungrateful animal is portrayed as having ethical principles that allow a **trickster** to turn the tables. See, for example, “The Brahman, the Tiger, and the Six Judges” (page 153).

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**T**here was once a farmer who was extremely poor. It happened that when his poverty was greatest a son was born to him, and this son was such a lucky child that his father speedily became quite as rich as he was before poor, and obtained a great name over all the country.

After a certain time the farmer thought to himself, “I must get my son betrothed somewhere. I was poor once, but I am now rich, and my son is lucky. It is right that he should be betrothed to the daughter of some rich man like myself.”

It was long before he found a suitable match, but at last he betrothed the boy to a girl who lived in a distant town. The ceremony came on, much money was spent, many guests were invited, and much food was given away. In short, the betrothal was splendid. The son had scarcely grown to manhood when the father died, leaving him in the world alone.

The parents of his betrothed, when they heard the sad news, felt very sorry for him, and at first they would have brought him to live at their own house. But the mother said, “He is old enough now to come and take our daughter home with him, so let us send for him that he may do so. No friend like a good wife.”

A messenger was accordingly sent off, and the lad, when he received the invitation, dressed himself up in his best, and, mounting his mare, set off.

On the way he came to a lonely jungle, in which he saw a mongoose and a snake of enormous dimensions, engaged in deadly combat. He reined up his horse to look on. The mongoose soon began to wear out his adversary, and to inflict such wounds as would have put an end to its life in a short time. Seeing which, the boy considered to himself, “When two are contending, it is an act of charity to separate them.” So he tried to separate the combatants, but every time he failed, as the mongoose again and again sprang upon his adversary in spite of him. Finding he could not prevail, he drew his sword and dealt the warlike little mongoose his death-blow.

After this he went on again, but he had not proceeded far when he found that the snake had rushed round and intercepted him.

Then began the boy to remonstrate. "I did you good service," said he. "Why, then, have you pursued me?"

"It is true," answered the snake, "that you saved me from my enemy. But I shall not let you go. I shall eat you."

"Surely," replied the lad, "one good turn deserves another. Will you injure me because I assisted you? In my country we do not deal with each other thus."

"In these parts," said the snake, "the custom is different. Everyone here observes the rule of returning evil for good."

The boy then began to argue with the snake, but he argued in vain, for the snake was determined to eat him. At last he said, "Very well, snake, you can eat me. But first give me eight days to go about my business, after which I shall come back."

With this request the snake complied, saying, "Be it so. In eight days you must return to me."

The snake, which had coiled himself round about the boy's body, now released his hold and suffered him to depart. So he rode on once more and completed his journey.

All his friends were very glad to see the young bridegroom, and especially his little wife, and at his father-in-law's house he remained for several days. But as he was always downcast and sad, they asked him, "Why are you so sorrowful?" For six days they asked in vain. On the seventh they spoke to their daughter, "Is he angry? What is the matter with him?" But she also asked him in vain.

When the eight day came, he said, "Now let me go home." The father and mother then gave the daughter her portion [of her inheritance as a dowry], and, having placed them both in a bullock cart, they sent the young couple away.

So the two traveled until they had left the village far behind them. Then said the lad to his wife and to her servants, "Return now back again to your own home. As for me, it is decreed that I shall die on the way."

All the servants, being alarmed, at once returned, but his young wife said, "Where you fall, I shall fall. What am I to do at my house?" So she continued to accompany her husband.

When he arrived at the spot appointed, he dismounted from his horse and called forth the snake.

"I have come," said he, "in accordance with my promise. If you wish to eat me, come and eat me now!"

His wife, hearing his ominous words, descended also, and came and stood by her husband's side. By and by a dreadful hissing sound was heard, and the snake crawled out from the jungle, and was preparing to devour the unfortunate boy, when the girl exclaimed, "Why are you going to eat this poor youth?"

The snake then told her the whole story, how he was fighting with a mon-goose, and how her husband interfered and killed his adversary. "And in this country," continued he, "our custom is to return evil for good!"

The young wife now tried all the arguments she could think of to divert the monster from his purpose, but he was deaf to her pleadings and refused to listen to them. Then said she, "You say that in this country people do evil in return for good. This is so strange a custom, and so very unreasonable, that I would fain know the history of it. How did it all come about?"

"Do you see those five talli trees?" answered the snake. "Go you to them and cry out to them, 'What is the reason that in this country folks do evil in return for good?' and see what they will say to you!"

The girl went and did as she was bidden, addressing her request to the middle of the five.

The tree straightway answered her, "Count us! We are now five, but once we were six—three pairs. The sixth tree was hollow, having a vast cavity in its trunk. It happened once upon a time, many years ago, that a certain thief went and robbed a house, and that the people followed him. He ran and ran and ran, and at last he came in among us. It was night, but the moon was shining, and the thief hid himself in the hollow talli tree. Hearing his pursuers close at hand, he besought the tree, saying, "O tree, tree, save me!"

When the talli tree heard his miserable cry it closed up its old sides upon him, and hid him in a safe embrace, so that the people searched for him in vain, and they had to return without him. When all pursuit was over, the tree once more opened and let him go.

Now, in this old talli tree there was sandal wood, and the thief, when he went forth, had the scent of sandal wood so permanently fixed upon him that wherever he was, and wherever he appeared, he diffused a delightful fragrance. It so happened that he visited the city of a certain king, and a man passing him on the road suddenly stopped, and asked him, "Where did you get this beautiful scent?"

"You are mistaken," answered the thief. "I have no scent."

"If you will give me this scent," said the man, "I will pay you its value."

Again the thief answered, "I have no scent—none."

Then the man, who was shrewd and intelligent, went his way to the king and told him, "There is a stranger arrived here who possesses a most wonderful scent. To your highness, perhaps, he might be induced to give it up."

The king then ordered the thief into his presence, and said to him, "Show me the scent you have."

"I have none," said he.

"If you will give it up to me quietly," said the king, "you shall be rewarded. If not, you shall be put to death."

When the thief heard this he got frightened and said, "Do not kill me, and I will tell the whole story." So he told the king how his life was preserved in the heart of the talli tree, and how the scent of sandal wood had never left him since.

Then said the king, "Come along and show me that wonderful tree of which you tell me."

Arriving at this very spot, the king instantly gave orders to his followers to cut the tree down and to carry it to his palace. But when the tall tree heard his order, and when it understood the reason of it, it cried aloud, "I have saved the life of a man, and for this I am to lose my own life. For the future, therefore, let it be decreed within this jungle that whosoever dares to do good, to him it shall be repaid in evil!"

The girl, having heard this doleful story, returned once more to her husband's side.

"Well," said the snake, "have you consulted the tall tree? And do you find that our custom here is even as I told you?"

She was compelled to admit that it was so. But as the monster advanced to his victim, she wept and said, "What will become of me? If you must eat my husband, you must begin by eating me!"

The snake objected to an arrangement so unreasonable. "You?" cried he. "But you have never done me the smallest good. You have not even done me harm. How, then, can I be expected to eat you?"

"But if you kill my husband," replied she, "what's left for me? You acknowledge yourself that I have done you no good, and yet you would inflict this injury upon me."

When the snake heard these words he stopped, and began to grow remorseful, especially as she wept more copiously than ever. That the boy must be eaten was certain, but how should he comfort the girl? Wishing to devise something, he crept back to his hole, and in a few minutes he returned with two magic globules or pills. "Here, foolish woman," said he, "take these two pills and swallow them, and you will have two sons to whom you can devote yourself, and who will take good care of you!"

The girl accepted the pills, but, with the cunning natural to a woman, said, "If I take these two pills, doubtless two sons will be born. But what about my good name?"

The snake, who knew not that she was already wed, hearing her speech, became exasperated with her. "Women are preposterous beings," cried he, and he crept back once more to his hole. This time he brought out two more pills, and when handing them to the disconsolate girl he said, "Revenge will sweeten your lot. When any of your neighbors revile you on account of your sons, take one of these pills between finger and thumb, hold it over them, rubbing it gently so that some of the powder may fall on them, and immediately you will see them consume away to ashes."

Tying the former pills in her cloth, the girl looked at the other pills incredulously, and then, with a sudden thought, she gently rubbed them over the snake, saying with an innocent air, "O snake, explain this mystery to me again! Is this the way I am to rub them?"

The moment an atom of the magic powder had touched the snake, he was set on fire, and in another instant he was merely a long wavy line of gray dust lying on the ground.

Then with a glad face the little wife turned to her husband and said, “Who-soever does good to anyone, in the end good will be done to him. And whosoever does evil to anyone, in the end evil will be done to him. You did good, and lo! You are rewarded. The snake did evil, and evil befell him. All things help each other. The Almighty brings everything to rights at last.”

After this the two went on their way to their own home, where they lived in happiness and contentment for many a year.

## THE DEATH AND BURIAL OF THE POOR HEN-SPARROW

**Tradition Bearer:** Hajjan

**Source:** Steel, Flora Annie. *Tales of the Punjab: Told by the People*. London: Macmillan and Company, 1894, 148–158.

**Date:** ca. 1880

**Original Source:** Punjabi

**National Origin:** Pakistan

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The following **cumulative tale**, true to form, emphasizes ever-accumulating detail, rhythm, and rhyme in a story built on “The Death of the Little Hen” (AT 2022).

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Once upon a time there lived a cock-sparrow and his wife, who were both growing old. But despite his years the cock-sparrow was a gay, festive old bird, who plumed himself upon his appearance, and was quite a ladies’ man. So he cast his eyes on a lively young hen, and determined to marry her, for he was tired of his sober old wife.

The wedding was a mighty grand affair, and everybody as jolly and merry as could be, except of course the poor old wife, who crept away from all the noise and fun to sit disconsolately on a quiet branch just under a crow’s nest, where she could be as melancholy as she liked without anybody poking fun at her.

Now while she sat there it began to rain, and after a while the drops, soaking through the crow’s nest, came drip-dripping onto her feathers. She, however, was far too miserable to care, and sat there all huddled up and peepy till the shower was over. Now it so happened that the crow had used some scraps of dyed cloth in lining its nest, and as these became wet the colors ran, and dripping down on to the poor old hen-sparrow beneath, dyed her feathers until she was as gay as a peacock.

Fine feathers make fine birds, we all know, and she really looked quite spruce; so much so, that when she flew home, the new wife nearly burst with envy, and asked her at once where she had found such a lovely dress.

“Easily enough,” replied the old wife, “I just went into the dyer’s vat.”

The bride instantly determined to go there also. She could not endure the notion of the old thing being better dressed than she was, so she flew off at once to the dyer’s, and being in a great hurry, went pop into the middle of the vat, without waiting to see if it was hot or cold. It turned out to be just scalding. Consequently the poor thing was half boiled before she managed to scramble out.

Meanwhile, the gay old cock, not finding his bride at home, flew about distractedly in search of her, and you may imagine what bitter tears he wept when he found her, half drowned and half boiled, with her feathers all awry, lying by the dyer’s vat.

“What has happened?” quoth he.

But the poor bedraggled thing could only gasp out feebly:

The old wife was dyed—  
The nasty old cat!  
And I, the gay bride,  
Fell into the vat!

Whereupon the cock-sparrow took her up tenderly in his bill and flew away home with his precious burden. Now, just as he was crossing the big river in front of his house, the old hen-sparrow, in her gay dress, looked out of the window, and when she saw her old husband bringing home his young bride in such a sorry plight, she burst out laughing shrilly, and called aloud,

That is right! That is right! Remember what the song says:  
Old wives must scramble through water and mud,  
But young wives are carried dry-shod o’er the flood.

This allusion so enraged her husband that he could not contain himself, but cried out, “Hold your tongue, you shameless old cat!”

Of course, when he opened his mouth to speak, the poor draggled bride fell out, and, going plump into the river, was drowned. Whereupon the cock-sparrow was so distracted with grief that he picked off all his feathers until he was as bare as a plowed field. Then, going to a pipal tree, he sat all naked and forlorn on the branches, sobbing and sighing.

“What has happened?” cried the pipal tree, aghast at the sight.

“Don’t ask me!” wailed the cock-sparrow. “It isn’t manners to ask questions when a body is in deep mourning.”

But the pipal would not be satisfied without an answer, so at last poor bereaved cock-sparrow replied:

The ugly hen painted.  
By jealousy tainted,  
The pretty hen dyed.



Lamenting his bride,  
The cock, bald and bare,  
Sobs loud in despair!

On hearing this sad tale, the pipal became overwhelmed with grief and, declaring it must mourn also, shed all its leaves on the spot.

By and by a buffalo, coming in the heat of the day to rest in the shade of the pipal tree, was astonished to find nothing but bare twigs.

“What has happened?” cried the buffalo. “You were as green as possible yesterday!”

“Don’t ask me!” whimpered the pipal. “Where are your manners? Don’t you know it isn’t decent to ask questions when people are in mourning?”

But the buffalo insisted on having an answer, so at last, with many sobs and sighs, the pipal replied:

The ugly hen painted.  
By jealousy tainted,  
The pretty hen dyed.  
Bewailing his bride,  
The cock, bald and bare,  
Sobs loud in despair;  
The pipal tree grieves  
By shedding its leaves!

“Oh dear me!” cried the buffalo. “How very sad! I really must mourn too!”

So she immediately cast her horns, and began to weep and wail. After a while, becoming thirsty, she went to drink at the riverside.

“Goodness gracious!” cried the river, “What is the matter? And what have you done with your horns?”

“How rude you are!” wept the buffalo. “Can’t you see I am in deep mourning? And it isn’t polite to ask questions.”

But the river persisted until the buffalo, with many groans, replied:

The ugly hen painted.  
By jealousy tainted,  
The pretty hen dyed.  
Lamenting his bride,  
The cock, bald and bare,  
Sobs loud in despair;  
The pipal tree grieves  
By shedding its leaves;  
The buffalo mourns  
By casting her horns!

“Dreadful!” cried the river, and wept so fast that its water became quite salt [salty].

By and by a cuckoo, coming to bathe in the stream, called out, “Why, river! What has happened? You are as salt as tears!”

“Don’t ask me!” mourned the stream. “It is too dreadful for words!” Nevertheless, when the cuckoo would take no denial, the river replied:

The ugly hen painted.  
By jealousy tainted,  
The pretty hen dyed.  
Lamenting his bride,  
The cock, bald and bare,  
Sobs loud in despair;  
The pipal tree grieves  
By shedding its leaves;  
The buffalo mourns  
By casting her horns;  
The stream, weeping fast,  
Grows briny at last!

“Oh dear! Oh dear me!” cried the cuckoo. “How very, very sad! I must mourn too!” So it plucked out an eye, and going to a corn [grain] merchant’s shop, sat on the doorstep and wept.

“Why, little cuckoo! What’s the matter?” cried Bhagtu the shopkeeper. “You are generally the pertest of birds, and today you are as dull as ditchwater!”

“Don’t ask me!” sniveled the cuckoo. “It is such terrible grief! Such dreadful sorrow! Such-such horrible pain!”

However, when Bhagtu persisted, the cuckoo, wiping its one eye on its wing, replied:

The ugly hen painted.  
By jealousy tainted,  
The pretty hen dyed.  
Lamenting his bride,  
The cock, bald and bare,  
Sobs loud in despair;  
The pipal tree grieves  
By shedding its leaves;  
The buffalo mourns  
By casting her horns;  
The stream, weeping fast,  
Grows briny at last;

The cuckoo with sighs  
Blinds one of its eyes!

“Bless my heart!” cried Bhagtu, “But that is simply the most heartrending tale I ever heard in my life! I must really mourn likewise!” Whereupon he wept, and wailed, and beat his breast, until he went completely out of his mind. And when the queen’s maidservant came to buy of him, he gave her pepper instead of turmeric, onion instead of garlic, and wheat instead of pulse.

“Dear me, friend Bhagtu!” quoth the maidservant. “Your wits are wool-gathering! What’s the matter?”

“Don’t! Please don’t!” cried Bhagtu. “I wish you wouldn’t ask me, for I am trying to forget all about it. It is too dreadful—too, too terrible!”

At last, however, yielding to the maid’s entreaties, he replied, with many sobs and tears:

The ugly hen painted.  
By jealousy tainted,  
The pretty hen dyed.  
Lamenting his bride,  
The cock, bald and bare,  
Sobs loud in despair;  
The pipal tree grieves  
By shedding its leaves;  
The buffalo mourns  
By casting her horns;  
The stream, weeping fast,  
Grows briny at last;  
The cuckoo with sighs  
Blinds one of its eyes;  
Bhagtu’s grief so intense is,  
He loses his senses!

“How very sad!” exclaimed the maidservant. “I don’t wonder at your distress. But it is always so in this miserable world! Everything goes wrong!”

Whereupon she fell to railing at everybody and everything in the world, until the queen said to her, “What is the matter, my child? What distresses you?”

“Oh!” replied the maidservant, “The old story! Everyone is miserable, and I most of all! Such dreadful news!

The ugly hen painted.  
By jealousy tainted,  
The pretty hen dyed.

Lamenting his bride,  
The cock, bald and bare,  
Sobs loud in despair;  
The pipal tree grieves  
By shedding its leaves;  
The buffalo mourns  
By casting her horns;  
The stream, weeping fast,  
Grows briny at last;  
The cuckoo with sighs  
Blinds one of its eyes;  
Bhagtu's grief so intense is,  
He loses his senses;  
The maidservant wailing  
Has taken to railing!

“Too true!” wept the queen, “Too true! The world is a vale of tears! There is nothing for it but to try and forget!” Whereupon she set to work dancing away as hard as she could.

By and by in came the prince, who, seeing her twirling about, said, “Why, mother! What is the matter?”

The queen, without stopping, gasped out:

The ugly hen painted.  
By jealousy tainted,  
The pretty hen dyed.  
Lamenting his bride,  
The cock, bald and bare,  
Sobs loud in despair;  
The pipal tree grieves  
By shedding its leaves;  
The buffalo mourns  
By casting her horns;  
The stream, weeping fast,  
Grows briny at last;  
The cuckoo with sighs  
Blinds one of its eyes;  
Bhagtu's grief so intense is,  
He loses his senses;  
The maidservant wailing  
Has taken to railing;  
The queen, joy enhancing,  
Takes refuge in dancing!

“If that is your mourning, I’ll mourn too!” cried the prince, and seizing his tambourine, he began to thump on it with a will. Hearing the noise, the king came in, and asked what was the matter.

“This is the matter!” cried the prince, drumming away with all his might:

The ugly hen painted.  
By jealousy tainted,  
The pretty hen dyed.  
Lamenting his bride,  
The cock, bald and bare,  
Sobs loud in despair;  
The pipal tree grieves  
By shedding its leaves;  
The buffalo mourns  
By casting her horns;  
The stream, weeping fast,  
Grows briny at last;  
The cuckoo with sighs  
Blinds one of its eyes;  
Bhagtu’s grief so intense is,  
He loses his senses;  
The maidservant wailing  
Has taken to railing;  
The queen, joy enhancing,  
Takes refuge in dancing;  
To aid the mirth coming,  
The prince begins drumming!

“Capital! Capital!” cried the king, “That’s the way to do it!” So, seizing his zither, he began to thrum away like one possessed.

And as they danced, the queen, the king, the prince, and the maidservant sang:

The ugly hen painted.  
By jealousy tainted,  
The pretty hen dyed.  
Bewailing his bride,  
The cock, bald and bare,  
Sobs loud in despair;  
The pipal tree grieves  
By shedding its leaves;  
The buffalo mourns  
By casting her horns;

The stream, weeping fast,  
Grows briny at last;  
The cuckoo with sighs  
Blinds one of its eyes;  
Bhagtu's grief so intense is,  
He loses his senses;  
The maidservant wailing  
Has taken to railing;  
The queen, joy enhancing,  
Takes refuge in dancing;  
To aid the mirth coming,  
The prince begins drumming;  
To join in it with her  
The king strums the zither!

So they danced and sang till they were tired, and that was how everyone mourned poor cock-sparrow's pretty bride.

## THE SEVEN WISE MEN OF BUNEYR

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Swynnerton, Charles. *Indian Nights' Entertainment: Folk-Tales from the Upper Indus*. London: Elliot Stock, 1892, 305–307.

**Date:** ca. 1890

**Original Source:** Pakistan

**National Origin:** Pakistan

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There is heavy irony in the title “The Seven Wise Men of Buneyr,” because this is a classic **numskull** tale concerning a group of men who behave in an absurdly foolish fashion. The basic plot of the tale is provided by “Numskulls Unable to Count Their Own Number” (AT 1287), while other incidents compound the foolishness until the shepherd to whom they become indebted begs for mercy.

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Seven men of Buneyr once left their native wilds for the purpose of seeking their fortunes. When evening came they all sat down under a tree to rest, when one of them said, “Let us count to see if we are all here.” So he counted, “One, two, three, four, five, six,” but, quite omitting to reckon himself, he exclaimed, “There’s one of us missing, we are only six!”

“Nonsense!” cried the others, and the whole company of seven began counting with uplifted forefingers, but they all forgot to count themselves.

Fearing some evil, they now rose up, and at once set out to search for their missing comrade. Presently they met a shepherd, who greeted them civilly and said, "Friends, why are you in such low spirits?"

"We have lost one of our party," answered they, "we started this morning seven in number, and now we are only six. Have you seen any one of us hereabouts?"

"But," said the shepherd, "seven you are, for I have found your lost companion; behold: one, two, three, four, five, six, *seven!*"

"Ah," answered the wise men of Buneyr, "you have indeed found our missing brother. We owe you a debt of gratitude. Because you have done us this service, we insist on doing a month's free labor for you."

So the shepherd, overjoyed with his good fortune, took the men home with him.

Now, the shepherd's mother was a very old woman, in her dotage, utterly feeble and unable to help herself. When the morning came he placed her under the care of one of the Buneyris, saying to him, "You will stay here and take care of my old mother."

To another Buneyri he said, "You take out my goats, graze them on the hills by day, and watch over them by night."

To the other five he said, "As for you, I shall have work for you tomorrow."

The man who was left in charge of the old crippled mother found that his time was fully occupied in the constant endeavor to drive off the innumerable flies which in that hot season kept her in a state of continual excitement and irritation. When, however, he saw that all his efforts were fruitless, and that he flapped the wretches away in vain, he became desperate, and, lifting up a large stone, he aimed it deliberately at a certain fly which had settled on the woman's face. Hurling it with all his might, he of course missed the fly, but, alas! he knocked the woman prone on her back. When the shepherd saw this he wrung his hands in despair. "Ah," cried he, "what has your stupidity done for me? The fly has escaped, but as for my poor old mother, you have killed her dead."

Meanwhile, the second Buneyri led his flock of goats up and down among the hills, and when midday came he rested to eat his bread, while many of the assembled goats lay down beside him. As he was eating he began to observe how the goats were chewing the cud and occasionally looking at him. So, he foolishly imagined that they were mocking him, and waxed wroth. "So," cried he, "because I am taking my food, you must needs crowd round and make game of me, must you?" And, seizing his hatchet, he made a sudden rush at the poor animals, and he had already struck off the heads of several of them, when the shepherd came running to the spot, bemoaning his bad luck and crying to the fellow to desist from slaughter.

That night was a sorrowful one for the trustful shepherd, and bitterly he repented his rashness. In the morning the remaining five wise men of Buneyr came to him, and said, "It is now our turn. Give us some work to do, too!"

“No, no, my friends,” answered he, “you have amply repaid me for the trifling favor I did for you in finding your missing companion; and now, for God’s sake, go your way and let me see you no more.”

Hearing these words, the wise men of Buneyr resumed their journey.



# PUNJABI

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## THE GRAIN OF CORN

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Steel, Flora Annie. *Tales of the Punjab: Told by the People*. New York: Macmillan and Company, 1894, 198–202.

**Date:** ca. 1890

**Original Source:** Punjabi

**National Origin:** India

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In this and all other **variants** of the **cumulative tale** “Bird’s Pea Gets Stuck in Socket of Mill-Handle” (AT 2034), a bird’s life is in peril over a minor object (for example, a pea or a grain of corn). In the end, this minor affair has repercussions extending to the highest levels of society. Compare this tale’s development to “The Death and Burial of the Poor Hen-Sparrow” (page 281) for differing uses of rhyme and rhythm. Punjab is a rich agricultural region straddling the border between India and Pakistan. Because of the necessity for reciting long chains of events quickly, these tales often pose a challenge for performers.

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Once upon a time a farmer’s wife was winnowing corn, when a crow, flying past, swooped off with a grain from the winnowing basket and perched on a tree close by to eat it. The farmer’s wife, greatly enraged, flung a clod at the bird with so good an aim that the crow fell to the ground, dropping the grain of corn, which rolled into a crack in the tree.

The farmer’s wife, seeing the crow fall, ran up to it, and seizing it by the tail, cried, “Give me back my grain of corn, or I will kill you!”

The wretched bird, in fear of death, promised to do so, but, lo and behold! When he came to search for the grain, it had rolled so far into the crack that neither by beak nor claw could he reach it.

So he flew off to a woodman, and said:

Man! man! cut tree;  
I can't get the grain of corn  
To save my life from the farmer's wife!

But the woodman refused to cut the tree; so the crow flew on to the king's palace, and said:

King! king! kill man;  
Man won't cut tree;  
I can't get the grain of corn  
To save my life from the farmer's wife!

But the king refused to kill the man; so the crow flew on to the queen, and said:

Queen! queen! coax king;  
King won't kill man;  
Man won't cut tree.  
I can't get the grain of corn  
To save my life from the farmer's wife!

But the queen refused to coax the king; so the crow flew on till he met a snake, and said:

Snake! snake! bite queen;  
Queen won't coax king;  
King won't kill man;  
Man won't cut tree;  
I can't get the grain of corn  
To save my life from the farmer's wife!

But the snake refused to bite the queen; so the crow flew on till he met a stick, and said:

Stick! stick! beat snake;  
Snake won't bite queen;  
Queen won't coax king;  
King won't kill man:  
Man won't cut tree;

I can't get the grain of corn  
To save my life from the farmer's wife!

But the stick refused to beat the snake; so the crow flew on till he saw a fire,  
and said:

Fire! fire! burn stick;  
Stick won't beat snake;  
Snake won't bite queen;  
Queen won't coax king;  
King won't kill man;  
Man won't cut tree;  
I can't get the grain of corn  
To save my life from the farmer's wife!

But the fire refused to burn the stick; so the crow flew on till he met some  
water, and said:

Water! water! quench fire;  
Fire won't burn stick;  
Stick won't beat snake;  
Snake won't bite queen;  
Queen won't coax king;  
King won't kill man;  
Man won't cut tree;  
I can't get the grain of corn  
To save my life from the farmer's wife!

But the water refused to quench the fire; so the crow flew on till he met an ox,  
and said:

Ox! ox! drink water;  
Water won't quench fire;  
Fire won't burn stick;  
Stick won't beat snake;  
Snake won't bite queen;  
Queen won't coax king;  
King won't kill man;  
Man won't cut tree;  
I can't get the grain of corn  
To save my life from the farmer's wife!

But the ox refused to drink the water; so the crow flew on till he met a rope,  
and said:

Rope! rope! bind ox;  
Ox won't drink water;  
Water won't quench fire;  
Fire won't burn stick;  
Stick won't beat snake;  
Snake won't bite queen;  
Queen won't coax king;  
King won't kill man;  
Man won't cut tree;  
I can't get the grain of corn  
To save my life from the farmer's wife!

But the rope wouldn't bind the ox; so the crow flew on till he met a mouse, and said:

Mouse! mouse! gnaw rope;  
Rope won't bind ox;  
Ox won't drink water;  
Water won't quench fire;  
Fire won't burn stick;  
Stick won't beat snake;  
Snake won't bite queen;  
Queen won't coax king;  
King won't kill man;  
Man won't cut tree;  
I can't get the grain of corn  
To save my life from the farmer's wife!

But the mouse wouldn't gnaw the rope; so the crow flew on until he met a cat, and said:

Cat! cat! catch mouse;  
Mouse won't gnaw rope;  
Rope won't bind ox;  
Ox won't drink water;  
Water won't quench fire;  
Fire won't burn stick;  
Stick won't beat snake;  
Snake won't bite queen;  
Queen won't coax king;  
King won't kill man;  
Man won't cut tree;  
And I can't get the grain of corn  
To save my life from the farmer's wife!

The moment the cat heard the name of mouse, she was after it; for the world will come to an end before a cat will leave a mouse alone.

So the cat began to catch the mouse,  
 The mouse began to gnaw the rope,  
 The rope began to bind the ox,  
 The ox began to drink the water,  
 The water began to quench the fire,  
 The fire began to burn the stick,  
 The stick began to beat the snake,  
 The snake began to bite the queen,  
 The queen began to coax the king,  
 The king began to kill the man,  
 The man began to cut the tree;  
 So the crow got the grain of corn,  
 And saved his life from the farmer's wife!

## THE BILLY GOAT AND THE KING

**Tradition Bearer:** Major Campbell Feroshepore

**Source:** Lang, Andrew. *The Olive Fairy Book*. London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1907, 211–215.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Punjabi

**National Origin:** India

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In this **variant** of “The Animal Languages” (AT 670) a gift has become a curse. Ironically, in the end, the curse leads to a solution to the protagonist’s dilemma.

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Once there lived a certain king who understood the language of all birds and beasts and insects. This knowledge had of course been given him by a fairy godmother; but it was rather a troublesome present, for he knew that if he were ever to reveal anything he had thus learned he would turn into a stone. How he managed to avoid doing so long before this story opens I cannot say, but he had safely grown up to manhood, and married a wife, and was as happy as monarchs generally are.

This king, I must tell you, was a Hindu; and when a Hindu eats his food he has a nice little place on the ground freshly plastered with mud, and he sits in the middle of it with very few clothes on—which is quite a different way from ours.

Well, one day the king was eating his dinner in just such a nice, clean, mud-plastered spot, and his wife was sitting opposite to wait upon him and keep him company. As he ate he dropped some grains of rice upon the ground, and a little ant, who was running about seeking a living, seized upon one of the grains and bore it off towards his hole. Just outside the king's circle this ant met another ant, and the king heard the second one say, "Oh, dear friend, do give me that grain of rice, and get another one for yourself. You see my boots are so dirty that, if I were to go upon the king's eating place, I should defile it, and I can't do that, it would be so very rude."

But the owner of the grain of rice only replied, "If you want rice go and get it. No one will notice your dirty boots; and you don't suppose that I am going to carry rice for all our kindred?"

Then the king laughed.

The queen looked at herself up and down, but she could not see or feel anything in her appearance to make the king laugh, so she said, "What are you laughing at?"

"Did I laugh?" replied the king.

"Of course you did," retorted the queen, "and if you think that I am ridiculous I wish you would say so, instead of behaving in that stupid way! What are you laughing at?"

"I'm not laughing at anything," answered the king.

"Very well, but you did laugh, and I want to know why."

"Well, I'm afraid I can't tell you," said the king.

"You must tell me," replied the queen impatiently. "If you laugh when there's nothing to laugh at you must be ill or mad. What is the matter?"

Still the king refused to say, and still the queen declared that she must and would know. For days the quarrel went on, and the queen gave her husband no rest, until at last the poor man was almost out of his wits, and thought that, as life had become for him hardly worth living while this went on, he might as well tell her the secret and take the consequences.

"But," thought he, "if I am to become a stone, I am not going to lie, if I can help it, on some dusty highway, to be kicked here and there by man and beast, flung at dogs, be used as the plaything of naughty children, and become generally restless and miserable. I will be a stone at the bottom of the cool river, and roll gently about there until I find some secure resting-place where I can stay for ever."

So he told his wife that if she would ride with him to the middle of the river he would tell her what he had laughed at. She thought he was joking, and laughingly agreed; their horses were ordered and they set out.

On the way they came to a fine well beneath the shade of some lofty, wide-spreading trees, and the king proposed that they should get off and rest a little, drink some of the cool water, and then pass on. To this the queen consented; so they dismounted and sat down in the shade by the well-side to rest.

It happened that an old goat and his wife were browsing in the neighborhood, and, as the king and queen sat there, the nanny goat came to the well's brink and peering over saw some lovely green leaves that sprang in tender shoots out of the side of the well.

"Oh!" cried she to her husband, "come quickly and look. Here are some leaves which make my mouth water; come and get them for me!"

Then the billy goat sauntered up and looked over, and after that he eyed his wife a little crossly.

"You expect me to get you those leaves, do you? I suppose you don't consider how in the world I am to reach them? You don't seem to think at all; if you did you would know that if I tried to reach those leaves I should fall into the well and be drowned!"

"Oh," cried the nanny goat, "why should you fall in? Do try and get them!"

"I am not going to be so silly," replied the billy goat.

But the nanny goat still wept and entreated.

"Look here," said her husband, "there are plenty of fools in the world, but I am not one of them. This silly king here, because he can't cure his wife of asking questions, is going to throw his life away. But I know how to cure you of your follies, and I'm going to."

And with that he butted the nanny goat so severely that in two minutes she was submissively feeding somewhere else, and had made up her mind that the leaves in the well were not worth having.

Then the king, who had understood every word, laughed once more.

The queen looked at him suspiciously, but the king got up and walked across to where she sat.

"Are you still determined to find out what I was laughing at the other day?" he asked.

"Quite," answered the queen angrily.

"Because," said the king, tapping his leg with his riding whip, "I've made up my mind not to tell you, and moreover, I have made up my mind to stop you mentioning the subject any more."

"What do you mean?" asked the queen nervously.

"Well," replied the king, "I notice that if that goat is displeased with his wife, he just butts her, and that seems to settle the question—"

"Do you mean to say you would beat me?" cried the queen.

"I should be extremely sorry to have to do so," replied the king, "but I have to persuade you to go home quietly, and to ask no more silly questions when I say I cannot answer them. Of course, if you will persist, why—"

And the queen went home, and so did the king; and it is said that they are both happier and wiser than ever before.

# SRI LANKA

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## THE FROG PRINCE

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Parker, Henry. *Village Folk Tales of Ceylon*. Vol. 1. London: Luzac and Company, 1910, 67–71.

**Date:** ca. 1910

**Original Source:** Sri Lanka

**National Origin:** Sri Lanka

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Sri Lanka (called Ceylon before 1972) is located about 18 miles off the southern coast of India. Since ancient times it has served as a crossroads between continental South Asia, West Asia, Southeast Asia, and Europe. The early residents were the people known as Veddahs, and later the Dravidian people arrived on the island. The following **ordinary tale** is an inverted **variant** of the well-known “Frog Prince” (AT 440) plot, a plot in which ordeals lead to the transformation of a frog or other animal into a prince. Any significance between the transformation of the protagonist by the use of rice and the date palm has been lost in the cross-cultural transmission of the tale. It may be worth noting, however, that the date palm provides the raw materials for making the palm wine traditionally consumed in Sri Lanka as well as in other areas of South Asia. A major element of the plot involves the “Obstacle Flight” **motif** (D617).

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**A**t a city there is a certain king; a widow lives at a house near his palace. She subsists by going to this royal palace and pounding rice there; having handed it over, she takes away the rice powders and lives on it.



During the time while she was getting a living in this way, she bore a frog, which she reared there. When it was grown up, the king of that city caused this proclamation to be made by beat of tom-toms, "I will give half my kingdom, and goods amounting to an elephant's load to the person who brings the Jeweled Golden Cock that is at the house of the Rakshasi (Ogress).

The frog took the bundle of rice, and hanging it from his shoulder, went to an Indi (wild date) tree, scraped the leaf off a date spike (the mid-rib of the leaf), and strung the rice on it. While going away after stringing it, the frog then became like a very good-looking royal prince, and a horse and clothing for him made their appearance there. Putting on the clothes he mounted the horse, and making it bound along he went on till he came to a city.

Hearing that he had arrived, the king of that city prepared quarters for this prince to stay at, and having given him ample food and drink, asked, "Where art thou going?"

Then the Prince said, "The King of our city has made a proclamation by beat of tom-toms, that he will give half his kingdom and an elephant's load of gold to the person who brings him the Jeweled Golden Cock that is at the Rakshasi's house. Because of it I am going to fetch the Jeweled Golden Cock."

The King, being pleased with the prince on account of it, gave him a piece of charcoal. "Should you be unable to escape from the Rakshasi while returning after taking the Jeweled Golden Cock, tell this piece of charcoal to be created a fire-fence, and cast it down," he said. Taking it, he went to another city.

The king of that city in that very manner having prepared quarters, and made ready and given him food and drink, asked, "Where art thou going?"

The prince replied in the same words, "I am going to bring the Jeweled Golden Cock that is at the house of the Rakshasi."

That king also being pleased on account of it, gave him a stone, "Should you be unable to escape from the Rakshasi, tell this stone to be created a mountain, and cast it down," he said.

Taking the charcoal and the stone which those two kings gave him, he went to yet another city. The king also in that very manner having given him quarters, and food and drink, asked, "Where art thou going?" The prince in that very way said, "I am going to bring the Jeweled Golden Cock." That King also being greatly pleased gave him a thorn. "Should you be unable to escape from the Rakshasi, tell a thorn fence to be created, and cast down this thorn," he said.

On the next day he went to the house of the Rakshasi. She was not at home; the Rakshasi's daughter was there. That girl having seen the prince coming and not knowing him, asked "Elder brother, elder brother, where are you going?"

The prince said, "Younger sister, I am not going anywhere whatever. I came to beg at your hands the Jeweled Golden Cock which you have got."

To that she replied, "Elder brother, today indeed I am unable to give it. Tomorrow I can. Should my mother come now she will eat you; for that reason come and hide yourself."

Calling him into the house, she put him in a large trunk at the bottom of seven trunks, and shut him up in it.

After a little time had passed, the Rakshasi came back. Having come and seen that the prince's horse was there, she asked her daughter, "Whose is this horse?"

Then the Rakshasi's daughter replied, "Nobody's whatever. It came out of the jungle, and I caught it to ride on."

The Rakshasi having said, "If so, it is good," came in. While lying down to sleep at night, the sweet odor of the prince having reached the Rakshasi, she said to her daughter, "What is this, Bola [a familiar and somewhat condescending term of address]? A smell of a fresh human body is coming to me."

Then the Rakshasi's daughter said, "What, mother! Do you say so? You are constantly eating fresh bodies; how can there not be an odor of them?"

After that, the Rakshasi, taking those words for the truth, went to sleep.

At dawn on the following day, as soon as she arose, the Rakshasi went to seek human flesh for food. After she had gone, the Rakshasa-daughter, taking out the prince who was shut up in the box, told that prince a device on going away with the Jeweled Golden Cock, "Elder brother, if you are going away with the cock, take some cords and fasten them round my shoulders. Having put them round me, take the cock, and having mounted the horse, go off, making him bound quickly. When you have gone, I shall cry out. Mother comes when I give three calls. After she has come, loosening me will occupy much time; then you will be able to get away."

In the way she said, the Prince tied the Rakshasa-daughter, and taking the Jeweled Golden Cock mounted the horse, and making it bound quickly came away.

As that Rakshasa-daughter said, while she was calling out, the Rakshasi came. Having come, after she looked about (she found that) the Rakshasa-daughter was tied, and the Jeweled Golden Cock had been taken away. After she had asked, "Who was it? Who took it?" the Rakshasa-daughter said, "I don't know who it was." After that, she very quickly unfastened the Rakshasa-daughter, and both of them came running to eat that Prince.

The Prince was unable to go quickly. While going, the Prince turned round, and on looking back saw that this Rakshasi and the Rakshasa-daughter were coming running to eat that Prince.

After that, he cast down the thorn which the above-mentioned king of the third city gave him, having told a thorn fence to be created. A thorn fence was created. Having jumped over it, they came on.

After that, when he had put down the piece of stone which the king of the second city gave him, and told a mountain to be created a mountain was created. They sprang over that mountain also, and came on.

After that, he cast down the charcoal which the king of the first city gave him, having told a fire fence to be created. In that very manner, a fire fence was

created. Having come to it, while jumping over it, both of them were burnt and died.

From that place, the prince came along. While coming, he arrived at the Indi tree on which he had threaded the rice, and having taken off it all that dried-up rice, he began to eat it. On coming to the end of it, the person who was like that prince again became a Frog.

After he became a frog, the clothes that he was wearing, and the horse, and the Jeweled Golden Cock vanished. Out of grief on that account, that frog died at that very place.

## THE KING WHO LEARNED THE SPEECH OF ANIMALS

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Parker, Henry. *Village Folk Tales of Ceylon*. Vol. 3. London: Luzac and Company, 1910, 258–260.

**Date:** ca. 1910

**Original Source:** Sri Lanka

**National Origin:** Sri Lanka

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The following tale is a **variant** of “The Animal Languages” (AT 670). In the course of this narrative, the jackal uses a typical **trickster** strategy of directing action by inference and analogy. In this way, he accomplishes goals without risk to himself. Compare this folktale to “The Billy Goat and the King” (page 295).

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**I**n a certain country a king was rearing wild animals. The king had learnt in a thorough manner the speech of animals.

One day at that time the fowls were saying, “Our king assists us very much; he gives us food and drink.” They thanked the king very much. The king having heard their talk, the king laughed with pleasure.

The royal queen having been near, asked, “What did you laugh at?”

“I merely (*nikan*) laughed,” the king said. Should he explain and give the talk to any person the king will die. Because of it he did not explain and give it. That the king knows the speech of animals he does not inform anyone.

The royal queen says, “There is no one who laughs in that way without a reason. Should you not say the reason I am going away, or having jumped into a well I shall die.”

Thereupon the king, because he was unable to be released from [the importunity of] the queen, thought, “Even if I am to die I must explain and give this.”

Thinking thus, he went to give food to the animals. Then it was evident to those animals that this king is going to die. Out of the party of animals first a cock says, "His majesty our king is going to be lost. We don't want the food. We shall not receive assistance. Unless his majesty the king perish thus we shall not perish. In submission to me there are many hens. When I have called them the hens come. When I have told them to eat they eat. When I have told them to go they go. The king, having become submissive in that manner to the thing that his wife has said, is going to die."

The king having heard it, laughed at it also.

Then, also, the royal queen asked, "What did you laugh at?"

Thereupon, not saying the [true] word, the king said, "Thinking of constructing a tank, I laughed."

Then the queen said, "Having caused the animals that are in this Lankawa (Ceylon) to be brought, let us build a tank."

Then the king having said, "It is good," caused the animals to be brought. The king having gone with the animals, showed them a place [in which] to build a tank; and telling them to build it came away.

The animals, at the king's command being unable to do anything, all together began to struggle on the mound of earth. Those which can take earth in the mouth take it in the mouth. All work in this manner. The jackal, not doing work, having bounded away remained looking on.

After three or four days, the king having gone [there] trickishly stayed looking on. The king saw that the other animals are all moving about as though working. The jackal, only, having bounded off is looking on.

Having seen it he asked the jackal, "The others are all working. Thou, only, art looking upward. Why?"

Thereupon the jackal said, "No, O lord, I looked into an account."

Then the king asked, "What account art thou looking at?"

The jackal says, "I looked whether in this country the females are in excess or the males are in excess."

The king asked, "By the account which thou knowest, are the females in excess or the males in excess?"

The jackal said, "So far as I can perceive, the females are in excess in this country."

Then the king said that men are in excess. Having said it the king said, "I myself having gone home and looked at the books, if males are in excess I shall give thee a good punishment."

The king having come home and looked at the books, it appeared that the males were in excess. Thereupon the king called the jackal, and said, "Bola, males are in excess."

Then the jackal says, "No, O lord, your majesty, they are not as many as the females. Having also put down to the female account the males who

hearken to the things that females say, after they counted them the females would be in excess.”

Then the jackal said, “Are the animals able to build tanks? How shall they carry the earth?”

Thereupon the king having considered it, and having said, “Wild animals, wild animals, you are to go to the midst of the forest,” came home.

At that time, the queen asked, “Is the tank built and finished?”

Then the king, taking a cane, began to beat the queen. Thereupon the queen, having said, “Ané! O lord, your majesty, I will never again say anything, or even ask anything,” began to cry aloud.

The king got to know that the jackal was a wise animal.



# **SOUTHEAST ASIA**





# BORNEO

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## THE BEGINNING

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Evans, Ivor H. N. "Folk Stories of the Tempassuk and Tuaran Districts, British North Borneo." *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 43 (1913): 471–473.

**Date:** ca. 1910

**Original Source:** Borneo

**National Origin:** Malaysia

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The Southeast Asian region of Borneo, located in the midst of the Indonesian archipelago is the third largest island in the world. In the twenty-first century, it is apportioned among Indonesia, Malaysia, and Brunei. The Dusun, Bajau, and Illanun from whom the following narratives were collected are among the three dozen ethnic groups indigenous to the island. The subsistence bases of the indigenous cultures vary from fishing to agriculture, depending on the region in which each resides. Many groups, such as the Bajau and Illanun, for example, have been profoundly influenced by Islam. Indigenous belief systems are at the core of such narratives as "The Beginning," however. Kenharingan and Munsu-mundok are the primary deities of the Dusuns of Borneo. In the following creation **myth**, the pair create land and living things as well as introduce death into the universe.

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**A**t first there was a great stone in the middle of the sea. At that time there was no earth only water. The rock was large and it opened its mouth and out of it came a man and a woman. The man and the woman looked around and there was only water. The woman said to the man,

“How can we walk, for there is no land?” They descended from the rock and tried to walk on the surface of the water and found that they could.

They returned to the rock and sat down to think; for a long time they stopped there; then again they walked upon the water and at length they arrived at the house of Bisagit (the spirit of small-pox), for Bisagit had made land though it was very far away. Now the man and his wife were Kenharingan and Munsumundok. They spoke to Bisagit and asked for some of his earth and he gave it to them.

So going home they pounded up the rock and mixed Bisagit’s earth with it and it became land. Then Kenharingan made the Dusun and Munsumundok made the sky. Afterwards Kenharingan and Munsumundok made the sun as it was not good for men to walk about without light. “Then,” said Munsumundok, “there is no light at night, let us make the moon,” and they made the moon and, the seven stars, the blatek and the kukurian [constellations].

Kenharingan and Munsumundok had one son and one daughter. Now Kenharingan’s people wept because there was no food. So Kenharingan and Munsumundok killed their girl child and cut it up, and from the different portions of its body grew all things good to eat: its head gave rise to the coconut, and you can see the marks of its eyes and mouth on the coconut till this day; from its arm-bones arose sugar cane; its fingers became bananas and its blood [rice] padi. All the animals also arose from pieces of the child.

When Kenharingan had made everything he said, “Who is able to cast off his skin? If anyone can do so, he shall not die.” The snake alone heard and said, “I can.” And for this reason, till the present day, the snake does not die unless killed by man. (The Dusun did not hear or they would also have thrown off their skins and there would have been no death.) Kenharingan washed the Dusun in the river, placing them in a basket; one man, however, fell out of the basket and floating away down the river stopped near the coast. This man gave rise to the Bajau who still live near the sea and are skilful at using boats.

When Kenharingan had washed the Dusun in the river he menghadjied [held a ritual for] them in his house, but one man left the house before Kenharingan had menghadjied and went off into the jungle to search for something and when he came back he could not enter the house again for he had become a monkey. This man is the father of the monkeys.

## **THE THREE RAJAHS**

**Tradition Bearer:** Gergoi

**Source:** Evans, Ivor H. N. “Folk Stories of the Tempassuk and Tuaran Districts, British North Borneo.” *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 43 (1913): 463–465.

**Date:** ca. 1910

**Original Source:** Borneo

**National Origin:** Malaysia

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**Myth** commonly describes a dividing and ordering process during which the present state of the universe, including ethnic and political systems, is established. In the following narrative, the Dusun of Borneo offer an explanation for the current relationships between themselves, their Islamic neighbors, and the Europeans who colonized Borneo. The custom of taking human heads was common among the Dusun in the relatively recent past. This is especially true at the beginning of the twentieth century when the myth below was performed.

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Long ago there were no men in this country of the Tempassuk; men's first place was at Naragang Nonok, up country. In this village there were many Nonok trees and men lived in them. When the kampong was over full they called a council and they agreed to divide the country between them. So three men with their wives and children and followers set out at different times from the kampong.

The first man who started at length came to a place where there was a threefold fork in the road; he kept straight on and set a mark on the road by which he had traveled. The second man chose the road to the left hand, and the third took that to the right. So the companions of the first man followed him along the straight road and at last they made a village. The parties of the second and third men, who had gone to the left and right, also made kampongs.

Seven days after the first man had made his kampong a white stag came to the place. The men of the kampong agreed to try and catch the stag, but it always escaped them, although it did not go far away from the village. Now the name of the man who followed the straight road was the Rajah Kapitan and he had seven wives, and he said to them, "I cannot catch this stag; you had better make me some cakes of banana and flour" (linobok). Then the Rajah, taking with him seven cooks to carry his food and baggage, got on his horse and set out to hunt the stag. So he hunted, and at night the Rajah and the stag both stopped.

The next morning, early, as soon as the Rajah had eaten, he again started off after the stag and for three days he chased it, but at last he lost it. Then the Rajah, finding that he did not know where he was, agreed with his men to push on till they should come to some kampong, if there was one. At last they came to a kampong and the Rajah said, "Why, there are other people in this country; I thought that my village was the only one." Then he asked in the village whose it was, and he was told the Rajah Kretan's ["King Shark"] and that the Rajah had seven wives.

“Well,” said the Rajah Kapitan, “if it is true that he has seven wives, he is like me, and I will ask him for betel-nut, telling him, if his wives come to me, to send those that are the most beautiful.” So the Rajah’s two most beautiful wives came to him, one to give him betel-nut and the other to make him rook [cigarettes]. They were lovely, one as a star and the other as the moon. The Rajah Kretan, however, slept in his house. When the two beautiful women had waited upon the Rajah Kapitan he immediately killed them both and cutting off their heads started for home. This he did because he was angry at losing the stag. Then the Rajah Kretan awoke and when he found what had happened he caught his great dog and using it as a horse pursued the Rajah Kapitan. Now the Rajah Kapitan, who was afraid of being attacked because of the heads he had taken, when he had got home made a fort three fathoms in height.

So the Rajah Kretan came to the fort, and his dog jumped the wall. When he had got inside he asked whose kampong it was, and men answered, “The Rajah Kapitan’s.”

“How many wives has he got?” he asked, and a man answered “Seven.”

“If that is so,” said the Rajah Kretan, “let them bring me roko and pinang [betel-nut].” So the two most beautiful wives of the Rajah Kapitan came out to give him roko and pinang, and when he had been served he immediately cut off their heads, and leaping on his dog called out that he was now avenged on the Rajah Kapitan. The dog took the wall at a leap and in a little time the Rajah Kretan was nearly home. Now the Rajah Kretan was the second man who had started from Naragang Nonok, but the Rajah Kapitan knew nothing of the other men who had followed behind him. When the Rajah Kapitan awoke, for he had been asleep, he asked where his two favorite wives were, and he was told how they had been killed.

So he started out alone on his horse to hunt the Rajah Kretan and overtook him just as he was going to enter his house. Then the Rajah Kretan seeing him, threw the heads on the ground and made off on his dog, and the Rajah Kapitan hunted him on his horse. After they had been going thus for a week, the Rajah Kretan running away, and the Rajah Kapitan pursuing him, they left the Rajah Kretan’s country behind and came out upon a plain. So the Rajah Kretan dismounted from his dog and the Rajah Kapitan from his horse and the two fought, but neither conquered the other. Now while they were still fighting they came into a kampong but did not know it until they struck their backs against the posts of the houses. And the men of the kampong were astonished for they saw that the two men were strangers. Then the Rajah Bassi, who was the Rajah of the village, awoke, and coming out of the house, asked why they were fighting, and the Rajah Kapitan told him how he had hunted the stag and how being angry at losing it he had cut off the heads of the Rajah Kretan’s wives. And the Rajah Kretan told him how he had avenged himself on the Rajah Kapitan, and how the latter had pursued him. Then said the Rajah Bassi, “Do not quarrel any more about your wives, for I have twenty-seven who are all beautiful and you

can replace your dead wives from them. This only, I beg, do not fight in my country.” So the Rajah Bassi’s twenty-seven wives came out of the house, and the Rajah Kapitan and the Rajah Kretan each chose two wives like their former wives in appearance.

And the Rajah Bassi said, “I have given you wives and you must fight no more; for we three men all came from Naragang Nonok, but I only know the way back. You, Rajah Kapitan, have become a Dusun, you, Rajah Kretan, have become a Mohammedan, while I have become a white man; and in future time if I have any trouble you must give me your help.”

Then the Rajah Kretan and the Rajah Kapitan thanked him and promised to help him. “For,” said they, “you have become a great Rajah and we will help you; and you shall judge us and our children and shall help us in time of sickness.” So the Rajah Bassi said that their answer was good and that they should help him and that he would judge their peoples and give them help, “And,” said he, “you must pay me a yearly tax on each head (male) of your people.” And so to the present day the Rajah Bassi (the white people) judge the Rajah Kapitan (the Dusun), and the Rajah Kretan (the Mohammedans) and take a tax from them for each man. Further he spoke, saying, “There shall be in this pelompong [island] many people, for that is my wish.”

So we Dusun to the present day are descendants of the Rajah Kapitan and the Bajau of the Rajah Kretan, and as the white people are the descendants of the Rajah Bassi we obey the Government and clean the paths and do other work in which the Government asks our help. For the Rajah Bassi said, “Though you have made me great I am mortal and shall die, but I will tell this story to my grandchildren, and you, Rajah Kapitan, and you, Rajah Kretan, shall tell it to yours and they shall observe it.”

## AKI GAHUK, THE FATHER OF THE CROCODILES

**Tradition Bearer:** Sirinan

**Source:** Evans, Ivor H. N. “Folk Stories of the Tempassuk and Tuaran Districts, British North Borneo.” *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 43 (1913): 454–455.

**Date:** ca. 1910

**Original Source:** Borneo

**National Origin:** Malaysia

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According to the following narrative, the crocodile was the result of filial impiety. In this **myth**, Grandfather Gahuk’s children neglected him, regretted their actions too late, and brought about the origin of a major predator in their environment.

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Long ago Aki ["grandfather"] Gahuk was chief of Kampong Tengkurus. He was a very old man and he had seven sons and four daughters. His sons all wished to take wives, and his daughters, husbands, and so they married. At last Aki Gahuk became so, old that he could no longer walk, and his children did not wish to provide for him. Then Aki Gahuk said to them, "Why do you not wish to support me, for I am an old man and can no longer get my living?" But his children answered that they wished he were dead, as he was only an encumbrance to them. So Aki Gahuk wept and said, "If you wish me dead you had better put me into the river, for although you give me food, you give me no clothes and I am naked and ashamed."

Then his children put him into the river, for they did not wish to buy clothes for him; and Aki Gahuk stopped there in the water, and every night and morning they gave him food. There was a large stone in the middle of the stream and when he was cold Aki Gahuk used to climb slowly up on to this and sit there like a toad. Now after he had been in the water for three or four months, Aki Gahuk no longer climbed the big stone and his feet and legs as far as his knees became like those of a crocodile. His children who brought him food saw that his feet had become like a crocodile's and said, "Father, we thought you would die but you are becoming a crocodile." Then all the brothers and sisters came together to look at their father and said to him, "Father, if you are not going to die, let us take you home again to the house and give you clothes, for we do not wish you to become a crocodile."

But Aki Gahuk said, "How can I go home with you, for I have become a crocodile. Before, you had no pity on me and now that you have pity on me I am unable to go home." So his children wept and said that they did not wish him to turn into a crocodile and Aki Gahuk said to them, "You can tell this story to your descendants; perhaps also it is good that I should become a crocodile. On feast days you can call to me, and when there is a flood I will take you across the river on my back." After some days his whole body became like that of a crocodile and his children were afraid that he would eat men, but he could still speak and he told them that he would never eat men though perhaps his descendants might do so. Then after a year Aki Gahuk called to his children and told them that he wished to go seawards, saying that if his children went in that direction they were to call him, "For," said he, "I wish to take a wife."

Said his children, "How will you take a wife for there are no other crocodiles?"

"I will call one to me," said their father, "I will call the Pang (iguana) and she will become my wife." Then Aki Gahuk went seawards and the Pang became his wife and from their offspring arose all the crocodiles.

## THE MOSQUITOS' VILLAGE

**Tradition Bearer:** Si Ungin

**Source:** Evans, Ivor H. N. "Folk Stories of the Tempassuk and Tuaran Districts, British North Borneo." *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 43 (1913): 446–447.

**Date:** ca. 1910

**Original Source:** Borneo

**National Origin:** Malaysia

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The **motif** of the two siblings, one kind and respectful and the other rude and haughty, appears to be popular in this traditional repertoire. Compare the following tale with "Ligat Liou" (page 315).

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A long time ago a man was once hunting in the jungle and when it was near nightfall he wished to return home, but having wandered from the path he was unable to find it. While he was still searching for the way he came upon a large house near a kampong. So he went into it and meeting there an old man he told him how he was lost and asked for leave to sleep there. "Yes," said the old man, "you can sleep here, for you cannot find your way home tonight, as it is already dark." After a time, other people, men, women, and children, came to the house, and the old man told them about the stranger, saying, "Let us give him a bed for the night."

Then they brought him food, but instead of water they gave him blood, and for rice they gave him maggots. "Perhaps I am among evil spirits," thought the stranger; so he ate a little of what they had given him.

"Why do you not eat?" said the old man; and the stranger replied that he was troubled about having lost his way home. "If you cannot find your way home," said his host, "tomorrow I will send one of my men with you to show you the path." Then the women of the house said that they would find him a mat to sleep on; but when they brought it, it was only a banana leaf. So the stranger and the people of the house lay down, but the former could not sleep owing to the great number of mosquitoes. Then as he heard none of the other men in the house striking at the mosquitoes, he thought, "Perhaps this is the mosquitoes' kampong," and so he also did not try to kill them but brushed them gently from his body; and when he had done this once they no longer returned to disturb him. However, he did not sleep for he was afraid.

When morning came the old man looked at the stranger's mat and seeing no dead mosquitoes there he said to him, "Well, my son, you wish to go home and you shall have someone to show you the way. This, my younger brother,

shall go with you, and you shall become brothers to one another, only do not bring him to your house but let him go when you find your path; for we are all mosquitoes, and that was man's blood you drank last night. You must take this bombing [bamboo box] with you, and when you get home call your father and mother and brothers and sisters to see what it contains, but do not open it before you get to your house."

So the stranger went home, the old man's younger brother accompanying till he found the path. When he got to his house he told his relations what had happened to him and how the old man had given him the bamboo box and had ordered him to open it in the presence of his father and mother; speaking thus, he opened the box and from it he brought out gold ornaments, rings and bracelets, and fine clothes.

Now when the stranger's elder brother saw the gold and the fine clothes he said, "I also will go to the kampong and tell the people that I am your brother." So he started and after a time he too 'lost his way in the jungle. When it was near night he came to the kampong of the mosquitoes and asked the old man to let him sleep there; and he told the old man how his brother had lost his way in the jungle before and how he had come upon a house when he was lost and that the people of the house had given him gold and fine clothing. "But," said he, "I do not know if this is the house." Then the old man ordered them to bring food for the elder brother, and for water they brought him blood, and for rice, maggots. "What sort of food is this you give me?" said the elder brother. "Blood and maggots! I cannot eat it." When the time for sleep came they brought him a banana leaf instead of a mat; and he said again, "What is this you have brought me? This is a house not the jungle. I want to sleep on a mat, not on a banana leaf." Said the old man, "These are our mats; sleep on it if you will, but if not, what can I do, only do not say I have no respect for you." So the elder brother slept, but before long he awoke and found that he was being bitten by swarms of mosquitoes. Then he started slapping away at them right and left, and in the morning when he wished to go home there was no blood left in his body.

In the morning the old man told him that he must return and gave him a bamboo, telling him not to open it till he came to his house. "But," said the elder brother, "how can I go home for I do not know the way!" The old man replied that he must find the way for himself. So setting out he at length came upon the path and reached home safely. Then he called together all his relations and friends and said, "I also have got a bamboo and I think there must be gold and fine clothes in it too." But his younger brother asked him, "Did a man guide you home?" and the elder brother said "No." So the elder brother opened the box and from it came out scorpions and centipedes and other poisonous animals and stung him to death, but no one else in the house was touched by them. Thus the elder brother fell down and died; and the younger said, "My brother must have offended the people of the kampong."



## LIGAT LIOU

**Tradition Bearer:** Sirinan

**Source:** Evans, Ivor H. N. "Folk Stories of the Tempassuk and Tuaran Districts, British North Borneo." *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 43 (1913): 439–442.

**Date:** ca. 1910

**Original Source:** Borneo

**National Origin:** Malaysia

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The following tale is reminiscent of the **ordinary folktale** "The Kind and the Unkind Girls" (AT 480) in which two girls set out on the same path. The first is rewarded for acts of kindness, while the second is punished for refusing to perform the same acts for a supernaturally powerful stranger. Compare this tale to the Caribbean tale "The Witch at Bosen Corner" (Volume 4, page 434).

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There was once a man named Tamburan. One day he took his parang [machete] and spear and his bareit [basket] and went off to look for vegetables in the jungle, for he was poor and had no food. He searched and searched but could find nothing; at last, however, he came to an old kabun [garden] and seeing a sulap [hut] near it he went to look if there were any people in it, for he thought that the kabun was still being used as there were many gourds there. Putting down his bareit and spear he climbed up into the hut, and there he saw a woman lying down. Now she was unable to sit up because her head was very large while her neck was only as thick as my little finger. The woman, whose name was Ligat Liou ["little neck"], spoke to him and said, "Tamburan, why have you come here?"

"I have come looking for vegetables," answered Tamburan, "for I have nothing to eat and nothing with which I can buy padi."

"If you are hungry," said Ligat Liou, "there is some rice ready cooked there on the saleian [shelf above the fire], which you can eat and you will find fish there too."

"How does she manage to pound her rice," thought Tamburan, "for she cannot even sit up." Then he said, "I do not like to eat alone."

"I have eaten just now," said Ligat Liou, "do not be ashamed to eat" So Tamburan took the rice and ate and when he had finished Ligat Liou asked him to come and search for lice in her hair; so he went to search, but instead of lice he found in her hair scorpions and little snakes and centipedes and all other sorts of poisonous animals. Then he killed them all till there were none left and Ligat Liou thanked him, saying that none of the women who came there would

search for lice in her hair. "But now," said she, "I shall be able to stand up, for my head is light since I am free of all these lice."

So she stood up and said to Tamburan, "Take seven gourds from this kabun." So Tamburan took the gourds and brought them into the sulap. Then said Ligat Liou, "Take this first gourd as soon as you get home and cut it in two; the second one cut open when you get into your room; the third you must open in your store room; the fourth on the padi shelf, the fifth on the verandah, the sixth below the steps, and the seventh below the house."

Then Tamburan went home and on reaching his house he did as Ligat Liou had instructed him, for his children were crying for food. When he cut open the first gourd he found rice and all other kinds of food ready cooked in it, together with plates and drinking cups. So they ate and when they had finished he cut open the second gourd in his sleeping room and in it were mats for sleeping on and all the furnishings for a bedroom. The third gourd he opened in his store room and from it came gongs of all kinds and other goods besides. The fourth gourd he opened on the padi shelf and from it came great quantities of padi. The fifth he opened on the verandah and in it were many hens. The sixth he opened below the steps and out of it came great numbers of pigs. The seventh held many kerbaws [carabaos]; this also he cut open, as he had been ordered, within the fence below the house.

Now when the gourds were cut open there was a man in the house named Sikinding, who lived in another room. This man was also poor and he came to Tamburan and said, "Brother (Pori San), where did you get all these goods from?"

Said Tamburan, "I was astonished at getting them myself, for I dreamed I was rich and when I woke up I found it was true."

"Ah," said Sikinding, "I always dream at night but I have never become rich from it," for he did not believe Tamburan's words. "It is true," said Tamburan, "for you know well that yesterday I was as poor as you and went with the rest of the men to look for vegetables in the jungle." But Sikinding still did not believe him and said, "Perhaps you got them from someone."

"I spoke truth," said Tamburan, "and this is my dream, I dreamed that I came to an old kabun and that I went into a hut there, and that I got the goods from the person who lived in the hut."

"Well," said Sikinding, "I will try and find this kabun and the person you dreamed of."

"Just as you like," said Tamburan, "for as I told you I only dreamed of the place."

"I shall start tomorrow," said Sikinding.

"Well, I am not ordering you," replied Tamburan, "you are going to please yourself." So the next day Sikinding set out to look for the kabun, but having searched for two days and not finding it he went back and told Tamburan that he thought he was a liar, saying that he had searched for the kabun for two days

and not found it. "For," said he, "I think you really went to the kabun and not that you dreamed about it" But Tamburan again replied that it had been a dream. "Ah," said Sikinding, "I don't believe you, how many times have men dreamed in this kampong and never yet got rich from it."

"Well, try once more to find the place," said Tamburan, "and perhaps you will succeed."

So on the next day Sikinding set out again and not finding it returned after he had searched for four days. Thought Sikinding, "Perhaps Tamburan is trying to kill me by sending me into the jungle, this time I will take my spear and parang when I ask him, and if he will not tell me, I will kill him." Then Sikinding went to Tamburan's door and said, "I still do not believe your story though I have hunted for the kabun for four days. If you do not tell me the truth this time I will kill you, for if my luck had been bad in the jungle I should have died there." But Tamburan still declared it was a dream, and Sikinding getting angry snatched the sheath from his spear and Tamburan ran away. Then Tamburan cried out that he would tell the truth, for he was afraid that Sikinding would kill him; so Sikinding stopped chasing him and Tamburan told him how he had gone to the kabun and how he had marked the trees with his parang, so as to know the way back. "Well," said Sikinding, "I will not kill you if you will show me the way."

"But, perhaps," said Tamburan, "you will not be brave enough to hunt for the lice in her hair."

"Oh," said Sikinding, "however brave you are, I am braver."

"Well, when you come to the kabun," said Tamburan, "if anybody asks you to search for lice, you must not be afraid, for many men have been there, but I only was brave enough."

"Oh, I shall not be afraid," said Sikinding. So the next day he set out and followed the marks which Tamburan had made on the trees, and at length he came to the kabun. When he was still some way from the hut he began calling out to know if there was anyone inside; but no answer came. So when he had come to the hut he put down his bareit, and going in saw Ligat Lion there and she said to him, "What do you come for?"

"Oh," said Sikinding. "I have no padi and I have come to look for vegetables; I am very hungry; where is your rice?"

"How should I have rice?" said Ligat Liou, "for I cannot get up to pound it."

"Oh! That's not true," said Sikinding, "for how can you live if you have no rice?"

"Well, it is true," said Ligat Liou, "for as you see yourself I cannot get up." So Sikinding went to get her rice from the shelf over the fireplace, but on taking down the plate he found nothing but earth in it.

"Ah," he said, "you people in this kampong are no good; you eat earth."

"I told you I had no rice," said Ligat Liou, "but you can take a gourd from the kabun." Then Sikinding went and took a gourd, and going up again into the

but he asked Ligat Liou how he was to eat it. “You must cut it open,” said she, “and eat what is inside it.” So he cut it open and found a little rice and one fish in it, and from this he made his meal. When he had finished eating the rice and fish he said to Ligat Liou, “That is not enough; I’ll go and take another gourd and that will be sufficient.”

“You can take another,” said she, “but only one.” So he brought another gourd, and cutting it open found inside it only rice in the husk and uncooked fish.

“I’ve not had enough to eat,” said he, “where can I get it from?”

“You can cook the food here,” said Ligat Liou.

“No, I won’t do that,” said Sikinding, “I will take it home and cook it; but I want seven gourds to take home with me.”

“I will give them to you,” said Ligat Liou, “but first come and look for lice in my hair.” So Sikinding went to look for lice but when he saw the scorpions and snakes and other poisonous things he cried out and was not brave enough to kill them and he let Ligat Liou’s head fall first to one side and then to the other. “Well,” said Ligat Liou, “if you are afraid to kill my lice you had better go home. But take one gourd with you; you may take a large one, but do not take more than one.” Then Sikinding took the gourd and Ligat Liou said to him, “When you get home and wish to open this gourd, get into your tankob [large storage vessel] and make your wife and children get into it as well; but shut up the top of the tankob well so that nothing can get out.” So Sikinding ran home and calling his wife and children, they all got into the tankob with the exception of one small child, for whom there was no room. Then Sikinding opened the gourd and from it came out snakes and scorpions, which bit Sikinding and his wife and children until they died. The only person who remained alive was the small child for whom there had been no room in the tankob.

## GINAS AND THE RAJAH

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Evans, Ivor H. N. “Folk Stories of the Tempassuk and Tuaran Districts, British North Borneo.” *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 43 (1913): 468–469.

**Date:** ca. 1910

**Original Source:** Borneo

**National Origin:** Malaysia

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The extraordinary nature of Ginas, the protagonist of the following tale, is revealed at conception, if the possible translation of his mother’s name (“virgin”) is correct. He is precocious physically and intellectually, but

he refuses to be fettered by the rules of proper behavior or even by the rajah's dictates. Ginas demonstrates his cleverness in a contest of wits involving a series of tests imposed upon him by the ruler. He trumps the rajah's ploys in handy fashion, in one case with a task of his own ("Making a Rope of Sand," AT 1174). The narrative demonstrates the affection the Dusun of Borneo have for the **trickster**.

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**A** long time ago there was a man and his wife whose names were Rakian and Sumundok. On the day when they married many others also had married and each couple had at least two children, but Rakian and Sumundok had none, though Sumundok was expecting a child.

Rakian fell ill, and he said to his wife, "Perhaps I shall die before I see my child, but you must bring him up well, for we are not wanting in possessions."

Then Rakian died and after a time Sumundok gave birth to a male child, and she said to it, "I will give you a name; your name is Ginas, but I will not bring you up, I will put you in a box." So Sumundok put the child into a box, and after two or three months she went to look at it and found that it had grown and could walk. When the child had come out of the box it spent its time in hunting the pigs and its mother did not forbid it, "For," thought she, "if it should kill a pig, I can replace it." But the people of the kampong became angry because Sumundok's child was always chasing their pigs.

One day Ginas went to the Rajah's house, and for two days he hunted the pigs there below the house. Then the Rajah said to one of his men, "Go to Ginas's house and tell his relations that he must not hunt pigs any more, for I have had no sleep from it for two nights. If he does not follow my orders I will make him my slave." So three men went to Ginas's house and told him that if he chased the Rajah's pigs any more he would make him a slave. But Ginas paid no heed to the Rajah's words, and going to the Rajah's house he again hunted the pigs. Then said the Rajah, "All men follow my orders, this Ginas only, who is still small, does not obey me." So the Rajah sent to Ginas saying, "For three nights I have not been able to sleep for the noise of the waves in the sea. Go and chase them and see if you can stop them." When the Rajah's men came to the house of Ginas they said to him that the Rajah wished him to stop the waves, and Ginas said, "You must stop here tonight and eat with me." The three men stopped there; and when it was night Ginas went down to the sea-shore, and, taking sand, wrapped it in his handkerchief.

Then going back to the house, he woke the Rajah's men and said to them, "Give this sand to the Rajah and tell him to have a rope made from it and when the rope is made I will use it to catch the waves with." So the men went home and the Rajah asked them what Ginas had said to his order to stop the waves. Then the Rajah's men told him that Ginas had said that he would catch the waves, only that as he was short of rope he was sending some sand to the

Rajah of which to make a cord, and that when the cord was made he would catch the waves with it. And the Rajah had to admit that he was beaten, and threw the sand away.

Then the Rajah had seven jars of Tapai made, and killed three cattle; then he sent three men to call Ginas to drink. The three men came to Ginas and he replied that he would come on the next day. On the morrow, Ginas brought out clothes all covered with gold, and, putting them on, set out. When he got to the Rajah's house the Rajah asked him to sit down on his mattress, and all kinds of food and drink were brought to them, and there was a bowl there for washing the hands, seven punkals [hand spans] in circumference. After they had eaten, the Rajah said to Ginas, "Ginas, you shall wash your hands on my mattress, and if the mattress is not wetted you shall replace me as Rajah, and shall have all my property and my daughter for your wife; but if you wet the mattress you shall become my slave."

So when Ginas was washing out his mouth he was afraid to spit the water out on to the mattress, so he sent it into the Rajah's face instead, saying, "I was afraid to put it anywhere else, but your face does not matter, since you are blind in one eye, and thus your face is damaged. Take this looking-glass and look." So the Rajah took the glass, and, seeing that one of his eyes was damaged, and that no one else had so ugly a face, was ashamed and ran away from the country, taking with him only one of his wives. As for Ginas, he took his place and became Rajah.

## RAKIAN

**Tradition Bearer:** Sirinan

**Source:** Evans, Ivor H. N. "Folk Stories of the Tempassuk and Tuaran Districts, British North Borneo." *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 43 (1913): 457–459.

**Date:** ca. 1910

**Original Source:** Borneo

**National Origin:** Malaysia

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The **motif** of the spouse who changes from animal to human and back again is widely distributed. The plot of "Rakian" is typical: discovery of the animal wife who causes her husband to prosper, followed by his violation of the oath of secrecy about her animal nature, which leads to her abandoning him.

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Once there was a mangis tree in which there were large bees' nests, and when there was sufficient honey in the nests a man named Rakian went to the tree and began to drive bamboo pegs into it so that he could

climb up. It was getting towards evening when he began to work. Now there were many bees' nests in the tree and Rakian, seeing that the bees of the nest right at the top of the tree were white, decided to take it, "For," thought he, "I have never yet seen white bees." Then he climbed up the steps he had made in the tree to take the bees' nest and when he was close he drew his parang to cut it down.

But the bees did not swarm out from the nest and while he was sawing away at the branch from which it hung he heard the bees say "That hurts." Then Rakian, wondering, sheathed his parang and the bees said to him, "If you wish to take the nest take it gently and do not cut it down." So he took the nest with the bees in it and putting it into his bareit [basket] he descended the tree and went home. When he came to his house he put the bareit with the bees in it into his room.

Early the next morning Rakian went to his kabun and did not return until near dark when, on coming back to his house, he found rice and fish ready cooked on his shelf above the fire. "Then," thought Rakian, "who can have cooked for me for I am the only man who lives in this house: this fish is not mine though the rice is. The rice is cold and must have been cooked for a long time. Perhaps somebody has come here and cooked and taken away my bees' nest." So he went to his bareit and found the bees' nest still there. Then Rakian sat down to eat. "Well," he thought, "if, someone is going to cook for me, so much the better."

In the morning he ate the remains of the rice from the day before, and again went to his kabun. As on the previous day he came home before nightfall and again there was food prepared for him. "Who is this," thought Rakian, "who comes to my house and cooks?" and once more he went to see if his bees' nest had been stolen; and thus it happened that there was always food ready for him when he came home. One day he determined to return early and see who was cooking his food for him.

So early in the morning he set out as if for his kabun, but when he had gone a little way he went straight home again and hid himself near the house. For a long time he waited and nothing happened, but at last the door of his house creaked and a beautiful woman came out of his room and taking his bamboo water vessel went out of the house to the river to get water. Then when she had gone down to the river Rakian entered his room without the woman seeing him and went to look at his bees. But when he opened his bareit he found that there were no bees in it, but only the nest. So he took the nest from the bareit and hid it and concealed himself in the house.

After a time the woman came back from the river and went to the bareit to look for the bees' nest. "Oh," said she, "who has taken my box (sarong)?" So she hunted for the nest and at last began to weep, saying, "Who can have taken it? It cannot be Rakian for he has gone to work at his kabun. I am afraid that he will come back and find me." When it was nearly dark Rakian came out from

his hiding-place as if he had just come back from his kabun; but the woman sat there without speaking.

“Why are you here?” said Rakian, “perhaps you want to steal my bees.”

“I do not know anything about your bees,” said the woman. So he went to the bareit to look for his bees but of course they were not there for Rakian himself had hidden the nest. “Oh,” said he, “my bees’ nest is not here, perhaps you have taken it. “How should I know anything about your bees’ nest,” said she. “Well, it does not matter,” said Rakian, “will you cook for me, for I am very hungry?”

“I do not want to cook,” said the woman, “for I am vexed.” So Rakian kept on telling her to cook for him, but the woman refused and at last she said, “Where is my sarong?”

“I have not taken it,” said Rakian. “I believe you have hidden it,” said the woman, “and all my clothes and goods are in it.” At last Rakian said, “I will not give it to you for I am afraid you will get into it again.”

“I will not get into it,” said the woman, “if you like you can take me for your wife. My mother wished to give me to you in this way because you have no wife here and I have no husband either in my country.” Then Rakian took the bees’ nest and gave it to the woman.

“But,” said she, “if you take me as your wife do not ever call me a bee woman, for if you do I shall be much ashamed.” So they married and had a child. Now one day there was a feast at a neighboring house and Rakian went to eat there. “Where is your wife from?” said a man at the feast, “for we have never seen such a beautiful woman before.”

“She is from this kampong,” replied Rakian. When all the men had become drunk they still kept asking him whence he had got his wife, and saying that they had never before seen such a beautiful woman. At last Rakian, who had up to that time always replied that he had taken his wife from the kampong, became drunk also. Then he forgot his promise and said, “The truth is that my wife was at first a bee.” So the men stopped questioning him and Rakian went home.

When he got to the house his wife would not speak to him. “Why will you not speak?” said Rakian. “What did I tell you long ago?” said she. “I think you have been saying things to make me ashamed.”

“I have not said anything,” replied Rakian. “You are lying,” said his wife, “for though the house is far off I heard. When men asked whence I came, at first you would not tell them, but when you became drunk, then you told them everything.” Then Rakian in his turn became silent. “I will go home,” said she, “for you have made me ashamed; but the child I will leave with you. In seven days my father will pass on his way home to his country and I will go with him.” So Rakian wept. At the end of seven days Rakian saw a white bee flying to his house, and his wife came down the steps from his house and saying, “There is my father,” she became a bee again and flew off after the other.

Then Rakian rushed into the house and seized the child, for it was in his heart to follow his wife and her father, “For,” said he, “if my wife is not here the



child will die because it is still little.” So he hunted for the bees until he saw them going in front of him in the jungle. At the end of seven days he had lost sight of them and still he had not come to any kampong. On the eighth day he came to a bathing-place at a river. Then both he and the child, being hungry and weary, lay down by the side of the river and slept. At last a woman came from the kampong and woke Rakian and said, “Rakian, why don’t you go to your wife’s house instead of sleeping here with your child, for the house is not far off?”

“When I have bathed,” said Rakian, “you must show me the way,” and the woman replied, “Very well.” So Rakian bathed and then he followed the woman and it was not long before they came to a kampong. “That is her house,” said his guide, pointing to a long-house, “but her room is right in the middle of it. There are eleven rooms in the house and if you enter it you must not be afraid, for the roof beams are full of bees, but they do not attack men.” So Rakian climbed up into the house and found it full of bees, both large and small, but in the middle room there were none. Men in the house there were none, only bees. Then the child began to cry and Rakian sat down. “Otun [term of endearment],” said a voice in the middle room, “Why do you not come out? Have you no pity on your child who is weeping here?” Then after a time Rakian’s wife appeared in the room and the child ran to her at once, and Rakian’s heart became light; but his wife said to him, “What did I tell you at first that you were not to tell whence I came? If you had not been able to follow me here, certainly there would have been distress for you.” When she had finished speaking all the bees dropped down from the roof beams to the floor and became men. As for Rakian and his child they stayed in the kampong and did not go back any more.

## LANGAON

**Tradition Bearer:** Sirinan

**Source:** Evans, Ivor H. N. “Folk Stories of the Tempassuk and Tuaran Districts, British North Borneo.” *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 43 (1913): 435–439.

**Date:** ca. 1910

**Original Source:** Borneo

**National Origin:** Malaysia

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As in the tale of “Rakian” (page 320), a man acquires an animal wife, but he fails to keep her because he violates the rules that have been imposed upon him. In his initial wandering and later in his quest to recover his wife, he learns courage and integrity and at last becomes worthy of marriage to a goddess.

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Langaon had made a kabun [garden] sufficient in which to sow two mandores of padi [rice] and after a time it bore fruit. When the padi harvest came the men of the kampong went to reap in their kabuns and Langaon went also to reap in his, but when he had finished his reaping he found the produce of it was only two mandores, just what he had sown at first. "Why is this?" said Langaon. "Other men all have a good return from their sowing; I alone have no padi." So he went to the old men of the kampong and told them about it.

However, he decided to make another kabun and this time to sow three mandores. So he made his kabun, and sowed three mandores, and when his padi came up it was better than anyone else's in the kampong; when it began to fruit too it was finer than that in any other kabun. At length harvest time came and Langaon this time got three mandores of padi for his harvest while every other man had at least a full tankob [large bin].

Then he made up his mind to leave the village and search for better ground in which to plant padi. So he set out and after he had wandered for a long time in the jungle, at last he came to a small river and made himself a sulap there. Here he stopped and made borusats [fish traps] in the stream. The next morning he went to look at his traps, and found that he had got a large catch of fish. "Then," said he, "it would be good to stop here for there is no lack of fish; only I have no salt and no padi, and how can I live without them?" So he set out with his fish to look for some place where he might sell them for salt or padi. After a time he came to a kampong and the people said to him, "Oh, Langaon, where are you going?"

"I have run away from my kampong and am living near the river," said Langaon. "I have caught many fish but as I have neither salt nor padi, I have come here to sell them." Then they called him to come into the house and they gave him padi and salt and cooking pots and mats in exchange for his fish. So Langaon was much pleased and the people of the kampong asked him to come every day and bring them fish. When he got home he had sufficient to eat and vessels in which to cook, for hitherto he had used bamboo to cook in. So he decided to stop at the river, and make himself a large hut.

The next morning there were again many fish in his traps and Langaon thought, "I shall be ashamed if I go every day to the kampong, so I will dry these fish in the sun, and tomorrow I will take them the dry fish and any fresh fish I get from the traps." On the following day, Langaon again went to the kampong, and the people of the kampong gave him parangs [machetes] and spears and cloth in exchange for his fish. Then Langaon said to himself, "I had better tell them I shall not come again at once, as the river has fallen since there has been no rain, and until rain comes again I shall have no fish." So he told them, but they said to him, "If you have no fish, come all the same." Langaon went home, and though he got many fish he did not go to the kampong for another week. At last, however, he started for the kampong with his fish, but when he got there, he said, "Today I do not wish to sell my fish; I will

divide them among you, but I will not take anything in return.” So he divided the fish among them and each man got two tempurongs [half of a coconut shell used as a drinking or food vessel] full.

“Why do you not ask a price for your fish,” said the people of the kampong.

“I am not without food,” said Langaon, “I still have much left from what you gave me before, but if I have no food left and catch no fish, I will come and ask you for what I want.” So it was agreed, and Langaon asked them, when was the time for making kabuns there, and they said, “As soon as this month is finished we begin to make them.” When the month was finished, Langaon went back to the kampong, bringing with him a little fish to give to the people, and again he asked them when they would start making kabuns.

“Oh, any time we feel inclined,” said they, “tomorrow or the next day,” and they asked him to come and live in their kampong, but Langaon refused. So he went home and the next day he began to make a kabun, and when he had cut down all the trees, his kabun was large enough to sow two mandores of seed in. “Well,” he thought, “I will rest a little till other people begin to burn” (the cut trees). After about twenty days he saw great quantities of smoke coming from near the kampong and going to his kabun, he fired it until not a single tree trunk was left. “This is, troublesome,” thought he, “I have no seed to sow in my kabun.”

In the morning, he took his fish with him and went to the kampong to ask for seed, and when he was still far off, they started calling to him to bring his fish. So he divided his fish among them, everybody getting a tempurong full; and the people of the kampong asked him if he had sown his padi. “Not yet,” said Langaon, “I came here today, to ask you to give me some seed.”

“How big is your kabun?”

“About two or three mandores large,” replied Langaon. So each man in the kampong gave him a mandore of seed, until there were none left who had not given.

“Why do you give me so much?” said Langaon, “for my kabun is not a large one, only enough for two mandores. If each man were to give me one or two tempurongs full I shall not finish it, but this you have given me is much more than I shall use; besides, how shall I get it home, for I shall only be able to carry two or three mandores.”

“Never –mind,” said the men of the kampong, “whatever you do not want to sow you can leave here, and you can use it to eat.” So when he went home he took only three mandores of seed with him, and the next day he started and sowed two mandores in his kabun. The padi sprouted and thrived, and Langaon said, “Ah, perhaps this year I shall have plenty of padi,” and each day he went to his kabun, though there were no weeds in it. At last he said, “What use is it for me to go to the kabun for there are no weeds in it,” and for six days he remained at home. On the seventh day he went back and found that Maragang monkeys had broken into his kabun and damaged his padi. Then Langaon wept,

“Ah,” said he, “all my padi has been destroyed.” So he tried to raise the stems which the monkeys had beaten down, and he resolved to move his house to the kabun, so that he might guard what remained of the crop. He stayed there at the kabun until his padi had recovered, and when it was ripe, he said to himself, “I must make my binolet [storage vessel].” Then he went into the jungle to get wood for the binolet, and slept a night there, but when he returned home he found not a single grain of padi left in his kabun, all the ears of grain had been taken and only the straw left standing, and there were tracks of many monkeys everywhere. “Ah,” said Langaon, “I will run away from here, for first of all the monkeys damaged my crop, and now when it is ripe they have come again and eaten it all.” So he set out again, and after he had wandered in the jungle for a long time, at last he made another sulap [hut], but this time there was no river near, and he had to live on whatever he could find in the jungle. He had brought away with him the one mandore of padi seed which he had not planted in his former kabun, and here he again made a kabun and sowed the seed in it. This time he made his kabun round his house so that he might keep a guard on his crop, and when the padi came up it was very good. There he lived until his padi was in the ear.

One day he went to fetch water from the river and on coming back he saw a great many Maragang monkeys near his kabun; though they had not yet entered it and eaten his padi. Then he dropped his water vessel and went to drive away the Maragangs, but the monkeys attacked him, and Langaon ran away, for he had first come from the river, and had neither parang nor spear with him. When he got to his sulap he snatched up his spear and wounded one of the monkeys and they all ran off, except the largest of them, which still fought with him. Then Langaon retreated from the monkey backwards, until without noticing it, he became entrapped between four large tree stumps which stood in the kabun; and there both Langaon and the monkey stopped fighting while after some time the monkey suddenly became transformed into a beautiful woman.

Langaon seeing this, came out from the tree stumps and spoke to her. “Where do you come from?” said he.

“My mother ordered me to come here,” replied the woman. “When you made a kabun before, I came there also, but you did not guard your padi. The padi which you said monkeys ate was reaped and I also was among the reapers.”

“Where did you put the padi?” said Langaon.

“In my house,” said the woman, “and the people of my kampong reaped with me.”

“Well,” said Langaon, “I have no food, for this padi is not yet ripe.”

“You had better come home to my house,” said the woman. So Langaon followed the woman home, and found that her house was in the jungle, and not far from his kabun. “I am alone here,” said she, “for my father and mother and my companions are in my kampong which is a long way off. My father has much

pity for you because you have no wife, and I also. All this padi in my house is yours, for when you made the kabun in your village, it was I who stole your padi, and when you made a kabun by the river, I went there also.”

So Langaon stopped there, and the woman told him how she was really a Maragang monkey, but had become a woman. Then she became his wife, and Langaon said, “I will search for some kampong near, for it is evil for us to be all alone here.”

“Oh,” said the woman, “if you want a kampong, there is one not far off,” and she pointed out a kampong to him which he had not noticed before; but his wife besought him not to go there, and so he remained with her. At last, when they had a child, Langaon said, “I should like to go to the kampong; if I start today I shall return today also, for it is not far away.”

His wife said, “Do not go, for I shall be very much frightened, while you are away there.” But Langaon did not pay attention to his wife’s words, and after a while she said to him, “Well, if you go do not sleep the night there, for I shall be all alone here with the child.” So Langaon started off, and when he got to the kampong he found a great feast going on, and joining in it he became drunk and forgot about going home. For seven days he stopped there eating and drinking, and on the sixth night he fell in love with a woman of the kampong. However, on the seventh day he started home. and when he came to his house, his wife was very angry and would not speak to him. “Why are you angry?” said he.

“Why should I not be angry,” said his wife, “for you have been unfaithful with another woman, for though you were far off, I know it, and you have a mark on you by which I can tell.” But Langaon denied it. “If,” said his wife, “you deny it, I will take from you the mark by which I know that you have been unfaithful.”

“You may take it,” said Langaon.

“Well,” said she, “I will show you, for I am the God of your kampong (Kenharingan Tumanah),” and taking a looking-glass she showed him the appearance of the other woman and himself in the glass. Then said Langaon, “It is true.”

“I will leave you,” said his wife, “and take the child with me, for you have now a wife in the kampong.” But Langaon asked for pardon, saying he would pay what was according to custom, as a recompense. But still his wife refused to stop with him; so when it was near night he bound her hands and feet to his, for he was frightened that she would run away. So they slept, but when Langaon awoke in the morning, the ropes were opened, and his wife and child had gone. Then Langaon wept, for he did not know the kampong in which his wife lived. On the second day he stopped weeping and started out to look for his wife, “For,” said he, “wherever I find a kampong there will I search.” So he wandered in the jungle and one day he met a herd of deer which attacked him. Then Langaon ran away and crept into a hole in the ground and hid, and the deer could not catch him.

The next morning he came out of the hole and started again, but he had not gone far before he met a herd of wild pigs and these also attacked him, and

as before he ran away until, coming to the same hole, he again got into it to hide. There he slept and dreamed, and in his dream a man came to him and said, “Langaon, you are a coward to run from the deer and wild pig, for if I were looking for my wife I would fight them.”

“How can I fight them,” said Langaon, “for I am all alone and they are many?”

“If you journey again tomorrow and are brave,” said the man, “you will get your wife back, for she will ride a rhinoceros.”

“Formerly I was not afraid even of the rhinoceros,” said Langaon, “but I found that I was afraid of these stags and wild pig.”

“If you are afraid,” said the man, “you will not get your wife back.”

“How shall I know the animal she is riding,” said Langaon, “for the other animals had no one riding them?”

“You will know the one,” said the man, “because it will have bells on it; that is the one you must hunt, but do not let it go or you will lose your wife.”

In the morning Langaon awoke, and set off early in search of his wife, and, after a time, he came upon a herd of rhinoceros and among them he saw a large one which had bells hanging round its neck. So he waited for the rhinoceros with the bells to attack him, and did not run away, and when he caught hold of it by the bells round its neck all the rest of the herd vanished. The one he had caught also tried to escape, but Langaon struggled with it for three days, until he stumbled and fell close to his own house, and in falling he let go the bells. The rhinoceros disappeared and Langaon sat down to think outside his house. After a time he heard a child begin to weep inside and he went in to see who was there, and opening his door found that his wife and child had returned.

## THE MOUSE DEER AND THE GIANT

**Tradition Bearer:** Si Ungin

**Source:** Evans, Ivor H. N. “Folk Stories of the Tempassuk and Tuaran Districts, British North Borneo.” *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 43 (1913): 477–478.

**Date:** ca. 1910

**Original Source:** Borneo

**National Origin:** Malaysia

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Like hare, tortoise, and spider in Africa, spider in the Caribbean, rabbit in the African American south, and coyote in many Native American traditions, mouse deer—plandok—plays a **trickster** role in parts of Southeast Asia, especially Borneo, Java, Sumatra and the Malay Peninsula. As is the case with other trickster **cycles**, the incidents commonly

are arranged as a sequence of related tales, but the sequence of incidents is subject to considerable variation. In general, however, the cycle begins with the trickster cleverly exploiting one of his fellows and incurring the victim's lasting enmity. The following collection of mouse deer trickster tales begins with an interrelated set of narratives told by a single narrator, Si Ungin. In this and the following series of five tales, it is clear that one of mouse deer's primary motivations is demonstrating the superiority of his wits over his fellow creatures' physical attributes. The gergasi in the following narrative is a giant forest demon who carries a spear over his shoulder.

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Once upon a time there were seven kinds of animals, the kerbau (buffalo), the sapi (ox), the dog, the stag, the horse, the plandok (mouse-deer), and the kijang (barking-deer, *Cervulus muntjac*). These animals agreed to catch fish and when they had cast a round net into the sea they drew it to the edge and there were many fish in it. They placed their fish on the sand, and someone said, "Who will guard our fish while we go and cast the net again, for we are afraid of the gergasi." Then said the kerbau, "I will guard the fish for I am not afraid of him, if he comes here I will fight him with my horns."

When the other animals had gone away the gergasi came and said, "Ha, ha, ha, what a lot of fish you have caught! I'll eat them directly, and if you don't like it I'll eat you too."

Said the kerbau, "All right, come here and I'll horn you."

"Very well," said the gergasi, "if you won't give me your fish I will eat you." When the gergasi had got close, and the kerbau made as if to horn him, he seized hold of its horns and the kerbau could do nothing, because the gergasi was very big and strong.

Then the kerbau cried out, "Let go; if you let me go you can eat the fish." So the gergasi let him go and the kerbau swam off to his companions, who were in the sea catching fish. When he came there, he said to them, "The gergasi has eaten our fish; he caught hold of my horns and I could do nothing."

Then the other animals were angry with the kerbau and said, "If we were to go on fishing till we died the gergasi would get all our fish"; and the horse said to him, "You fish with these others this time; I'll guard the fish, and if I don't manage to bite the gergasi at any rate I'll kick him." So the animals brought the fish to the same place and leaving them there in charge of the horse went again to catch more.

When the other animals had been gone a good time, out came the gergasi again, and said "Ha, ha, ha, if you don't swim off again to your companions, I'll eat you as well as the fish."

"Well," said the horse, "come and take them if you can, but I will guard them till I die." On the gergasi's approach the horse tried to bite him; but the gergasi caught him by the head and he could do nothing. Then the horse reared

up and the gergasi let go his head. When he had got free he let fly at the gergasi with his heels but the gergasi caught him by the hind legs. So the horse begged to be let go and the gergasi let him go, and while the horse was swimming away to his companions the gergasi ate the fish.

When the horse reached his companions he said, "I too have done my best, but the gergasi has got the fish. First I tried to bite him, and he caught me by the head. Then I reared and, having shaken him off, tried to kick him, but he only caught me by the legs, and I had to give in."

Then his companions said, "What is the use of our catching fish, we only get tired and the gergasi eats them; it is best that we should go home." So the sapi, the stag, the dog and the kijang said, "What is the use of our trying to fight the gergasi, for we are afraid; all the strong animals have tried but they have all been beaten. Let us go home."

The plandok only remained silent, and when all the others had had their say he said, "You go and catch fish again and I will stop on guard."

"What can you do," said the horse, "who are so small? How can you fight the gergasi?"

"Nevermind," replied the plandok, "I can't fight him or kill him but I should like to guard the fish." The other animals wanted to go home, but the plandok persuaded them and they again caught many fish and these they placed on the sand in the same spot. Then said the stag, "Who is going to guard the fish?" and the kerbau replied, "Why the plandok said just now that he would."

"Very well," said the plandok, "I will guard them but perhaps some other animal would prefer to, as my body is so small." But none of the other animals were willing, so the plandok said, "All right, I will guard them, but put them in a heap and cover them with leaves so that they cannot be seen." Then his companions heaped up the fish and covered them with leaves and having done so went back to the fishing. When the others had gone the plandok went and got some rattan and cut it into strips such as are used for binding anything.

As soon as he had finished, out came the gergasi and said, "Ha, ha, ha, is the plandok guarding here? Why, I got the fish from the kerbau and the horse, what do you think you, who are so small, can do? You had better give me the fish or I'll eat you along with them."

Then the plandok said, "I'm not guarding the fish, I'm working cutting up rattan," and the gergasi, who had come near but had not seen the fish said, "What are you doing with the rattan?"

"I'm binding it round my knees," replied the plandok. "Why are you doing that?" said the gergasi. "Don't you see the sky?" said the plandok, "it looks like falling, see how low it has got; that's why I am binding up my knees."

"Why do you bind up your knees if the sky looks like falling?" asked the gergasi.



"I'm binding up my knees so that I can get into our well here; for, if the sky falls, I shall not get hurt when I'm down there." Then the gergasi looked at the sky and saw that it was very low. "Don't bind up your legs first," said he, "bind mine."

"All right," said the plandok, "only go over to the well first." So the two went to the well, the plandok carrying the rattan. Then the gergasi said, "You bind yourself up first," but the plandok replied, "If I bind myself up first how can I bind you up afterwards."

"Very well," said the gergasi, "bind me first, but you shall be the first to go into the well."

"If I do that," said the plandok, "I shall not die from the sky falling on me but from your falling on top of me in the well." So the gergasi agreed to go first as what the plandok said seemed reasonable; and the plandok bound up the gergasi firmly, tying his hands to his knees.

"Why have you bound me so tightly?" said the gergasi, but the plandok only gave him a push and he fell into the well.

"Ah, now you can stop there till you die," said the plandok you don't know the plandok's cleverness."

"I suppose I shall die here," said the gergasi.

"Yes," said the plandok, "for you have always stolen our fish." After a little time there came the plandok's companions, bringing more fish. "Ah, see how clever I am," said the plandok, "for I have bound the gergasi! You said the gergasi was strong. How then have I managed to tie him up?"

"You lie," said the kerbau, and the horse, "How could *you* manage to bind him."

"If you don't believe me," said the plandok, "look into that well and see if he's not there." So all the animals went to the well and saw the gergasi.

Then said the horse and the kerbau, "How did you bind him?"

"What's the use of your asking," said the plandok, "you don't know the plandok's cunning. However, you'd better kill him with a spear or something because he's stolen our fish so often." So they killed the gergasi with a spear.

When the gergasi was dead they agreed to eat on the shore, and when they had cooked their fish and rice they found only one thing wanting, and that was pepper. So as they had no red pepper they did without it, though as they were accustomed to it they did not enjoy their food so much.

Then while they were eating, the plandok saw that the end of the dog's penis was showing red, "Ah," said he, "we were seeking for red pepper just now—there is some I see." And he pointed to the dog's penis. The dog did not understand and the stag and the kijang said, "Where is pepper."

"There," said the plandok, and he again pointed to the dog. Then the dog became very angry because he was ashamed and the stag and the kijang had laughed at him. Then the stag, the kijang, and the plandok became frightened and ran away and the dog pursued them. And the dog always hunts these three until the present day, because they made him ashamed.

The dog was hot on the track of the plandok when they entered the jungle. The plandok, however, managed by using its teeth and feet to climb a tree. The dog came below the tree but could neither see the plandok's tracks nor follow its scent beyond this spot. So the dog left following the plandok and went to hunt the stag and kijang. When he got to the place where the animals had fed he found that they had all gone but their fish and rice were left behind. Then he hunted the stag and the kijang but could not catch them. At last he said, "Well, if I ever see either the stag or the kijang or the plandok I will kill them, and my children and their descendants shall do the same." And so they do down to the present day.

A little time after the dog met the horse, the kerbau and the ox and these four animals shared the food, for the dog was not angry with them, because they had not laughed at him.

## **THE MOUSE DEER AND THE TIGER**

**Tradition Bearer:** Si Ungin

**Source:** Evans, Ivor H. N. "Folk Stories of the Tempassuk and Tuaran Districts, British North Borneo." *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 43 (1913): 474.

**Date:** ca. 1910

**Original Source:** Borneo

**National Origin:** Malaysia

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Tiger is a typical adversary of mouse deer in his traditional role of **trickster**. In this tale, the narrator states that "the plandok went in search of the tiger" with the apparent intent of tormenting him. The orut is a sash bound around the abdomen during battle to hold in intestines if the wearer is wounded.

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**W**hen the dog had gone home the plandok went in search of the tiger, and on his way he came across a lot of snakes which were lying coiled up in circles near the tiger's house. The plandok waited there and the snakes did not move. Then came the tiger, and the tiger and the plandok saw each other at the same moment.

The tiger, however, did not see the snakes, and said to the plandok, "Plandok, what are you doing here?"

"Oh," said he, "I've been waiting here a long time on guard, because the Rajah has ordered me to."

“What are you guarding?” said the tiger. “I am guarding the Rajah’s goods here, his oruts [sash],” said he, pointing to the snakes. Then the tiger looked at the oruts, and seeing them coiled up, he said, “What if we drag them undone, then I can tie them round my waist and see if they are good ones or not.”

“I dare not let you do it,” said the plandok, “as the Rajah has put me here to guard his goods, but if you like I will ask him.” Now the plandok was frightened of the tiger and wanted to beat a retreat, so he said, “I will go ahead, and if I meet the Rajah I will call to you.” Then the plandok started in search of the Rajah, and when he had got some little way off, he called to the tiger and said, “I have met the Rajah, and he says that you can try on the cloths.” Then the tiger caught hold of the snakes and dragged at them, and they, waking, attacked him, winding themselves about his body and biting him. Thus the tiger died. As for the plandok he ran off, saying, “Ah, you tiger, you consider yourself strong, don’t you? But you are no match for the cunning of the plandok.”

## THE MOUSE DEER AND THE BEAR

**Tradition Bearer:** Si Ungin

**Source:** Evans, Ivor H. N. “Folk Stories of the Tempassuk and Tuaran Districts, British North Borneo.” *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 43 (1913): 474–475.

**Date:** ca. 1910

**Original Source:** Borneo

**National Origin:** Malaysia

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Mouse deer reveals a “duelist’s mentality” in the following narrative, in that he is said to go out in pursuit of strong animals to defeat.

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**W**hen the tiger was dead the plandok began to think how he could get the best of the bear, for he had heard that the bear was also a strong animal. As he was walking along one day he came across a bees’ nest in a tree, and sat down near it to wait. After he had been there for some time there came the bear. “What are you doing here?” said he.

“I am guarding the Rajah’s tawag-tawag [gong],” answered the plandok, “which he has left in my charge.”

“May I try its sound,” said the bear, “whether it is good or not?” The plandok answered as before that he must ask the Rajah first, and when he had gone off and had got some distance away, he called out, “The Rajah says you can strike the gong.” So the bear struck the nest and the bees, coming out in a fury, stung him to death.

## THE MOUSE DEER AND THE HERMIT CRAB

**Tradition Bearer:** Si Ungin

**Source:** Evans, Ivor H. N. "Folk Stories of the Tempassuk and Tuaran Districts, British North Borneo." *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 43 (1913): 475–476.

**Date:** ca. 1910

**Original Source:** Borneo

**National Origin:** Malaysia

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The following narrative is a **variant** of the widely distributed **tale type** "Race Won by Deception" (AT 1074) in which the **trickster** loses out to an adversary who is even more clever than he. The best-known variant to this type is "The Tortoise and the Hare."

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**W**hen the plandok had cheated all the strong animals and had brought about their deaths, he wished to have a contest of wits with an animal who considered himself clever, so he went in search of one, and at last he met the omong [hermit crab] and the omong said to him, "Plandok, all the strong animals have been killed by your cunning, but if you like to try your wits against mine, I am ready."

"Very well," said the plandok, "that is just for what I am looking, animals who consider themselves long-headed; but how would you like to compete with me?"

"I should like to race you," said the omong, "and if you win I will acknowledge your cleverness and your power of running."

"What, you want to race with me?" said the plandok, "you can only walk sideways on the sand, and you don't race with your body only for you have to carry a shell as well." So the plandok felt ashamed to run a race with the omong, but he said, "When are we to race?"

"Tomorrow," replied the omong, "we will meet in the middle of the sands and race. You had better call your companions and I will call mine too."

"Very well," said the plandok, "I will come tomorrow."

"We will make a four-sided course for the race," said the omong, "and we will race along the sides of the square from post to post." On the morrow the plandok and his companions came, and also the omong with his, and it was decided that whoever won should be considered the champion over all the animals, for the plandok had already overcome, all the strongest of them.

When they arrived at the open sand by the sea they made a square, placing stakes at the corners. Now the plandok collected all his followers into one

place as did also the omong. The omong, however, had made a plot and chosen three of his companions like him in appearance and size, and had told them to bury them-selves in the sand by three of the corners of the racecourse, but to leave the fourth corner, the starting-point, vacant. Then said the omong to the plandok, "When you get to the first post call out, 'Omong,' and if I don't answer you will know that I have been left behind and that you have won the race." So the plandok and the omong started to race from the first post, the omong saying, "Run." When the plandok heard the omong say "Run," he gave a jump and the omong, who of course was left behind, quickly buried himself in the sand, without anyone seeing him; for the spectators were some way off and the omong small. So the plandok ran without looking back, and when he got near the first post the second crab had come out of the sand and was waiting for him. When the plandok got to the post he called out, "Omong," and the crab answered, "Yes." So the plandok seeing what was apparently the same crab gave another jump and started running for the second post. The same thing happened here also, and the plandok said to himself, "How is it that the omong who walks so slowly manages to keep up with me?" At the third post the crab again answered, and the plandok, who was breathing heavily from running at top speed, set off as fast as he was able, for the original starting-post, which was also to be the finish of the race. When he got there the omong was waiting for him, and again when the plandok called out, "Omong," he was answered. Then the plandok was ashamed and wished to die, so he ran from stake to stake until his breath was exhausted, and when he reached the starting point he called out again, "Omong," and the omong answered, "Yes." Thereupon the plandok, who had no breath at all left, fell down and died, and the omongs cried out that the omong was the champion; but the plandok's followers kept silence.

## THE MOUSE DEER AND THE CROCODILE

**Tradition Bearer:** Anggor

**Source:** Evans, Ivor H. N. "Folk Stories of the Tempassuk and Tuaran Districts, British North Borneo." *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 43 (1913): 475.

**Date:** ca. 1910

**Original Source:** Borneo

**National Origin:** Malaysia

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As is the case with the tiger, numerous tales are told of the tricks played by the mouse deer on the crocodile.

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The plandok was walking one day near the edge of a river and he saw some fruit on a tree on the other side. He was just going to cross when he saw the crocodile. “Who is that?” said the plandok, but the crocodile did not answer. Then said the plandok, “Ah, I know who you are, you are the crocodile. In seven days’ time I will bring my whole tribe to fight you, and do you also bring your people.” When the seventh day had arrived, the plandok went down to the river very early, before the crocodile had come, and walked backwards and forwards until the whole of the river margin was covered with its tracks. After a time the crocodile and his companions arrived. Then the plandok, who was awaiting them, spoke and said, “You are late in coming; my followers waited and waited for you, but at last they grew tired and have gone home. If you do not believe me, look at their tracks on the bank. I should like to count how many you and your companions are, so draw yourselves up in a row from one side of the river to the other.” So the crocodiles did so, and the plandok started walking on their backs counting “One, two, three,” when suddenly he gave a jump and reached the other bank. Then he called out, “Ah, I have cheated you, for how else could a plandok fight with crocodiles. I saw the fruit on the other side of the river, but I was afraid to swim across as I knew you were waiting for me.”

“Very well,” said the crocodile, “wait till you come down to the river to drink and I’ll eat you.” A few days afterwards the plandok, who had forgotten about the crocodile, came down to the river to drink, and the crocodile caught him by the leg. Then the plandok took hold of a piece of wood and pulled it towards him, and when he had done this he called out, “That is not my leg you have caught hold of; this is my leg,” said he, pointing to the piece of wood. So the crocodile let go of the plandok’s leg and the plandok sprang away, calling out, “Ah, I have cheated you again, how foolish is the crocodile!”

“Very well,” said the crocodile, “another time I won’t let go of your foot so easily.”

## **THE MOUSE DEER IN A HOLE**

**Tradition Bearer:** Orang Tua Ransab

**Source:** Evans, Ivor H. N. “Folk Stories of the Tempassuk and Tuaran Districts, British North Borneo.” *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 43 (1913): 477.

**Date:** ca. 1910

**Original Source:** Borneo

**National Origin:** Malaysia

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The following tale demonstrates the **trickster’s** typical willingness to sacrifice innocent parties to serve his own ends.

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The plandok when wandering in the jungle one day fell into a large hole in the ground and could not get out again. After a time the timbadou [wild cow] came to the hole, and seeing the plandok, said, "Why, plandok, what are you doing there?"

"Oh," said the plandok, "I've come here to see my mother and father, my sisters and brothers."

"Wait a bit," said the timbadou, "and I will come down too, for I also wish to see my mother and father, sisters and brothers," but the plandok told the timbadou he was not to come down. Then the timbadou answered that if he said that again he would fall on him from above, and he, the plandok, would die. So the plandok gave the timbadou leave to get into the hole and the timbadou came down.

When he was down the timbadou said to the plandok, "Where are my father and mother?"

"Wait a little," said the plandok, "I've lost them just at present." So the timbadou waited and after a time the rhinoceros came to the hole and asked them what they were doing. Then the plandok answered as before that he was amusing himself, that he was seeing his father and mother and that there were lots of shops down there.

Whereupon the rhinoceros came down too, "For," said he, "my father and mother are dead and I would like to meet them and see how they have come to life again." Next came the stag and asked what they were doing and the plandok replied that he was seeing his father and mother and that there were many people sailing away on voyages down there. So the stag also jumped down. After that came the kijang [barking-deer], and he receiving the same answer from the plandok came down too. Then since the other animals were standing on each other's backs in the hole, the timbadou at the bottom and the kijang at the top, the plandok was able to scramble up to the top on their backs and make his escape from the place. Now when he had got out he met a man and his dog hunting, and the dog having got on his scent pursued him. Then the plandok made for the hole and running round it once or twice departed. So the dog, while following the scent of the plandok, came to the hole and seeing the timbadou and the other animals stopped there barking. Then the man came up and killed them all. As for the plandok he got off scot-free.

# INDONESIA

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## THE FIRST VILLAGE

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Pleyte, C. M. "An Unpublished Batak Creation Legend." *Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 26 (1897): 103–109.

**Date:** ca. 1897

**Original Source:** Indonesia

**National Origin:** Indonesia

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The Batak, for whom this **myth** offered their traditional explanation of the creation and population of the world, comprise several distinct ethnic groups who reside in the highlands of north Sumatra, an Indonesian island located north of Java and west of Malaysia. Like all mythologies, theirs accounts not only for physical features of the universe, but also for technology (the fire brought down from the other world by cow flea) and features of the supernatural universe (the benevolent mythic figure from other narratives, Rumari, an old widow who lives in a paradise called Pulo porlak pagaran, "fenced island garden"). The opening lines of the myth are an invocation that constitutes the customary opening for Batak tales.

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“**I** Fold my hands respectfully above my head, O gods on high!”  
“Seven times pardon, lord, for naming thy name, *Batara guru doli* [the major deity of the Batak] who reignest among the gods of the upper regions!”  
“Lord of the seven strongholds, whose walls are so high, that the elephants stoop before them, the surrounding bamboo compels the storm to respect.”



“Possessor of the bathing place *Si-mangera-era*, situated in an inaccessible region.”

The ficus *Yambu bares* extends its vault over thee, when thou enjoyest thyself with thine in the fields, or pronoucest judgment in the shade of its foliage, wherein the birds of the sky hover to and fro, flapping their wings and warbling sweetly.”

*Si-tapi Sindar di mata ni ari* [“*Si-tapi* who is illuminated by the sun”] daughter of *Batara guru*, sat at the gate of heaven, dressing her hair, wherein she made an extraordinarily beautiful parting. She felt a desire to look downward, but her heart was struck with sadness when she could discover nothing but a bare plain. When she came home, her father remarked the alteration of her features and asked with compassionate interest, “What is the matter, my dear daughter? You seem put out.”

“Nothing is the matter with me, father, why should I be discontented? I have the happiness to be your daughter, and is it not already blithe to see the birds *Patija raja* and *Burukburuk bolajan*?”

*Batara guru* slept and had a bad dream. “I woke disturbed, for in my sleep I saw an unwonted agitation in the air, and the ground shook as if it were moved by an earthquake,” he said to his daughter, and turning to one of his *Mandi-swallows*,” he ordered it to go down.

“How shall I get there, lord?”

“Here is a jacket of my father’s, put it on in order not to get too tired with flying in such a vast space,” said *Si-tapi Sindar di mata ni ari*.

The swallow sailed downward, tracing wide circles in the air, but it saw nothing whatever on which it could rest. At last it espied the rock *Tanjuk tolu*, and let itself, quite exhausted, down upon it. Then it rolled up the jacket and used it as a cushion on which to take the rest it so much wanted.

*Si-tapi Sindar di mtata ni ari* became impatient on account of the long absence of the swallow, and sent the bird *Patija raja* to look after it. *Patija raja* was also provided with a jacket and hovered on it downward. After it had looked for a long time in all directions, it discovered at last the swallow sleeping peacefully.

“Why do not you come?”

“The Storm wind makes it impossible for me to fly upward.”

“Say rather that you are not willing; why such a false pretence? Look how I shall manage.”

*Patija raja* flew up in mid-air, but it was overmastered by the strong wind which drove him towards the east, and he was obliged to come back without delay.

“What did I tell you, it is impossible!”

“Now then we shall have to stay here for the present.”

“What can be the reason that they stay so long?” said the princess, growing more and more impatient. She called the cowflea and said, “Please go down and see why they do not come back.”

“I must, you say, go thither; but is there nothing that I have to take with me?”

“Here is a firesteel [flint and steel used to strike sparks for making fire]; take it in your armpit, and be careful that nobody here shall know that I have given it to you.”

The cowflea went, and one would say that the little balls protruding from his head had been his eyes, if it were not known that his organs of sight were in his armpits. The flea despaired at first of finding the two birds, but had nevertheless had the good luck of meeting them still on the *tanjuk tolu*. “Why do not you come? The princess is so angry!”

“The strong wind has made our return impossible, and that is why we are still sitting here.”

The three began to consider together what they ought to do. They resolved to go to the rock *Nanggar jati* [an immense rock reaching to the sky] and to try to make their return from its top. When they had reached the rock, *Patija raja* began to climb it. He arrived half way up and looked on all sides, but he discovered nothing that could be of use to them in their embarrassment. Only a bare plain was spread before his eyes. Therefore he climbed higher, and first, when he reached the top, he saw the roots of the *Yambu barus* dangling gently above him. He hoped now to be soon back, provided he succeeded in grasping one of the roots, but notwithstanding all his efforts, they still remained out of his reach. He began to lament loudly, for his last hope was gone.

His cries rose upward and were heard by the princess, who thought that she recognized the voice of her favorite bird. She sent one of her servants to see what had happened, and was soon after aware of the truth. She asked then for her betel-pouch, and opened it so that the scent spread far off, and *Patija raja*, who smelt it, was full of sad thoughts on account of his beloved mistress.

*Si-tapi Sindar di mata ni ari* went to the gate of heaven and took with her a magic ring, her betel-pouch, and seven hen’s eggs. When arrived, she sat down and looked downward, upon which, espying *Patija raja*, she said to him, “Do not cry any more but hasten to come up.”

“Alas, princess, I cannot reach the roots of the *Yambu bares*, all my endeavors have been in vain.”

“Since it cannot be otherwise, you must make up your mind to go down again; I shall take care that you want nothing.”

She let down the magic ring and gave *Patija raja* these directions: “When you three have settled on the *Tanjuk tolu*, then you must open the eggs, and you will find in them all the plants and trees which you may require; but if you want to have cattle, you must call on the magic ring, and you will get not only cattle but also all kinds of animals, habitations, council-houses, and whatever more you may wish for.”

When the adventurers found themselves together again on *Tanjuk tole*, they opened the eggs, scattered round about them the contents, and by this means

soon saw splendid fields and gardens appear. In a short time they were, by the power of the magic ring, put in possession of houses and all they wanted.

They feasted then, eating and drinking good things, and settled also that *Patija raja* should be king, the swallow vice-king, and the cowflea commander of the warriors of the newly established village. Then they prayed to *Batara guru* that they might have offspring in order to people the village.

When he had heard their prayer, *Batara guru* ordered his sister *Pandan rumari*, to go to the earth.

“But, brother, how shall I get there?”

“Do not be anxious about your journey, aunt; I shall make it as easy as possible for you,” said *Si-tapi Sindar di mata ni ari*.

“You must choose a good spot to settle there, aunt; and when you have made your establishment, you must promise me that on the next festival Saturday [the Saturday preceding the full moon of each month] you will come on to the top of the rock.”

*Si-tapi Sindar di mata ni ari* now twisted her hair into a basket, wherein her aunt *Pandan rumari*, after having put a magic ring on her finger, placed herself to be let down on the *Nanggar jaii*. When she arrived on the top, she looked fearfully round about, but finally went down the rock. She settled at the foot of it, and called her abode *Pulo porlak pagaran*. When the festival Saturday arrived, *Pandan rumari* went to the top of the *Nanggar jati*, where the roots of the *Yambu bares* still dangled. She tried to take hold of one, but failed, and, not knowing what to do, she began to weep loudly.

At the moment *Si-tapi Sindar mata n, ari* heard the sobbing, she said to herself, “Is not this my aunt?” And going to the gate of heaven to look down, she found at once that she was right. At the same time she remembered what had been concerted. She ordered a servant to bring her a woman’s jacket, a jew’s harp, a pair of ear ornaments, a mirror, and lemons, twelve different kinds grown on the same branch. She let all these things down to her aunt and then took leave of her with the following words, “Go back down the rock, dear aunt, and take with you the bird *Imbulu Man*, who can be of service to you, if you want to enter into relation with *Patija raja* and his comrades.”

*Pandan rumari* then got the bird *Imbulu Man* to accompany her, who was no ordinary bird, since she had no feathers, and she was like a human being as regarded her skin. She was also, through the will of *Batara guru*, pregnant of a human fruit.

When she had returned to her dwelling, *Pandan rumari*, on account of the situation in which the bird found herself, gave her an appropriate couch, surrounded by mats arranged like curtains.

One day, *Pandan rumari* lighted a great fire, the smoke of which rose on high and was perceived by the inhabitants of *Tanjuk tole*.

“Go and see who makes a fire there,” said *Patija raja* to the swallow.

“But when I arrive there and find somebody, I shall have to say something.”

“If you do not know the person, ask him who has made him come there.”

The swallow came to *Pandan rumari* and asked her who had sent her to that place. “*Batara guru* sent me here. But you come as if called for, because *Imbulu Man* must be with you at *Tanjuk tole*,” answered *Pandan rumari*.

When the swallow arrived at *Tanjuk tole* with *Imbulu Man*, this last addressed *Patija raja* as follows, “The reason why I have been sent here by the princess, is that I should provide you offspring so that you do not remain without subjects.” After some time, *Imbulu Man* was delivered of two daughters, of whom *Patija raja* and the swallow each took one for his wife. If *Imbulu Man* were to give birth to one more daughter later, then the cowflea was to have her for a wife. The cowflea was by no means satisfied, and thinking that he might have to wait a very long time for his wife, he secretly got *Imbulu Man* with child, in order to secure his wish. It appeared soon that she was again pregnant, and she declared that this was the cowflea’s doing; but he was let off after a slight reprimand from *Patija raja*.

*Imbulu Man* was afterwards delivered of a son, who had the name of *Bala porang*. After that *Patija raja* had by his wife a son, to whom they gave the name of *Raja Manuksang di portibi*. As for the swallow, he had two daughters, the one of whom they called *Sada lumbar*, and the other *Boru dognu*; at the feast of the naming of his daughters, the swallow gave himself the title of *Namora Mangipa*.

As they made their children intermarry, the inhabitants of *Tanjuk tole* could soon rejoice in the possession of numerous descendants, whose swarms filled the newly founded village.

## **SRY NAGASARY**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Scheltema, J. F. “Sry Nagasary.” *Journal of American Folklore* 32 (1919): 324–342.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Indonesia

**National Origin:** Indonesia

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From the beginning of the Common Era (first century A.D.), the Indonesian archipelago has been influenced by the Hindu religion from the Indian subcontinent. In the fourteenth century through the beginning of the sixteenth century, the powerful Hindu Majapahit Empire extended its influence from its seat of power in Java throughout a large portion of Indonesian and into the Malay Peninsula to the north. Even when Islam established dominance in around 1500 C.E., Hinduism remained influential in the traditions of Indonesia. The following tale, which seems to

derive from a Javanese **variant**, reflects not only this continuing Hindu influence, but also the moral codes that grew out of the synthesis of Hindu, indigenous, and Islamic values.

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Once upon a time there was a man, named Kyahy Taboos, who lived in a village near the mouth of a river that flowed from the blue mountains in the interior of one of the Sunda Islands toward the sea. He had four sons: Bagal, a wood-carver; Sompoq, a merchant; Paning, a jeweler; and Mashmool who, being the last-born and favorite, was allowed to follow his natural bent toward music and poetry instead of learning a more useful and profitable trade than that of a merry-andrew [jester] as the elder brothers contemptuously called him when discussing his gifts of entertainment. Though brought up in a very religious way and considering themselves of the elect and knowing that the teachings of Batara Guru, the great god, urged man to goodwill and kindness in his dealings with all his fellow-creatures, and especially to love and charity in his relations with his kindred, envy had taken possession of their hearts because their father indulged Mashmool upon whom therefore they looked with eyes of hatred.

So when Kyahy Taboos had been summoned by the gods to receive the amount of his due, Bagal, speaking also for Sompoq and Paning even on the day of their father's burial, said to Mashmool with a lying tongue, "How dost thou propose to provide thy share in our means of subsistence? Our father has left us little more than this house in which we live. Thy brother Sompoq buys and sells merchandise at a profit; thy brother Paning is a worker in gold and silver, and a dealer in precious stones, and whatever passes through his hands leaves also substantial gain behind; I am thoroughly acquainted with the nature and qualities of the different kinds of wood and proficient, for the good of our common household, in turning *kayu mahar* into shafts for lances and spears, and into sheaths for krisses, using *kayu kamuning* for the upper parts where the steel touches first in sending the weapon home, improving by skilful carving the design of *kayu pelèt* to enhance the mysterious play of its black and red-brown spots on its luminous grain, a premonition of deeds of darkness and blood, but thou, what canst thou do to earn thy rice and salt?"

"I am a musician," answered Mashmool, dignified and self-conscious for all his modesty, "I can recite in fitting language what has been preserved in our chronicles of ancient wisdom and what they record of high mettle and tender devotion, of virtue and purity in mortals emulating the gods."

"And who cares?" asked Sompoq.

"No one sufficiently to untie his purse-string for accomplishments of the sort," remarked Paning.

"Nor is it incumbent on us to encourage idlers," continued Bagal.

These words were hard to hear and since his brothers persisted in their abusive speech, finding fault with everything he did or left undone, Mashmool

resolved to part from them. When he made known his intention to travel and see the wide world and seek his fortune in distant lands, they laid their heads together, discussing how to defraud him of his portion of their father's inheritance, at least how to put him off with a most inadequate payment in cash. But the generous Mashmool, whose mind was not set on worldly considerations, never thought of a settlement; trustful because upright himself, he deemed it quite regular that his brothers should remain in undivided possession of their father's patrimony until his return, an arrangement perfectly agreeable to them. And so, at his departure, with his *suling* [bamboo flute] under his arm to try his luck as a wandering minstrel, his brothers' farewell with ostentatious wishes for his success in crossing the seven seas and roaming the seven empires, was of the most affectionate description, touching enough, in fact, to make him search his innocent heart when under way, as to whether perhaps he had done the sons of his father an injustice by doubting their brotherly love. But he walked on.

After Mashmool had gone, the trade of the wicked brothers in their respective occupations began to fall off. It seemed that with him prosperity had turned its back on them. At first they thought that Mashmool, incensed by his treatment at their hands, had sought the assistance of some wizard to obtain revenge through the agency of malevolent spirits, ever prone to mischief and rancorous tricks. To foil these demons they attached strips of white cloth to the roof-corners and other conspicuous parts of their dwelling, a potent means to draw the attention of well-disposed deities to the sinister work of the servants of Evil in the abode of godly men, for so the trio considered themselves, being scrupulously strict in the observance of the ceremonial duties prescribed by their creed, very godly indeed, provided that godliness did not interfere with their greed.

Their astonishment knew no bounds at noticing, when the pieces of white cloth had been fluttering in the wind for a while, that the host of malignant fiends who had chased off their customers, persisted in pursuing them with ill luck. The men with well-tempered lance and spear points to be mounted on strong, flexible shafts, and with beautifully damascened krisses to be further embellished with sheaths of a correct pattern and artistically carved hafts, still passed their door with averted heads to entrust the delicate work to one of Bagal's competitors. The women going to market still avoided the booths of Sompoq and Parting whatever pains they took to attract both matrons and virgins by a cunning display of silk and gold brocade, of ear-rings and bangles and necklaces, jewelry fit for princesses and queens, beyond price yet dirt-cheap if the fair ones only would venture a bid.

Putting the blame on the minor deities who neglected to protect Batara Guru's [supreme god in the Sundanese pantheon] own, Mashmool's brothers never suspected the real cause of the adverse circumstances they had to struggle against, namely, their hardness in their dealings, their rapacity which did not even stop short at cheating and turned people away from them.

One night, after having spent the evening with Sompoq and Parting in their habitual grumbling at the incomprehensible attitude of the rulers of the universe inflicting hardships on the deserving, Bagal had a dream. He fancied himself carving out of wood, and he took special note that it was *kayu nagasary*, the image of an *apsara*, one of the hand-maidens of Indra, that amuse the god by dancing before his throne on Mount Mandara; and when the image was ready, it took life and showered gold on its maker. Marveling at his vision and not being able to make out its meaning, Bagal told Sompoq and Paning, who did not understand any better than he. They resolved therefore to refer the matter to a saintly hermit with a great reputation for the interpretation of dreams. Charging his usual price for the accustomed offerings to the divine guardians of the secrets of the past, present and future, and keeping them moreover in long suspense while engaged in pressing those lords of the recondite for precise information, the saintly hermit made at last known as Batara Guru's, the upper god's manifest will, revealed by the aforesaid sapient beings after the completion of the sacrifice, that Bagal should do, consciously in his waking state, that which his soul had been made to do without the cooperation of the body. Rich reward would be the result.

So Bagal carved a life-sized image of an *apsara*, and it was a fine piece of sculpture and he called it Sry Nagasary after the name of the wood suggested by his dream. Sompoq and Parting, desirous of participating in the promised rich reward, which they construed to mean abundant wealth, clothed the puppet with silk and brocade, and adorned it with jewelry. Bagal, loath to share his good fortune, told them repeatedly that this was not in the dream but as they insisted and were two to his one, he had to acquiesce, pretending with a sour face that he conferred the solicited favor upon them out of the fullness of his brotherly affection. And this display of fraternal disinterestedness became the more fervent the less inclination Sry Nagasary evinced to realize the hopes excited by the saintly hermit's words.

Her presence, remarked the brothers to one another, brought no change in their condition, and if they did not know what to think of a world that refused to acknowledge their superior virtue, or of a heaven full of gods whom they lost no opportunity to wheedle into the belief of their obedient piety but who, nevertheless, suffered their neighbors to treat them according to their works rather than according to their professions, neither could they conceive why the saintly hermit had deluded them by a false interpretation of the dream, making them the laughing-stock of the village for the affair had become known and every one ridiculed the credulity of Kyahy Taboos's sons, who expected a wooden image, dressed and bedecked with jewels like a woman of quality, to restore the credit and standing which they had lost by their grasping dishonesty.

When they complained to the saintly hermit and sought redress, they received his assurance that his interpretation of the dream was right. "You should break yourselves of the bad habit of blaming others for your own faults,"

he added. "The truth of the *apsara's* failure to gratify your wishes is a long distance beside your surmise. To exercise her functions in discharge of the task assigned to her, she needs not only a human shape, since she is now dwelling among mortals; and clothes for decency's sake, since she is earthly on earth; and garnishment of her beauty, since even a celestial female will strive with might and main to please men, but also music to guide her dancing. Oh that you had not driven away your younger brother, the musician!"

They were surprised and pained by the reproof implied in the saintly hermit's remark and replied somewhat hotly, though he was a holy man, that Mashmool had gone of his own accord. And with respect to his excellence in music, he did not possess a monopoly of the art. If it were not for their sure knowledge of its being an empty, almost sinful pastime, they could no doubt learn to play any instrument as well and better than he.

"Hearts absorbed in the contemplation of the divine will cannot be corrupted by the arts that soothe and recreate," rejoined the saintly hermit, a faint smile enlivening his emaciated countenance.

Then he dismissed the brothers who, returning home, had a serious argument, evoked by this utterance as a sequel to his fuller explanation of his interpretation of the dream. Considering and reconsidering, it now appeared entirely clear to them: the rich reward for their righteousness, at last acknowledged by Batara Guru, was to arrive through the *apsara* dancing to their music; and all their religious scruples about the propriety of that frivolous diversion vanished the moment they saw their advantage in it.

Bagal commenced practicing the *rabab* [violin], Sompoq the *gendang* [drum] and Paning the *katram* [cymbals] in order to form a complete orchestra, by far more sonorous and melodious, more adequate to accompany a celestial dancer, they flattered themselves, than Mashmool's feeble efforts with a simple bamboo flute ever could be.

After persistent and strenuous toil they noticed slight movements in the puppet. It began to quake and quiver; with their progress in the production of a concordant combination from the sounds they generated, to change its posture and position at the measure of the tune to which they strove to do justice. The achievement put an end to the scoffing of their neighbors who, compelled by curiosity, sought their company for ocular evidence of their prodigious command over a wooden image into which they had blown life, causing it to go through its paces as if it were a real dancing-girl.

The neighbors were, of course, made to pay for the privilege. Sry Nagasary's monetary value expelled from the minds of the brothers all doubts of her divine mission to recompense them for their holiness, tardily but now fitly recognized by Batara Guru. This was the rich reward foretold by the saintly hermit, which flowed more and more richly as their proficiency in handling their musical instruments increased, to wit, their mechanical proficiency, always short of the artistic touch born from an inspiration intrinsically foreign to their



coarse-grained temperament. And this was the reason, but they knew it not, why Sry Nagasary, instead of budding into life, remained a marionette with lips always sealed; set, truly, in machine-like motion by their music such as it was, but stark again the instant it ceased.

Even though they prospered, thanks to the *apsara's* offices, the brothers began to mistrust her lack of animation unless specially roused to activity. Constitutionally suspicious and spiteful, they also mistrusted one another, each meditating in his mind how he could become her sole possessor, secure for himself alone the rich reward by releasing the aerial nymph from her wooden prison and marrying her. Surely, Batara Guru had decreed her transmigration into an earthly shape for the highest good. And was not the highest good attainable in this case that the rich reward should go to the most meritorious, the most godly of the three as each of them believed himself to be?

For ways and means the saintly hermit could be consulted. So once more they went up to him; not together, however, but separately and secretly, in fear of being caught at their knavish game, turning on their heels at every few steps to keep their father's spirit off their track for Kyahy Taboos, angered in the narrow valley of death at their intent to cheat one another, might contrive to cross it with calamitous result. The saintly hermit showed not the least surprise at their coming and gave each the same answer to his request for advice, again faintly smiling as Bagal, Sompoq and Paning, to conceal their base motives, feigned an ardent solicitude for the ultimate fate of the wooden *apsara*, whose incarnation they said that they wished to compass for her own weal, namely, to insure her happiness in union with Batara Guru's chosen one.

"To fulfill her destiny and yours, according to Batara Guru's will," declared the saintly hermit, "your *apsara* needs a human soul to conclude in its human stage the divine labor enjoined on her. Whoever, with a clean heart and clean hands, gives his soul to her in token of his true love, shall have hers." Having spoken these words to Bagal, Sompoq and Paning successively, the saintly hermit declined to tell them anything more.

They spent their days and nights in pondering the queer, puzzling recommendation that they should give their souls to Sry Nagasary. Uncertain how to act upon it and avoiding one another because burning with envy, they endeavored to despoil destiny of its secrets by communicating with soothsayers, whose divinations at the cost of incessant offerings on numberless altars to numberless gods, brought them not a step farther. When they met to join in their musical performances, necessary to induce the *apsara* to dance, it was no pleasure to them, rather a vexation, to observe her growing skill, which attracted to their house people from far and near, and made the treasure in their coffers swell. They got their gold and silver too dear, prospering at the expense of their tranquility of mind for each of the three was constantly scheming how to defraud the others of that source of income and finally of lasting comfort to its exclusive possessor. Since they had to share their good fortune, it made them utterly miserable.

Meanwhile the fame of the dancing image had spread to distant lands. Mashmool, the youngest brother, heard it spoken of on his travels and also somewhat homesick notwithstanding his unpleasant experience, he resolved to go and see for himself. After many new adventures and subsisting on his minstrelsy during his journey back as he had done all the time, he arrived at last, tired and footsore, in his native village. It was evening and nobody recognized him because he had become taller of stature while his features, too, had undergone a change reflecting a wider knowledge of the world, a riper insight which nevertheless abided by the guileless sincerity of his candid nature.

To reach his home he had either to cross the river in a boat or to skirt it upstream for quite a distance to pass over a bridge and return by the opposite bank. Standing near the water's edge, he looked at the rising ground on the other side, purple in the rays of the setting sun. Behind the first bend where, giving way to cultivated ground, the tangled mangroves ceased to fringe the stream, lay the house of his desire. In the growing darkness he saw many lights glimmering between the palms that masked its landing-place. Many more lights floated onward with the flood. They belonged to *sampans* and larger craft, *koleks* and *jukoongs*, all making for the luminous headland. Mashmool inquired of a man, just embarked and ready to push off, what was going on that the whole village, and strangers too, it seemed, were speeding toward the semblance of some palace of a thousand torches, transplanted from a fairy tale to reality.

"Whence comest thou?" asked the man. "Even the people that live beyond the stars know of Sry Nagasary and of her dancing every market day. Jump in if thou hast a wish to behold the marvelous lady, a runaway from Indra's paradise."

Eyering Mashmool more closely as he did jump in, his flute in his hand and his violin under his arm, a Sumatra *rabab* he had learned to play when associating with the Rawas brethren of his guild, the man continued, voicing the misgivings naturally awakened by a strolling minstrel's appearance, "That is, supposing thou possessest the wherewithal to satisfy the craving for lucre which dishonors the sons of Kyahy Taboos who exhibit the *apsara*. Thou, companion of the road, canst pander to their infamy with cash? If not, thy going up is bootless and unavailing fatigue."

"Verily, thy words lack wisdom," retorted Mashmool, pointing to his instruments. "Shall music be barred where dancing sways the night?"

"Thou speakest truth," assented the man, beginning to paddle. "And oh for the dancing there would be with the youngest son of Kyahy Taboos leading instead of Bagal, who draws his bow across the copper strings as if he were sawing wood, while Sompoq and Paning bang the drum and clank the cymbals like irate husbandmen in their ricefields shooing off the birds. But Mashmool, where does he wander and what has happened to him since his shameless brothers turned him out?"

Mashmool had his reasons not yet to reveal his identity. His answers to the friendly but garrulous boatman's questions about the country he hailed from, his

musical training, the object of his visit and so forth, were short and evasive. Aided by the tide, which was setting in, they soon rounded the point near the landing-place, beached the boat and joined the crowd that sought admittance to the spacious hall where the performance was to be given. Originally open on three sides, it had been closed by means of screens of split bamboo between the pillars to prevent impecunious or penurious curiosity procuring gratification without pecuniary sacrifice. Over the outer gate, truly, was an inscription in large characters, a motto from the sacred books of ancient lore, extending a cordial welcome to friends, acquaintances and every one else who chose to enter, but Bagal, guarding the door, assisted by Sompoq and Paning, construed that greeting in a fashion which made their guests comment with wry faces upon words soft as butter proceeding from demons of avarice lurking in their hearts.

When Mashmool entered, paying them the gate-money, the brothers never suspected their father's preferred son they had wronged, in the travel-worn stranger questing admission. They took him for a wandering musician attracted by the renown of their marvelous preeminence in his art, which forced even inanimate objects to sympathetic obedience, and saluted him with the obligatory phrase in addressing visitors from foreign parts, "Our gain is great, O bestower of favors! That thy voyage has not been impeded by the perils of the road."

"The gain is mine, O you on whom Batara Guru showers his blessings! And it is your favor I seek," answered Mashmool in a low tone not to let his voice betray him.

Thereupon Bagal ordered the servants to spread mats for the spectators to sit upon with due regard to their rank and station, lining three sides of the space, also covered with matting, which was reserved for the performing puppet. He himself with Sompoq and Paning took place on the fourth side, muttering prayers while in the middle incense was burned as an indispensable preliminary to the exhibition. Then, getting up from their crouched position, they pushed the wooden doll forward, Sry Nagasary, in the regulation dress of a dancing girl: from her hips down she was clothed in a *kahin*, a garment of brocade wound round her middle and kept securely attached by the weight of its own graceful folds; her body was wrapped in the *kemben*, a narrow strip of silk, encircling her upward to the armpits and held tight by passing the ends under its loops; a *pending*, that is, a golden girdle, fastened more firmly both *kahin* and *kemun*; a *slen-dang* or scarf, stuck to right and left between the *pending* and her waist, completed her costume with a string of *melaty* [variety of jasmine] hanging down from her neck, and the *kerabu* [type of earring], bracelets and finger-rings which were the special admiration of her female beholders.

These could be heard but not seen behind the slatted shutters and screens of split bamboo through the interstices of which they watched over the heads of their squatted men-folk what was bechancing the aerial nymph dispatched from heaven for their amusement. Their excited whispers subsided into a long-drawn "Ah!" as they perceived the first signs of animation in her hands and arms and

visage, yellow with *boreh* [preparation of curcuma and cocoa oil, used at ceremonial functions to anoint and color the parts of the body which remain bare] when the three brothers, each coaxing his instrument into laborious discipline without minding the other two, began to attack the dancing music proper after an equally cacophonous prelude. Bagal, keeping his bow between his fingers as if manipulating a saw, to repeat the boatman's simile, worked the strings in an unsteady, painful manner of which his *rabab* complained loudly in screechy, chiding accents, like those of a testy old woman. Sompoq thwacked the drum, altogether independent of his lead, and Paning belabored the cymbals quasi-derisively of that shrill scolding, its strident sound going through interminable, monotonous, ill-executed variations of the attempted tune, wrangling with the jeering response of the *gendang's* bing-bang and the *katram's* click-clack, until at last by sheer reiteration of the invitation to dance, it persuaded Sry Nagasary to perform her *sembah*, the salutation expressive of her readiness to commence.

It was hailed with exclamations of unbounded, though, owing to the awe attending her astounding feats, of suppressed enthusiasm. While, with clumsy movements like those of an automaton, she took hold of her scarf, disengaging it from her girdle to raise it to her shoulders, putting it round her neck with the ends hanging down to her knees, Bagal, as leader of the orchestra, redoubled his vigor. Without prejudice on behalf of key or melody or harmony, he dispensed his fortes in an audaciously liberal style, goading Sompoq and Paning to surpass his energetic zeal with vicious fortissimos on *their* instruments, the three producing a combination of dissonants which gave an alarming foretaste of the futurist music that enraptures ultra-modern audiences in our Temples of Symphony and Philharmonic Halls.

Sry Nagasary made the best of it. Dancing slowly and mechanically, she warmed up to her divine art—that is, to a certain extent, to the extent permitted by the character of her accompaniment. Her stolid face, indeed, smeared with *boreh*, had nothing human, still less anything indicative of her heavenly extraction, yet, first the women and then the men remarked that her eyes, as she glided round, languidly lifting and twisting her arms and hands and fingers, began to move in her head. They moved sleepily, though, like the eyes of one acting under the impulse of a dream.... But lo! Her hair, it had become real hair and in it was stuck a leaf of the *waringin-tree*, just as if she were a common dancing-girl, performing in the street and desirous to attract lovers....

Encouraged by these familiar associations, the chief of the village, who attended *ex officio*, got up and took Sry Nagasary's scarf from her clumsily fumbling hands. Thereupon, followed by the tottering doll, he approached with the mincing steps prescribed by native etiquette his superior, the *demang* or chief of the district, also present, to squat down opposite the latter and to offer it as an invitation to the first dance *a deux*, an honor pertaining to the guest highest in rank. Again according to native etiquette there was a protracted contest of courtesy between the two officials, the one insisting with due deference, the other

politely refusing to accept the scarf until at last he yielded and, begging to be excused on account of his age while handing it back to the wooden lady, produced a silver coin, tendering the money to her as the price of his exemption from a precedence incompatible with his hoary dignity.

“The proper thing to do,” muttered the bystanders who watched Sry Nagasary clutching the coin with an awkward gesture and sliding by fits and starts, unconscious of her actions, toward a copper vessel in front of Bagal, into which she let it fall.

The chinking sound of its striking the rim and bottom displeased the women behind the shutters and screens. “An unmannerly dancing girl,” they whispered to one another, commenting upon this trick which, like the ostentatious display of a waringin-leaf, is a common one among the artists of the streets, who take good care to make the tangible evidence of approval, extracted from a male admirer, ring in its receptacle to stimulate the generosity of his rivals.

Moving away from the collection-bowl, Sry Nagasary halted before the village chief, whose turn had now come either to dance with her or to open his purse. He chose the former course, seconded by two of his elders, one to his right, the other to his left. Squirming about, contorting their limbs, encircling the unsightly image of a celestial virgin at the measureless measure of a wildly unharmonious orchestra, they presented a sight extravagantly weird and lugubrious in their *chasse-croise* with the grotesque *apsara*, descended from Indra’s court for the delectation of mortals. Although some of the onlookers enlivened the scene by clapping their thighs in time with the drum and cymbals, genially and affably to show the appreciation obligatory on well-bred neighbors, the pause, announced by an unearthly yelp of Bagal’s *rabab*, was welcomed as a relief even by the most curious.

Sry Nagasary relapsed at once into her original state of superlative woodenness. Never before, however, had she done so well, danced in such a life-like style as that night. The three brothers took, of course, all the credit of her progress in pose and attitude and elegant carriage to themselves. But those of the company who had not been wholly absorbed in the spectacle because distracted by their close observation of the stranger in their midst, the wandering minstrel half hid in a corner with his eyes riveted on the dancing doll that seemed to gain in vitality under his gaze, were of a different opinion.

“He has the air of a *gandharva* [a heavenly musician] in search of his *apsara*: no wonder that she responds,” said the women and girls, favorably impressed by the looks and deportment of the handsome youth.

“Is not this Mashmool, come back to claim his portion among the sons of Kyahy Taboos?” A selectman asked of the village scribe.

The accosted authority, whose wife had nursed Mashmool after the death of his mother in childbed, scrutinized him closely and cried. “Indeed it is and my hearty greeting to him!”

The exclamation and the crowding forward of the villagers to salute the wanderer happily restored to his friends, awakened his brothers to a sense of something unusual going on, an event not on the evening's program. Joining the circle which had formed around Mashmool, they now recognized him too, their preoccupation as owners, managers and orchestra of the show having so far prevented their taking much notice of him. His arrival did not suit them at all but they went up to him with sugary words and a grand display of joy at his return, and they entreated him to consider himself at home in their father's house, forgetting that it was his as well as theirs.

In their vexation at Mashmool's unexpected reappearance, they solaced themselves with the thought that their generous but vague assurances of hospitable intent could easily be modified after they had had time to consider the case at their leisure, basing their line of conduct on mature reflection. For the present Sry Nagasary's resuscitation claimed their undivided attention. So they took up again their instruments to resume their arduous functions in the eagerly awaited second part of the performance. But, while they preluded with more than ordinary absence of concord and consonance, owing to their perturbed state of mind, the *demang*, after a whispered consultation with the village chief, interrupted their play and proposed an arrangement the idea of which had already occurred to several others: since Mashmool was known to be an excellent musician, could not Bagal leave the musical direction to him the better to discharge the duties of the general management?

Bagal argued that Sry Nagasary, being a personal gift from Batara Guru to himself and, he added under the stress of their presence, to his brothers Sompoq and Paning, would most certainly decline to dance to any music but his own. One might try, answered the *demang*. His proposition in favor of the change being carried by acclamation, Bagal was obliged to give in and resign the leadership of the orchestra to Mashmool who, rejecting his elder brother's fiddle, commenced tuning the Sumatra *rabab* which he had learned to play during his peregrinations in Jamby and the Rawas. Besides other differences in construction, it had three strings of twisted silk instead of the two copper ones which Bagal never succeeded in stretching properly to sound the right notes of the *salendro-octave*. Mashmool's prelude revealed at once his indisputable superiority as an apt pupil of the eminent virtuoso that made Batang Asay, where this maestro had established a school, a name famous among the connoisseurs from Majapahit to Manang Kabau.

The coarse, raw noises, suggestive of an abusive hag, a shrieking virago, which Bagal had inflicted upon his audience, gave way to soft tones like those of a love-sick maiden whose hopes and desires are bursting into song. Mashmool's masterly execution of the opening strains profoundly touched the cloistered women and girls who, for all his having been recognized as Kyahy Taboos's youngest son, could not get rid of the fanciful belief that the wandering minstrel was an incarnation of the primal and essential Gandharva, the patron

of their sex, the deity of courtship and marriage. His tender call to come forth and dance, a gentle but irresistible summons to the completion of high events, had a still more wonderful effect upon the *apsara*, manifestly so anxious to do his bidding that it almost petrified Bagal, who sat motionless with mingled feelings of amazement and exasperation while Sompoq and Paning, no less confounded, fortunately forgot to follow their younger brother's lead with their drum and cymbals.

In fact, every one doubted the evidence of his senses when Sry Nagasary stepped airily to the middle of the space assigned for the exhibition of her art, subject to a transformation unlike and much greater than that which had enabled the lumbering doll, fashioned by Bagal and dressed and bedecked with jewels by Sompoq and Paning, to go through its twitching paces. Her features took a living hue; the layer of *boreh* disappeared from her face and arms and hands, leaving them tinted like the dusky-yellow rind of the succulent *langsah*. The life-blood, vital principle of human existence, rushed up from its source beneath the lotus and tinged her cheeks; her bosom heaved; her brow expanded; her lustreless eyes began to sparkle; the *waringin* leaf in her hair-knot blossomed into a red-glowing rose.

Nimble, yet stately, she danced to the measure of Mashmool's accords, swaying her lithe body on her haunches, extending and bending upward her fingers, spreading and waving her scarf with winding, graceful movements. Timidly advancing, shyly receding, she seemed to hold converse with the all-spirit, wooing its creative essence and being wooed, trembling under unseen caresses, melted to conceive and bear like a flower-bud in the warmth of the sun. How beautiful she was! And her dancing in agitation of ecstasy an elation of the soul, a solution of the riddle of man and woman, of the noble and the base, of heaven and earth!

The hearts of those who beheld her throbbed with rapture. They were now perfectly convinced that she was one of Indra's hand-maidens, her home the abode of the gods. And, miracle upon miracle, when she finished her dance with Mashmool's last note quavering sky-ward, she did not subside into the rigid inanity from which he had quickened her, but, after craving with *a sembah* and obtaining his permission to withdraw, disappeared into the women's apartments, bestowing on him a parting glance which made the young folks turn white, then scarlet under their brown skins as their tumultuous blood ceased its flow, immediately to dash on again through their veins in fiery waves.

And one of the elders said, "The *ghandarva* fully deserves his reward."

"Nay, call him Kama, the god of the flowery bow, smiled upon by Raty, his fond spouse," replied the village scribe, who was something of a prig.

The *demang*, rising to depart after thanking Bagal for the rare entertainment provided and Mashmool for its exceptional success, gave the sign for the assembly to break up. The village chief followed suit, escorting him home at the head of a numerous retinue. Thereupon the rest of the guests dispersed in due

sequence, taking a perfunctory leave of their host and his two brothers next in age, but very cordially commending themselves to the youngest and complimenting him upon the new proof of his surpassing talent they had just enjoyed. Mashmool accepted their praise with a modesty which endeared him still more, especially to the fair among his admirers. Yet, however unassuming his behavior, this homage to his musical proficiency, not to mention Sry Nagasary's evident preference for his person and accompaniment, was not at all to his seniors' liking. On the other hand, they saw their advantage in retaining him until they had mastered the trick, for so they considered it, which wrought the magical transition of a wooden image into an embodiment of the transports of paradise, far beyond their own past achievements unaided by occult artifice.

So they, too, complimented him, feigning to be overjoyed at his return, cajoling him, beseeching him to stay and live with them forever but resolved in their minds to get rid of him the instant they had wheedled him out of his secret. They ordered the servants to spread a sleeping-mat for him in the verandah over the stream that laved the basement of the house, his favorite place to pass the night in as they affectionately remembered. Without doubt he was tired and they needed also a good rest after the fatigue of the night's performance, wherefore they begged him to excuse them for the nonce from expatiating upon their contentment caused by his hale and hearty presence, from exchanging the news of the village for an account of his travels and adventures: the morrow would bring time for that together with the festive celebration of his restitution to the parental roof.

Meanwhile they were consumed with a desire to see Sry Nagasary in the flesh as she withdrew from the dance, to speak to her privately, to establish their claims on the promised reward, each for himself to the exclusion of the other two. But at the women's quarters they were told in reply to their sly inquiries, that the lady had gone to the river for a bath, as might have been expected from an *apsara*, a water-nymph reincarnate; that she had imperiously commanded when retiring for repose after the refreshing expedition, on no pretext to suffer any one to annoy her with requests for an interview, least of all Bagal, Sompoq or Paning.

Mashmool, believing in his brothers' fond protestations, had laid himself down upon his sleeping-mat, thinking of the strange events of the day, of the ungainly wooden doll transfigured by the effective energy of his music into a celestial princess, of the fervid glance that lovely, peerless being had shot at him, grateful for her delivery, promising worlds of joy. It made him inexpressibly happy, gave him a feeling of beatitude that mingled in the surrounding darkness with the blissful smell of the juicy herbs of the pasture grounds and the sappy buds of the sprouting trees in the jungle, carried from far inland on the wings of the cooling mountain breeze. The growing stillness disposed him to slumber but his rest was not untroubled.

Tossing about, Mashmool was dreaming of the *apsara*, whom he fancied at his side, leaning over him and looking at him with eyes that plucked his heart



out of his body, when a stronger scent, a scent of flowers, delicious and exciting, woke him up. The scent came from *melaty* and *chompaca* [variety of magnolia] strung profusely in the thick coils of her hair from which now the rose had vanished as, earlier in the evening, the waringin-leaf. Sitting up, fully awakened by the emotion produced by her close proximity, Mashmool saw however nothing, though he heard a faint rustle of flowing robes, soon lost in the gurgle of the water that swirled past beneath his feet. Had she come to him, the spirit of divine delight, Sry Nagasary? Or had it been one of the comely shaped witches that prowl by night to tear open the breasts of men in search of the clotted drop of blood?

Whoever or whatever it might have been, Mashmool resolved to watch for a new manifestation, surveying the black, eddying current, trying to pierce the murky wall of river and cloud blurred together, that closed him in. Wrapped in his *sarong*, he sat quite still, noting every suspicious ticking and creaking of rafters and flooring, every shuffle of unshod feet he discerned moving in the house between the whirl of fluttering bats and the yelping bark of the wild dogs that were snapping at one another over the carrion thrown up by the tide. Nervously vigilant he sat until the first glimmer of the rising moon, blinking through the thin, flying filaments of vapor that detached them-selves from the heavy mist which rested on land and sea, began to disperse the gloom. Then he took his flute and played a piece in laud of the soft, silvery light, so melodious that the occupants of the women's quarters, from mistress to lowest serving wench, spoke the next morning of heavenly lutes they had heard.

And his heart being full, Mashmool laid aside his flute to address himself to the moon in verses of the kind whose meter, in the guise of an eagle, once mounted to the realm of sublime felicity and stole the celestial liquor *soma*, lulling its guardian to neglectful sleep. And having done his duty by the benign luminary, Mashmool gave vent to the love he felt in him for Sry Nagasary and he sang:

My lady is like the yolk of the egg of the world  
 She is the cause and the aim of all that exists;  
 Of her true lover's anguish and bliss for ever and ever,  
 Of the pain he exultantly bears for her sake.

No more time elapsed than necessary to sheathe a kris, when a voice responded, a voice sweet as honey and distinct as the tones of Vishnu's conch that stirs creation from its crest to its navel at his passing astride on the bird Garuda:

Through trials and suff'ring prepare to enter thy kingdom.  
 Man's strength's steel'd by patience and man's love by delay.  
 Is not the air cleared and cleansed by thunder and lightning?  
 Steadily chase thy desire by night and by day.

Mashmool had wooed and won the *apsara* without the assistance of the saintly hermit, and deep silence, the mysterious silence of the hours before dawn ushers the work and battle of mortal existence, confirmed the announcement of her conditional surrender.

The incident did not escape the attention of the brothers who, stung by the *apsara's* refusal to see them, were spying on her to keep track of further developments. Though the more jealous of one another the more beautiful she had become and the more accomplished in her profitable art without collapsing the moment she lost the spur of musical incitement, they dropped their rivalry to unite in their common envy of Mashmool. Their backs hunched up and their livers burst of hatred at her response to his declaration, the first articulate utterance that proceeded from her lips in their hearing, and such an utterance!

"We have labored," said Bagal, "and his is the gain!"

"We have admitted him to our home, him who came as driftwood," added Sompoq, "and extended our hospitality to him and this is how he repays our kindness, licking up the mead poured out for us by the gods."

"He has brought with him a spirit of evil, his master," continued Paning, "the one that taught him those tricks, and benefactions to the wicked are always punished by the gods, adverse as they must needs be to dealings with devils and the children of their wrath."

So they talked, wicked words leaving their mouths, sinful words suggested by the spirits of evil that lived in themselves who could not apprehend the fact of Mashmool's superior power over the heavenly nymph originating simply in his superior musical skill backed by his superior cast of mind. Acting on the prognostics of Bagal's dream, as interpreted by the saintly hermit, and competing for the promised reward, they had prepared for everything except that which now had happened. To obviate its consequences, they resolved upon the sacrifice of a human life, (and whose life could it be but Mashmool's?), first to frighten his demonic master into revealing to them the coveted secret; secondly to serve the gods, notably Batara Guru, whose evident will it was that the *apsara's* mission should redound to their advantage, not his. Dreadful deeds are sometimes planned and done in the professed service of the gods!

Mashmool was asleep after his amorous vigil. Having ascertained this, the conspirators armed themselves and stealthily entered the verandah over whose balustrade they hoped to cast him, when finished, into the river which, as they knew by experience, never gave back what had sunk, properly weighted, beneath its whirling surface to its slimy bottom. Mashmool's regular breathing augured well for their undertaking. But suddenly, already near his sleeping mat and reaching for their krisses, their fratricidal hands were arrested by an apparition, luminous in the moon glow. Startled, they drew back. Sry Nagasary, premonished by her divine perception, had come to warn them off and they went, turning tail like beaten dogs, yet self-righteous enough, even in the hour of their discomfiture and repudiation, to make one another believe that it was they who

renounced her since they detected their danger: do not the gods when the holy practices of sanctified men threaten damage to their pre-eminence, employ *apsaras* to lure those saints from the blessed road? Enlightened by the happenings of the night, they would abstain.

When the mean, by far too crafty fools had gone, withering under her contemptuous stare, Sry Nagasary stooped and touched Mashmool's forehead. He woke up a second time and, looking around, unquiet as a budding plant stirred by the longings of spring, he saw now plainly before him the earthly form of her who had become a dweller in his heart. Bending toward him her dainty figure that seemed wrought of the sheen of the waning moon, she carried her clean beauty proudly as a regal garment. Perplexed and afraid to speak to one descended from the highest sphere to expose herself to contact with mortals, ordained for a purpose he could not divine, to disport among them as she was wont to do among the gods, he gazed at her in silence, intoxicated by the blithe-some influence of her personality, the very marrow of love.

"Thy singing has moved me strangely," she said. "Hast thou the strength to be mine?"

"Forgive me," he answered. "I forgot myself: thou belongest to my brothers and my manifest duty is to go."

"Thy brothers are a rottenness at the core of the sanctity they pretend. They sham devotion, disturbing its limpid course, stirring up its dregs and besmirching themselves. Indra's thunderbolt will destroy them: Rudra, the blue-black demon, is already tracing their path. But, by the light of the moon! I have a more important matter in hand than to discuss thy brothers' share in my assuming this shape, which will confound them through their rascal stupidity. Therefore again: Hast thou the strength to be mine; mine in my master's palace of Amaravati, in the fragrant gardens of Randana?"

Though his courage never turned away from a legitimate object, Mashmool repeated that he would resume his wanderings rather than contend with his brothers for a treasure he prized above all but considered theirs. Thereupon Sry Nagasary, unfolding their machinations and disclosing their intention to kill him, as a king's messenger unwraps a royal dispatch from its yellow silken cover and discloses its contents, told him of their frustrated attempt on his life, adding that their fate, whatever he might wish or do, was in the hands of Varuna, the god of justice and punishment. This having dissipated his scruples, he gladly confessed his love and declared his readiness to prove it by performing any task she might be pleased to appoint.

Her answer fed the lurking suspicion always associated with the unexpected fulfillment of a strong desire:

"My home is in heaven and, though the celestial beverage of delight I dispense, can be drunk by gods or by men at Batara Guru's discretion, the privileged mortal has to select between earthly marriage, which is a short, counterfeit happiness, and lasting felicity in *svarloka*, the palace and gardens of eternal bliss,

which to gain requires fortitude and continence and high endeavor while traversing the valley of sorrow. It is in thy choice to abase me, *an apsara*, to thy own uncleansed condition, or to raise thyself to mine as a *gandharva*, my consort before the throne, a servant of Agni, the effulgent, and of Varuna, the exalted judge. Choose thy destiny for me to follow!”

Flurried by the alternative and impelled by the rash impatience that marks the hot lover, Mashmool had it on the tip of his tongue to beg her consent for immediate espousal, but the knowledge of its brief, incomplete satisfaction marred the tempting picture of undeferred possession as the shadow of a cloud darkens a sun-lit landscape. He stood motionless: gratification of the sin-ridden flesh for a fleeting hour or the soul’s reward in undecaying beatitude, the real treasure in Sry Nagasary’s gift?

Dawn had now arrived, Ushas, the shimmer of newborn day, sweethearting with the streaks of vapor in the sky, turning their complexion from palest pink to deepest carmine, and the celestial virgin took her bridegroom by the hand, leading him out of the house to the riverside.

There she held back and spoke, “Look, the moon, the lady of fecundity under whose influence Indra created the universe and fixed the orbits of the planets, Soma, restored to her dominion, is drunk up by the gods; she waneth and will not be filled ere I return to my place on high. What is thy choice? Which way shall we travel, either together for a little while, constantly menaced by irrevocable separation as between a mortal and a child of the stars; or apart for a little while, thou undoing thy desire of its low, lustful wrappings to let me precede where, after trial and purification in the accomplishment of thy task, thou shalt become my other self among the diamonds that stud the roof of the world?”

Loaded with the perfumes of bourgeoning woods, the land wind rippled the water whose playful wavelets rocked the coconut shells which the girls of the village, praying to Soma, had filled with sweet-meats and sent floating down the stream to dispose to favor the deity in charge of the matrimonial market.

The passing fisher-folk as they steered their boats seaward before the auspicious breeze, and the husbandmen as they made up to plough their ricefields and saw them standing, Mashmool and Sry Nagasary, silhouetted against the amber and garnet welkin, in earnest, affectionate communion, said, “Lo! The *apsara* has found her *gandharva*.”

From afar they were watched by the saintly hermit, who had been drawn from his holy meditations by the rapidly spreading news of Sry Nagasary’s release from bondage by the charm of Mashmool’s enchanting melodies, and was curious to know whether the youngest of the sons of Kyahy Taboos, conquering himself, would reap the rich reward Batara Guru had empowered the *apsara* to bestow on the most deserving.

“Oh she,” he muttered, “she, the cloud-spirit, groping in her deliverance for the liberation of her lover from the thralldom of carnal appetite, will she attain her wish and elevate him to glory?”

Mashmool seemed to hesitate. Anxious for a token, he scanned the horizon to the North where Kubera, the god of worldly indulgence, keeps his court, and to the North-East where Chandra illuminates the joys of paradise.

“Thou, Surya, direct his decision!” pleaded Sry Nagasary, invoking the sun, which began to climb the firmament in his golden chariot behind his milk-white, lucent horses.

At his advent Mashmool obtained the inspiration he had sought. And Surya soon reigning supreme, Mashmool loudly published his choice, erect on the ridge at the river’s edge, gorgeously clothed in the lord of fruition’s reflected radiance as in shining armor, clenching shining weapons, put in his hands by the resplendent god: a flaming sword to strike at error and deceit, a lance with flashing head to drive back falsehood into slanderous throats, the minstrel having enlisted as a warrior in Batara Guru’s army of the upright.

And Sry Nagasary contemplated him contentedly, fain to ascend whence she had come, going before with a cheery word of trust in a speedy consummation of their union; with a prayer in her heart for its perfection in purity, such a prayer as no god can resist: May my soul be his soul as his soul is my soul, one forever in whole, undying truth!

## SUNRISE

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Dixon, Roland. *Oceanic Mythology*. Boston: Marshall Jones Company, 1916, 224–227.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Indonesia

**National Origin:** Indonesia

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The following tale contains the common elements of questing for a lost sibling, animal helpers, and mistaken identification of a reflection in the water. These and other **motifs** in “Sunrise” are worldwide. The inclusion of the garuda, a monstrous mythic bird recognized both by Hindus and Buddhists, points to a more direct influence from South Asia. In contrast, the motif of an animal or object answering for an escaping fugitive is characteristically Indonesian.

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**T**wo sisters, whose parents had been killed and eaten by a tiger and a *garuda* bird, saved themselves from their parents’ fate by hiding in a drum; but one day a man went out hunting, and his arrow falling on the roof of the house where the two were hidden, he found the girls and took the older, whose name was Sunrise, as his wife.

After a time the man said to his sister-in-law, "Bring me a piece of bamboo, that I may knock out the partition (at the nodes) and make a water-vessel for you to get water in," but when he fixed it, he secretly made holes through the bottom also. He then gave her the water-vessel, and she went to the stream to bring water, but the bamboo would not hold it; and after she had tried for a long time, she discovered the holes in the bottom. Accordingly she returned to the house, but found that Sunrise and her husband had gone, for he had pierced the bottom of the water-vessel so that he and his wife might have time to run away.

Before going off, however, Sunrise had left two lice behind her and had instructed them to answer for her when her sister should return and thus delay pursuit, her orders being, "If she calls me from the landside, do you answer from the seaside; if she calls me from the seaside, do you answer from the land-side; if she asks you the way, show it to her." When the deserted sister returned to the house, she called to Sunrise and thought she heard an answer, but when she went thither, the reply came from the opposite direction. Thus deceived by the false calls, she was long delayed; but finally she discovered the trick, asked the way which Sunrise had taken, and set off in pursuit.

By and by she came upon an old woman, to whom she called, "Oh, granny! Oh, granny! look here!"

The old woman said to herself, "Well, ever since the world was made, I have lived alone, so I won't look," but, nevertheless, she did look, and then asked, "Well, Granddaughter, where do you come from?"

"Granny, I am seeking my older sister," said the other sister, whose name was Kokamomako; and then hearing the sound of a drum, she inquired, "Granny, why are they having a feast over there?"

The old woman answered, "Just now they went by with your sister," and so Kokamomako, continued on her way.

When she came to the house, she called out, "Show me the hair of my sister in the window," but the people inside held up the hair of a cat, whereupon Kokamomako said, "My sister is indeed ugly, but that is the hair of a cat. You must show me her foot."

Then the people took the foot of a cat and thrust it out of the window, saying, "If you want us to produce your sister, you must pick up a basket of rice that we will throw out," whereupon they threw it out and scattered it. Then Kokamomako wept, for this was a task which she could not accomplish; but a rice-bird came up to her and asked, "What is your trouble, and what do you want, that you are picking that up?"

She replied, "I have no trouble, and I don't want anything, but they have hidden my elder sister."

Then the rice-bird helped her, and it was not long before the rice was all gathered; but still the people would not bring out her sister, Sunrise; whereupon Kokamomako said, "If you don't produce my sister, I will go home and set fire to my house," adding, "when you see blue smoke, that will be the furniture;

when you see white smoke, that will be money; when you see red smoke, that will be I.” Then she went away, and soon they saw that she had set fire to her house, perceiving that the smoke was first blue, then white, and then red. Knowing that her sister was now dead, Sunrise went and bathed, and when she came back to the house, she took a knife and stabbed herself and died. By and by her husband went to carry her food, and found her dead, whereupon he also took a knife and tried to kill himself, but did not succeed.

Now there was a slave in the house who went to get water at the river, and when she looked in the stream, seeing the reflection of Sunrise, she thought it was her own and called out, “Oh, sirs, you said that I was ugly, but really I am beautiful.” Proud of her supposed good looks and thinking herself too good to be a slave, she threw away her water-vessel and broke it; but when she went back to the house, they sent her back again for water and once more she saw the reflection of Sunrise, for the latter and her younger sister (their ghosts) were hidden in the top of a tree that leaned over the stream. This, however, the slave did not know, and again she said, “Oh, sirs, you said that I was ugly, but I am really beautiful,” and again she threw away the water-vessel and broke it, doing this seven times before she told the people in the house that she had seen the reflection of Sunrise.

In the house was another slave who suffered from wounds on his legs, and the husband of Sunrise ordered him to dive into the stream in order to seize her, but he refused. So all set upon him, and he was forced to do as he was bid; but though he dove and dove, and broke open his wounds, and colored the stream with his blood, he could not find Sunrise.

Accordingly he came ashore and said, “I told you just now that I could not do it, and now you have forced me to try, and I have broken my wounds open again.”

Thereupon, as they sat by the stream, the husband happened to look up, and seeing his wife in the top of the tree, he called out, “Let down a rope, so that I may climb up.”

So she lowered a copper wire, saying, “When you get half way up, don’t hold on so tight,” but when he climbed up and reached the halfway point, she cut the wire, and he fell and was dashed to pieces.

## **THE LIZARD HUSBAND**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Dixon, Roland. *Oceanic Mythology*. Boston: Marshall Jones Company, 1916, 210–213.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Indonesia

**National Origin:** Indonesia

Many Indonesian folktales tell the story of an animal spouse. These frequently take the form of “Beauty and the Beast” (AT 425C). As in the following narrative, the animal husband is misjudged, but by means of enchantment, he triumphs over those who maltreat him.

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Once there was an old woman who lived alone in the jungle and had a lizard which she brought up as her child. When he was full grown, he said to her, “Grandmother, go to the house of Lise, where there are seven sisters; and ask for the eldest of these for me as a wife.” The old woman did as the lizard requested, and taking the bridal gifts with her, went off; but when she came near the house, Lise saw her and said, “Look, there comes Lizard’s grandmother with a bridal present. Who would want to marry a lizard! Not I.”

The old woman arrived at the foot of the ladder, ascended it, and sat down in Lise’s house, whereupon the eldest sister gave her betel, and when her mouth was red from chewing it, asked, “What have you come for, Grandmother? Why do you come to us?”

“Well, Granddaughter, I have come for this: to present a bridal gift; perhaps it will be accepted, perhaps not. That is what I have come to see.” As soon as she had spoken, the eldest indicated her refusal by getting up and giving the old woman a blow that knocked her across to the door, following this with another that rolled her down the ladder.

The old woman picked herself up and went home; and when she had reached her house, the lizard inquired, “How did your visit succeed?”

She replied, “O! Alas! I was afraid and almost killed. The gift was not accepted, the eldest would not accept it; it seems she has no use for you because you are only a lizard.”

“Do not be disturbed,” said he, “go tomorrow and ask for the second sister,” and the old woman did not refuse, but went the following morning, only to be denied as before. Each day she went again to another of the sisters until the turn of the youngest came. This time the girl did not listen to what Lise said and did not strike the old woman or drive her away, but agreed to become Lizard’s wife, at which the old woman was delighted and said that after seven nights she and her son would come.

When this time had passed, the grandmother arrived, carrying the lizard in a basket. Kapapitoe (the youngest sister) laid down a mat for the old woman to sit on while she spread out the wedding gifts, whereupon the young bride gave her food, and after she had eaten and gone home, the lizard remained as Kapapitoe’s husband. The other sisters took pains to show their disgust. When they returned home at night, they would wipe the mud off their feet on Lizard’s back and would say, “Pitoe can’t prepare any garden; she must stay and take care of



her lizard,” but Kapapitoe would say, “Keep quiet. I shall take him down to the river and wash off the mud.”

After a while the older sisters got ready to make a clearing for a garden, and one day, when they had gone to work, the lizard said to his wife, “We have too much to bear. Your sisters tease us too much. Come, let us go and make a garden. Carry me in a basket on your back, wife, and gather also seven empty coconut-shells.” His wife agreed, put her husband in a basket, and after collecting the seven shells, went to the place which they were to make ready for their garden. Then the lizard said, “Put me down on the ground, wife, so that I can run about,” and thus he scurried around, lashing the grass and trees with his tail and covering a whole mountain-side in the course of the day; with one blow he felled a tree, cut it up by means of the sharp points on his skin, set the pieces afire, and burned the whole area, making the clearing smooth and good.

Then he said to Kapapitoe, “Make a little seat for me, so that I can go and sit on it,” and when this was done, he ordered the seven coconut shells to build a house for him, after which he was carried home by his wife. The older sisters returning at evening, saw the new clearing and wondered at it, perceiving that it was ready for planting. When they got home they said to their sister, “You can’t go thus to the planting feast of Ta Datoe. Your husband is only a lizard,” and again they wiped their feet on him.

The next day Lizard and his wife went once more to their clearing and saw that the house had already been built for them by the coconut shells, which had turned into slaves; whereupon the lizard said, “Good, tomorrow evening we will hold the preliminary planting festival, and the next day a planting feast.” Ordering his seven slaves to prepare much food for the occasion, he said to his wife, “Let us go to the river and get ready,” but on arriving at the stream, they bathed far apart, and the lizard, taking off his animal disguise, became a very handsome man dressed in magnificent garments. When he came for his wife, she at first did not recognize him, but at last was convinced; and after she had been given costly new clothes and ornaments, they returned toward Lise’s house. As they came back, the preliminary planting festival had begun, and many people were gathered, including Kapapitoe’s elder sisters, Lise, and the old woman.

The six sisters said, “Tell us, Grandmother, who is that coming? She looks so handsome, and her sarong rustles as if rain were falling. The hem of her sarong goes up and down every moment as it touches her ankles.”

The old woman replied, “That is your youngest sister, and there comes her husband also,” whereupon, overcome with jealousy, the six sisters ran to meet their handsome brother-in-law and vied with each other for the privilege of carrying his betel-sack, saying, “I want to hold the *sirih*-sack of my brother-in-law.” He, however, went and sat down, and the six went to sit beside him to take him away from their youngest sister, but the lizard would have none of them.

Next day was the planting, and his sisters-in-law would not let the lizard go in company with his wife, but took possession of him and made him angry. Accordingly, when Lise and the sisters were asleep, the lizard got up, waked Kapapitoe, and taking a stone, laid four pieces of bark upon it and repeated a charm, "If there is power in the wish of the six sisters who wipe their feet on me, then I shall, when I open my eyes, be sitting on the ground just as I am now. But if my wish has power, when I open my eyes, I shall be sitting in my house and looking down on all other houses."

When he opened his eyes, he was seated in his house high up on the mountain, for the stone had grown into a great rock, and his house was on top of it. His sisters-in-law tried to climb the cliff, but in vain, and so had to give up, while he and his wife, Kapapitoe, lived happily ever after.

## KANTJIL THE MOUSE DEER

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As noted in the discussion of the Plandok (mouse deer) cycle in Borneo, this **trickster** figure is popular in Southeast Asia. In Indonesia, the mouse deer is commonly teamed with or pitted against three other figures: ape, crocodile, and tiger. See the Dusun "Mouse Deer the Trickster" cycle (page 328) for additional information and comparative data from Borneo.

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### Mouse Deer and Tiger

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Dixon, Roland. *Oceanic Mythology*. Boston: Marshall Jones Company, 1916, 186–188.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Indonesia

**National Origin:** Indonesia

One day the kantjil was resting quietly when he heard a tiger approaching and feared for his life, wherefore, quickly taking a large leaf, he began to fan a pile of dung which happened to lie near. When the tiger came up, and overcome by curiosity asked what he was doing, the mouse-deer said, "This is food belonging to the king. I am guarding it."

The tiger, being very hungry, at once wished to be allowed to eat the royal food, but the kantjil refused for a long time, advising him not to touch it and saying that it would be wrong to betray his trust; but at last he agreed to let the tiger have his way if he would promise to wait before eating it until he, the kantjil, had gone; for thus the blame might be escaped.

No sooner said than done; so when the kantjil had reached a safe distance, he called back to the tiger, "You may begin now," whereupon the tiger hungrily seized what he thought was a delicious morsel, only to be cruelly deceived. Furious at the trick played upon him by the little kantjil, he hurried after the fugitive to get his revenge.

His intended victim, had meanwhile found a very venomous snake, which lay coiled up asleep. Sitting by this, he awaited the tiger's arrival, and when the latter came up raging in pursuit, he told him that he had only himself to blame, since he had been warned not to eat the food. "But," said the kantjil, "you must keep quiet, for I am guarding the girdle of the king. You must not come near it, because it is full of magic power." The tiger's curiosity and desire being, of course, only stimulated by all this, he insisted that he be allowed to try on the precious girdle, to which the kantjil yielded with apparent reluctance, again warning him to be very careful and, as before, saying that the tiger must first let him get safely away, in order that no guilt might attach to him. When the kantjil had run off, the tiger seized the supposed magic girdle, only to be bitten by the snake, which he did not succeed in killing until after a severe struggle.

Thirsting for vengeance, the tiger again took up the pursuit of his clever little adversary, who, meanwhile, had stopped to rest, so that when the tiger caught up with him, he found him sitting near a clump of tall bamboo. The kantjil greeted the tiger warmly and said, without giving the latter time to express his anger, that he had been appointed keeper of the king's trumpet. The tiger, immediately desiring to try this wonderful instrument, was induced to put his tongue between two of the bamboos, being told that, as soon as the wind blew, they would give fine music. The trickster ran off, and presently a strong gust arose, swayed the bamboos, and thus pinched the tiger's tongue entirely off.

Again the tiger gave chase, and this time found the kantjil standing beside a great wasp's nest. As before, the trickster warned the tiger not to disturb him, for he was guarding the king's drum which gave out a very wonderful tone when struck; but the tiger, of course, was most anxious to have the opportunity of sounding it. With feigned reluctance, the kantjil at last agreed, stipulating, as before, that he be allowed to get out of the way. As soon as he had put a safe distance between himself and the tiger, he gave the signal, and the tiger struck the nest, only to be beset the next instant by a swarm of angry wasps.

## Mouse Deer, Tiger, and Ape

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Dixon, Roland. *Oceanic Mythology*. Boston: Marshall Jones Company, 1916, 191–192.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Indonesia

**National Origin:** Indonesia

The tiger was seeking the kantjil to eat him, when the latter hastened to find a *djati*-plant, whose leaves he chewed making his mouth blood-red; after which he went and sat down beside a well. By and by the tiger came along, and the trickster, assuming a fierce aspect and driveling blood-red saliva from his mouth, said that the tiger had better look out, as he, the mouse-deer, was accustomed to eat tigers, and if the latter did not believe it, let him look in the well, in which he would see the head of the last one that he had finished. The tiger was much alarmed, though not wholly convinced, so he went to look in the well, where he saw, of course, the reflection of his own head. Thinking that this was really the head of the tiger which the mouse-deer had just eaten, and convinced of the trickster's might, the tiger ran away as fast as he could.

The ape, however, encouraged the tiger not to be afraid of the trickster, who was not so terrible a person after all, and to prove this, he said that he would go with the tiger to seek the kantjil once more; while to demonstrate his good faith he proposed that they should tie their tails together so that they might thus make a common attack, the ape riding on the tiger's back.

The latter agreed and in this way again approached the clever little rascal; but as soon as the latter saw them coming, he called out, "Ha! That is strange! There comes the ape who usually brings me two tigers every day as tribute, and now he is bringing only one." Terrified at this, the tiger ran away as fast as his legs would carry him; and the ape, being tied to his tail, was dashed against the rocks and trees and was killed.

## Mouse Deer and Crocodile

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Dixon, Roland. *Oceanic Mythology*. Boston: Marshall Jones Company, 1916, 190.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Indonesia

**National Origin:** Indonesia

Once kantjil wished to cross a river which he was unable to wade or swim because it was in flood, so, standing upon the bank, he called for the crocodiles, saying that the king had given command that they should be counted. Accordingly, they came in great numbers and by the trickster's directions arranged themselves in a row extending from bank to bank, whereupon the mouse-deer pretended to count them, jumping from one to the other and calling out, "one," "two," "three," etc., until he reached the opposite bank, when he derided them for their stupidity.

Resolving to be avenged, the crocodile bided his time, and when the trickster came later to the river to drink, he seized one of the mouse-deer's legs in his mouth. Nothing dismayed, the captive picked up a branch and called out, "That is not my leg; that is a stick of wood. My foot is here." The crocodile

accordingly let go and snapped at the branch, thinking that it was really the trickster's leg; but this gave the needed opportunity, and the clever mouse-deer bounded away to safety, leaving the stupid crocodile with the stick in his mouth.

The crocodile, however, determined not to go without his revenge, lay in wait, floating like a water-soaked log until the mouse-deer should visit the river again. When, after a while, he did come to the stream and saw the crocodile motionless, he stood on the bank and said, as if he were in doubt whether or not it was a log, "If that is the crocodile, it will float downstream." The crocodile, resolving not to give himself away, remained motionless; and then the trickster added, "But if it is a log, it will float upstream." At once the crocodile began to swim slowly against the current, and the mouse-deer, having discovered what he wished, called out in derision, "Ha! Ha! I have fooled you once more."

## ROOSTAM THE GAME-COCK

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Scheltema, J. F. "Roostam the Game-cock." *Journal of American Folklore* 32 (1919): 306–323.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Indonesia (Sumatra)

**National Origin:** Indonesia

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"Roostam the Game-cock" is set during the later period of Dutch influence over Indonesia, a territory in the Dutch East Indies. From 1602 until 1945, with the exception of Japanese conquest in World War II, the Netherlands, first through private enterprise and later via colonialism, exerted dominance in the area. Continuing enmity between the local population and "the Company" as well as rivalries between coastal and highlands regions pervades the **legend** as adapted by J. F. Scheltema. The symbolic importance of cock-fighting in Indonesia and Southeast Asia, in general, is obvious in the narrative. Success of one's bird brings not only financial gain, but prestige and power. The title clearly demonstrates the close identification between bird and owner.

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**T**he Malays of the Padang Highlands in Sumatra are born cock-fighters. But for a main of game-fowls, arranged to take place near the beautiful lake of Maninju, sweet, pretty Raissa would be at home instead of on the road between Mator and Pasar Lawang.

It is early, between eight and ten, the hour specified in native speech as most propitious for spreading out the rice in the hull to dry. The people of the Lowlands, truly, would call it late, seeing that they observe much earlier hours for going to market and the transaction of business because the sun makes them. In the cool Highlands, however, there is no such fear of the burning Eye of Day.

The road leads through coffee-gardens and here and there a primitive sugar-plantation with the old-fashioned mill, worked by hand or by a yoke of oxen. Farther away the watered rice-fields are watched over by giant mountains in the hazy distance. Everywhere, in the valleys and on the hills, mother earth lifts up her opulence to the favoring light of heaven, which descends in the glory of a newborn tropical day.

It is not considered proper for young girls to attend market-places, where conversation is held of such meaning, where people are encountered of such an adventurous disposition as ought to be met only by men and old women who know something of the world and its ugly snares. But Raissa, though the child of a well-to-do mother, yea, living in a house with gables pointed upward like horns, the exclusive privilege of the free-born Malay, Raissa is all for new ideas. She has been a pupil of the native school at Mator, where six *gurus*, appointed by the Dutch Government, instruct some two hundred children, among whom are already fifteen girls. Female emancipation is beginning to spread around the lake of Maninju And Raissa has still another excuse, quite sufficient in her opinion if maidenly coyness may come to the rescue of old-time institutions: Raissa is in love.

Behold her, then, brown but comely, her dark red scarf, embroidered with gold, folded over her head after the manner of the daughters of the land; her eyes, black and bright, brighter yet by the effect of a blue powder rubbed into the lower lids, haughtily looking down upon the other women, who trot to the market loaded with baskets of merchandise. Raissa is proud; proud of her mother's standing in her village; proud of her fine clothes, of the gold bracelets on her wrists, of the gold rings in her ears, while everybody knows that at home she keeps even more golden treasure, to be admired at every feast, gold pins to keep her hair smooth and a gold diadem, the envy of all her friends. Raissa is a girl of consequence and proud of it indeed, very proud, but most proud in the affection of Roostam, surnamed the Game-Cock.

Roostam, a daredevil sort of a young fellow, did not get that nickname for nothing. Apart from his natural proclivity to cock-fighting as a Sumatran Malay and, more particularly, as a scion of the family which has held the record for the raising of game-fowl in the whole country from time immemorial, his maternal uncle, Haji [honorific title given to a Muslim who has taken a pilgrimage to Mecca] Yusoof, being the greatest authority on everything connected with the sport, far and near in the Highlands and in the Lowlands too, Roostam himself is the veriest game-cock among men. Though generous and kind-hearted, his friends and acquaintances know him to be quick at taking offense. He does not

suffer any one to slight his interests or, worse still, his pretensions. He is a free-born man, a stickler for the Malay code of etiquette; his young, hot blood rebels against even the thought of compromise; his kris [dagger] lives next door to his ire.

When the old women of the village found out that a match between Roostam and Raissa was a foregone conclusion, they warned their daughters and granddaughters against him with all their might, calling him a scapegrace, a dangerous wild bull in the herd, who sooner or later would get himself and all his kin into trouble, and the girls assented with faces suggestive of sour grapes for secretly they admired Roostam as the flower of chivalry and manly excellence, and they hated Raissa, whose success with him exasperated them. The old men, too, thinking of their own youth or what they made themselves believe that their own youth had been, cherished Roostam's exploits in their hearts and yarned about the vigor of past ages revived in his person.

Especially Haji Yusoo, who had traveled, improving his knowledge by the pilgrimage to Mecca, and through that feat, together with his unequalled experience in the matter of game-fowl, had become a personage of influence, extended his protection to Roostam, as indeed he should, being the lad's maternal uncle. The fundamental principle of all social institutions on the West Coast of Sumatra is the succession by inheritance according to the rules of a strict matrilineal descent. The Malay family, in the narrower sense of the word, consists there of the mother with her offspring. The father does not belong to it; his relationship to his brothers and sisters is of far more consequence than his relationship to his wife and children. And since he is not a member of the social group they constitute, he cannot be its head. The duties and privileges attached to that position devolve upon the eldest brother of his wife, the eldest maternal uncle of his children, called their *mammak*.

On her way to Pasar Lawang, Raissa passes a trail which leads her through a coffee-plantation to the place where she knows that a cock-fight is on. True, the Government has prohibited that kind of sport, but then Sumatra is, like the rest of the Dutch East Indies, a country of ordinances not enforced and regulations not attended to. Wherever the police raise a cry about cock-fighting, something more lies behind it than the cock-fighting itself, a native vendetta or a native quarrel of some sort, or simply a native desire to worry the Dutch officials. Since, however, the written law must be respected, at any rate by the minions of the law, if not in fact at least in outward appearance, the cock-fights are removed from the market-places to more secluded nooks and corners, an arrangement quite satisfactory to the said minions, who indulge in the national pastime without further reserve, as every one else does, and engage their game-fowls to be pitted either by their own hands or by proxy. So it happened in the case of a native police officer, by common consent called *murei*, which is the name of a bird with an unmelodious, unpleasant squeak. The nickname was aptly bestowed as Malay nicknames always are. A stranger in the land, a man

from Bencoolen, thrown upon the country by the influence of an official who put him on the police force in consideration of personal services, Murei had established his reputation as a sneak, not to be trusted on any account and a braggart withal. He found pleasure in lifting his voice against the breed of game-fowls that were the glory of Roostam and Roostam's *mammak*, Haji Yusoof. The battle now in progress was planned to cure him of his pluming himself as the possessor of a cock, brought all the way from Padang, which, he boasted, could kill in single combat all the game-cocks between the lake of Maninju and the lake of Singkarah. This morning that valorous bird was to step forward against Roostam's favorite.

Feeling much interested, Raissa has eagerly watched the preparation for the odd fights that are to follow the main as far as game-fowls from Mator may take part. She has witnessed the infinite care bestowed on the separation of the fat cocks from the middling and the middling from the lean before their being cooped and, after the necessary purging of the fat ones, before their being put to their diet. She has followed the sparring exercises, the providing of the spears with muffs, the minute, periodical examination of the feathers, the beak, the eyes, to see if the fowls are in good health. And then, three days before the battle, at the auspicious hour set for the removal of the fighters to the scene of their future great deeds, she attended the last probing of their temper and listened to the animated debates, the endless discussions as to whether they were game or not and which one was most game and how the chances stood, and so forth, and so forth.

Meanwhile Roostam had trained his cock with the utmost assiduity under the guidance of his *mammak*, Haji Yusoof. All that time of anxious care he hardly allowed Raissa to come near him; but as it concerned a matter of so much moment, she bore him no ill will for being neglected. Sharing his enthusiasm she resigned herself and her unescorted walk to Pasar Lawang, inconsistent with the habitual reserve of a maiden of her rank and station, has no other purpose than to learn the issue of the battle immediately after its having been fought for, surely, the very first thing its promoters will do is to send word to the marketplace where the itinerant tradesmen are awaiting the news to spread it through the whole district as far as Bukit Tinggi. It would be a calamity indeed if a game-cock of Haji Yusoof's breed, in Roostam's hands, lost against a Padang cock in the hands of a man from Bencoolen, and Murei at that. Raissa's excitement running higher and higher, her expectations are, however, of the very best.

Hearing steps behind her and some one calling her by her name, she turns round to see Roostam's *mammak* coming up, extremely venerable in his regulation dress of a *haji*, with a tuft of sparse white hair under his chin. He reads the question in her eyes and tells her that, at the time he left the pit, they were still at the preliminaries. Raissa thinks it strange that Roostam's *mammak* has not waited for the end; yet she ventures no direct inquiry. But soon she understands that something is amiss, when informed of Murei's determination to stay away



himself and be represented by one of his underlings. Haji Yusoof does not say so but Raissa feels that he suspects foul play and, being of the elect, declines to get mixed up in the affray which is likely to follow. Haji Yusoof holds an office of responsibility as the chief of the kampong Lawang and, therefore, though of all cock-fights his heart goes out to this special one, he deems it desirable, with a view to possible consequences of possible happenings, that he be able to say: I was not in it.

Solicitous to please Roostam's *mammak* as women, brown or white, are always eager to please whenever it can further some ultimate purpose, Raissa lets Haji Yusoof pass before her and walks behind him to Pasar Lawang.

The venerable looking Haji Yusoof is a great talker as indeed all Sumatra Malays are, but now he keeps silent and, having reached his dwelling, where he bids Raissa enter with him for a chat with his womenfolk, he goes straight up to where his *ketitiran* hangs in its cage, suspended from a roof-beam, and takes it down, putting it beside him. The natives are very fond of pigeons, in particular of some kinds that live wild in the woods, as the *ketitiran* and the *punei*, which are caught and tamed and then become the constant companions of their owners. Haji Yusoof's *ketitiran* is a famous one, reputed to bring extraordinary luck. As a matter of fact, Haji Yusoof prospers exceedingly in a worldly sense, harvesting from many rice fields.

Very soon quite a number of callers drop in, anxious to hear about the cock-fight which, for some reason or other, they are not able to attend; anxious also to let their own fowl profit by Haji Yusoof's advice. They have made it a habit on Monday, the market day at Kampong Lawang, to consult Haji Yusoof in that way when visiting the *pasar* for their weekly purchases. People travel even from Bukit Tinggi and Padang Panjang, yea, from Bua and Solok, to avail themselves of his skill in dealing with the maladies and disorders that fowl, especially game-fowl, are heir to.

On the main battle, now raging between the cocks of Roostam and his opponent, Haji Yusoof has not much to say, and his visitors perceive very soon that the subject is better dismissed in his presence. But he readily imparts his superior wisdom in the treatment of such ailments among poultry as indigestion, costiveness, diarrhea, fever, asthma, gout, consumption, inflammation of the eye, obstruction of the nostrils, melancholy or moping, rheumatism or lifts, with useful hints about molting, loss of feathers, vermin, etc., thrown in. A man from Bua has brought with him an old rheumatic rooster and the younger females of Haji Yusoof's household derive great amusement from the spectacle of this bird, once a game-cock of some renown, strutting round, lifting its legs high and putting them down with care, stiff in limbs and joints, as if it were marching to the sound of the solemn march sometimes heard at Bukit Tinggi when the soldiers, in garrison at Fort de Kock, turn out for a military funeral.

After treating this patient, Haji Yusoof examines the sick-looking eyes, nostrils and mouth of a hen with ruffled feathers, that is suffering from croup,

breathing laboriously, and he advises to give her plenty of fresh air, to grease her swollen head every morning before sunrise, to hide her from the moon. Thereupon a bad case of pip claims his attention and he warns against unclean food and muddy water, and prescribes a dose of pepper, administered with coconut-oil or, if that proves insufficient, the cutting off, as a last resort, of the tip of the tongue. Almost forgetting the cock-fight in his endeavors to sustain his reputation as a breeder and physician of poultry, he expatiates upon a remedy against the gapes, somewhat heroic but recommended by long experience ...

Raissa, impatient to learn the result of the battle, slips out to the *pasar* proper (that is, the place where the *pakan* or market is held), cunningly calculating that, as soon as anything positive becomes known, it will be proclaimed there first of all. Picking her way to the enclosure of peace, a spot marked off by flat stones standing on end, where formerly the elders used to meet in council and to preside over the bull-fights, cock-fights and other such amusements before the Government stepped in to forbid them, picking her way between the little booths whose owners deal in the produce of the land and articles of daily use in Malay households, she meets many acquaintances, mostly old women for the reason already referred to. If anything, the marriageable girls of the Padang Highlands are even more shy about showing themselves in public than those of other Malay lands. Little girls, however, run about in plenty and several of them, children of poor mothers who squat at the roadside with the fruit of their gardens for sale, offer *kopi daoen* to the thirsty, a concoction of the leaves of the coffee-shrub. Too poor to drink real coffee while tending the richest of coffee-plantations, they have to leave the berries and beans alone after picking them for export oversea.

Raissa does not worry about such things when she finds herself in the *pasar*, which is no less a delight to the native fair ones than are the pretentious shops of Rijswijk and Noordwijk at Batavia to their sisters of the ruling race. Raissa worries about Roostam, the Game-Cock, though, for all that, she cannot help admiring the printed cotton goods temptingly displayed by merchants from Padang, trashy stuff, imported from Europe as a cheap substitute for the fine but expensive *bajus* and *sarongs* and *slendangs* of silk and gold lace, the pride of the Highland damsels in days of yore, finery altogether out of the financial reach of the present generation, save of a few who carry them as heirlooms.

A few strangers stroll about, their respective habitats being indicated by their raiment in a country where, if not the material, at least the cut, with purely local variations, has remained stationary from the time when Parapatih Sabateng of Body Chiniago and Kiahny Tumanggangan of Kota Pilihan, in the picturesque valley of Priangan Padang Panjang, laid the foundation of the Malay institutions as they continue up to this day, notwithstanding sharp conflicts between western innovations and the *hadat*, the ancient, unwritten law. The men of Agam, who frown at the naked legs of their brethren that hail from the XIII Kotas, can be recognized by their long inexpressibles, and Raissa notices

even one or two visitors in Acheh-trousers, very wide and loose from the hips down. They make her think of a fellow who lately has courted Roostam's company, at night for he avoids the light of day, gossip marking him as a deserter from the Dutch army in close touch with the malcontents that are opposing the regular troops in Korinchy, and sent in quest of able men for reinforcement of the marauding bands in the North. As to the women who throng the market at Lawang, the strangers among them are still more easily distinguishable, and those of the XIII Kotas, accustomed to arrange their hair in braids, heartily despise the *kondeh*, the more or less elaborate knot adopted by all the rest. The children, most of them with noses in sad need of wiping, wear their hair—boys (under the age of the head-covering) as well as girls—in most comical little plaits, five for the free-born and four for the common raff.

As noon approaches with the sun high up in the sky, Raissa can hardly master her agitation. Where she passes, the old women eye her maliciously and whisper of Roostam's girl possessing a *pusar*, a birthmark—they know it for certain—which will make him who marries her or even aspires to her hand, unlucky in all his dealings. Signs and marks on women, horses and pigeons, portending good luck or bad luck to husbands or owners, are an ever welcome theme for discussion.

"Look at her," says one of the hags, "look at her as she goes there, proud of her finery. I am sorry for Roostam!"

"And the old man, Roostam's *mammak*," says another, "who ought to know and yet encourages his passion for this ill-omened daughter of calamity!"

"What is the will of Haji Yusoof against the will of the young game-cock?"

"And why then does he carry his head so high, wise in forebodings and *pusars* and *krimans*, if he cannot stay the evil that comes to his own?"

"Hide thy envy as closely as the wrinkles of age hide thy good looks," some one chimes in, making all the bystanders laugh.

The gossips look up. It is the *dubalang*, one of the elders of the village, who continues, "It is coming to a fine pass indeed when the *orang banyak* (the plebs) give the *orang patoob* (the upper ten) a free ride on their tongues."

"Next thing," remarks a waggish youth, "they will find fault with all the good things the Company [Dutch East Indies Company] promises and does not do."

This speech meets with applause from the lad's friends among those who are gathering round, but the more advised look grave and the *dubalang* answers, "Thou, wait till thy turn of speaking arrives with thy tooth of discernment!"

Meanwhile at the cockpit, in a sheltered nook off the road, excitement began to run high. For the main battle, in which the game-cock of Roostam was to be pitted against the game-cock of Murei, the latter had failed to appear. The crowd waited with murmuring and growing discontent until at last a messenger from Murei arrived with his bird and the information that he withdrew his patronage. He had bethought himself of the Government prohibition

against cock-fighting and, suddenly mindful of his duty as a police officer, declined to countenance the game. Not to disappoint the many then and there assembled to witness the battle, he had nevertheless condescended to send his rooster, permitting them to let it take part as previously arranged, with only this proviso that it was to fight not under his name but under the name of his *wakil* (substitute), accompanied by quite a number of followers, most of them no free-born Malays, strangers to the country, adventurers of evil repute, a sorry pack.

At this stage of the proceedings, Haji Yusoof, suspecting foul play, left the battleground, not however before giving a piece of advice to Roostam, with a parting glance at Roostam's game-cock, which looked somewhat depressed as if it had been tampered with. The wings and the tail, to be sure, were not cut shorter than they ought to have been and the joints appeared all right, but the animal's general weariness suggested the idea of poison. Knowing the youngster's temper, Haji Yusoof did not speak of it but the thought had occurred to Roostam himself and did not dispose him to calm reasoning when Murei's *wakil*, after Haji Yusoof's departure, proposed with the utmost impudence that the handling of his fowl be left to the contending party.

Meeting, of course, the strongest opposition, this absurd proposal gave rise to a lengthy discussion and the bystanders, later on, in the light of subsequent events, freely expressed their opinion that such an intermezzo was the real purpose of the claim put forward because it would be helpful in giving the drug, administered to Roostam's bird, the necessary time to operate. It soon became evident to everyone that something was wrong with the Highland favorite. Roostam's friends declared openly that his fowl had been doctored, and tried to persuade him to retire from the main, while others goaded him to the extremity of his pride in their reluctance to lose the chance of a contest between the distasteful Murei and the young hero of the district, for the fight between the roosters was essentially a fight between their owners and the interests they represented.

Roostam was worked up to a dangerous pitch of excitement and this dark young fellow with his fierce eyes, supple and strong, quick and nimble in his movements, fully deserved the nickname that had been given to him, among men no less keen on proving his mettle in any combat offered to him, than a game-cock in condition among poultry.

But his bird, alas! The pride of all the countryside, was clearly *not* in condition and when, at length, after wearisome exceptions, Murei's *wakil* consented to the birds being weighed, preparatory to the great encounter, no coaxing or urging, no spurring prevailed upon the animal to show fight. Then it was also discovered that Murei's game-cock had been gaffed [fitted with sharp extensions to his natural spurs] in a fashion strictly prohibited by the regulations as highly unfair to the opposite party, which engendered a new dispute between the backers of Roostam and the backers of Murei, the latter pretending that Roostam

had lost because his cock refused battle, the former insisting upon the fact that Murei's cock would have been debarred anyway. The umpire, a man from Mator, decided in favor of Roostam, whereupon Murei's men withdrew, every one of them declining to stay for the games which were to follow the main, after having demanded in vain that the case be referred to another umpire, chosen on the spot from those present.

The withdrawal of the Murei crew caused no sorrow and, while Roostam nursed his cock without saying a word but white with rage under his brown skin, the owners of the other birds that were to compete, prepared them for the odd fights. Taking turns, each cocker, fowl in hand, went to his station to set his bird, sharply eyeing his adversary for no one is allowed to assist in the fight after it has been declared on, either to encourage or to discourage, save to avail himself of the privilege to relieve a rooster which has landed on its back.

The stirring sensations of the game made those who experienced them almost forget what had happened to the champion, defender of the country's honor against all comers. Closely pressing round, squatting after the manner of the land, they grew highly agitated over the gallant behavior of two cocks that proved very evenly matched and took a long time to decide between victory and defeat. The birds renewed the attack vigorously after every separation, viciously slashing round with their armed spurs, flying up with ruffled feathers, struggling to get behind each other for a final assault in the rear. Some of the most admiring ascribed their endurance to the fact of their having been breasted according to the highest requirements of the art; others, critically inclined, considered it an effect of bad heeling. Anyhow, the victory was hotly contested; no more odds were accepted; the timorous hedged their bets—everybody had money on, this way or that, in the majority of cases more than he could afford to lose and the gamblers hung in suspense.

Roostam himself, with a scowl on his face and his sick pet in his lap, was being carried away by the general emotion when, raising his eyes at the sound of nearing footsteps, he suddenly jumped to his feet. Murei, his enemy, stood before him, surrounded by the men who a few moments before were so disagreeably noisy as the backers of that despised trickster's Lowland cock. The boys set to watch the approaches to the pit, had left their posts to gratify their curiosity and thus it happened that Murei with his gang found the road open and safe. The crowd hardly took notice of him in the growing agitation of the fight. Murei was a policeman but what of that? Had he not pitted a cock himself, even for the main battle, the very same morning?

Roostam, however, felt that Murei meant business, that he intended either to profit by the law being transgressed so as to gain an advantage in their personal feud, or simply to avenge himself for the barring out of his bird, the victory having been adjudged to the Highlands, notwithstanding his treacherous ruse. But if Roostam's feathered champion refused battle, Roostam did not and growled in defiance:

“You in uniform? In the uniform of the Company? Don’t you know that the Company does not countenance cock-fighting?”

“I know it and that is why I am here: to stop this game and to arrest you, my fine game-cock.”

The incriminated sports thought first that he jested but he proved to be in dead earnest and, while some began stealing away, the others jeered him:

“Come! Come now! And how about that bird of yours, pitted by your *wakil*?”

“A liar who says so! Where is my bird? Where is my *wakil*?”

“Do you pretend to deny that the fellows you are this moment hiding behind, came here this morning, sent by you to pit your Padang crower against my Highland beauty?” asked Roostam with glittering eyes.

“These men are the men I sent this morning to report all about your cock-fight to *me* and they will be used as witnesses against *you*.”

“Lying witnesses and you a lying son of a Bencoolen [town in southwest Sumatra]...” Roostam advanced,

“Step out from behind your spies, you cur, and take me if you want me!”

An old man, seeing that all the trouble was only between Roostam and Murei, and desirous to compromise, took the young fellow by the sleeve of his jacket and whispered to him,

“We will settle with Murei. You skip!”

Roostam shook him off, “I will settle for myself. Let him come and take me!”

Murei still delayed executing his threat though he repeated that, being *in* the Company’s service, he had to stop the cock-fight.

A voice replied by quoting an old Malay adage, playing upon Murei’s name to signify that his reference to the Company’s orders was counted by those present as an empty tale, not worth any consideration.

And another spoke up, “Well, you have stopped the fight, what do you want more?”

“I want my prisoner, the principal of the fight.”

“Come and take me!” said Roostam again. “Come and take me if you dare!”

They all taunted Murei, who urged his men to arrest Roostam:

“Come, Murei, bird of the delectable voice, come and take him!” Nobody stirred.

“Skip!” repeated the old man.

“Well” continued Roostam, “if you won’t come to me, I’ll go to you, you scurvy dog, and spit in your face!”

Quick as lightning, Roostam, the Game-Cock, unsheathed his kris and leaped upon his enemy, spitting in the hateful face, while he sent the cold, blue steel right to the man’s heart. Then he turned round to Murei’s underlings, who had jumped back, beginning to cry *amok*, and he said, disappearing in the jungle, “Now take me!”

Raissa, waiting in the market-place of Lawang, is getting nervous under the strain of the cock-fight lasting so provokingly long. The sun has already sunk half way down the sky and still no tidings. Surely there must be something amiss and she remembers the Government injunctions against the sport, but then is not Murei, the police officer, one of the principals?

She has sought the shade of a booth kept by a dealer in woman's apparel, who stands haggling with an old dame, a sharp customer. He reminds her of days long past, when his stock in trade consisted of hand-woven goods, of silk and gold brocade, while now there is no money even to buy the cheap, poor, imitation fabrics from over the sea at prices he lays under the obligation to cut down to the ridiculous:

"My grandfather," he says, "amassed wealth in this trade, and my father was able to keep it, but I shall be bankrupt ere long, selling below cost, and yet to live I have to sell."

"So it is with all of us," groans the crone. "What we had, is far behind us and what we have, is less than nothing. I offer thee what I said for this piece of goods."

"Plague on the Company that takes and talks fine and never makes any return! If thou must have this piece of goods for thy granddaughter, who is going to be married as thou sayest, I cannot deny thee, but thou art working my ruin."

"I think that I might have the same stuff even for less, of certain dealers I know at Bukit Tinggi and Payacombo."

"I take the Prophet for a witness that thou laborest under a misapprehension! Though the white merchants of Padang have their agents everywhere in the land to undersell us, whose business it has been to supply this commodity from father to son, for innumerable generations, yet none of them is able to beat my prices. And let it not be rumored about that I agreed to the sum thou hast named, for everybody would come and solicit the same kindness and rob me of my goods! Indeed, it is robbery to exact such dealings! Nevertheless, most venerable mother, this being intended for thy granddaughter, who is to marry."

The philanthropist's eloquence is checked by the passing of a boy, who cries something which creates great consternation all over the market. The merchants leave their merchandise and gather in groups with their customers. In the confusion of voices Raissa distinguishes that the cock-fighters have been surprised and that Roostam, refusing to be taken prisoner, has killed Murei. She hurries to the house of Haji Yusoof. He, if any one, will know whether Roostam has made good his escape.

Haji Yusoof's house is closed. The curious, who rightly suppose with Raissa that Roostam's *mammak* will have the first and best information as to his course and plans after the scrape at the cockpit, are refused admission. Haji Yusoof, so an attendant tells them, cannot be disturbed in his mid-day nap; he has been sleeping since noon; the report, current in the market-place, has not yet reached him; Haji Yusoof knows nothing.

The curious understand. Roostam's *mammak*, to be sure, will see his nephew out of this trouble without openly showing his hand. And they approve. Roostam, the Game-Cock, doing ten times better than winning the main in the cockpit, has rid them of Murei, the odious, punishing him for going so far in his boastful pretensions as to set a vile Padang rooster against the game-fowl of the Highlands. Roostam rises high in their esteem and no one entertains for a moment the idea of his being apprehended for the deed. They agree that Haji Yusoof lies under an obligation to keep him concealed in the *rimbu gedang* (the great jungle as distinguished from the *rimbu ketek*, the little jungle), until the affair is forgotten or he can be spirited away.

Raissa, being on terms of intimacy with the women of Haji Yusoof's household, has slipped in and found Roostam's *mammak* wide awake, considering ways and means. She asks him, with a failing heart, what he intends to do in this most serious affair, and he answers, "Nothing but deliver Roostam to the *comandoor* [local civil servant] as soon as he is caught."

Raissa, greatly agitated, stands aghast at this answer of Roostam's *mammak*.

"But so far he is not caught," adds the *haji*.

"And will he be caught?"

Haji Yusoof looks her straight in the eyes and then, affecting the speech he has heard at Mecca, as he is accustomed to do on grave occasions, waives further questions with pious commonplace, "The secrets of the future are with the Most High, the Most Merciful and Compassionate."

Raissa's short interview with Haji Yusoof has made it clear to her that Roostam will not be handed over to the retribution of the rigorous and withal strangely complicated law of the white men. On that score she is satisfied. His safety, however, requires also that he be shielded from the vengeance of Murei's clique and if he has to leave for a while, she wants to see him before he goes and say good-bye. Therefore she resolves not to return to Mator for the time being, but to stay at Haji Yusoof's house where doubtless ere long his hiding-place will be known.

Keenly watchful on the steps that lead to the door of Haji Yusoof's dwelling, which is built on piles, according to the custom of the land; on the alert to intercept the expected messenger from the fugitive to his *mammak*, Raissa hears some one whispering her name. The voice comes from behind a rice-shed and there she perceives a boy, ten or eleven years old, who bids her follow the path from the village to the little market-place near the lake and wait at the pillar set by the triangulation service. There he will meet her again, by Roostam's command, and he urges her to set out at once, warning her not to ask or answer any questions concerning the Game-Cock's whereabouts. He himself has been charged to inform Haji Yusoof.

The boy is known to Raissa as one of the first disciples of a *faqir* recently arrived in the neighborhood to open a school and teach religion. Obeying him, she observes punctiliously the directions given her in the name of Roostam and reaches the triangulation pillar to the left of the road where it slopes down to the



beach in sharp descent. To avoid the risk of meeting curious acquaintances in the little market-place on the right, she sits down among the high ferns that cover the hilltop overlooking the sheet of water deep down, the lovely lake of Maninju.

It is now late in the afternoon but somehow or other the clouds that roll on from the South with the heat of day to veil its loveliness after the sun has smiled upon it and taken possession in passionate embrace, somehow or other the clouds are tardy in gathering on the hills. Silent and tranquil the lake lies as it lay when the ardent lover withdrew, its surface shining like a polished shield of bronze engraved in strange design, long strips and whirls of water-weeds framing the reflections of the blue sky and the steep, wooded banks. The islands of Moko Moko, near the mouth of the Batang Antokan, the eastern ridges that run out to Tanjong Padang, rest dreamily in the last splendor of glorious light and when at last the clouds do come, throwing a belt of white round waving green, invading the plain to the North, they leave a gleamy dimness trailing over the trees, over the houses of Baju and Anam Kota half hidden among the *klapah* plantations. And still they come, airy flakes before a curtain of mist. Where the lake has been, in the depth below, nothing but hazy waves of vapor, rising higher and higher, hiding even the fire-mountains far away, the giants that lift their heads to guard the broad valleys from sea to sea.

The view of Lake Maninju from this spot, from the triangulation pillar, is perhaps still more striking than from the little pavilion, built expressly for a belvedere on the top of one of the steep hills that close it in, but Raissa is not in a mood to enjoy the beauty of her surroundings. She waits and waits and does not notice how the people to the right of the road, between their buying and selling, point their fingers at her: the girl of Roostam, the girl of the Game-Cock who has killed Murei; they know the whole story.

A kindly old woman, who is selling salt, takes pity on her and invites her to the bamboo shed she occupies, saying that for somebody's sake she ought not to expose herself too much, "The greater the danger, the greater must be the caution and where they find the loving bird, there they will look for its mate."

Then the old woman begins to complain of the stress of the times, a general complaint. Is she not compelled, at her age, to gain her living by fetching salt from Bukit Tinggi and carry it all the way to the lake of Maninju? And still she has occasion to call herself lucky because she is able to keep body and soul together by saving others the trouble of journeying many miles to the Government salt-store for a week's provision or sometimes less.

Raissa turns but an inattentive ear to the mournful tale of the mumbling crone who, when darkness falls, gathers her baskets together and leaves for home. The little market-place lies deserted now. Beneath, the enshrouded lake; overhead, the glimmering of the stars. Fear and weariness oppress the lonely girl as the night creeps on. At last she hears a stealthy step approaching. It is the boy, Roostam's messenger to Haji Yusoo, who instructed her to bide further developments at the triangulation pillar.

Raissa arises and follows him in the gloom along a trail that leads them through wood and underbrush to a *teratak*, a clearing with an enclosure for corraling the cattle of the village near by. Two or three other boys are lying around a large fire, lighted to keep the tigers off; seemingly fast asleep, they take no notice of the newcomers. Her guide precedes her to a rudely constructed hut, the door and windows of which are wide open, and there, having entered, she finds four persons together, three men and a woman. In the glare of the fire outside, she recognizes one of the men as Roostam. Nobody greets her and she, too, says not a word as she squats down beside the woman, Roostam's mother, who sits muttering incantations. Roostam's mother, the sister of Haji Yusoof, prides herself no less than he does upon their descent from a fighting family, true to the *hadat*, a family very conspicuous in the Padri War, the last effort of the Malays of the Padang Highlands to regain their independence; and Roostam's mother possesses many a secret descended through centuries from eldest daughter to eldest daughter, many a charm of the highest value on trying occasions. She is a fierce sort of a woman. Fierceness runs in the blood of her clan and Roostam's spirit shows plainly the truth of the saying that, in breeding, it is the hen as much as the cock which determines the temper of the chick.

At arm's length before her on the ground stands a cage with a pigeon in it. Raissa knows it by the embroidered covering; it is Haji Yusoof's and she infers that the old man must be near, the *mammak* watching over his charge.

The incantations give way to prayer, several *ayats* of the Quran being recited in succession by an unfamiliar voice, while the others respond in a drone, "Amin! Amin!"

Raissa surmises the leader to be the *faqir*, the new religious teacher, which explains how one of the youths of the school just opened came to act as her guide. And when the second stranger, after prayer has ceased, speaks to Roostam of the joys of the holy war against the infidels, she recognizes him as the deserter from the Dutch army who, though donning Acheh-trousers, affects the Batavia [modern Jakarta on the island of Java] lilt over the ear and a pronounced Batavia accent, ae-ing his a's.

It becomes evident to Raissa that they are inciting Roostam, the Game-Cock, to battle. The deserter, who arrived from Korinchy, she remembers, is on his way to Acheh, propagating the good cause, and Roostam, being in trouble, seems perfectly willing to extricate himself by a course altogether in his line: war to the knife against the white men that send fellows like Murei to harass and annoy the real lords of the soil—plague on the cur and his employers!

And the *faqir* promises success: the Moslem are destined to rule in this life the nations of the earth as in the life to come they are destined for everlasting bliss.

And Roostam's mother dwells upon the traditions of the family, upon the exploits of its members at Bonjol, where the *mammak* of his *mammak* was killed on the side of the Padri under Tuanku Imam, valorous warriors who sacrificed their lives for their country and whose death has not been avenged.

Shall her son, with such blood in his veins, be afraid because the white men have guns, big guns, and repeating-rifles and dynamite bombs, fighting from afar? Why not lure them to the mountains and tackle them hand to hand, the unbelievers?

“The killers of the weak and unprotected,” continues the deserter, eyewitness of the horrors at Kampong Pulau Tengah in Korinchy. “Shall strong and able youths sit still and hush their voices and play girls’ games when such things are going on?”

Roostam’s eyes sparkle while they goad him, “I am not afraid of blood,” he says slowly.

“And blood is thirsting for blood,” says his mother.

“And the blood of the infidel opens the gates of Paradise to the faithful,” says the *faqir*.

Raissa lifts her head, trembling, wishing to speak in her turn, but Roostam’s mother sees the movement and shrieks in her face, “What art thou doing here, thou with the mark that brought bad luck to my son? Art thou not content with his bird, our bird, refusing to fight a Padang bird? Is it to deliver him now to Murei’s evil-eyed gang that thou hast come hither, thou daughter of ill-repute? Out with thee!”

She threatens to strike the girl, but Roostam jumps to his feet. “None of this!” he cries.

“If thou stayest or goest where I can go with thee, I will give thee something that undoes the spell of all marks and signs,” begs Raissa, pulling a ring from her finger.

Roostam looks at her and the deserter says tauntingly, “Another game-cock that shows the white feather!”

Roostam feels the sting and sits down again.

“Don’t gibe him,” entreats Raissa in despair. “It is my grandmother’s ring, a ring of virtue.”

“Can it confound the bloodhounds of the white men now on his track? Can it make him invisible?” asks the deserter, whose mysterious strength lies in the last named accomplishment. “If not, what is the good of his staying here?”

“It undoes all spells,” Raissa rejoins doggedly.

“Keep thy ring!” yells the old woman. “Has he not enough sorrow by virtue of thy mark? Go! Go!”

Roostam does not move and by this token Raissa knows that all is over. She arises and goes, but returns and addresses him once more,, “Thou wilt leave us and do dangerous things. I, the girl with the mark, shall wait for thee here, trusting in the power of this ring on my finger, and pray that, if unhappily the spell comes to nought and thou fallest, male blood-relations may be near to wash thy corpse, and female blood-relations to strew flowers on thy grave.”

Then she steps out into the night, while the *faqir* again falls to praying, “On the hearts of His followers that are slain in the holy war, the most Exalted sits extended as on His throne.”

“Amin! Amin!”

Raissa, full of anguish, has not gone far in the utter darkness which precedes dawn, when she is terrified by an apparition. Phantom-like, it stands upright near a projecting rock beside the road, shrouded in white, awe-inspiring, an image of the angel of death. She holds her breath in terror, but soon recognizes in that specter Roostam’s *mammak*, Haji Yusoof. Having left his house to pass the night in watching the trail which leads to the place where his nephew lies in hiding, he has donned for this occasion the white dress used by him and other fervent Muslims in praying, the dress come down to them from the “white time” so called, the time of the Padri, whose uprising was an outcome of the doings of the Wahhabites, the purifiers of the faith. It seems but proper that Haji Yusoof should have chosen those garments for his watch has been a continuous communion with the Invisible Great Watcher in the Night. At the approach of day, between the dawn of the elephants and the dawn of man, he has composed himself to the regulation early morning prayer with its necessary gestures. So it is that Raissa sees him standing, ghost-like, in her path. Drawing near, she hears him, raising his voice to curse the infidels, the strivers against the behests of the Most Gracious, whom he invokes, for Roostam’s sake, the true believer being nearest to God when he treads down God’s enemies. And, confusing the articles of Muslim faith with the traditions of Menangkabau, he prays on, imploring assistance and mercy for those who seek shelter with the Lord and refuge in the *hadat*, calling down destruction on the heads of the usurpers, who darken the luster of the purified through consecration, of the elect of earth and heaven, set apart for highest honor by anointment and the sprinkling of water, all the fragrance of all flowers not equaling the fragrance of King Adityawarnan....

From the holy Quran he has wandered to the holy inscriptions on the stones of the holy graves at Batu Beragoong and Pagar Ruyong where the old Hindu rulers of the land lie buried.

Raissa listens, glad to have a friend near her in the jungle, which is peopled at night with shetans, jinn and all kinds of evil sprites. It is almost an hour now, the space of time required for the cooking of three allowances of rice, since she has left Roostam in the company of his mother and his wicked counselors; and the dawn of man, the dawn proper, has already streaked the eastern sky with its delicate hues when Haji Yusoof notices her.

He makes a movement which gives her courage to address him, “Roostam wants to fight the Company,” she says.

“Young men should do what old men think.”

“But ...”

“Now leave me, for prayer is better than idle talk.”

Behind her, in a cattle-pen, Raissa hears the little bells of the oxen that are getting up to their work and, alone with her grief, she turns away and takes the path to Matoor, to her mother’s house.

# MALAYSIA

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## RAJA DONAN

**Tradition Bearer:** Mir Hassan

**Source:** Maxwell, W. E. "Raja Donan: A Malay Fairy Tale." *The Folk-Lore Journal* 6 (1888): 134–139.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Malay

**National Origin:** Malaysia

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The following Malay tale has the complexity and episodic nature of the **ordinary folktale**. The miracles surrounding the birth of Raja Donan, his early abandonment "Exposure in a Boat" (*Motif* S141), and prodigious feats in battle and magic are reminiscent of heroes cross-culturally. The Semang tribes, whose appearance the protagonist borrowed for his disguise, are a "Negrito" minority who lived in the mountains of peninsular Malaysia.

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Once upon a time, in the kingdom of Mandi Angin, there reigned a certain King Raja Besar, whose wife was the Princess Lindongan Bulan. He was blessed in every way that the gods bless mortals, except in one respect, which was that he had no son and heir. By constant prayers and the giving of alms, at length when the king had reigned nearly eight years, there was a prospect of Raja Besar's happiness being completed. All the astrologers were summoned to tell whether the child would be male or female, and what was the lot in store for it. The astrologers, having for a long time continued their incantations, at length perceived that the expected child would be a prince, and that he would be gifted with extraordinary qualities. But the

astrologers hated the king, and so they did not tell him the truth, but told him that his child would be a prince who was fated to be a curse to all who would come in contact with him.

Next day the king summoned an old astrologer who was both blind and deaf and infirm to tell the destinies of the child. The old man having pursued his divinations from sunset to sunrise, announced to the king that his son would be a highly gifted prince, and that under him the kingdom would attain an unheard-of prosperity. "This is altogether different," said the king, "from the prognostication of the former soothsayers."

"I am blind and deaf and of failing memory," said the old man, "but in all things that concern the prince your highness may rely on what I say."

At last, a terrible storm then raging, the princess gave birth to a son. The infant disappeared into the earth; then he was vomited out again, seated on a cushion, and with him a sword, a hen's egg, a swivel-gun, a flute, a piece of scented wood for burning, and some incense. The king, influenced by the opinion of the seven lying astrologers, directed that the child should at once be put into a rickety old boat and set adrift on the river. The princess wept on hearing what was to be the fate of her child, and directed her maids to put into the boat a basket full of clothes and another full of provisions for the child. This done, the boat was cast off amid the roaring of cannons which the king had ordered to be fired off for joy that evil had been averted from his kingdom.

The king's elder brother, Bandahara Tua, was living some distance away, at the mouth of the river, and, hearing the cannons, he said, "Surely a prince has been born, and the king has believed the lying astrologers and cast his son away." He prayed that God would send his newborn nephew to him, and, after waiting a day and a night on the bank of the river, at last the little boat was wafted up to his very steps.

The Bandahara went into the cabin to seek his nephew, and having found him he brought him on deck to take him to his house, but found that while he was below the boat had floated into mid-stream, and was being rapidly carried out to sea. Day and night for a year the boat went on, and at the end of that time the little castaway, now able to talk, gave himself the name of Raja Donan.

One day the Bandahara, at the request of his nephew, who said he felt a presentiment of approaching evil, climbed into the look-out place and carefully scanned the horizon, and at length sighted a great fleet of 99 ships approaching them, whose masts were like a grove of cotton trees. Raja Donan now prepared for the worst, and put on the magic garments which his mother had given him, and girded on the sword which was supernaturally produced at the time of his birth.

The fleet approached; it was that of Raja Chamar Lant, of Mundam Batu, who was on board the "Biduri," the largest of all. On sighting the little boat, Raja Chamar Lant ordered one of his galleys to be manned to see who was on

board the stranger. This huge boat, carrying 44 rowers, came alongside, and those on board it saw no one but a pretty child, who said that he came from the country of Mandi Angin, from the rice-fields where there are no embankments, from the waters where no fish are ever seen, a lonely place where the ape howls nightly, inhabited only by people who live on fern-shoots." The officers of the galley said that tribute must be paid to his master, or the little boat would be seized as a prize. Raja Donan said he did not refuse to pay, but he should first ask the port-fire of his cannon and the blade of his sword, and if they answered that he should pay there was an end of the matter. With this answer the officer returned to his master, who at once ordered his men to fire and blow the little craft to pieces.

For seven days and nights did the fleet keep up a terrible shower of ball from cannon and musket, and at the end of that time the order to cease firing was given. When the smoke cleared away, there stood the little boat, brighter than ever, and quite unharmed. Raja Chamar Lant was furious. He would show his men how to shoot, and so he fired at Raja Donan's boat. But he did not harm it. Raja Donan now fired his little brass swivel-gun which was thrown out of the earth when he was born, and with the one shot he sunk the whole 99 ships, leaving only the "Biduri" afloat. His trusty craft bore him alongside the survivor. With a terrible shout he boarded it. For three days and nights, single-handed, he kept up the battle with the warriors on board, and finally killed them all, the last being Raja Chamar Lant.

The prince found in the cabin of the "Biduri" the younger sister of Raja Chamar Lant, who prayed him that he would kill her. He, however, soothed her with an account of his woes, and she agreed to go into his boat and remain with him. Raja Donan brought his prahu [Malayan sailboat with a triangular sail and single outrigger] alongside with a wave of his turban, and, having got the princess into it, he then stepped in and sank the "Biduri."

Che Amborg, as the princess was called, told Raja Donan that the reason she had left her beautiful home was that Petukal, a powerful raja, had asked for her in marriage, but her brother had taken her to sea to save her from Petukal, who was even now pursuing them. Raja Donan now prayed for a breeze that would bring them up to Petukal, a breeze "so strong as to be visible in a form resembling human shape, which would lay prostrate the cattle feeding in the fields, and sweep away the young cocoa nuts growing in the courtyard."

For seven days and seven nights they ran before the wind that sprang up, and on the eighth day, about noon, the fleet of Petukal, 99 ships in all, was seen right ahead. Raja Petukal, observing the new comer, sent off his eighty-oared galley to make inquiries. Raja Donan answered them as he had the officers of Raja Chamar Lant, and met their demand for tribute in the same way. In the same way Raja Petukal opened fire, and continued it for seven days and nights, at the end of which time he ordered the firing to cease. So dense was the smoke that it took three days to clear away, and then the little home of Raja Donan

was seen to be quite untouched. Raja Petukal, having, like Raja Chamar Lant, fired some of his guns with his own hand, had no better luck. Then Raja Donan with a single shot from his gun sent the whole fleet, excepting the raja's vessel, to the bottom. Raja Donan boarded this, and slew all his enemies except their chief: with him he had a dreadful struggle. Once Raja Donan's sword shivered in his hand when he made a thrust at Raja Petukal, and before he could recover himself his opponent threw him overboard. His prayer to be put back again on deck was answered; and in the next struggle Raja Petukal was hurled into the sea, where he perished.

Che Muda, a sister of Raja Petukal, was found in the cabin, and went with Raja Donan aboard his boat. Guided by the princesses, he sought the shores of the country in which resided the beautiful Princess Ganda Iran. He played his magic flute, and, though he was many miles away, his prayer was heard that the Princess Ganda Iran should be able to hear his music.

She was enraptured, and dispatched a kite to bear to the youth a cap made of beautiful flowers. The kite carried his message, and placed the cap in the hands of Rajah Donan, who in return sent three rings, one as a sign of betrothal, one to bind the promise, and one as a sign that whatever was undertaken would be successfully carried out, and a shawl as a sign of intimacy. When the kite had safely delivered the prince's message, the beautiful princess again dispatched the bird with all kinds of sweetmeats, and in return the prince sent some other presents, telling the kite that they were setting out at once for the princess's palace.

By the prayer of Raja Donan all the troops of Raja Chamar Lant and Raja Petukal were restored to life, and his little bolt was turned into a magnificent palace. He called all the restored warriors together, and, putting chiefs over them, he set out on his journey on foot, taking with him his sword and his magic flute. When on his way, a certain princess, named Linggam Chahya, who resided in heaven, but came down often to the earth to amuse herself, met and fell in love with him, and sent her favorite bird to ask him to come to see her. He pleaded another appointment, but promised to come within three years, three months, and ten days.

Disguised as a Semang, or wild hill-man, with all the skin diseases and sores which disfigure those people, he gained admittance to the Princess Ganda Iran. The raja, her father, forced him to play his magic flute, which when the princess heard she fell down, and was thought to be dead. Preparations were made for her funeral, and the Semang was promised her hand in marriage, and the sovereignty of the country if he restored her to life. He played his magic flute, and when he saw her coming back to life disappeared from the palace.

The Semang could not be found, but in their search the officers of the raja met a pretty child by the roadside. They brought him to the palace, where the princess took a great fancy to him. The child suddenly changed one day into Raja Donan, a handsome young man, and the princess, having heard who he was, was exceedingly happy.



Raja Piakas, who had been affianced to the princess, being exceedingly jealous, on losing her, went to his home and begged his sister that she would help him to take revenge on the country of the Princess Ganda Iran. Now the sister of Raja Piakas had power over all dragons, crocodiles, and all beasts of the earth. These she summoned from all parts of the world, and ordered them to invade the country of the princess who had injured her brother. The reptiles and animals advanced, doing immense mischief; but at the prayer of Raja Donan the sea rushed over the whole land and drowned all these creatures.

Raja Piakas then fitted out an expedition against his former friends, but he was slain in single combat by Raja Donan. The magnanimous conqueror, however, brought him back to life, and married him to the princess Che Amborg.

Raja Donan now set off with his uncle and a large fleet to find his old home in Mandi Angin. After a long voyage they arrived at the well known river, but found everything desolate, the palace gone, the cottages burnt. An old man told them that the king had been dethroned years ago by seven lying astrologers, who were living like rajas far up the river.

Raja Donan found his parents occupying a poor but in a wood; but, having slain the lying astrologers, he put his parents on the throne again, and made Mandi Angin as prosperous and peaceful as it had ever been. Having done this, Raja Donan sailed away to his kingdom, where he ever after dwelt in peace and happiness. He was absent for a short time, however, when he kept his word and visited the Princess Linggan Chahya in the heavens.

# PHILIPPINES

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## ADVENTURES OF THE TUGLAY

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Benedict, Laura Watson. "Bagobo Myths." *The Journal of American Folklore* 26 (1913): 27-35.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Mindanao

**National Origin:** Philippines

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Tuglay ("old man") and Tuglibung ("old woman") were the Mona, the beings who lived on the earth before time began. The Mona were very poor and possessed only the rudiments of technology. The names Tuglay and Tuglibung do not refer to specific mythic personages, rather they are generic terms for all the "old people" who are characters in Bagobo myth. The Buso are evil entities, in both human and animal form. The Bagobo universe is infested with them. The Malaki are a large group of semidivine beings. Many, but by no means all, are associated with features and forces of nature. Salamia'wan and Panguli'li are high gods of heaven. The former resides in the second heaven, and the latter in, the ninth. Eight, a sacred number that appears repeatedly, is sacred and therefore found throughout indigenous Bagobo ceremony, myth, and theology.

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**I**t was eight [number of ritual importance to the Moros] million (*kati*) years ago, in the days of the Mona, that the following events took place. The Tuglay lived in a fine house the walls of which were all mirrored glass, and the roof was hung with brass chains. One day he went out into the woods to snare jungle-fowl, and he slept in the woods all night. The next day, when he

turned to go home, he found himself puzzled as to which trail to take. He tried one path after another, but none seemed to lead to his house. At last he said to himself, "I have lost my way: I shall never be able to get home."

Then he walked on at random until he came to a vast field of rice, where great numbers of men were cutting the *palay*. But the rice-field belonged to Buso, and the harvesters were all buso-men. When they saw Tuglay at the edge of their field, they were glad, and said to one another, "There's a man! We will carry him home."

Then the *buso* caught Tuglay, and hastened home with him. Now, the great Buso's mansion stretched across the tops of eight million mountains, and very many smaller houses were on the sides of the mountains, all around the great Buso's house; for this was the city of the *buso* where they had taken Tuglay. As he was carried through the groves of coconut-palms on Buso's place, all the Coconuts called out, "Tuglay, Tuglay, in a little while the Buso will eat you!"

Into the presence of the great chief of all the *buso*, they dragged Tuglay. The Datto Buso was fearful to look at. From his head grew one great horn of pure ivory, and flames of fire were blazing from the horn. The Datto Buso questioned the man.

"First of all, I will ask you where you come from, Tuglay."

"I am come from my house in T'oluk Waig," replied the man.

And the great Buso shouted, "I will cut off your head with my sharp *kris* [Malay sword]!"

"But if I choose, I can kill you with your own sword," boldly answered Tuglay.

Then he lay down, and let the Buso try to cut his neck. The Buso swung his sharp sword; but the steel would not cut Tuglay's neck. The Buso did not know that no knife could wound the neck of Tuglay, unless fire were laid upon his throat at the same time. This was eight million years ago that the Buso tried to cut off the head of Tuglay.

Then another day the Tuglay spoke to all the *buso*, "It is now my turn: let me try whether I can cut your necks."

After this speech, Tuglay stood up and took from his mouth the chewed betel-nut that is called *isse*, and made a motion as if he would rub the *isse* on the great Buso's throat. When the Buso saw the *isse*, he thought it was a sharp knife, and he was frightened. All the lesser *buso* began to weep, fearing that their chief would be killed; for the *isse* appeared to all of them as a keen-bladed knife. The tears of all the *buso* ran down like blood; they wept streams and streams of tears that all flowed together, forming a deep lake, red in color.

Then Tuglay rubbed the chewed betel on the great Buso's throat. One pass only he made with the *isse*, and the Buso's head was severed from his body. Both head and body of the mighty Buso rolled down into the great lake of tears, and were devoured by the crocodiles.

Now, the Tuglay was dressed like a poor man, in dark garments. But as soon as he had slain the Buso, he struck a blow at his own legs, and the bark trousers fell off. Then he stamped on the ground, and struck his body, and immediately his jacket and kerchief of bark fell off from him. There he stood, no longer the poor Tuglay, but a Malaki T'oluk Waig, with a gleaming *kampilan* [broad sword] in his hand.

Then he was ready to fight all the other *buso*. First he held the *kampilan* in his left hand, and eight million *buso* fell down dead. Then he held the *kampilan* in his right hand, and eight million more *buso* fell down dead. After that, the Malaki went over to the house of Buso's daughter, who had but one eye, and that in the middle of her forehead. She shrieked with fear when she saw the Malaki coming; and he struck her with his *kampilan*, so that she too, the woman-buso, fell down dead.

After these exploits, the Malaki T'oluk Waig went on his way. He climbed over the mountains of benati, whose trees men go far to seek, and then he reached the mountains of barayung and balati wood. From these peaks, exultant over his foes, he gave a good war-cry that re-echoed through the mountains, and went up to the ears of the gods. Panguli'li and Salamia'wan heard it from their home in the Shrine of the Sky (*Tambara ka Langit*), and they said, "Who chants the song of war (*ig-sungal*)? Without doubt, it is the Malak T'oluk Waig, for none of all the other *malaki* could shout just like that."

His duty performed, the Malaki left the ranges of balati and barayung, walked down toward the sea, and wandered along the coast until he neared a great gathering of people who had met for barter. It was market-day, and all sorts of things were brought for trade. Then the Malaki T'oluk Waig struck his legs and his chest, before the people caught sight of him; and immediately he was clothed in his old bark trousers and jacket and kerchief, just like a poor man. Then he approached the crowd, and saw the people sitting on the ground in little groups, talking, and offering their things for sale.

The Malaki Lindig Ramut ka Langit and all the other *malaki* from the surrounding country were there. They called out to him, "Where are you going?"

The Tuglay told them that he had got lost, and had been traveling a long distance. As he spoke, he noticed, sitting among a group of young men, the beautiful woman called Moglung.

She motioned to him, and said, "Come, sit down beside me."

And the Tuglay sat down on the ground, near the Moglung. Then the woman gave presents of textiles to the Malaki Lindig Ramut ka Langit and the other *malaki* in her crowd. But to the Tuglay she gave betel-nut that she had prepared for him.

After that, the Moglung said to all the *malaki*, "This time I am going to leave you, because I want to go home."

And off went the Moglung with the Tuglay, riding on the wind.

After many days, the Moglung and the Tuglay rested on the mountains of barayung, and, later, on the mountains of balakuna trees. From these heights,

they looked out over a vast stretch of open country, where the deep, wavy meadow-grass glistened like gold; and pastured there were herds of cows and carabao and many horses. And beyond rose another range of mountains, on the highest of which stood the Moglung's house. To reach it they had to cross whole forests of coconut and betel-nut trees that covered eight million mountains. Around the house were all kinds of useful plants and trees. When they walked under the floor of the house [typical Malay houses are pile-dwellings, the floor being raised several feet above the ground], the Moglung said, "My grandmother is looking at me because I have found another grandchild for her."

Then the grandmother (Tuglibung) called to them, saying, "Come up, come up, my grandchildren!"

As soon as they entered the house, the Tuglay sat down in a corner of the kitchen, until the grandmother offered him a better place, saying, "Do not stay in the kitchen. Come and sleep on my bed."

The Tuglay rested eight nights in the grandmother's bed. At the end of the eight nights the Moglung said to him, "Please take this betel-nut that I have prepared for you."

At first Tuglay did not want to take it; but the next day, when the Moglung again offered the betel, he accepted it from her and began to chew. After that, the Tuglay took off his trousers of bark and his jacket of bark, and became a Malaki T'oluk Waig. But the Moglung wondered where the Tuglay had gone, and she cried to her grandmother, "Where is the Tuglay?"

But the Malaki stood there, and answered her, "I am the Tuglay." At first the Moglung was grieved, because the Malaki seemed such a grand man, and she wanted Tuglay back.

But before long the Malaki said to her, "I want you to marry me."

So they were married. Then the Moglung opened her gold box, and took out a fine pair of trousers and a man's jacket, and gave them to the Malaki as a wedding gift.

When they had been living together for a while, there came a day when the Malaki wanted to go and visit a man who was a great worker in brass, the Malaki Tuangun; and the Moglung gave him directions for the journey, saying, "You will come to a place where a hundred roads meet. Take the road that is marked with the prints of many horses and carabao. Do not stop at the place of the cross-roads, for if you stop, the Bia ["Lady" used as an honorific term] who makes men giddy will hurt you."

Then the Malaki went away, and reached the place where a hundred roads crossed, as Moglung had said. But he stopped there to rest and chew betel-nut. Soon he began to feel queer and dizzy, and he fell asleep, not knowing anything. When he woke up, he wandered along up the mountain until he reached a house at the border of a big meadow, and thought he would stop and ask his way. From under the house he called up, "Which is the road to the Malaki Tuangun?"

It was the Bia's voice that answered, "First come up here, and then I'll tell you the road."

So the Malaki jumped up on the steps and went in. But when he was inside of her house, the Bia confessed that she did not know the way to the Malaki Tuangun's house.

"I am the woman," she said, "who made you dizzy, because I wanted to have you for my own."

"Oh! That's the game," said the Malaki. "But the Moglung is my wife, and she is the best woman in the world."

"Never mind that," smiled the Bia. "Just let me comb your hair."

Then the Bia gave him some betel-nut, and combed his hair until he grew sleepy. But as he was dropping off, he remembered a certain promise he had made his wife, and he said to the Bia, "If the Moglung comes and finds me here, you be sure to waken me."

After eight days had passed from the time her husband left home, the Moglung started out to find him, for he had said, "Eight days from now I will return."

By and by the Moglung came to the Bia's house, and found the Malaki there fast asleep; but the Bia did not waken him. Then the Moglung took from the Malaki's toes his toe-rings, and went away, leaving a message with the Bia:

"Tell the Malaki that I am going back home to find some other, *malaki*: tell him that I'll have no more to do with him."

But the Moglung did not go to her own home; she at once started for her brother's house that was up in the sky-country.

Presently the Malaki woke up, and when he looked at his toes, he found that his brass toe rings were gone.

"The Moglung has been here!" he cried in a frenzy. "Why didn't you waken me, as I told you?" Then he seized his sharp-bladed *kampilan*, and slew the Bia. Maddened by grief and rage, he dashed to the door and made one leap to the ground, screaming, "All the people in the world shall fall by my sword!"

On his war-shield he rode, and flew with the wind until he came to the horizon. Here lived the Malaki Lindig Ramut ka Langit. And when the two *malaki* met, they began to fight; and the seven brothers of the Malaki Lindig that live at the edge of the sky, likewise came out to fight. But when the battle had gone on but a little time, all the eight *malaki* of the horizon fell down dead. Then the angry Malaki who had slain the Bia and the eight young men went looking for more people to kill; and when he had shed the blood of many, he became a *buso* with only one eye in his forehead, for the *buso* with one eye are the worst *buso* of all. Everybody that he met he slew.

After some time, he reached the house of the great priest called "Pandita," and the Pandita checked him, saying, "Stop a minute, and let me ask you first what has happened to make you like this."

Then the Buso-man replied sadly, “I used to have a wife named Moglung, who was the best of all the *bia*; but when I went looking for the Malaki Tuan-gun, that other Bia made me dizzy, and gave me betel, and combed my hair. Then she was my wife for a little while. But I have killed her, and become a *buso*, and I want to kill all the people in the world.”

“You had better lie down on my mat here, and go to sleep,” advised the Pandita. While the Buso slept, the Pandita rubbed his joints with betel-nut; and when he woke up, he was a *malaki* again.

Then the Pandita talked to him, and said, “Only a few days ago, the Moglung passed here on her way to her brother’s home in heaven. She went by a bad road, for she would have to mount the steep rock-terraces. If you follow, you will come first to the Terraces of the Wind (Tarasu’ban ka Kara’mag’), then you reach the Terraces of Eight-fold Darkness (Walu Lapit Dukilum), and then the Terraces of the Rain (Tarasuban k’Udan).

Eagerly the Malaki set out on his journey, with his *kabir* [woven carrying bag] on his back, and his betel-nut and buyo-leaf in the *kabir*. He had not traveled far, before he came to a steep ascent of rock-terraces, the Terraces of the Wind, that had eight million steps. The Malaki knew not how to climb up the rocky structure that rose sheer before him, and so he sat down at the foot of the ascent, and took his *kabir* off his back to get out some betel-nut. After he had begun to chew his betel, he began to think, and he pondered for eight days how he could accomplish his hard journey. On the ninth day he began to jump up the steps of the terraces, one by one. On each step he chewed betel, and then jumped again; and at the close of the ninth day he had reached the top of the eight million steps, and was off, riding on his shield.

Next he reached the sharp-edged rocks called the “Terraces of Needles” (Tarasuban ka Simat), that had also eight million steps. Again he considered for eight days how he could mount them. Then on the ninth day he sprang from terrace to terrace, as before, chewing betel-nut on each terrace, and left the Tarasuban ka Simat, riding on his shield.

Then he arrived at the Terraces of Sheet-Lightning (Tarasuban ka’Dilam-dilam); and he took his *kabir* off his back, and prepared a betel-nut, chewed it, and meditated for eight days. On the ninth day he jumped from step to step of the eight million terraces, and went riding off on his war-shield. When he reached the Terraces of Forked-Lightning (Tarasuban ka Kirum), he surmounted them on the ninth day, like the others.

But now he came to a series of *cuestas* [rock ledges] named “Dulama Bolo Kampilan,” because one side of each was an abrupt cliff with the sharp edge of a *kampilan*; and the other side sloped gradually downward, like a blunt-working bolo. How to cross these rocks, of which there were eight million, the Malaki did not know; so he stopped and took off his *kabir*, cut up his betel-nut, and thought for eight days. Then on the ninth day he began to leap over the rocks,

and he kept on leaping for eight days, each day jumping over one million of the *cuestas*. On the sixteenth day he was off, riding on his shield.

Then he reached the Terraces of the Thunder (Tarasuban ka Kilat), which he mounted, springing from one terrace to the next, as before, after he had meditated for eight days. Leaving these behind him on the ninth day, he traveled on to the Mountains of Bamboo (Pabungan Kawayanan), covered with bamboo whose leaves were all sharp steel. These mountains he could cross without the eight days' thought, because their sides sloped gently. From the uplands he could see a broad sweep of meadow beyond, where the grass glistened like gold. And when he had descended, and walked across the meadow, he had to pass through eight million groves of coconut trees, where the fruit grew at the height of a man's waist, and every coconut had the shape of a bell (*korung-korung*). Then he reached a forest of betel-nut, where again the nuts could be plucked without the trouble of climbing, for the clusters grew at the height of a man's waist. Beyond, came the meadows with white grass, and plants whose leaves were all of the rare old embroidered cloth called *tambayang*. He then found himself at the foot-hills of a range of eight million mountains, rising from the heart of the meadows, and, when he had climbed to their summit, he stood before a fine big house.

From the ground he called out, "If anybody lives in this house, let him come look at me, for I want to find the way to the Shrine in the Sky, or to the Little Heaven, where my Moglung lives."

But nobody answered.

Then the Malaki sprang up the bamboo ladder and looked in at the door, but he saw no one in the house. He was weary, after his journey, and sat down to rest in a chair made of gold that stood there. Soon there came to his ears the sound of men's voices, calling out, "There is the Malaki T'oluk Waig in the house."

The Malaki looked around the room, but there was no man there, only a little baby swinging in its cradle. Outside the house were many *malaki* from the great town of Lunsud, and they came rushing in the door, each holding a keen blade without handle (*sobung*). They all surrounded the Malaki in the gold chair, ready to fight him. But the Malaki gave them all some betel-nut from his *kabir*, and made the men friendly toward him. Then all pressed around the Malaki to look at his *kabir*, which shone like gold. They had never before seen a man's bag like this one. "It is the *kabir* of the Malaki T'oluk Waig," they said. The Malaki slept that night with the other *malaki* in the house.

When morning came, the day was dark, like night, for the sun did not shine. Then the Malaki took his *kampilan* and stuck it into his belt, and sat down on his shield. There was no light on the next day, nor on the next. For eight days the pitchy darkness lasted; but on the ninth day it lifted. Quick from its cradle jumped the baby, now grown as tall as the bariri-plant; that is, almost knee-high.



“Cowards, all of you!” cried the child to the Malaki Lunsud. “You are no *malaki* at all, since you cannot fight the Malaki T’oluk Waig.” Then, turning to the Malaki T’oluk Waig, the little fellow said, “Please teach me how to hold the spear.”

When the Malaki had taught the boy how to make the strokes, the two began to fight; for the boy, who was called the Pangalinan, was eager to use his spear against the Malaki. But the Malaki had magical power (*matulu*), so that when the Pangalinan attacked him with sword or spear, the blades of his weapons dissolved into water. For eight million days the futile battle went on. At last the Pangalinan gave it up, complaining to the Malaki T’oluk Waig, “How can I keep on fighting you, when every time I hit you my knives turn to water?”

Disheartened, the Pangalinan threw away his spear and his sword. But the Malaki would not hurt the Pangalinan when they were fighting; and as soon as the boy had flung his weapons outside the house, the Malaki put his arm around him and drew him close. After that, the two were friends.

One day the Pangalinan thought he would look inside the big gold box that stood in the house. It was his mother’s box. The boy went and raised the lid, but as soon as the cover was lifted, his mother came out from the box.

After this had happened, the Pangalinan got ready to go and find the Moglung whom the Malaki had been seeking. The boy knew where she lived, for he was the Moglung’s little brother. He took the bamboo ladder that formed the steps to the house, and placed it so that it would reach the Shrine in the Sky, whither the Moglung had gone. Up the bamboo rounds he climbed, until he reached the sky and found his sister. He ran to her crying, “Quick! Come with me! The great Malaki T’oluk Waig is down there.”

Then the Moglung came down from heaven with her little brother to their house where the Malaki was waiting for her. The Moglung and the Malaki were very happy to meet again, and they slept together that night.

Next day the Moglung had a talk with the Malaki, and said, “Now I want to live with you; but you remember that other woman, Maguay Bulol, that you used to sleep with. You will want her too, and you had better send for her.”

So the Malaki summoned Maguay Bulol, and in a few minutes Maguay Bulol was there. Then the Malaki had two wives, and they all lived in the same house forever.

## **STORY OF LUMABAT AND WARI**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Benedict, Laura Watson. “Bagobo Myths.” *The Journal of American Folklore* 26 (1913): 21–23.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Mindinao

**National Origin:** Philippines

The following narrative is another **myth** concerning the earliest times. The tale chronicles the creation of physical features and animal species of the world, and the creation of a god from the son of the “Old Man” and the “Old Woman” (see “Adventures of the Tuglay,” page 388, for background on Tuglay and Tuglibung). The myth also serves moral goals in noting Bagobo disapproval of incest.

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**T**uglay and Tuglibung had many children. One of them was called Lumabat. There came a time when Lumabat quarreled with his sister and was very angry with her. He said, “I will go to the sky, and never come back again.”

So Lumabat started for the sky-country, and many of his brothers and sisters went with him. A part of their journey lay over the sea, and when they had passed the sea, a rock spoke to them and said, “Where are you going?”

In the beginning, all the rocks and plants and the animals could talk with the people.

Then one boy answered the rock, “We are going to the sky-country.” As soon as he had spoken, the boy turned into a rock. But, his brothers and sisters went on, leaving the rock behind.

Presently a tree said, “Where are you going?”

“We are going to the sky,” replied one of the girls.

Immediately the girl became a tree. Thus, all the way along the journey, if any one answered, he became a tree, or stone, or rock, according to the nature of the object that put the question.

By and by the remainder of the party reached the border of the sky. They had gone to the very end of the earth, as far as the horizon. But here they had to stop, because the horizon kept moving up and down (*supa-supu*). The sky and the earth would part, and then close together again, just like the jaws of an animal in eating. This movement of the horizon began as soon as the people reached there.

There were many young men and women, and they all tried to jump through the place where the sky and the earth parted. But the edges of the horizon are very sharp, like a *kampilan* [sword], and they came together with a snap whenever anybody tried to jump through; and they cut him into two pieces. Then the parts of his body became stones, or grains of sand. One after another of the party tried to jump through, for nobody knew the fate of the one who went before him.

Last of all, Lumabat jumped quick, quicker than the rest; and before the sharp edges snapped shut, he was safe in heaven. As he walked along, he saw many wonderful things. He saw many *kampilan*s standing alone, and fighting, and that without any man to hold them. Lumabat passed on by them all. Then

he came to the town where the bad dead live. The town is called “Kilut” [City of the Dead]. There, in the flames, he saw many spirits with heavy sins on them. The spirits with little sins were not in the flames; but they lay, their bodies covered with sores, in an acid that cuts like the juice of a lemon. Lumabat went on, past them all.

Finally he reached the house of Diwata, and went up into the house. There he saw many *diwata*, and they were chewing betel-nut [nut of the areca palm]. And one *diwata* spit from his mouth the *isse* [the cud, the solid part of the betel-nut that remains after the juice has been extracted] that he had finished chewing. When Lumabat saw the *isse* coming from the mouth of the god, it looked to him like a sharp knife. Then Diwata laid hold of Lumabat, and Lumabat thought the god held a sharp knife in his hand. But it was no knife: it was just the *isse*. And Diwata rubbed the *isse* on Lumabat’s belly, and with one downward stroke he opened the belly, and took out Lumabat’s intestines (*betuka*).

Then Lumabat himself became a god. He was not hungry any more, for now his intestines were gone. Yet if he wanted to eat, he had only to say, “Food, come now!” and at once all the fish were there, ready to be caught. In the sky-country, fish do not have to be caught. And Lumabat became the greatest of all the *diwata*.

Now, when Lumabat left home with his brothers and sisters, one sister and three brothers remained behind. The brother named Wari felt sad because Lumabat had gone away. At last he decided to follow him. He crossed the sea, and reached the border of the sky, which immediately began to make the opening and shutting motions. But Wari was agile, like his brother Lumabat; and he jumped quick, just like Lumabat, and got safe into heaven. Following the same path that his brother had taken, he reached the same house. And again Diwata took the *isse*, and attempted to open Wari’s belly; but Wari protested, for he did not like to have his intestines pulled out. Therefore the god was angry at Wari.

Yet Wari staid on in the house for three days. Then he went out on the *atad* that joined the front and back part of the gods’ house, whence he could look down on the earth. He saw his home town, and it made him happy to look at his fields of sugarcane and bananas, his groves of betel and coconuts. There were his bananas ripe, and all his fruits ready to be plucked. Wari gazed, and then he wanted to get back to earth again, and he began to cry; for he did not like to stay in heaven and have his intestines taken out, and he was homesick for his own town.

Now, the god was angry at Wari because he would not let him open his belly. And the god told Wari to go home, and take his dogs with him. First the god fixed some food for Wari to eat on his journey. Then he took meadow-grass (*karan*), and tied the long blades together, making a line long enough to reach down to earth. He tied Wari and the dogs to one end of the line; but before he lowered the rope, he said to Wari, “Do not eat while you are up in the air, for if you eat, it will set your dogs to quarreling. If I hear the sound of dogs fighting, I shall let go the rope.”

But while Wari hung in the air, he got very hungry, and, although he had been let down only about a third of the distance from heaven to earth, he took some of his food and ate it. Immediately the dogs began to fight. Then Diwata in the sky heard the noise, and he dropped the rope of meadow-grass. Then Wari fell down, down; but he did not strike the ground, for he was caught in the branches of the tree called *lanipo*. It was a tall tree, and Wari could not get down. He began to utter cries; and all night he kept crying, "Aro-o-o-o-i!" Then he turned into a kulago-bird? At night, when you hear the call of the kulago-bird, you know that it is the voice of Wari.

The kulago-bird has various sorts of feathers, feathers of all kinds of birds and chickens; it has the hair of all animals and the hair of man. This bird lives in very high trees at night, and you cannot see it. You cannot catch it. Yet the old men know a story about a kulago-bird once having been caught while it was building its nest. But this was after there came to be many people on the earth.

The three dogs went right along back to Wari's house. They found Wari's sister and two brothers at home, and staid there with them. After a while, the woman and her two brothers had many children.

"In the beginning," say the old men, "brother and sister would marry each other, just like pigs. This was a very bad custom."

## **THE STORY OF BANTUGAN**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Porter, Ralph S. "The Story of Bantugan," *Journal of American Folklore* 15 (1902): 143–161.

**Date:** 1900

**Original Source:** Philippines (Mindinao)

**National Origin:** Philippines

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Mindanao is the second largest and easternmost of the more than 7,000 Philippine Islands. The island maintained a strong Muslim presence in the area from around the fourteenth century, the date of the founding of the Sultanate of Sulu. The **legend** below recounts the exploits of the Moro (Muslim) hero Bantugan. Present within the narrative, however, are elements of indigenous religion that predate Filipino contact with either Islam or Christianity. Thus, characters are able to become invisible, bladed weapons are magical, and spirits animate the environment. The following elements of Moro culture are useful for an understanding of the tale. Mbama is a package of bongo nut, bulla leaf, lime, and tobacco, considered a delicious combination for a chew by the Moros. If a Moro woman presents a roll of this to a man, it signifies that she is willing to

be courted by him. The Tiruray tribe is regarded as the most primitive culture of Mindanao. They live up in the mountains and sometimes in trees. The concept of “juramentado” refers to a Moro who makes a vow before the priest to die taking the blood of a Christian, and believes that in so doing he will go at once to heaven. So he starts out with his sword and attacks every Christian he can find until he is himself killed. The kinship ties among the various characters of this legend are complex, as a guide for the reader, collector Ralph S. Porter offers this genealogy. “Bantugan and his relatives were: Palamata Bantugan, son of Tinumanan sa Lugun Minuluca Dalendeg (brother of the earthquake and thunder). The brothers of Bantugan were: 1, Mapalala Macog; 2, Madali Macabancas; 3, Dalumimbang Dalanda; 4, Damadag la Lupa; 5, Maladia Langig; 6, Marandang Datto Sulug; 7, Malinday Asabarat; 8, Mudsay sa Subu Subu; 9, Pasandalan na Murud; 10, Bendera Mudaya; 11, Pamanay Macalayan; 12, Pandi Macalele. The sisters of Bantugan were: 1, Alcat Ulaunan; 2, Mandanda Uray; 3, Dalinding u Subangan. The sons of Bantugan were: 1, Balatama Lumana; Pandumagan Dayuran; 2, Alungan Pidsiana Lumalang sa Dalisay; 3, Malinday Abunbara Lumanti Dowa Dowa; 4, Tankula Bulantakan Bulu Bulu sa Lagat; 5, Tagatag sa Laya-gum sa Pigculat; 6, Lumbay sa Pegcaualau Daliday Malindu; 7, Lumbay Magapindu” (Porter 143).

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Once upon a time there came a terrific hurricane which carried the house of the sister of Bantugan from the village of Bombalan to the seacoast.

While there it was seen by a Spanish general who was lying off the coast in his warship. The Spanish general’s name was Mindalunu sa Tunu-Miducau sa da Uata.

The general put the house with the sister of Bantugan on his warship and carried her away to his town of Sugurungan a Lagat.

The king of this town was Dumakulay Amalana Dumombang Mapamatu. For capturing this maiden the general was given high rank and honor and was ordered to build a house for the sister close to the house of the king.

Now when the king asked Alcat (which was the name of Bantugan’s sister) to give him some mbama to chew, she refused, saying, “Do not talk to me, for I have been taken from my brothers and am heavy at heart; if you wish to marry me, go to my brothers and ask them for me.”

When the brothers of Alcat knew that she had been stolen away from them, they were heavy at heart also. Then said Bantugan, “Prepare all of our war boats and launch my great warship Linumuntan Mapalo Mabuculud Linayum. Put out all our battle-flags and let all my brothers gather with me to search for our sister.”

When they were all aboard the captain of Bantugan's warboat called out to it, "Sail like the wind, Linumuntan, so that we may overtake the wicked Spanish general who has carried away the sister of our datto" (chief).

But the ship did not obey his command, and Malinday Asabarat, the seventh brother of Bantugan, said, "It must be that we have a bad soldier on board; let us find out who he is and kill him, that we may proceed on our journey." Then Malinday pointed out a soldier whose name was Masualo Savani Masunu Sakasumba, whose great fault was that he made love to the wives of the dattos and other married women.

When this man knew he was to die, he said, "Tell my friends when you return that I died in battle and not that I was executed."

Then Malinday took him to the bow of the ship and with one stroke of his campilan (Moro broadsword) cut off his head. When the soldier was dead the ship at once began to speed through the water with tremendous velocity, so that all the great fish of the sea were much afraid.

Before long they came to a small island and there anchored, and four men carried the body of the soldier ashore and buried it.

Mapalala Macog now suggested that they rest here a while and sleep. While they were sleeping there came to anchor on the other side of the island a warship of Datto Banningan, who was the accepted lover of Bantugan's sister, Alcat Ulaunan, who had been carried away by the Spaniard, and whom Bantugan had started to search for.

Banningan had ordered the colintangan (large Moro xylophone) to be played in his warship, which was called the Katipapabayan Lumbayan Dakadua, meaning the two-tailed crocodile of the sea.

Now Bendera Mudaya, the tenth brother of Bantugan, heard the loud playing of Banningan's colintangan and he became very wroth, for he thought it would disturb his brother Bantugan's rest, so he called a thousand soldiers and had the lantakas (cannon) fired at the ship of Banningan, and the shot carried away all the principal masts of Banningan's ship and killed many of his soldiers.

Now Banningan's brother, whose name was Mapandala sa Dalen Matankin sa Gavi (he that bites like the pepper of the deep forest), called the master of the ship, whose name was Salindala Kabunga Salgangka sa Bukau, and ordered him to return the fire; but said the master, "Let us first ask permission of Datto Banningan," who just now awakened and inquired what had happened. Mapandala replied that Bantugan's ship had fired on them and begged to be allowed to fire back.

"No," said Banningan, "if we fire on Bantugan I can then never marry his sister."

"But," said the brother, "look at the ruin of the ship and the loss of men. Let this woman go and let us revenge ourselves."

"No," said Banningan, "seeing that you my brother still live not even the loss of ships or men will compel me to attack the great and honorable Bantugan."

So Banning gave orders for his anchors to be raised and his ship to be sailed straight for Bantugan's ship, that they might converse. Banning sat in the bow (ulunan) with two gold embroidered umbrellas held over him.

Now when Bendera Mudaya recognized that it was Banning he had fired at, he broke into tears and cried out, "Ama ku" (my father), "do not scold me. I thought your ship was the ship of our enemies. It is all my fault; do with me as you will."

"No," said Banning, "we are equally sad, let us say no more of it. I but beg of Bantugan to allow me to lash my ship to his." This was soon done and the dattos greeted each other.

Then Banning asked, "What brings you out in your warship with so many soldiers and lantakas?" When Banning had been told that his sweetheart had been carried away by the Spaniards his grief was very great, and with a common enemy these two dattos sealed their friendship.

After a council it was decided that Bantugan should continue the search by sea and that Banning should go by land, as his ship was no longer seaworthy.

After the council Banning returned to his own ship and cast loose from Bantugan, who sailed away. All the panditas (priests) were now called together by Banning and were asked for their advice as to how to proceed to find the lost maiden. They told him, when he started out, not to go as a datto with fine raiment and many followers, but to go alone in the disguise of a tiruray, and that if he went this way he would surely meet with success.

So Banning sent his brother Mapandala back with the ship to their village of Cudarangen, there to be ruler in his stead. But the brother's heart was heavy, for he wanted to go also on the trip, and he begged unavailingly of Banning to let him go, but he would not consent. So Banning went ashore and Mapandala put his ship about to return home, but when Banning was well out of sight Mapandala turned again and started to follow Bantugan as best he could, making many repairs to his ship.

In a day or two he passed by a large town called Pamamaluy a ig Alamay a Lagat, and there encountered a great Spanish warship whose captain inquired where he was from. Mapandala answered, "From Cudarangen." Then the Spaniard asked him where he was going. Mapandala answered, "To search for the sister of Datto Bantugan." Whereupon the Spanish fired upon him; the general on the ship was the same one who had carried away Bantugan's sister, and he ordered Mapandala to return to Cudarangen, saying that not far away there was a fleet of a thousand Spanish ships waiting for Bantugan and his followers.

"Nevertheless," said Mapandala, "I shall not return." And the battle began at once, between Mapandala and the Spaniard. The latter soon won, and Mapandala was badly injured so that his entrails fell out. Both boats were badly injured and many were killed on both sides, but the Spaniards were able to float and navigate, and they looted Mapandala's boat and then returned to their village.

Mapandala's boat was finally cast upon the beach, where it was seen by Banning who came by there on foot at that very moment. He at once boarded her, and when Mapandala saw someone coming he cried out for water which Banning brought him. When they recognized each other Banning embraced his brother and wept to see him so sorely wounded. Mapandala said, "I am surely dying." But Banning called for a fairy from Cudarangen to take his brother back and cure him there of his wounds with a great medicine which he had at home in his chest. When the fairy had taken Mapandala, Banning went on his way.

The warship of Bantugan finally reached the village of the Spaniards, Sudurungan a Lagat, and there found a thousand Spanish war-ships, who at once fired upon them, but the only effect of their firing was to push Bantugan farther away, not a single cannon-ball penetrating his ship.

Banning continued on his road, and after many days reached a high hill from which he could see the great city of the Spaniards, with many ships in the harbor and many more on guard at its entrance. This great display frightened Banning very much, for he thought to himself, "At the very door of the city I will die." So he decided to go back to the brother of Bantugan, who was named Pasandalan na Murud, and who was the sultan of I Labumbalan Tankulabulantan, and ask him what he should do in the face of such dreadful obstacles.

He had not gone far until two little golden birds alighted on his shield (klung) and told him not to go back, for he would be laughed at, and all would say that he was not worthy of his sweetheart. Banning then smote his breast and decided to return to the search even though he died ten times. He then hid his shield and campilan (broadsword) in a hollow rock and carried only a bow and arrows.

As he was passing along the coast he saw the ships of the Spanish general sailing by who had destroyed his own boat. The Spanish general also saw him and called to him to come on board his ship, for he did not think that he had the walk or carriage of a poor tiruray. So Banning went aboard the Spanish ships, and the soldiers were so thick on the deck that he could not help stepping on them as he passed. This made the soldiers mad, but the general said, "Never mind; he is only a poor tiruray, and does not know good manners." The tiruray walked right up and sat down close by the side of the general, which made the general mad on the inside, but he did not show it. Then the general asked him, "Where are you from?"

He answered, "From Lalansayan Lalanun." Now the general knew that the king's brother lived with this family and so the tiruray, who was Banning in disguise, said that he had been sent by the king's brother to inquire if it was true that the king had captured the sister of Bantugan, and for the king to beware, for Bantugan was a powerful and dangerous enemy. Then the general told a great lie, saying that they had had a big war with Bantugan and that Alcat had been given as a peace offering.



This great lie maddened the tiruray, so that for a minute he wanted to go “idzavil” (run amuck or juramentado). The general noticed that the tiruray was getting mad, and asked, “Why are you red in the face? I believe that you are Banningan, and if you are you will go no farther. But the tiruray answered and said, “Show me Banningan, and I myself will slay him.” Then the general said, “Tell me truly from where you come?”

The tiruray answered and said, “From Lansayan Aluna Lundingan Apamalui Deliday Linauig Lumbay Lungan a Lagat, whose datto is Daliday Linauig Lumbay Alungan a Lagat, who is a brother to your king.”

Then the general and the tiruray shook hands, and the general asked, “What is your errand here?”

The tiruray answered, “I come by order of the brother of the king to see if it was true that the king had the sister of Datto Bantugan in his city and if she was beautiful or not.”

The general said, “She is as beautiful as the moon.”

The tiruray now asked the general to take him to see the sister of Bantugan, for he alone would not be allowed to pass the gates. So the general and Banningan went ashore and walked towards the city of the king, and when they reached the gates the guard would only allow the general to pass and would not admit the tiruray.

But the general said, “This tiruray is a good man and comes from the town of the king’s brother.”

Then the captain of the guard said, “No, he cannot pass, for I know that in the city of the king’s brother there are no tirurays.”

“Yes,” said Banningan, “that is true, but I do not claim to live in the town of the king’s brother, but in a village near it named Malasan sa Ulay Uluban sa Bulauan.”

“Well,” said the captain of the guard, “You may go in; you look innocent at any rate.”

So in they went, and soon they came to the second guard, whose captain asked the general, “What is your business with the king?”

The general said, “To beg permission of the king to return to my family.”

“Who is the tiruray with you,” asked the captain of the guard.

“Oh, he is all right, I will vouch for him,” said the general.

Then the captain of the guard said, “Well, you may both pass, but the law is that all who pass this gate must pass through dancing.” So they both danced their way through the gate.

By and by they reached the house of the king, where there were many guards, who did not care to have the tiruray pass, but the king, when he heard that there was a tiruray below, ordered the guard to admit him and bring the man up to him, and when the tiruray had entered the palace he found the floor covered with soldiers sitting and lying down. He clumsily stepped on several, who immediately wanted to kill him, but the king said, “No, he is only a tiruray

and knows no manners; do not hurt him.” Then the tiruray walked straight up to the throne and sat right down beside the king, to the great fear of the general, who told him not to, for the king would surely scold him or kill him. When the courtiers saw this poor beggar take his seat by the king’s side, they begged permission to kill him for his presumption. But the king said, “No, I will question him first.”

While Baningan was seated beside the king he saw the armor of his brother lying on the floor and covered with blood. His face became red and the tears fell from his eyes, and he again wanted to be an “idzavil,” but on second thought decided not to, for if he did he could not succeed in seeing his sweetheart.

The king asked him why his face was so red and why he was crying. Baningan answered, “I cry, for I cannot see the sister of Bantugan.”

Then asks the king, “What do you know of the sister of Bantugan, and where do you come from?”

Baningan answered, “From your brother’s town.”

Then the king at once asked him, “Is my brother well and happy?”

“Yes,” said the tiruray, who then asked, “Is the sister of Bantugan as beautiful as she is reported to be?”

“Yes,” said the king, “she is as beautiful as the moon.” Then Baningan asked the king’s permission to see her so that he could tell the king’s brother of her beauty. So the king told the tiruray to go and ask Alcat for bulla for the king to chew, and to tell her that if she would not give it he would have her head cut off.

When the tiruray reached the house in which the sister of Bantugan was kept, a wife of the king (whose name was Salagambal Kla Undiganan) came forward and asked him what he wanted. When he told her, she asked him to come in and sit down, but Baningan said, “I wait for the order of the sister of Bantugan.” But the sister of Bantugan did not care to order the tiruray to come in, for he was of low blood. But on the solicitation of the other wives of the king, she told him to come in and sit down.

When the tiruray came in the house he sat down close to Alcat, who scolded him for it, and ordered him away, but the wives of the king said, “No, he is only a poor tiruray and knows no better; let him stay and we will have some sport with him.”

Then Bantugan’s sister asked him from whence he came.

He answered, “From Mapulud Salin Kikan Palau sa Linun Kayo.”

Then Alcat at once asked him if he knew Datto Bantugan. The tiruray answered and said, “Yes, I know him, but I have heard that he was killed not long ago in a fight with the Spaniards. Also his brother Mapalala Macog, who was killed by a crocodile, and all the other brothers are dead in the warship of Dalumimbang Dalanda.”

When hearing this the sister of Bantugan fell in a faint (the name of the warship was Timbalangay a Uatu Timbidayala Sunga).

When Alcat had recovered from her faint, she asked the tiruray if he knew Banningan. At this the tiruray laughed and showed his teeth, which the sister of Bantugan recognized at once, but she gave no sign of recognition. Then the tiruray said, "Banningan fell in a cave a week ago and has not come out yet." Then he took a ma-lung (a Moro dress) and put it on in Moro style and seized the sister of Bantugan and put her on his lap.

She did not scold him, but asked, "Can you win in a fight with the Spaniards and take me home to my family?"

Banningan answered and said, "Win or lose, I will not leave you. The king has sent me to bring him bulla from you and if you don't give it he will kill you."

"Well," said Bantugan's sister, let him kill me; I will not give him the bulla."

Banningan now called the fairies to bring his campilan and rodella and prepared himself for a fight.

Alcat cried and said, "If you leave me now even for a minute, you will never come back."

"Yes," said Banningan, "I will come back." He then made himself invisible by a spell and went out to the harbor mouth where he could get a stone to sharpen his campilan.

While all this was going on, the king became very impatient at the non-return of the tiruray and sent for him. The women told the messenger that the tiruray had gone some time before, and when the king heard this he said, "The tiruray does not return, for he is ashamed to return without the bulla which Bantugan's sister has refused."

The king then ordered a well dug and had the sister of Bantugan brought to it, that she might be drowned in it. But the courtiers begged that she be spared, for, they said, "If you kill the sister of Bantugan, we will surely have a war with Bantugan and his brothers, and they are very brave men and have many followers." But the king became more and more angry and took his saber to kill the sister of Bantugan.

At that moment Banningan returned in his invisible state and stood by her side. Alcat now said to Banningan, "What are you going to do now?"

He answered, "I will take you up to the top of the highest coconut tree," which he did, and when he returned, became visible to all the court clad in armor and with his campilan and klung. He was at once surrounded by the general and the soldiers of the court, who attacked him, but Banningan defended himself so well that every stroke of his campilan cut off ten heads.

In the mean time, Bantugan arrived at the harbor mouth and heard a great commotion in the city, which was caused by the fight that was going on between Banningan and the king's soldiers. On learning this Bantugan ordered his ship to pass under the water instead of on top, until he reached the point not far from the Spanish fleet. His ship then ascended to the surface, causing great commotion and excitement among the Spaniards. Madali Macabancas

now suggested that the ship be anchored bow and stern. This was scarcely done before the Spaniards opened fire on them, and for seven days the fire continued, so that the smoke was so thick that it made the day the same as night.

At the end of the seventh day the smoke rose a little and the Spaniards saw that Bantugan's boat was still uninjured, while they were badly cut up. Their bullets had simply *pushed* Bantugan's ship farther away.

Marandang Datto Sulug now said, "Let us go ashore with campilan (sword) and klung" (shield). This was done, and the course of fighting was done at once. At the same time Banning was still fighting within the walls.

Just at this time Datto Sulune Cudungangan sa Colingtongan, of the town of Sungiline a Dinal Hayrana Amiara, arrived in his great warship, Galawongat Tinumcup Ukil a Keranda. This datto, whose sister Bantugan was in love with, came to see if he could not act as a peacemaker and have the quarrel cease, so that all should be friends.

He first spoke to Bantugan and told him to quit fighting, so that he could arrange matters with the king, and that anyway Bantugan could not win, for the Spaniards were too many for him. Bantugan answered, and said, "If they give back my sister, I will fight no more, but if not, we will fight to the death."

"Well," said the datto, "wait till I have spoken to the king before you fight any more."

So the datto went in and reached the place where Banning was fighting and also prevailed upon him to wait and fight no more till he had spoken to the king.

When the datto reached the palace, the king agreed to quit fighting if Bantugan would give Alcat to him in marriage.

But the datto said, "If you insist on that condition, the war will last for many years, for Bantugan surely will not give his sister to you, for he has contracted to give her to Banning."

"Well," said the king, "Alcat can go, but her companions must stay, for I prefer Moros to Spaniards."

Then the datto said, "No, this is not good, the fighting will surely continue if you insist on this."

"Well," said the king, "let them all go, but I do not want to see Bantugan at all."

So the datto carried the house and all the women and Alcat down to the ship of Bantugan and put them on board, and Bantugan then returned to his country with Banning (the country of Bantugan was named Ilian a Bumbalan Tankalabulantakan), and when they reached there the house was replanted in its former place, and all were happy.

Now the older brother (Mapalala Macog) said, "Now let Bantugan marry." And it was decided that Bantugan should marry Minilig Urugung Managam a Dalendeg, who was the daughter of the sultan Minialungan Simban of Minifigi a Lungung Minaga na Dalendeg.

Pasandalan na Murud now called Dalumimbang Dalanda and Damagag da Lupa, and ordered them to make a journey to the country of the sultan and ask his daughter's hand in marriage for Bantugan.

"Well," they said, "if the sultan refuses we will not return until we have punished them well."

"No," said Pasandalan, "that will not do. I will get another messenger"; and he called Mapalala Macog, who answered the same as did all the other brothers.

"Well," said Pasandalan, "I will go myself"; but Pandi Macalayan objected and said, "No, let us send Bantugan's son, Balatama Lumana Alcat, Pandumagan Dayuran." (This boy was the son of Bantugan's sister whom Bantugan had married innocently, because when Bantugan was born he was sent away on a ship and did not return until he was grown up, and not knowing his sister Alcat, fell in love with her and married her, and this boy was born before they knew of their relationship.)

When the son was found, he was brought before Pasandalan and said, "Why am I, a child, to be sent on this errand. Why do not some of my uncles go?"

"Well," said Pasandalan, "I will go."

"No," said the son, "let me go as the rest wish." But now Bantugan interrupted and objected to this small boy being sent on so important and dangerous an errand. But the brothers all insisted, and so he was sent away to prepare himself and to return to be instructed. When he came back properly dressed, his mother also came crying, not wanting him to go so far away. But the boy said, "I go because my uncles cannot."

Now Pasandalan said to him, "Have patience and speak good word with the sultan, and even if they speak ill to you have patience as long as you can, but when you cannot stand it any longer, of course you must fight."

So the arms of Bantugan were given him, and when he started away he told them that if he did not return in three months it would surely be that he was dead. So he bade good-bye to all and started on his journey.

After he had been gone some hours Dalumimbang Dalanda disguised himself and went out to try the boy's courage, and appeared before Balatama as an old man and asked him where he was going. Balatama answered and told his errand.

Then Dalumimbang said, "You cannot go any farther; you must return."

But the boy said, "No, I will continue on my errand."

"Well, then," said the old one, "if you don't go back I will kill you."

At this the boy took his campilan and struck at the old one, who disappeared in the air.

Then he kept on his journey, and on reaching a high stone he was able to look back and see the village from which he had come. The sight made him cry and he wanted to return, but the recollection of the order of his uncles made him keep on his way.

By and by a little bird came by and perched upon his shoulder, and asked him where he was going, and on being told said, "Do not go any farther because

Mimdalanu sa Tunu Midsicau di Uato is waiting for you to kill you.” But the boy went on just the same, and that night slept on the beach in a bed made of magical snake-belt. In the morning his heart called to him to awake, and when he arose it was with such a bound that it made the beach tremble.

So he continued on his journey, and by and by came to a stone in the form of a man. It was named Mamilbang a Uato and was surrounded by a fence made out of wood called Kayo Naniarugun Kayo Rani Dalandeg, and the land which this fence enclosed belonged to the wife of Satan. It lay across the road and obstructed his way, so he took his campilan and cut down the fence, which made the wife of Satan very mad, so she made the air to be as dark as night; and the boy began to cry, for he could not see his way to continue the journey. Then the wife of Satan made it rain stones as large as houses, but the boy protected himself by holding his shield over him and prayed and called for the winds from the home land to come and help him, which they did, and the air became clear again and the rain ceased, and then Balatama saw the wife of Satan in a window of her house and took her to be his mother, for she resembled her so much. The woman called to him to come up into the house, which he did, and then she asked him what his errand was, and on being told said to him, “Do not go any farther, for the Spaniards are waiting for you to kill you.” But the boy said he would go on his way nevertheless.

Then the woman asked him if he had a charm of gold in the shape of a man. The boy answered, and said that he had one. Then he bade good-bye to Satan’s wife and started on his journey again.

Soon on the road he met a big man-monster with horns who asked him where he was going. The boy told him, and then the monster said to him, “You cannot go any farther; go back to your country where you come from.” But Balatama took his campilan and made a stroke at the monster, who disappeared in the air.

A little farther on he came across a great snake on the road, who also asked his errand, and on being told, the snake said, “No, you cannot pass, for I am the guard on the road, and none can pass here.” So the snake made a motion to seize him, but the boy with his campilan cut the snake into two pieces and threw one half into the sea and one half into the mountains and then went on his way.

After many days he came to a stone set in the middle of the road. It glowed and glistened as if it were made of pure gold, and from this point he could see the city to which he was going. It was a fine large town with ten harbors. He saw one house which seemed to be made of crystal and which he supposed was the house of the sultan. When he came nearer the city, he saw a house made of pure gold.

It took him a long time to reach the harbor mouth, although from the golden stone it appeared to be but a short distance.

When he entered the city gates, he was very careful not to mix with the crowds, for he did not know what kind of people he would meet. When he did

meet some of the people they asked him where he was going, but he did not answer them, for they were only workingmen and he, a datto's son, would not converse with them. As he passed the streets all the people stared at him, but he was very beautiful and was admired by all; as he went along he passed a number of datto's sons playing "sefa." They asked him to play, but he said he did not know how. Then one of them said, "Who are you and from where, that you cannot play sefa?" but the son of Bantugan said, "You needn't ask of me; are you the sultan of this town?"

The young man who had questioned him (Batalasalapay an Datto sa Ginaeunan) said, "I am of high blood," and was very wroth.

"Well," said the son of Bantugan, "if you want to fight, I guess you can do so now."

So they fought until an old man came and made them stop. In the meantime some one had carried word to the sultan that there were two people fighting, so the sultan ordered them both brought before him. When they were brought, the son of Bantugan went up and sat down next to the sultan, which made all the other Moros furious, and then the courtiers begged that he might be killed, but the sultan said, "No, let us question him first." Bantugan's son said that before he told his errand to the sultan he wanted all the dattos' sons and dattos present to hear, but they told him it would take too long to gather them. Then Balatama said that before he spoke he wanted all persons to take off their helmets. But they thought this was too much and were very wroth, and wanted to kill him at once. The son of Bantugan then said, "Pshaw, what are you all to me? You are nothing."

Then the sultan said, "Tut, tut, let all take off their helmets so that we can hear this young man's story, for if we kill him we will know nothing of his errand, or from where he comes." So all the helmets were taken off and Balatama arose and told him his name and where he was from. And then all became of a good heart again and the sultan then asked Balatama to tell them his errand.

"I am sent by Pasandalan na Murud Bandelo Madayo to ask for the daughter of the sultan for Datto Bantugan."

The sultan then said to his courtiers, "You, my friends, answer the request."

One courtier then said (Bambay sa Pananian), "I don't see how Bantugan can marry the sultan's daughter, because the first gift (sungut) must be a figure of a man or a woman in pure gold."

"Well," said Bantugan's son, "I am here to hear what you want and to say whether it could be given or not."

"Well," said another datto, "you must also give a great yard with the floor of gold, three feet thick" (this datto's name was Midtumula Buisan Ninbantas Balabagan).

"Well," said Bantugan's son, "all this can be given."

"Then the sister of the princess spoke up and said, "The gifts must be as many as the blades of grass in this city."

“It can be given,” said Balatama.

A datto named Daliday sa Lugungan said, “You must also give a bridge (talitay) built of stone, to cross the Pulangui (Rio Grande de Mindanao).”

“It can be given,” said Balatama.

Batatalatayan now said, “You must change this city from a city of wooden buildings to a city of stone buildings.”

And Dalendegen Sangilan said, “You must give a ship of stone.”

Daliday su Milen demanded that all the coconuts in the sultan’s grove be turned into gold and also the leaves.

“All this would be done,” said the son of Bantugan. “Mapalala Macog will give the yard of gold; Malinday Assabarat the bridge of stone; Dalumimbang Dalanda the boat of stone; Matabalau Man. Guda will give the many gifts; Siagambalanua the golden cocoas. The golden statue I will give. Very well,” said Balatama, “but I will have to go back my to father’s town (Bombalan) to get it.”

At this one of the dattos scolded and said, “You are surely a liar and do not intend to get the statue at all. Let us cut his head off.”

And the sultan said, “Yes, let us have the golden statue now or we will kill you.”

“No,” said Balatama, “if I give you the statue now there will be dreadful storms, rain, and darkness.” But they only laughed at him and demanded the statue. So he reached into the helmet and drew forth the statue of gold, and immediately there was a great storm and earthquakes and it rained stones as big as houses. And the sultan called to Balatama to put back the statue, for they would surely be all killed if he did not.

“Well,” said Balatama, “you would not believe me when I told you, and now I am going to let the storm continue.” But the sultan begged him to put back the statue, and said that if he would put it back Bantugan might come and marry his daughter and give no other presents at all but the golden statue. So Balatama put back the statue, and the air became calm again, to the great relief of the sultan and the dattos.

“Now,” said Balatama, “I will return. But first let me see the future wife.” This was granted, and they asked him when Bantugan would come to the wedding. He told them in three months. So Balatama went to the palace and at the door was stopped by a female guard (Siagambal Anunan Kelam Anandinganan). She told him to sit down and have some bulla to chew. But he answered and said that he was but a child, and did not chew it.

When the princess saw the boy she asked him what he came for. He told her that he had come to see her and then go back and tell his father of her beauty. The princess gave him a ring and a handkerchief for a present and then he bade her good-bye.

On the road home he again met the wife of Satan, who compelled him to stay with her for four months.

There was a sailor of the sea from Kindalungan Minaga Delandeg and another from Ibat a Kadalán, a Spanish town. They met on the high seas, and



after greeting each other the second one asked the first one, "Is it true that Bantugan is going to marry the daughter of the sultan?"

"Yes," said the first one, "great preparations are being made for it."

Then the second one said, "Why, does he not know that the great General Linumimbang Sandaw Minabi Salungan is going to marry the same princess?"

"No," said the first, "and I suppose it would not make any difference if he did know." So the sailors separated, and the Spanish sailor went straight up to the general and told him that Bantugan was preparing to marry the sultan's daughter.

The general at once ordered a great expedition to be prepared, and called the chief pandita (Batataswalian) and asked him if he thought it was a good hour for it.

"No," said the chief, "if you go now they will surely have a big fight and you will lose." Nevertheless the general embarked in his great warship, the *Minanaga su Macag Maluba Kuman sa Tau*, also with him were all of his brothers and following after him were ten thousand other ships. They went to the sultan's city, and their number was so great that they filled the harbor, greatly frightening the people of the city.

And the general's brother disembarked and went to the house of the sultan, where he demanded the princess for his brother, saying that if she was not given the fleet would destroy the city and all the people. This frightened the sultan and his courtiers very much, so they decided to give the daughter to the general and asked him to fix the date for the wedding. He told him that it would be the first full moon. Then the general's brother left, saying that the general would soon come to see them.

Bantugan prepared everything for the wedding, which he expected would take place at the appointed time. But the days went by and Bantugan and his brothers were very much afraid, for the boy had not returned and they feared that he was dead. So after the three months had passed, Bantugan prepared a big expedition to go in search of *his* son. The great warship was decorated with flags of gold and all the mosquito bar was made of silk.

When they came in sight of the sultan's city one of Bantugan's brothers saw the Spanish fleet in the harbor, and advised Bantugan not to enter until the Spaniards had left. So they brought their ship to anchor, and all felt very sad because they could go no farther. Pidsayana Alungan, a son of Bantugan, came and asked his uncles why they were so sad, but they would not answer him, so he went back, and another son, Bulubulu sa Lagat, came and asked the same of his uncles, but they would not answer him.

Another son now came. Lumbay sa Layagum Pegcaualau Daliday Malindu came and asked the same of his uncles, but none would answer him. Lumbay Magapindu came and asked the same question, but they would give him no answer.

Now came Datto Baningan, who asked the same question of the brothers of Bantugan, saying, "Fear not." But they would give him no answer.

Pandi Macalele came and asked of his brothers, "Why didn't you answer? Why don't we go on? Even if the grass turns into Spaniards we need not fear."

Then Mapalala Macog came and asked the same, saying, "Why do you fear? Even if the cannon balls come like rain and lightning, we can fight always." But still no answer.

Then Marandung Datto Sulung came and spoke to Bantugan. "Why do all our brothers not answer when questioned? Do they fear the Spaniards? Anyway, we are here only to find the son who has not returned, so let us return to Bombalan."

"No," said Bantugan, "let us seek my son, and even if we enter the harbor where the Spaniards are, let us continue the search." So at Bantugan's command the anchors were raised and they sailed into the harbor where lay the Spanish fleet.

The general and his brother were about to go and call to see the princess, and when they reached the palace the daughter called them in and was very nice to them, offering the bulla to the gentlemen.

The general's brother admired one of the sisters of the princess very much, and asked her for bulla, but she laughed at him and would not give it, called him names, and made much fun with him, saying, he was not the general's brother, etc., etc., but only a bilan, manobo, or tiruray, and could not marry her, for he must marry a tiruray. This made the brother of the general very mad and he drew his kris to strike her, but his companion stopped him.

Then the sister of the princess said to him, "Why don't you kill me? I am not afraid of you" and then she went to the window to cool off, for she was very mad at the general and his brother. And the sight of the Spanish fleet in the harbor increased her rage, but just then a parrot with golden plumage hopped into the window and told her to look out into the harbor mouth and there she saw Bantugan's ships entering the harbor, so she called her sister to see them, who came, but could not tell whose flags they were.

Then the general's brother came and looked and said, "We must go and see at once whether it is the fleet of Bantugan, and if it is we must go and kill him and all his people."

So the brother returned to the sultan and asked him if he knew whose ships were coming into the harbor.

The sultan said, "No, I do not know, but will send for my father and see if he knows." So he sent one of his brothers to go and call the father, who, as he was very old, was kept in a little dark room by himself, so he could not get hurt.

The sultan said, "If he is so bent with age that he cannot see, talk, or walk, tickle him in the ribs, and that will make him young again, and you, my brother, carry him here yourself. Do not trust him to the slaves, for if he should fall he would break himself and die."

So the old man was brought, and when he looked at the flags on the ship he said that they were the flags of Bapa ni Bantugan (father of Bantugan), who

was a great friend of his in his younger days; and then he told the sultan that he and Bantugan's father had made a contract years ago that their children and children's children should intermarry, and now the sultan had promised his daughter to two people and that great trouble would come on the land.

So the sultan said to the general, "Here are two claimers to my daughter's hand. Go aboard your ships and you and Bantugan go and fight it out, and he who wins will have my daughter."

So the Spaniards opened fire upon Bantugan, and for three days the earth was covered with smoke from the battle, so that neither could see his enemy. The Spanish general said, "I cannot see Bantugan or the fleet anywhere, so let us go and claim the princess."

And when they reached the sultan they demanded his daughter, but the sultan said, "No, let us wait until the smoke rises to make sure that Bantugan is gone."

Pamanay Macalayan called to Maladia Langig and they two went to Bantugan and decided to engage the Spanish fleet. They took down the flags of gold and put up the battle-flags, and when they came within range of the Spanish fleet they opened fire, and their cannon balls carried away great pieces of the mountains, and many of the Spanish fleet were sunk and great darkness and smoke came over the earth.

When the smoke arose the ships of Bantugan were seen to be all unharmed, so the sultan said, "Bantugan has surely won, for his fleet is uninjured and yours is badly damaged and you have lost."

"No," said the general, "we will fight it out on land." So he landed all of his troops and cannon and made ready to meet Bantugan on the land, and when all were landed and ready the Spaniard sent his challenge against Bantugan. Bantugan landed his troops and cannon, but before he commenced fighting he paid his respects to the princess and sultan in case he should be killed. After the fight had begun the Spaniards saw that they could never win with guns and cannon, so they set upon Bantugan with campilans (or "kampilan," long sword used by the Moros of the Philippines) and spears, and soon the general's brother (Masuala Subangam) was killed by Bantugan. Before long the ground was covered with corpses and the rivers were dammed up with their numbers. So the sultan sent word for them not to fight any more, for the air and water were so polluted with the dead bodies.

But the Spaniard answered and said, "If you give your daughter to Bantugan we will fight forever or until we are dead."

The sultan sent a messenger to Bantugan saying, "Let us deceive the Spaniard in order to get him to go away. Let us tell him that you will not marry my daughter, and then we are sure he will leave, and then after he is gone, we can have the wedding."

Bantugan agreed to this, and word was sent to the Spaniards that Bantugan would not marry the sultan's daughter, and that the fighting should cease,

because the cannon balls were killing many of the women and children in the city. The Spaniard and Bantugan agreed that neither of them should marry the Princess and that they should be friends. So both the Spaniard and Bantugan sailed away to their home. But Bantugan soon returned and married the princess and continued on his search for his son. He soon found him in the house of the wife of Satan, and took him home with him.

The Spanish general sailed away for about a week, for his home, and then turned about to return to take the princess away by force, for his heart was deceitful, and when he arrived at the city of the sultan, and found that the princess had been carried away by Bantugan, his wrath knew no bounds, so that he destroyed the sultan, his city, and all of its people, and then sailed away to his own city to prepare a great expedition with which he should utterly annihilate Bantugan and his country.

When he arrived off the mouth of the Pulangui with his enormous fleet, their numbers were so great that the horizon could not be seen in any direction.

When Bantugan saw this display of force, his heart sank within him, for he saw that he and his country were doomed to destruction, as he could not hope to gain in a fight with so formidable an antagonist, and such great superiority in numbers. They called a meeting of all the dattos and none could offer any advice, so Bantugan arose and said, "My brothers, the Christian dogs have come to destroy the land, and we cannot successfully oppose them, yet we can die in defense of the fatherland."

So the great warship of Bantugan was again prepared and all the soldiers of Islam embarked thereon, and all their dattos, and with Bantugan standing at the bow they sailed forth to meet their fate. As they approached the Spanish fleet, Bantugan shouted forth his war-song.

"With my campilan which kills many, with my bloody campilan, shining with its gold ornaments, its bombol (a tassel of red hair attached to the handle of the campilan) made from the hair of a beautiful widow, which flashes like the ray of the sun at sunrise. With the beauty of its golden grip coming from the heaven heavenly. Its edge sharp as lightning and reaching even to the heavens. Flashing of its own accord and thirsting for the blood of the Christian dogs, I take it in my hands with such force that the gems in my rings burst from their settings, and fly away like birds. I take my shield painted by my sister, inlaid with flashing pearl. Its grip made of pure gold. Its button a great brilliant. My belt of golden snake. My amulets of pearl, the buttons on my armor taken from the stars. My turban of silver cloth and my helmet of gold. I go to my death, but with me shall die many of ye, Christian dogs."

The fighting soon became fast and furious, but in less than a day it was plainly seen that the Spaniards were winning, and the great warship of Bantugan was filling with water until at last it sank, drawing with it hundreds of the Spaniard's ships, and then a strange thing happened. At the very point where Bantugan's warship sank there arose from the sea a great island covered with bongo palms.

The wife of Bantugan, when she saw that her husband was no more and that his warship was destroyed, gathered together the remaining warriors and set forth herself to avenge him. In a few hours her ship was also sunk and in the place where it sank there arose the mountain of Timaco.

This is the Moro version of the Spanish occupation of Mindanao. Bongos Island is situated about three miles off the mouth of the Rio Grande de Mindanao and is the island said by the Moros to have arisen where Bantugan's ship had sunk. They say that deep within its mountains lives Bantugan and his warriors, and that whenever a Moro's vinta or sailing boat passes by Bongos Island, Bantugan has watchers out to see whether or not there are women in the vinta, and if there are any that suit his fancy, they are snatched from their seats and carried deep into the interior of the mountain. For this reason the Moro women are very reluctant to go to the island of Bongos or even to sail by it.

Timaco is an island marking the south side of the entrance to the north branch of the Rio Grande de Mindanao. It consists of one tall hill thickly covered with trees, and on it are found the only specimens of the "white monkey." These are said by the Moros to be the servants of Bantugan's wife, who lives in the center of the mountain. A Moro would not hurt one of them, but feeds them regularly. It is said that on a still day if one goes high up the mountain and listens carefully, he can hear the chanting and singing of the waiting girls of the wife of Bantugan and also hear the colingtangan (Moro musical instrument like a xylophone).

## THE MONKEY AND THE TORTOISE

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Benedict, Laura Watson. "Bagobo Myths." *The Journal of American Folklore* 26 (1913): 58–62.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Mindinao

**National Origin:** Philippines

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This tale casts a series of characters in the **trickster** role. The scatology is typical of tricksters cross-culturally. The widely known ploy that is at the heart of "The Briar Patch Punishment for Rabbit" (AT 1310) is used by the tortoise to escape the monkey's revenge.

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One day, when a Tortoise was crawling slowly along by a stream, he saw a baby-monkey drinking water. Presently the Monkey ran up to the Tortoise, and said, "Let's go and find something to eat."

Not far from the stream there was a large field full of banana trees. They looked up, and saw clusters of ripe fruit.

“That’s fine!” said the Monkey, “for I’m hungry and you’re hungry too. You climb first, Tortoise.”

Then the Tortoise crawled slowly up the trunk; but he had got up only a little distance when the Monkey chattered these words, “*Roro s’punno, roro s’ pun-nol*” (“Slide down, slide down, Tortoise!”).

At once the Tortoise slipped and fell down. Then he started again to climb the tree; and again the Monkey said, “*Roro s’punno!*” and again the Tortoise slipped and fell down. He tried over and over again; but every time he failed, for the Monkey always said, “*Roro s’pinnno!*” and made him fall. At last he got tired and gave it up, saying to the Monkey, “Now you try it.”

“It’s too bad!” said the Monkey, “when we’re both so hungry.” Then the Monkey made just three jumps, and reached the ripe fruit. “Wait till I taste and see if they’re sweet,” he cried to the Tortoise, while he began to eat bananas as fast as he could.

“Give me some,” begged the Tortoise.

“All right!” shouted the Monkey, “but I forgot to notice whether it was sweet.” And he kept on eating, until more than half of the fruit was gone.

“Drop down just one to me!” pleaded the Tortoise.

“Yes, in a minute,” mumbled the Monkey.

At last, when but three bananas were left on the tree, the Monkey called, “Look up! Shut your eyes.”

The Tortoise did so. The Monkey then told him to open his mouth, and he obeyed. Then the Monkey said, “I’ll peel this one piece of banana for you.”

Now, the Monkey was sitting on a banana leaf, directly over the Tortoise; but, instead of banana, he dropped his excrement into the Tortoise’s mouth. The Tortoise screamed with rage; but the Monkey jumped up and down, laughing at him. Then he went on eating the remainder of the bananas.

The Tortoise then set himself to work at making a little hut of bamboo posts, with a roof and walls of leaves. The upper ends of the bamboo he sharpened, and let them project through the roof; but the sharp points were concealed by the leaves. It was like a trap for pigs (*sankil*).

When the Monkey came down from the banana tree, the Tortoise said, “You climb this other tall tree, and look around at the sky. If the sky is dark, you must call to me; for the rain will soon come. Then you jump down on the roof of our little house here. Never mind if it breaks in, for we can soon build a stronger one.”

The Monkey accordingly climbed the tree, and looked at the sky. “It is all very dark!” he exclaimed.

“Jump quick, then!” cried the Tortoise.

So the Monkey jumped; but he got killed from the sharp bamboo points on which he landed.

Then the Tortoise made a fire, and roasted the Monkey. He cut off the Monkey's ears, and they turned into buyo-leaves. He cut out the heart, and it turned into betel-nut. He took out the brain, and it became lime (*apog*). He made that all into *pungaman*. The stomach he made into a basket. He put into the basket the betel and the lime and the *pungaman* and the buyo, and crawled away.

Soon he heard the noise of many animals gathered together. He found the monkeys and the deer and the pigs and the wild birds having a big rice-planting. All the animals were rejoiced to see the Tortoise coming with a basket, for they all wanted to chew betel. The monkeys ran up, chattering, and tried to snatch the betel-nuts; but the Tortoise held them back, saying, "Wait a minute! By and by I will give you some."

Then the monkeys sat around, waiting, while the Tortoise prepared the betel-nut. He cut the nuts and the *pungaman* into many small pieces, and the buyo-leaf too, and gave them to the monkeys and the other animals. Everybody began to chew; and the Tortoise went away to a distance about the length of one field (*sebad kinamat*), where he could get out of sight, under shelter of some trees. Then he called to the monkeys, "All of you are eating monkey, just like your own body: you are chewing up one of your own family."

At that, all the monkeys were angry, and ran screaming to catch the Tortoise. But the Tortoise had hid under the felled trunk of an old *palma brava* tree. As each monkey passed close by the trunk where the Tortoise lay concealed, the Tortoise said, "Drag your member [that is, penis]! Here's a felled tree."

Thus every monkey passed by clear of the trunk, until the last one came by; and he was both blind and deaf. When he followed the rest, he could not hear the Tortoise call out, "*Scapa tapol basic*"; and his member struck against the fallen trunk. He stopped, and became aware of the Tortoise underneath. Then he screamed to the rest; and all the monkeys came running back, and surrounded the Tortoise, threatening him.

"What do you want?" inquired the Tortoise.

"You shall die," cried the monkeys. "Tell us what will kill you. We will chop you to pieces with the axe."

"Oh, no! That won't hurt me in the least," replied the Tortoise. "You can see the marks on my shell, where my father used to cut my body: but that didn't kill me."

"We will put you in the fire, then, and burn you to death," chorused the monkeys. "Will that do?"

"Fire does not hurt me," returned the Tortoise. "Look at my body! See how brown it is where my father used to stick me into the fire."

"What, then, is best to kill you?" urged the monkeys.

"The way to kill me," replied the Tortoise, "is to take the punch used for brass, and run it into my rectum. Then throw me into the big pond, and drown me."

Then the monkeys did as they were told, and threw him into the pond. But the Tortoise began to swim about in the water.

Exultantly he called to the monkeys, "This is my own home: you see I don't drown." And the lake was so deep that the monkeys could not get him.

Then the monkeys hurried to and fro, summoning all the animals in the world to drink the water in the lake. They all came—deer, pigs, jungle-fowl, monkeys, and all the rest—and began to drink. They covered their *pagindis* [urethras] with leaves, so that the water could not run out of their bodies. After a time, they had drunk so much that the lake became shallow, and one could see the Tortoise's back.

But the red-billed bakaka-bird that lived in a tree by the water was watching; and as quick as the back of the Tortoise came into sight, the bird flew down and picked off the leaves from the *pagindis* of the deer. Then the water ran out from their bodies until the lake rose again, and covered the Tortoise. Satisfied, the bird flew back into the tree. But the deer got fresh leaves to cover their *pagindis*, and began to drink again. Then the bird flew to the monkeys, and began to take the leaves from their *pagindis*; but one monkey saw him doing it, and slapped him. This made the bird fall down, and then all the monkeys left the Tortoise in the lake, and ran to revenge themselves on the bird.

They snatched him up, pulled out every one of his feathers with their fingers, and laid him naked upon the stump of a tree. All the animals went home, leaving the bird on the stump.

Two days later, one Monkey came to look at the Bakaka. Little feathers were beginning to grow out; but the Monkey thought the bird was dead.

"Maggots are breeding in it," said the Monkey.

Three more days passed, and then the Monkey came again. The Bakaka's feathers had grown out long by that time; and the Monkey said, "It was all rotten, and the pigs ate it."

But the bird had flown away. He flew to the north until he reached a meadow with a big tual tree in the middle. The tree was loaded with ripe fruit.' Perched on one of the branches, the bird ate all he wanted, and when done he took six of the fruit of the *tual*, and made a necklace for himself. With this hung round his neck, he flew to the house where the old Monkey lived, and sat on the roof. He dropped one *tual* through the roof, and it fell down on the floor, where all the little monkey-children ran for it, dancing and screaming.

"Don't make such a noise!" chided the old Monkey, "and do not take the *tual*, for the Bakaka will be angry, and he is a great bird."

But the bird flew down into the house, and gave one *tual* to the old Monkey.

"That is good," said the old Monkey, tasting it. "Tell me where you got it." But the bird would not tell. Then the old monkey stood up, and kissed him, and begged to be taken to the tual tree.

At last the Bakaka said to all the monkeys, "Three days from now you may all go to the tual tree. I want you *all* to go, the blind monkey too. Go to the



meadow where the grass grows high, and there, in the center of the meadow, is the tual tree. If you see the sky and the air black, do not speak a word; for if you speak, you will get sick.”

At the set time, all the monkeys started for the meadow, except one female monkey that was expecting a baby. The deer and all the other animals went along, except a few of the females who could not go. They all reached the meadow-grass; and the monkeys climbed up the tual tree that stood in the center of the field, until all the branches were full of monkeys. The birds and the jungle-fowl flew up in the tree; but the deer and the other animals waited down on the ground.

Then the sky grew black, for the Bakaka and the Tortoise were going around the meadow with lighted sticks of *balekayo*, and setting fire to the grass. The air was full of smoke, and the little monkeys were crying; but the old Monkey bit them, and said, “Keep still, for the Bakaka told us not to speak.”

But the meadow-grass was all ablaze, and the flames crept nearer and nearer to the tual tree. Then all the monkeys saw the fire, and cried, “Oh! What will become of us?”

Some of the birds and most of the chickens flew away; but some died in the flames. A few of the pigs ran away, but most of them died. The other animals were burned to death. Not a single monkey escaped, save only the female monkey who staid at home. When her baby was born, it was a boy-monkey. The mother made it her husband, and from this pair came many monkeys.

It was the same with the deer. All were burned, except one doe who stayed at home. When her little fawn was born, it was a male. She made it her husband, and from this one pair came many deer.

## POOR LITTLE MARIA

**Tradition Bearer:** Cornelio

**Source:** Gardner, Fletcher, and W. W. Newell. “Filipino (Tagalog) Versions of Cinderella.” *Journal of American Folklore* 19 (1906): 265–270.

**Date:** 1903

**Original Source:** Tagalog

**National Origin:** Philippines

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“Poor Little Maria” consists of two folktales that merge at the conclusion of the narrative. The first tale, is a Filipino adaptation of “Cinderella” (AT 510A). After the marriage of Maria to the king, the tale plot is extended with a **variant** of “The Three Golden Sons” (AT 707). The combination of these two tales is uncommon.

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Once there were a man and his wife who had a daughter named Maria. Maria was a very pretty child and very happy, but unfortunately her father fell in love with a woman who was not his wife, and one day taking his wife out to fish with him he murdered her and threw her body into the water.

Poor little Maria cried a great deal after her mother's death, but her lot was worse after her father married the other woman, for the stepmother set her all kinds of cruel tasks and threatened her with awful penalties if she failed.

Maria had a pet pig, with which she played a great deal, and her stepmother ordered her to kill and clean it. Poor little Maria cried and begged, but the woman forced her to kill the pig. When the pig was cleaned, the stepmother gave Maria ten of the refuse pieces and told her to clean them in the river, and if one piece was missing when she returned, she would be beaten to death. Maria cleaned the pieces in the river, but one slipped away and went down stream.

The child cried and lamented over her fate so that an old crocodile going by asked her what was amiss. "That is nothing," said the crocodile, and he straightway swam after the piece and brought it back. As he turned to swim away, he splashed with his tail and a drop of water fell on her forehead where it became a most beautiful jewel, flashing like the sun and fastened so tightly that it could not be removed.

The little girl went home with the jewel on her forehead shining so brightly that it made every one cross-eyed to look at it, so that it had to be covered with a handkerchief.

The cruel stepmother asked many questions about Maria's good fortune, and when she found out all about it she sent her own daughter to kill a pig and do in all respects as the stepsister had done.

She did so and threw a piece of the refuse meat into the river and cried as it floated off.

The crocodile inquired of this girl also the cause of the trouble, and again brought the meat, but this time when he splashed with his tail, instead of a jewel on the girl's forehead, there was a little bell that tinkled incessantly. All the people knelt and crossed themselves because they thought the "Viaticum" passed, but when they saw the bell on the girl's forehead they laughed and pointed at her. So the daughter had to tie up her forehead for shame, for the bell could not be gotten off.

The stepmother was more cruel than ever to Maria now that she had met with good fortune and her daughter with ill. She set the girl to every kind of dirty work till her whole body was filthy and then sent her to the river to bathe, telling her that if she did not wash her back clean she would beat her to death.

Maria struggled and scrubbed, but she could not reach her back either to see whether it was clean or to wash it, and she began to cry. Out of the river came a great she-crab, that asked the girl her trouble.

“Oh,” said Maria, “if I do not wash my back clean my stepmother will beat me to death.”

“Very well,” said the crab, “that is easily remedied,” and jumping on to Maria’s back scrubbed and scrubbed till her back was perfectly clean. “Now,” said the crab, “you must eat me and take my shell home and bury it in the yard. Something will grow up that will be valuable to you.” Maria did as she was told, and from the place grew a fine lukban (grape fruit) tree which in time bore fruit.

One day the stepmother and her daughter wished to go to church and left Maria to get the dinner. The stepmother told her that dinner must be ready when she returned and must be neither cold nor hot. Maria wept again over the impossibility of the task and was about to despair when an old woman came in, to whom she told her troubles.

The old woman was a stranger but was apparently very wise, for she told Maria to go to church and that she would prepare the dinner. The girl said she had no clothes, but the old woman told her to look in the fruit of the lukban tree, and from the fruit Maria took out all the garments of a princess, a beautiful chariot and eight horses.

Quickly she bathed and arrayed herself and drove by the king’s palace to the church, the jewel on her forehead shining so that it nearly blinded all who looked. The king, seeing such a magnificently dressed princess, sent his soldiers to find out about her, but they could learn nothing and had nothing to show when they returned but one of her little slippers which fell off as she left the church.

Maria went home and hastily put the dress and equipage back into the lukban fruit, and the old woman was there waiting with the dinner, which was neither cold nor hot. When the stepmother came from church, she saw only her stepdaughter there in rags, and everything ready according to her order.

Now the king wished to know who this princess was and ordered a “bando” sent around to every woman and girl in the kingdom, saying he would marry whomever the shoe would fit. The stepmother and her daughter went to the palace, but tied Maria in a sack and set her in the fireplace, telling her that she would be beaten to death if she stirred. The shoe fitted nobody at the palace; whether their feet were long, short, broad, narrow, big, little, or otherwise, it fitted no one.

So the soldiers were sent out again to bring in every one who had not obeyed the “bando” and they looked into the house where Maria lived, but they did not see her. Just then a cock crowed and said, “Kikiriki, that’s the girl.” Kikiriki, there in the fireplace; the shoe fits her foot.” So the soldiers made Maria dress in her finery with the mate to her little slipper on her foot, and with her little chariot and the eight ponies she went to the king’s palace, and the other little slipper fitted exactly.

The stepmother and her daughter were envious, but could do nothing against the king’s wishes, and the king married Maria with great pomp, but none of the jewels were so beautiful as the one that blazed on Maria’s forehead.

In due time it came to be known that an heir would be born, but the king was called away to war. He arranged that a signal should be set, however, a white flag if all went well and a black flag if anything went wrong.

He left the princess in the care of her stepmother and two wise women, and warned them not to let anything bad happen to the queen. The stepmother had not forgotten her hate for Maria, and when the little princes were born, for there were seven, she and the other women took them away and substituted seven little blind puppies.

When the king returned he saw the black flag flying over the tower and hurried to the queen's rooms to find her in tears over the puppies. He ordered the puppies drowned and his wife put into a corner under the staircase, until a place could be built for her. Then he had a hut built outside the palace and placed the queen there in chains.

The seven little princes, stolen from their mother, were put into a box which was cast into the sea and which drifted far away to a shore near an enchanter's cave. This enchanter had an oracle which spoke to him and said, "Go by the mountains and you will be sad, go by the shore and you will be glad," as he was setting out for his daily walk. Obedient to the oracle, he went to the shore and there heard the crying of the babies. He secured the box and carried it and the babies to his cave, and there they lived for several years untroubled.

One day a hunter, chasing deer with dogs, went by that way and saw the children. He returned to town and told what he had seen, and it came to the ears of the old women. They, being afraid that the king would learn of the children's being there, made "maruya," which is a kind of sweetmeat, and mixed poison with it. Then they went out to where the children were and gave them the poisoned sweets, so that they all died. When night came the enchanter was greatly troubled because the children did not come, and taking a torch he set out to look for them. He found the little bodies lying at the foot of a tree, and wept long and bitterly. At last he took them to his cave and laid them in a row on the floor and wept again.

As he lamented he heard the voice of the oracle, which was like a beautiful woman's voice, accompanied by a harp, singing most sweetly, and bidding him beg a medicine of the mother of the Sun, who lives in the house of the Sun across seven mountains to the west. This, she promised, would restore them to life.

So he set out on his long journey, and when he had crossed three mountains he came to a tree on which the birds never lit, and the tree was lamenting the fact. The enchanter inquired the way to the Sun's house, and the tree told him thus and so, but begged him to ask the mother of the Sun why the birds never lit on it. The enchanter went on, and on the next mountain he saw two men sitting in a pair of balances, which pitched up and down like a barca (boat) in a storm. From them he asked again the way to the Sun's house, and they told him and asked him to speak to the mother of the Sun as to why they were condemned to ride the limb of a tree like a boat in a storm.

He went on to the next mountain and there he saw two poor, lean cattle feeding on rich grass. From them also he inquired the direction of the Sun's house, and they told him and requested that he ask the mother of the Sun why they were always lean and fed on rich herbage. He promised and passed on to the next mountain, and there he saw a black ox eating nothing but earth and still fat and sleek. This animal told him how to find the Sun's house and wished to know of the mother of the Sun why he was always fat though he ate only dust.

The enchanter gave his word and went on. At last, late in the afternoon, he arrived at the Sun's house and went boldly upstairs. The mother of the Sun met him and inquired his business, which he told her, and then she told him that he was in great danger, for if her son, the Sun, came home and found him there he would eat him. The enchanter told her that he would not go away without the medicine, and at last the mother of the Sun agreed to hide him; so she wrapped him up so that the Sun could not smell him when he came in and carried him up to the seventh story of the house. There he was to remain until the next morning after the Sun had started off on his journey across the Heavens.

Soon the Sun came in and asked his mother where the man was, but his mother told him there was none and gave him such a fine supper that he forgot about the man, though he remarked once or twice that he certainly thought he smelled man. At last morning came, and when the Sun was far enough away to leave no danger, the mother of the Sun gave the enchanter the medicine that he wanted and started him off on his long journey. She told him, too, the answer to the questions asked by the cattle, the men, and the tree.

When he came to the black ox which lived on the dust, he told it that it was always fat because it was going to Heaven, and it was glad.

To the two oxen which fed on rich pasture and yet were poor, he said that they were so because they were condemned to Hell, and they were sorrowful.

To the men sitting in the pair of balances, he said that they were there because of their sins, and they became sad.

To the tree on which the birds never lit, he said that it was because it was made out of silver and gold, and the tree rustled its leaves in pride.

Finally he came to his cave, and there instead of the bodies of seven young children he saw the bodies of seven handsome young men, for they had grown greatly while he was away. He gave them the medicine, and they at once stood up. Then he told them all of his adventures.

When the boys heard the story, the youngest, who was a dare-devil, set out to find the gold and silver tree and from its branches he shook down a great quantity of gold and silver leaves, which he carried back to the enchanter. The enchanter was proud of the boy and yet angry with him for his rashness, but no one could be angry with him for long, for he was a gentle lad.

The enchanter then took the gold and silver and made clothes for them of cloth of gold, silver sabers, golden belts, and a golden trumpet for the youngest, and sent them away on a Sunday morning to church in the city where the king

lived. As they came up close to the city wall, the trumpeter lad blew a merry blast on his horn, and the king sent out to inquire who they might be and to invite them to dinner after church. So they went to the palace after church and sat down to the king's table, and the dishes were brought on. The enchanter had warned them to eat nothing until they had fed a little to a dog, and one of the boys gave some meat to a dog that was with them. The dog was dead in a moment.

The king, ashamed, ordered everything to be changed and new cooks put into the kitchen, for of course he knew nothing of the wickedness against his sons, whom he did not recognize as yet. The boys now very respectfully requested that the woman chained in the hut be brought to the table with them, though they did not know why they should ask such a thing. So the king took his sword and with his own hands, from shame, set his wife free, and had her dressed as a queen and brought to the table. The jewel still glowed on her forehead. As they sat at the table, a stream of milk miraculously coming from the breast of the mother passed to the mouth of the youngest son. Then the king understood, and when he had heard the story of the sons he put the queen again into her rightful place and caused the wicked stepmother and her two accomplices to be pulled to pieces by wild horses.

The king, the queen, and the seven princes, having made an end of their rivals, lived long and happily together.

## **THE FIFTY-ONE THIEVES**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Gardner, Fletcher. "Tagalog Folk-Tales I." *Journal of American Folklore* 20 (1907): 114–115.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Tagalog

**National Origin:** Philippines

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"The Fifty-One Thieves" is a Tagalog version of "The Forty Thieves" ["Robbers Smuggled Into House in Food Containers"] (AT 954). This folktale enjoys broad distribution cross-culturally, but perhaps the best-known **variant** is "Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves" drawn from the Middle Eastern classic *One Thousand and One Nights*. Both Spanish Catholic and Muslim cultures had a profound influence of the culture of the Philippines from the European Renaissance to the present day. Therefore, the Tagalog variant could have been derived from either European or Middle Eastern (Southwest Asian) sources.

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There were once two brothers, Juan and Pedro. Pedro was rich and was the elder, but Juan was very poor and gained his living by cutting wood. Juan became so poor at last that he was forced to ask alms from his brother, or what was only the same thing, a loan. After much pleading, Pedro gave his brother enough rice for a single meal, but repenting of such generosity, went and took it off the fire, as his brother's wife was cooking it, and carried it home again.

Juan then set out for the woods, thinking he might be able to find a few sticks that he could exchange for something to eat, and went much farther than he was accustomed to go. He came to a road he did not know and followed it for some distance to where it led to a great rocky bluff and there came to an end.

Juan did not know exactly what to think of such an abrupt ending to the roadway, and sat down behind a large rock to meditate. As he sat there a voice within the cliff said, "Open the door," and a door in the cliff opened itself. A man richly dressed came out, followed by several others, whom he told that they were going to a town at a considerable distance. He then said, "Shut the door," and the door closed itself again.

Juan was not sure whether any one else was inside, but he was no coward and besides he thought he might as well be murdered as starved to death, so when the robbers had ridden away to a safe distance without seeing him, he went boldly up to the cliff and said, "Open the door."

The door opened as obediently to him as to the robber, and he went in. He found himself inside a great cavern filled with money, jewels, and rich stuffs of every kind.

Hastily gathering more than enough gold and jewels to make him rich, he went outside, not forgetting to say, "Close the door," and went back to his house.

Having hidden all but a little of his new wealth, he wished to change one or two of his gold pieces for silver so that he could buy something to eat. He went to his brother's house to ask him for the favor, but Pedro was not at home, and his wife, who was at least as mean as Pedro, would not change the money. After a while Pedro came home, and his wife told him that Juan had some money; and Pedro, hoping in turn to gain some advantage, went to Juan's house and asked many questions about the money. Juan told him that he had sold some wood in town and had been paid in gold, but Pedro did not believe him and hid himself under the house to listen. At night he heard Juan talking to his wife, and found out the place and the password. Immediately taking three horses to carry his spoils, he set out for the robbers' cave.

Once arrived, he went straight to the cliff and said, "Open the door," and the door opened immediately. He went inside and said, "Close the door," and the door closed tight. He gathered together fifteen great bags of money, each all he could lift, and carried them to the door ready to put on the horses. He found all the rich food and wine of the robbers in the cave, and could not resist the temptation to make merry at their expense; so he ate their food and drank their

fine wines till he was foolishly drunk. When he had reached this state, he began to think of returning home. Beating on the door with both hands, he cried out, "Open, beast. Open, fool. May lightning blast you if you do not open!" and a hundred other foolish things, but never once saying, "Open the door."

While he was thus engaged, the robbers returned, and hearing them coming he hid under a great pile of money with only his nose sticking out. The robbers saw that some one had visited the cave in their absence and hunted for the intruder till one of them discovered him trembling under a heap of coin. With a shout they hauled him forth and beat him until his flesh hung in ribbons. Then they split him into halves and threw the body into the river, and cut his horses into bits, which they threw after him.

When Pedro did not return, his wife became anxious and told Juan where he had gone. Juan stole quietly to the place by night, and recovered the body, carried it home, and had the pieces sewn together by the tailor.

Now the robbers knew that they had been robbed by some one else, and so, when Pedro's body was taken away, the captain went to town to see who had buried the body, and by inquiring, found that Juan had become suddenly rich, and also that it was his brother who had been buried.

So the captain of the robbers went to Juan's house, where he found a ball going on. Juan knew the captain again and that he was asking many questions, so he made the captain welcome and gave him a great deal to eat and drink. One of the servants came in and pretended to admire the captain's sword till he got it into his own hands; and then he began to give an exhibition of fencing, making the sword whirl hither and thither and ending with a wonderful stroke that made the captain's head roll on the floor.

A day or two later, the lieutenant also came to town, and began to make inquiries concerning the captain. He soon found out that the captain had been killed in Juan's house, but Juan now had soldiers on guard at his door, so that it was necessary to use strategy. He went to Juan and asked if he could start a "tienda," or wine-shop, and Juan, who recognized the lieutenant, said, "Yes." Then the lieutenant went away, soon returning with seven great casks, in each of which he had seven men.

These he stored under Juan's house until such time as Juan, being asleep, could be killed with certainty and little danger. When this was done, he went into the house, intending to make Juan drunk and then kill him as Juan had the captain. Juan, however, got the lieutenant drunk first, and soon his head, like the captain's, rolled on the floor.

The soldiers below, like all soldiers, wished to have a drink from the great casks, and so one of them took a borer and bored into one of the casks. As he did so, a voice whispered, "Is Juan asleep yet?"

The soldier replied, "Not yet," and went and told Juan. The casks by his order were all put into a boat, loaded with stones and chains, and thrown into the sea. So perished the last of the robbers.



Juan, being no longer in fear of the robbers, often went to their cave, and helped himself to everything that he wanted. He finally became a very great and wealthy man.

## JUAN THE FOOL

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Gardner, Fletcher. "Tagalog Folk-Tales I." *Journal of American Folklore* 20 (1907): 106–107.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Tagalog

**National Origin:** Philippines

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In the folklore of the Philippines, the figure of "Juan" (or often "Juan Puson" in Tagalog folktales) is the archetypal **trickster**, **numskull**, and ne'er-do-well rolled into one conventional character. In the following tale modeled on "The Table, the Ass and the Stick" (AT 563), Juan succeeds in spite of himself.

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**J**uan was lazy, Juan was a fool, and his mother never tired of scolding him and emphasizing her words by a beating. When Juan went to school he made more noise at his study than anybody else, but his reading was only gibberish. His mother sent him to town to buy meat to eat with the boiled rice, and he bought a live crab which he set down in the road and told to go to his mother and be cooked for dinner. The crab promised, but as soon as Juan's back was turned ran in the other direction.

Juan went home after a while and asked for the crab, but there was none, and they ate their rice without *ulam* [relish to be eaten with rice, meat especially]. His mother then went herself and left Juan to care for the baby. The baby cried and Juan examined it to find the cause, and found the soft spot on its head. "Aha! It has a boil. No wonder it cries!" And he stuck a knife into the soft spot, and the baby stopped crying. When his mother came back, Juan told her about the boil and that the baby was now asleep, but the mother said it was dead, and she beat Juan again.

Then she told Juan that if he could do nothing else he could at least cut firewood, so she gave him a bolo [machete] and sent him to the woods.

He found what looked to him like a good tree and prepared to cut it, but the tree was a magic tree and said to Juan, "Do not cut me and I will give you a goat that shakes silver money from its whiskers." Juan agreed, and the bark of the tree opened and the goat came out, and when Juan told him to shake his

whiskers, money dropped out. Juan was very glad, for at last he had something he would not be beaten for. On his way home he met a friend, and told him of his good fortune. The man made him dead drunk and substituted another goat which had not the ability to shake money from its whiskers, and when the new goat was tried at home poor Juan was beaten and scolded.

Back he went to the tree, which he threatened to cut down for lying to him, but the tree said, "No, do not kill me and I will give you a magic net which you may cast even on dry ground or into a treetop and it will return full of fish," and the tree did even so.

Again he met the friend, again he drank tuba [fermented juice of cocoa, buri, or nipa palms] until he was dead drunk, and again a worthless thing was substituted, and on reaching home he was beaten and scolded.

Once more Juan went to the magic tree, and this time he received a magic pot, always full of rice; and spoons always full of whatever ulam might be wished, and these went the way of the other gifts, to the false friend.

The fourth time he asked of the tree he was given a magic stick that would without hands beat and kill anything that the owner wished. "Only say to it 'Boombye, boomba,' and it will obey your word," said the tree.

When Juan met the false friend again, the false friend asked him what gift he had this time. "It is only a stick that if I say, 'Boombye, boomba,' will beat you to death," said Juan, and with that the stick leaped from his hand and began to belabor the wicked man. "Stop it and I will give you everything I stole from you." Juan ordered the stick to stop, but made the man, bruised and sore, carry the net, the pot, and the spoons, and lead the goat to Juan's home. There the goat shook silver from his beard till Juan's three brothers and his mother had all they could carry, and they dined from the pot and the magic spoons until they were full to their mouths.

"Now," said Juan, "you have beaten me and called me a fool all my life, but you are not ashamed to take good things when I get them. I will show you something else. Boombye, boomba!" and the stick began to beat them all. Quickly they agreed that Juan was head of the house, and he ordered the beating to stop.

Juan now became rich and respected, but he never trusted himself far from his stick day or night. One night a hundred robbers came to break into the house, to take all his goods, and kill him, but he said to the stick, "Boombye, boomba!" and with the swiftness of lightning the stick flew around, and all those struck fell dead till there was not one left. Juan was never troubled again by robbers, and in the end married a princess and lived happily ever after.

## THE STORY OF JUAN AND THE MONKEY

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Gardner, Fletcher. "Tagalog Folk-Tales I." *Journal of American Folklore* 20 (1907): 108-109.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Tagalog

**National Origin:** Philippines

In this Filipino **variant** of “Puss in Boots” (AT 545B), the protagonist is localized to a poor farmer rather than an orphaned youngest sibling. Rather than inheriting an animal helper as in the classic versions of this **tale type**, Juan spares a monkey who has been raiding his crops, thus introducing the “Animal Grateful for Rescue from Peril of Death” **motif** (B360). The *asuang* whose wealth the monkey cleverly appropriates after killing him is a creature from Filipino folklore. The *asuang* is a human who has acquired supernatural powers by eating human flesh. It is a shape-shifter and possesses the power to cause harm and even death by the use of its spells.

**J**uan was a farmer, a farmer so poor that he had only one shirt and one pair of trousers. Juan was much annoyed by monkeys, who stole his corn. So he set a trap and caught several of them. These he killed with a club until he came to the last, which said to him, “Juan, don’t kill me and I will be your servant all your life.”

“But I will,” said Juan. “You are a thief and do not deserve to live.”

“Juan, let me live, and I will bring you good fortune, and if you kill me you will be poor all your life.” The monkey talked so eloquently that Juan let himself be persuaded, and took the monkey home with him. The monkey was true to his word, and served Juan faithfully, cooking, washing, and hunting food for him, and at night going to distant fields and stealing maize and palay [rice] which he added to Juan’s little store.

One day the monkey said to Juan, “Juan, why do you not marry?”

Said Juan, “How can I marry? I have nothing to keep a wife.”

“Take my advice,” said the monkey, “and you can marry the king’s daughter.” Juan took the monkey’s advice and they set out for the king’s palace. Juan remained behind while the monkey went up to the palace alone.

Outside he called, as the custom is, “Honorable people!” and the king said, “Come in.”

The king said, “Monkey, where do you walk?” and the monkey said, “Mr. King, I wish to borrow your *salop*. My master wishes to measure his money.”

The king lent him the *salop* (a measure of about two quarts), and the monkey returned to Juan. After a few hours he returned it with a large copper piece cunningly stuck to the bottom with paste. The king saw it and called the monkey’s attention to it, but the monkey haughtily waved his hand, and told the king that a single coin was of no consequence to his master.

The next day he borrowed the *salop* again and the coin stuck in the bottom was half a peso, and the third day the coin was a peso, but these he assured the king were of no more consequence to his master than the copper. Then the king told the monkey to bring his master to call, and the monkey promised that after a few days he would.

They went home, and as Juan's clothes must be washed, Juan went to bed while the monkey washed and starched them, pulling, pressing, and smoothing them with his hands because he had no iron.

Then they went to call on the king, and the king told Juan that he should marry the princess as soon as he could show the king a large house, with a hundred head of cattle, carabao [domesticated water buffalo], horses, sheep, and goats. Juan was very despondent at this, though he was too brave to let the king know his thoughts. He told his troubles to the monkey, who assured him that the matter was very easy.

The next day they took a drum and a shovel and went into the mountains, where there was a great enchanter who was a very wealthy man and also an *asuang*. They dug a great hole and then Juan hid in the woods and began to beat his drum, and the monkey rushed up to the enchanter's house and told him the soldiers were coming, and that he would hide him. So the enchanter went with the monkey to the hole and the monkey pushed him in and began with hands and feet to cover him up. Juan helped, and soon the enchanter was dead and buried. Then they went to the house and at the first door they opened they liberated fifty people who were being fattened for the enchanter's table. These people were glad to help Juan convey all the money, cattle, and all the enchanter's wealth to the town. Juan built a house on the plaza, married the princess, and lived happily ever after, but his friend the monkey, having so well earned his liberty, he sent back to the woods, and their friendship still continued.

## **JUAN PUSONG**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Maxfield, Berton L., and W. H. Millington. "Visayan Folk-Tales I." *Journal of American Folklore* 19 (1902): 107–112.

**Date:** 1904

**Original Source:** Panay, Visayan

**National Origin:** Philippines

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Juan Pusong ("Tricky John") is the prototypical **trickster** among the people of the Visayas, the central cluster of the Philippine Islands located between Luzon to the north and Mindanao to the south. As is the case with tricksters cross-culturally, Juan Pusong is cunning,

dishonest, and willing to sacrifice friends and family to his own ends. In this tradition, as in many others in Southeast Asia, the trickster often comes to a bad end.

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As the name implies, he is represented as being deceitful and dishonest, sometimes very cunning, and, in some of the stories told of him, endowed with miraculous power. The stories are very simple and of not very great excellence. The few which follow will serve as samples of the narratives told of this popular hero.

Juan Pusong was a lazy boy. Neither punishment nor the offer of a reward could induce him to go to school, but in school-time he was always to be found on the plaza, playing with the other boys.

His mother, however, believed him to be in school, and each day prepared some dainty for him to eat upon his return home. Juan was not satisfied with deceiving his mother in this way, but used to play tricks on her.

“Mother,” he said, one day, “I have already learned to be a seer and to discover what is hidden. This afternoon when I come home from school I will foretell what you have prepared for me.”

“Will you?” said his mother joyfully, for she believed all he said, I will try to prepare something new and you will not be able to guess it.”

“I shall, mother, I shall, let it be whatever it may,” answered Juan.

When it was time to go to school, Juan pretended to set out, but instead he climbed a tree which stood near the kitchen, and hiding himself among the leaves, watched through the window all that his mother did.

His mother baked a bibingca, or cake made of rice and sweet potato, and hid it in a jar. “I will bet anything,” she said, “that my son will not guess what it is.” Juan laughed at his mother’s self-conceit.

When it was time for school to close he got down, and with a book in his hand, as though he had really come from school, appeared before his mother and said Mother, I know what you are keeping for me.”

“What is it?” asked his mother.

The prophecy that I have just learned at school says that there is a bibingca hidden in the olla [jar].”

The mother became motionless with surprise. “Is it possible?” she asked herself, “my son is indeed a seer. I am going to spread it abroad. My son is a seer.”

The news was spread far and wide and many people came to make trial of Pusong’s powers. In these he was always successful, thanks to his ability to cheat.

One day a ship was anchored in the harbor. She had come from a distant island. Her captain had heard of Pusong’s power and wished to try him. The trial consisted in foretelling how many seeds the oranges with which his vessel was loaded contained. He promised to give Juan a great quantity of money if he could do this.

Pusong asked for a day's time. That night he swam out to the vessel, and, hidden in the water under the ship's stern, listened to the conversation of the crew. Luckily they were talking about this very matter of the oranges, and one of them inquired of the captain what kind of oranges he had.

"My friend," said the captain, "these oranges are different from any in this country, for each contains but one seed."

Pusong had learned all that he needed to know, so he swam back to the shore, and the next morning announced that he was ready for the trial.

Many people had assembled to hear the great seer. Pusong continued to read in his book, as though it was the source of his information. The hour agreed upon struck, and the captain of the vessel handed an orange to Juan and said, "Mr. Pusong, you may tell us how many seeds this orange contains."

Pusong took the orange and smelled it. Then he opened his book and after a while said, "This orange you have presented me with contains but one seed."

The orange was cut and but the one seed found in it, so Pusong was paid the money. Of course he obtained a great reputation throughout the country, and became very rich.

Juan Pusong's father drove his cows out one day to pasture. Juan slipped secretly from the house, and going to the pasture, took the cows into the forest and tied them there. When his father was going for the cows he met Juan and asked, "Where did you come from?"

The boy replied, "I have just come from school. What are you looking for?"

"I am looking for our cows," said his father.

"Why, didn't you tell me that before," asked Juan. "Wait a minute," and he took his little book from his pocket and, looking into it, said, "Our cows are in such a place in the forest, tied together. Go and get them." So his father went to the place where Juan said the cows were and found them.

Afterwards it was discovered that Juan could not read even his own name, so his father beat him for the trick he had played.

Pusong had transgressed the law, and was for this reason put into a cage to be in a short time submerged with it into the sea.

Tabloc-lai, a friend of Pusong's, passed by and saw him in the cage. What are you there for?" Tabloc-lai asked.

"Oh!" answered Pusong, "I am a prisoner here, as you see, because the chief wants me to marry his daughter and I don't want to do it. I am to stay here until I consent."

"What a fool you are!" said Tabloc-lai. "The chief's daughter is pretty, and I am surprised that you are not willing to marry her."

"Hear me, Tabloc-lai!" said the prisoner. "If you want to marry the chief's daughter, let me out and get in here in my place; for tomorrow they will come and ask you if you will consent. Then you will be married at once."

"I am willing!" exclaimed Tabloc-lai. "Get out and I will take your place!"

Next morning the chief ordered his soldiers to take the cage with the prisoner to the sea and submerge it in the water.

Tabloc-lai, on seeing the soldiers coming toward him, thought they would make inquiries of him as Pusong had said. "I am ready now," he said, "I am ready to be the princess's husband."

"Is this crazy fellow raving?" asked the soldiers. "We are ordered to take you and submerge you in the sea."

"But," objected Tabloc-lai, "I am ready now to marry the chief's daughter."

He was carried to the sea and plunged into the water, in spite of his crying, "I am not Pusong! I am Tabloc-lai!"

The next week the chief was in his boat, going from one fish-trap to another, to inspect them. Pusong swam out to the boat.

The chief, on seeing him, wondered, for he believed that Pusong was dead. "How is this?" he asked. "Did you not drown last week?"

"By no means. I sank to the bottom, but I found that there was no water there. There is another world where the dead live again. I saw your father and he charged me to bid you go to him, and afterwards you will be able to come back here, if you wish to do so."

"Is that really true, Pusong?" asked the chief.

"Yes, it is really true," was the reply.

"Well, I will go there. I will have a cage made and go through the way you did."

So the next morning the chief was submerged in the water, with the hope of coming back. When a considerable time had elapsed without seeing his return, his servants searched for Pusong, in order to punish him, but he had escaped to the mountains.

There was once a king who had three young and beautiful daughters named Isabel, Catalina, and Maria.

In the capital city of the kingdom lived a young man known by the name of Juan Pusong. He had as friends an ape, named Amo-Mongo, and a wildcat, whose name was Singalong. The three friends were passing one day in front of the palace, and, seeing the three young ladies, were greatly charmed by their beauty.

Pusong, who posed as a young aristocrat of considerable learning, determined to go before the king and declare his love for the Princess Isabel. The king received him favorably, and offered him a seat; but Juan refused to sit down until he should know the result of his request.

The king was astonished at his manner, and asked him what he wanted. Juan replied that he had presumptuously allowed himself to be charmed by the beauty of the Princess Isabel, and humbly requested the king's consent to their marriage. The king had the princess summoned before him, and in the presence of Pusong asked her if she would accept this man as her husband. She dutifully expressed her willingness to do whatever her father wished, so the king granted the request of Pusong, who was immediately married to Isabel.

When Amo-Mongo saw how successful Pusong had been, he presented himself before the king, as his friend had done, and requested the hand of the Princess Catalina. The king, somewhat unwillingly, gave his consent, and these two were also married.

When Singalong saw to what high positions his friends had attained, he became desirous of like fortune, so he went to the king and obtained his consent to his marriage with the Princess Maria.

All three of the king's sons-in-law lived with their wives at the palace, at the king's expense. The latter seeing that his daughters' husbands were lazy fellows, determined to make them useful, so he sent Pusong and Amo-Mongo out to take charge of his estates in the country, while to Singalong he gave the oversight of the servants who worked in the kitchen of the palace.

Pusong and Amo-Mongo went out to the hacienda with the intention of doing something, but when they arrived there, they found so much to do that they concluded that it would be impossible to attend to everything and so decided to do nothing.

The latter, after merely looking over the estate, entered the forest, in order to visit his relatives there. His fellow monkeys, who knew of his marriage with the princess, believed him to be of some importance, and begged him to save them from the famine which was devastating the forest. This Amo-Mongo, with much boasting of his wealth, promised to do, declaring that at the time of harvest he would give them plenty of rice.

When Pusong and his companion returned to the palace they were asked by the king how many acres they had cleared. They replied that they had cleared and planted about one thousand acres. The king was satisfied with their answer, and, at Amo-Mongo's request, gave orders for a large quantity of rice to be carried from the store-house to the spot in the forest where his son-in-law had promised the monkeys that they should find it.

On the other hand, Singalong during the day did nothing, and as the king never saw him at work he disliked his third son-in-law very much. Yet every morning there were great piles of fish and vegetables in the palace kitchen. Amo-Mongo, knowing that his brother-in-law usually went out at night in order to bring something home, contrived to get up early and see what there was in the kitchen, so as to present it to the king as the result of his own labors. In this way, Amo-Mongo became each day dearer and dearer to the king, while Singalong became more and more disliked.

Maria knew that her husband procured their food in some way, for every morning he said to her, "All that you see here I have brought." However, the king knew nothing of all this.

When the early harvest time came, the king commanded Amo-Mongo to bring rice to make pilipig. (Rice pounded into flakes and toasted, a dish of which Filipinos are very fond.)



Amo-Mongo did not know where he could find it, but set out in the direction from which he had seen Singalong coming each morning, and soon came to an extensive rice field bearing an abundant crop. He took a goodly portion of it and, returning to the palace, had the pilipig prepared and set before the king and his household. Every one ate of it, except Singalong, who was the real owner, and his wife, who had been secretly notified by him of the truth of the matter.

Maria was greatly perplexed by what her husband had told her, so she determined one night to watch him. She discovered that, as soon as the other people were asleep, her husband became transformed into a handsome prince and left the palace, leaving behind him his cat's dress. As soon as he had gone, Maria took the cast-off clothing of her husband and cast it into the fire. Singalong smelt it burning and returned to the palace, where he found his wife and begged her to return to him his cat's dress. This she was unable to do, since it was entirely consumed. As a result, Singalong was obliged to retain the form of a prince, but he was afraid to appear before the king in this guise, and so hid himself.

In the morning, Maria went to the king and told him the truth about her husband. Her father, however, thought that she was crazy, and when she insisted, invited her to accompany him to Amo-Mongo's farm, in order to convince her of her error. Many people went with them, and Amo-Mongo led them to the farm, which was really Singalong's, but told them that it belonged to himself. Besides other things, Singalong had planted many fruits, among them atimon [melon] and candol.

Amo-Mongo, seeing the diversity of fruits, began to eat all he could, until he became unable to move a step. Whenever his wife urged him to come away, he would take an atimon under his arm and a candol or so in his hands, until at last his wife, angry at his greediness, gave him a push which caused him to fall headlong, striking his head against a stone and being instantly killed.

Then Singalong, who had secretly followed the crowd from the palace, showed himself to the king in his proper form. After making suitable explanations, he led them to a fine palace in the middle of the hacienda. There they all lived together, but Pusong and his wife, who in former times had treated Singalong very harshly, giving him only the bones and scraps from the table, were now obliged to act as servants in the kitchen of the king's new palace.

## **TRUTH AND FALSEHOOD**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Maxfield, Berton L., and W. H. Millington. "Visayan Folk-Tales I." *Journal of American Folklore* 19 (1902): 100–102.

**Date:** 1904

Original Source: Panay, Visayan

National Origin: Philippines

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The **fable** “Truth and Falsehood” utilizes personified abstractions (that is, truth and falsehood) to make its moral point. The familiar **motifs** “Dead Man as Helper” (E341.1) and “Grateful Animals” (B350) are used in the plot to permit the triumph of “truth” over his resentful companion “falsehood.”

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One day Truth started for the city to find some work. On his way he overtook Falsehood, who was going to the city for the same purpose. Falsehood asked permission to ride on the horse with Truth, and his request was granted.

On the way they questioned each other as to the sort of work they wanted. Truth stated that he intended to be a secretary, so that he might always be clean and white. Falsehood declared that he would be a cook, because then he would always have plenty of fine things to eat.

As they were riding along, they met a man carrying a corpse to the cemetery. He had no one to help him, and Truth, in his great pity for the man, jumped off his horse and helped him. After the corpse was buried, Truth asked, “Did you pray for the repose of the soul of the dead?”

“No,” was the reply, “I do not know how to pray, and I have no money to pay the priest for candles.”

Then Truth gave the man all the money he had, that he might have prayers said for the dead man, and went back to his companion.

When dinner time came, Falsehood was very angry at finding out that Truth had given all his money away, but finally proposed that they should go to the river and catch some fish for dinner. When they arrived at the river, they found some fish which had been caught in a shallow pool near the bank, and caught all they wanted. But Truth was very sorry for the fish, and threw his half back into the river. Falsehood murmured at him and said, “It would have been better for you to give them to me. If I had known that you would throw them into the river, I would not have given you any of them.”

Then they rode on. As they were going through a thick wood in the heart of the mountain they heard a noise as of crying, far away. Truth went forward to find what it was, but Falsehood, trembling with fear, hid himself close behind his comrade. At last they saw seven little eagles in a nest high in a tree. They were crying with hunger, and their mother was nowhere to be seen. Truth was sorry for them, and killed his horse, giving some of the meat to the young eagles, and spreading the rest on the ground beneath the tree, so that the mother-bird might find it.

Falsehood hated his comrade for having killed the horse, because now they were obliged to travel on foot. They went down the mountain, and entering the city, presented themselves before the king, desiring to be taken into his service, the one as secretary and the other as cook. The king granted both requests.

When Falsehood saw that his former companion sat at the table with the king and was always clean and dressed in good clothes, while he himself was dirty and had to eat in the kitchen, he was *very* angry and determined to do something to ruin the one whom now he hated so bitterly.

One day the king and queen went to sail on the sea. As they were far from land, the queen dropped her ring overboard. When Falsehood heard of the accident, he went to the king and said, "My Lord, the King, my friend—your secretary—has told me that he was endowed with magic powers and is able to find the queen's ring. He says if he does not find it he is willing for you to hang him."

The king immediately sent for Truth, and said to him, "Find the queen's ring without delay, or I will have you hanged early tomorrow morning."

Truth went down to the shore, but seeing how impossible it would be to find the ring, began to weep. A fish came near, and floating on top of the water, asked, "Why are you weeping?"

"I weep," Truth replied, "because the king will hang me early tomorrow morning unless I find the queen's ring, which has fallen into the sea."

The fish swam out and got the ring and gave it to Truth. Then he said, "I am one of the fishes which you found on the bank of the river and threw back into the water. As you helped me when I was in trouble, I am very glad that I have been able to help you now."

On another day, Falsehood went to the king and said, "My Lord King, do you remember what I told you the other day?"

"Yes," replied the king, "and I believe you told me the truth, as the ring has been found."

"Well," replied Falsehood, "my friend told me last night that he is a great magician and that he is willing for you to hang him in the sight of all the people, since it will not hurt him."

The king sent for Truth and told him, "I know what you have said to your friend. Tomorrow I will have you hanged in the sight of all the people, and we will see whether you are the great magician you claim to be."

That night Truth could not sleep. About midnight, as he was in great distress, a spirit suddenly appeared to him and asked what was the cause of his grief. Truth related his trouble, and the spirit said, "Do not weep. Tomorrow morning I will take your form and wear your clothes, and let them hang me."

The next morning, just at dawn, the spirit put on Truth's clothes and went out to be hanged. Many people came to see the hanging, and after it was over, returned to their homes. What was the astonishment of the king and those with him when, upon their return to the palace, they found Truth there before them, alive and well!

That night the spirit appeared to Truth and said, "I am the spirit of the dead man for whom you gave your money that prayers might be said for the repose of his soul." Then it disappeared.

On another day Falsehood appeared before the king, and said, "My Lord the King, my friend the secretary told me last night that if you would let him marry your daughter, in one night his wife should bring forth three children." The king sent for Truth and said, "I will give you my daughter to be your wife and if tonight she does not bear three children, I will have you buried alive tomorrow morning."

So they were married. But at midnight, as Truth lay awake thinking of the fate that was in store for him in the morning, an eagle flew through the window, and asked the cause of his sorrow. Truth related his tale, and the eagle said, "Do not worry; I will take care of that." Then he flew away, but just before the break of day three eagles came, each bearing a new-born babe.

Truth awakened the princess and said to her, "My dear wife, these are our children. We must love them and take good care of them."

Then the king, who had been awakened by the noise of children crying, sent to ask what it was all about. When he heard the news he came into the tower where the princess was, and when he saw the children he was overcome with joy; for he had no sons, and greatly desired to have an heir to his throne. So the king made a great feast and gave over his crown and scepter to his son-in-law, to be king in his stead.

Thus we see that those who help others when in trouble shall themselves be aided when they are in difficulty.

# Glossary

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**anecdote:** Originally, a short, humorous tale. Now, the term commonly refers to single-episode narratives, regarded as true and commonly concentrating on an individual.

**animal tales:** Narratives told as conscious fictions in which the characters, though they speak and behave like human beings, are animals. These animal characters are commonly stock types. For example, in many Native American traditions, coyote is regarded as an exploitive, impulsive manipulator. In African American tales, rabbit is type cast in the same role. The tales are most often moralistic (“don’t be greedy”) or etiological (why the frog has no tail) in intent.

**belief tales:** Legends or personal experience narratives that are told with the purpose of validating a particular folk belief.

**cautionary tales:** Narratives whose plots embody a message cautioning against the consequences of particular kinds of behavior.

**culture hero:** Character in myth who finishes the work that brings technology (usually symbolized as fire), laws, religion, and other elements of culture to humans. Culture heroes may take over the business of creating order out of chaos where a Supreme Creator left off. The culture hero serves as a secondary creator or transformer of the universe. He/she transforms the universe by means of his gifts into a universe in which humans can live. In some myths, the culture hero cleanses the universe of things that threaten human existence: monsters, cannibals, or meteorological phenomena.

**cumulative tale:** A tale that begins with an incident, action, or phrase and adds a succession of elements to create a lengthy chain of events.

**cycle:** A group of tales that focuses on a central character, plot, or theme.

**fable:** Fictional narrative ending with a didactic message that is often couched in the form of a “moral” or proverb.

**fairy tale:** See **ordinary folktale**.

**family saga:** Chronologically and often thematically linked collection of legends constituting the folk history of a particular family, usually over several generations. The term was coined by folklorist Mody C. Boatright.

**folk history:** Accounts based on perceptions of historical events rather than on written documentation or similar media.

- formula/formulaic element:** Conventional elements that recur in folk narrative. For example, clichés, structural patterns, stock characters, or situations.
- framing:** The act of setting apart a traditional performance from other types of activity by words, occasions of performance or other distinguishing features.
- genre:** Type, category.
- legend:** Narrative told as truth, set in the historical past, and that does not depart from the present reality of the members of the group.
- local legend:** Legends derived from and closely associated with specific places and events believed to have occurred in those locales.
- märchen:** See **ordinary folktale**.
- motif:** Small element of traditional narrative content, such as an event, object, concept, or pattern.
- myth:** Narratives that explain the will (the intent) and the workings (the orderly principles) of a group's major supernatural figures. Myth is set in a world that predates the present reality.
- natural context:** Setting, in all its elements, in which a performance would ordinarily take place.
- novelle:** Romantic tale.
- numskull:** Character who behaves in an absurdly ignorant fashion, also called "noodle."
- ordinary folktale:** Highly formulaic and structured fictional narrative that is popularly referred to as "fairytale" and designated by folklorists as *märchen* or "wonder tale." Term coined by folklorist Stith Thompson.
- personal experience narrative:** Narrative intended as truth performed in the first person by the individual to whom the described events happened.
- personal legend:** Narrative intended as truth told about a specific (usually well-known) individual.
- resource person:** The bearer of a particular tradition, such as the performer of a folktale.
- stock character:** Recurrent narrative character who invariably plays a stereotyped role such as trickster or fool.
- tale type:** Standard, recurrent folk narrative plot.
- tall tale:** Fictional narrative often told as a firsthand experience, which gradually introduces hyperbole until the audience realizes by the conclusion that the tale is a lie.
- trickster:** Character who defies the limits of propriety and often gender and species. Trickster lives on the margins of his world by his wits and is often regarded as possessing supernatural power. Often a mythic figure such as a coyote or hare will function as both culture hero and trickster.
- validating device:** Any element occurring within a traditional narrative that is intended to convince listeners that the tale is true.
- variant:** Version of a standard tale type.

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### **About the Editor**

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The Greenwood Library of

# world folktales

STORIES FROM THE GREAT COLLECTIONS

volume three

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# Introduction to Volume 3

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**E**urope is the westernmost peninsula of the Eurasian-African landmass, including the British Isles and Iceland far to the west. To the south, the Strait of Gibraltar establishes the boundary between the Iberian Peninsula and Africa. The eastern boundary between Asia and Europe is not so clearly defined, however. For purposes of *The Greenwood Library of World Folktales*, Europe includes not only the territory west of the Ural Mountains, the Ural River, and Caspian Sea, but those nations of the former Soviet Union such as Georgia, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan with cultural as well as political ties to Russia. The following divisions have been established for this collection: Britain and Ireland, Central Europe, Eastern Europe, the Mediterranean, the Nordic countries, and Western Europe.

**Britain and Ireland** have preserved a traditional narrative repertoire influenced by an indigenous Celtic culture and a culture of Germanic invaders who began arriving in the fifth century B.C.E. Later influences included Viking incursions and settlement in the ninth century and the Norman Conquest of the late eleventh century. The Celtic heritage appears not only in tales from Ireland (Éire) and those constituent countries of the United Kingdom that maintained Celtic identities into the twenty-first century (Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales), but also in Brittany across the English Channel and in the English county of Cornwall (see introductory notes to “Jack the Giant-Killer,” page 3 for further discussion). The preservation of traditional narratives in the British Isles was stimulated by the Celtic Revival of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, which sought to foster an appreciation for the art that gave voice to Celtic identity. One product of this cultural renaissance is “Death of Cuchulain” (page 39). Local legends (for example, “The Legend of Savaddan Lake,” page 61) and internationally distributed *märchens* (see, for example, “The Red Calf,” page 58 and “Lady Featherflight,” page 12) are well represented, also.

**Central Europe**, for purposes of this collection, includes those countries associated with the political entities formerly known as Austria-Hungary and

Prussia (Austria, the Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Slovakia, Slovenia) and Switzerland. Historically, Central Europe constituted of a buffer zone between the Ottoman Empire and the Western European nations. This historical experience, as well as the Magyar founders of Hungary, is called forth in “The Boy Who Could Keep a Secret” (page 96). Just as the appreciation and collection of the Celtic folklore of Britain and Ireland was furthered by the Celtic Revival, the study of German folktales was inspired by the work of brothers Jacob (1785–1863) and Wilhelm (1786–1859) Grimm. Although the Grimms were not the first to collect and publish German folktales, their *Kinder und Hausmärchen* (“Children’s and Household Tales”) has appeared in multiple editions; the individual tales have been included in hundreds of anthologies, and among the general public they remain the most well-known collectors of folk narrative. Variants of seven of their classic tales appear in this volume (cited as Grimm). See Germany (pages 67–95).

**Eastern Europe** constitutes not only Poland, Romania, Russia, and those countries that were members of the former United Soviet Socialist Republic (for example, Belarus, Georgia, and Ukraine), but also groups strongly associated with Eastern Europe that were dispersed across national borders both within and outside Eastern Europe. The two of the latter groups include the Ashkenazic Jewish community and the Roma, or Romani, most widely known as the gypsies—a label considered derogatory by group members. Narratives told by the Ashkenazim range from personal experience narratives recalling religious persecution (see, for example, “Return of a Cantonist,” page 141 and “Contempt for His Torturers,” page 147) to trickster tales in which a clever member of the group gets the better of a superior adversary (for example, “How Rabbi Joshua Went to Paradise Alive,” page 142). The Roma repertoire commonly recounts the folk beliefs of the area in which they reside, but in some cases confronts prejudice by presenting group members in a heroic light (see, “Jack and His Golden Snuff-box,” page 163). While many of the tales of Eastern Europe are variants of cross-culturally disseminated tales, they often contextualize the narratives by references to local customs and social institutions. For example, the plot of “The Fisherman and the Boyard’s Daughter” (page 182) is constructed around the customs that control the relationships between peasants and nobility in Romania from the fifteen through the twentieth centuries.

The **Mediterranean** subregion joins Europe, Asia, and Africa, and the Mediterranean Sea has served as a passage for trade goods, people, and ideas for millennia. Among the cultures that arose in this environment were the Classical European civilizations of Greece and Rome. The fact that the sea was one of the preoccupations of Greek antiquity is demonstrated in myths such as “How Theseus Slew the Devourers of Men” (page 231). Despite the Christian character of later Greek folktales, the classical myths appear to have an enduring effect as seen in the motif of the black sail in the modern “The Seven-Headed Serpent” (page 253). Given the access the location of Greece provides to the rest

of Eurasia and Africa, however, it comes as no surprise that other tales such as “The Golden Crab” (page 256) represent common tale types. The Italian tales included in this collection are equally widely distributed. The cultural diversity of Italy notwithstanding, “The Crystal Casket” (page 261), “The Crumb in the Beard” (page 266), and “Cinderella” (page 270) are variants of well-known tales found throughout Europe and most notably included in the collections of the Brothers Grimm. “King Pig” (page 274) is a literary version of the tale later collected by the Grimms as “Hans My Hedgehog” (Grimm 108). Therefore, although the story has the characteristics of literary invention rather than of folk performance, author Giovanni Francesco Straparola (1480–1557) obviously used a traditional tale as his model. The practice of composing literary works by elaborating on traditional tales was put to good use in Western Europe as well.

The narrative examples from the **Nordic Countries** of Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden, and Iceland draw on three bodies of narrative. The tales of the Sami (or Lapps) represent the aboriginal oral traditions of Finland, Norway, and Sweden. As the narratives demonstrate, shamanism and animism play central roles in Sami culture (see, for example, “How Some Wild Animals Became Tame Ones,” page 313, and “How the Stalos Were Tricked,” page 316). A second body of narrative that is central to the Nordic subregion is myth and saga. A selection from “The Prose Edda” (page 292) and “Thor in Peril” (page 298) are drawn from the former, and “From ‘Gisli the Outlaw’” (page 303) illustrates the nature of the Icelandic saga. Finally, the modern Danish folktales “The Suitor” (page 289) and “Peter Ox” (page 285) exemplify the narratives of Nordic folk culture, as distinct from aboriginal narrative or narratives of the “classic” period.

Much of the subregion **Western Europe**, in the broadest sense of that term, has been treated elsewhere in this introduction under more specific categories (for example, Central Europe). The following comments, therefore, focus on France and the Iberian Peninsula as representing the Western European subregion. France, which shares borders with both Central European and Mediterranean countries and coasts on both the Mediterranean Sea and the English Channel, has had the opportunity to absorb diverse European traditions in addition to the aboriginal Celtic, Romanized Celtic, and Germanic cultures that provided the raw materials for French regional cultures. The Basques residing in the Pyrenees, a mountain range partitioning off the Iberian Peninsula from France, constitute one of these distinctive folk groups. The Basques maintain an intense sense of cultural identity that comes to life in their narrative traditions (see, for example, “Roldan’s Bugle Horn,” page 339). Unique customs and folk beliefs also shape their tales, as in “The Grateful Tartaro and the Heren-Suge” (page 350). France, like Italy and Germany, developed literary versions of traditional tales, narratives that are more widely known to contemporary readers than their folk models. This literary tradition gave rise, in fact, to the phrase “fairy tale” (see notes for “The Story of Pretty Goldilocks,” page 364) and the

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fictional persona “Mother Goose” (see notes for “Bluebeard,” page 360). On the other side of the Pyrenees, the tales of the Iberian Peninsula blended the European Catholic worldview with North African (Moorish) Islamic culture. The folktale collections of novelist Cecilia Francisca Josefa De Arrom (1796–1877), writing under the pseudonym of Fernà Caballero, indicate that Moorish influence persisted well into the nineteenth century. Moreover, the tolerant attitudes of Moorish Spain (Al-Andalus) and the accessibility of the Iberian Peninsula to North Africa allowed the Sephardim (Jews who traced their origins to Spain and Portugal) to flourish from around the eighth century until their expulsion following the “Reconquest” of the subregion by Spain and Portugal in the late fifteenth century. “The Saragossan Purim” (page 379) and “The Slave’s Fortune” (page 380) are products of Sephardic traditional narratives dating from the post-expulsion period.

# **EUROPE**

***Britain and Ireland***





# ENGLAND

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## JACK THE GIANT-KILLER

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Hartland, Edwin Sidney. *English Fairy and Other Folktales*. London: Walter Scott, 1890, 3–17.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Chapbooks

**National Origin:** England

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Sharing the island of Great Britain with Scotland and Wales, England is the largest of the four constituent countries of the United Kingdom: England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales. The county of Cornwall is located on a peninsula west of Devon and extending southwest into the Atlantic Ocean. Historically, Cornwall has been noted as a mining region and elements of the tale reflect this occupation. Jack overcomes his first giant adversary using a miner's shovel and pickaxe, and in many of his adventures, he retrieves treasure from subterranean regions. Jack accomplishes his goals by wit and makes the world safe for humanity. Therefore, he serves the functions of **culture hero** by using the means of **trickster**, a common practice in **myth**. While "Jack the Giant-Killer" (AT 328) does not meet all the criteria of myth, the period of Arthur's reign in England is used here and elsewhere (see "The History of Tom Thumb," page 21, for example) to denote a long-ago age embodying more possibilities than the historical past of performers and audiences. The tale as published by Hartland was collated from chapbooks. The term chapbook refers to pamphlets, cheaply printed and widely distributed, that served as a medium of entertainment, current news, and history. The news most often consisted of rumor, and the

history was unreliable. The chapbooks, however, were important media for popular culture well into the nineteenth century.

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In the reign of King Arthur, there lived in the county of Cornwall, near the Land's End of England, a wealthy farmer who had one only son called Jack. He was brisk and of a ready lively wit, so that whatever he could not perform by force and strength he completed by ingenious wit and policy. Never was any person heard of that could worst him, and he very often even baffled the learned by his sharp and ready invention.

In those days the Mount of Cornwall was kept by a huge and monstrous giant of eighteen feet in height, and about three yards in compass, of a fierce and grim countenance, the terror of all the neighboring towns and villages. He lived in a cave in the midst of the Mount, and would not suffer any one else to live near him. His food was other men's cattle, which often became his prey, for whensoever he wanted food he would wade over to the mainland, where he would furnish himself with whatever came in his way. The good folk, at his approach, forsook their habitations, while he seized on their cattle, making nothing of carrying half-a-dozen oxen on his back at a time; and as for their sheep and hogs, he would tie them round his waist like a bunch of bandoliers. This course he had followed for many years, so that all Cornwall was impoverished by his depredations.

One day Jack, happening to be present at the town hall when the magistrates were sitting in council about the giant, asked what reward would be given to the person who destroyed him. The giant's treasure, they said, was the recompense. Quoth Jack, "Then let me undertake it."

So he furnished himself with a horn, shovel, and pickaxe, and went over to the Mount in the beginning of a dark winter's evening, when he fell to work, and before morning had dug a pit twenty-two feet deep, and nearly as broad, covering it over with long sticks and straw. Then strewing a little mould upon it, it appeared like plain ground. This completed, Jack placed himself on the contrary side of the pit, farthest from the giant's lodging, and, just at the break of day, he put the horn to his mouth, and blew, Tantivy, Tantivy.

This unexpected noise aroused the giant, who rushed from his cave, crying, "You incorrigible villain, are you come here to disturb my rest? You shall pay dearly for this. Satisfaction I will have, and this it shall be, I will take you whole and broil you for breakfast," which he had no sooner uttered, than tumbling into the pit, he made the very foundations of the Mount to shake.

"Oh, giant," quoth Jack, "where are you now? Oh faith, you are gotten now into Lob's Pound, where I will surely plague you for your threatening words: what do you think now of broiling me for your breakfast? Will no other diet serve you but poor Jack?" Thus having tantalized the giant for a while, he gave him a most weighty knock with his pickaxe on the very crown of his head, and killed him on the spot.

This done, Jack filled up the pit with earth, and went to search the cave, which he found contained much treasure. When the magistrates heard of this, they made a declaration he should henceforth be termed Jack the Giant-Killer, and presented him with a sword and an embroidered belt, on which were written these words in letters of gold—

Here's the right valiant Cornish man,  
Who slew the giant Cormelian.

The news of Jack's victory soon spread over all the West of England, so that another giant, named Blunderbore, hearing of it, vowed to be revenged on the little hero, if ever it was his fortune to light on him. This giant was the lord of an enchanted castle situated in the midst of a lonesome wood. Now Jack, about four months afterwards, walking near this wood in his journey to Wales, being weary, seated himself near a pleasant fountain and fell fast asleep. While he was enjoying his repose, the giant, coming for water, there discovered him, and knew him to be the far-famed Jack, by the lines written on the belt. Without ado, he took Jack on his shoulders and carried him towards his enchanted castle.

Now, as they passed through a thicket, the rustling of the boughs awakened Jack, who was strangely surprised to find himself in the clutches of the giant. His terror was not yet begun, for on entering the castle, he saw the ground strewed with human bones, the giant telling him his own would ere long increase them. After this the giant locked poor Jack in an immense chamber, leaving him there while he went to fetch another giant living in the same wood to share in Jack's destruction. While he was gone, dreadful shrieks and lamentations affrighted Jack, especially a voice which continually cried:

Do what you can to get away,  
Or you'll become the giant's prey;  
He's gone to fetch his brother, who  
Will kill, likewise devour you too.

This dreadful noise had almost distracted Jack, who, going to the window, beheld afar off the two giants coming towards the castle. "Now," quoth Jack to himself, "my death or my deliverance is at hand." Now, there were strong cords in a corner of the room in which Jack was, and two of these he took, and made a strong noose at the end; and while the giants were unlocking the iron gate of the castle he threw the ropes over each of their heads. Then drawing the other ends across a beam, and pulling with all his might, he throttled them. Then, seeing they were black in the face, and sliding down the rope, he came to their heads, when they could not defend themselves, and drawing his sword, slew them both.

Then, taking the giant's keys, and unlocking the rooms, he found three fair ladies tied by the hair of their heads, almost starved to death. "Sweet ladies," quoth Jack, "I have destroyed this monster and his brutish brother, and obtained

your liberties.” This said, he presented them with the keys, and so proceeded on his journey to Wales.

Having but little money, Jack found it well to make the best of his way by traveling as fast as he could, but losing his road, he was benighted, and could not get a place of entertainment until, coming into a narrow valley, he found a large house, and by reason of his present needs took courage to knock at the gate.

But what was his surprise when there came forth a monstrous giant with two heads; yet he did not appear so fiery as the others were, for he was a Welsh giant, and what he did was by private and secret malice under the false show of friendship. Jack, having told his condition to the giant, was shown into a bedroom, where, in the dead of night, he heard his host in another apartment muttering these words:

Though here you lodge with me this night,  
You shall not see the morning light:  
My club shall dash your brains outright!

“Say’st thou so,” quoth Jack; “that is like one of your Welsh tricks, yet I hope to be cunning enough for you.” Then, getting out of bed, he laid a billet in the bed in his stead, and hid himself in a corner of the room. At the dead time of the night in came the Welsh giant, who struck several heavy blows on the bed with his club, thinking he had broken every bone in Jack’s skin. The next morning Jack, laughing in his sleeve, gave him hearty thanks for his night’s lodging.

“How have you rested?” quoth the giant; “did you not feel anything in the night?”

“No,” quoth Jack, “nothing but a rat, which gave me two or three slaps with her tail” With that, greatly wondering, the giant led Jack to breakfast, bringing him a bowl containing four gallons of hasty pudding.

Being loath to let the giant think it too much for him, Jack put a large leather bag under his loose coat, in such a way that he could convey the pudding into it without its being perceived. Then, telling the giant he would show him a trick, taking a knife, Jack ripped open the bag, and out came all the hasty pudding.

Whereupon, saying, “Odds splutters, hur can do that trick hurself,” the monster took the knife, and ripping open his belly, fell down dead.

Now, it fell in these days that King Arthur’s only son requested his father to furnish him with a large sum of money, in order that he might go and seek his fortune in the principality of Wales, where lived a beautiful lady possessed with seven evil spirits. The king did his best to persuade his son from it, but in vain; so at last granted the request, and the prince set out with two horses, one loaded with money, the other for himself to ride upon.

Now, after several days’ travel, he came to a market-town in Wales, where he beheld a vast concourse of people gathered together. The prince demanded the reason of it, and was told that they had arrested a corpse for several large

sums of money which the deceased owed when he died. The prince replied that it was a pity creditors should be so cruel, and said, "Go bury the dead, and let his creditors come to my lodging, and there their debts shall be discharged." They accordingly came, but in such great numbers that before night he had almost left himself moneyless.

Now Jack the Giant-Killer, coming that way, was so taken with the generosity of the prince, that he desired to be his servant. This being agreed upon, the next morning they set forward on their journey together, when, as they were riding out of the town, an old woman called after the prince, saying, "He has owed me twopence these seven years; pray pay me as well as the rest,"

Putting his hand to his pocket, the prince gave the woman all he had left, so that after their day's refreshment, which cost what small spell Jack had by him, they were without a penny between them.

When the sun began to grow low, the king's son said, "Jack, since we have no money, where can we lodge this night?"

But Jack replied, "Master, we'll do well enough for I have an uncle lives within two miles of this place; he is a huge and monstrous giant with three heads; he'll fight five hundred men in armor, and make them to fly before him."

"Alas!" quoth the prince, "what shall we do there? He'll certainly chop us up at a mouthful. Nay, we are scarce enough to fill one of his hollow teeth!"

"It is no matter for that," quoth Jack; "I myself will go before and prepare the way for you; therefore tarry and wait till I return." Jack then rode away full speed, and coming to the gate of the castle, he knocked so loud that he made the neighboring hills resound.

The giant roared out at this like thunder, "Who's there?"

He was answered, "None but your poor Cousin Jack."

Quoth he, "What news with my poor Cousin Jack?"

He replied, "Dear uncle, heavy news, God wot!"

"Prithee," quoth the giant, "what heavy news can come to me? I am a giant with three heads, and besides thou knowest I can fight five hundred men in armor, and make them fly like chaff before the wind."

"Oh, but," quoth Jack, "here's the king's son a-coming with a thousand men in armor to kill you and destroy all that you have!"

"Oh, Cousin Jack," said the giant, "this is heavy news indeed! I will immediately run and hide myself and thou shalt lock, bolt, and bar me in, and keep the keys until the prince is gone." Having secured the giant, Jack fetched his master, when they made themselves heartily merry whilst the poor giant laid trembling in a vault under the ground.

Early in the morning Jack furnished his master with a fresh supply of gold and silver, and then sent him three miles forward on his journey, at which time the prince was pretty well out of the smell of the giant. Jack then returned, and let the giant out of the vault, who asked what he should give him for keeping the castle from destruction.

“Why,” quoth Jack, “I desire nothing but the old coat and cap, together with the old rusty sword and slippers which are at your bed’s head.”

Quoth the giant, “Thou shalt have them; and pray keep them for my sake, for they are things of excellent use. The coat will keep you invisible, the cap will furnish you with knowledge, the sword cuts asunder whatever you strike, and the shoes are of extraordinary swiftness. These may be serviceable to you, therefore take them with all my heart.”

Taking them, Jack thanked his uncle, and then having overtaken his master, they quickly arrived at the house of the lady the prince sought, who, finding the prince to be a suitor, prepared a splendid banquet for him. After the repast was concluded, she wiped his mouth with a handkerchief, saying, “You must show me that handkerchief tomorrow morning, or else you will lose your head.” With that she put it in her bosom.

The prince went to bed in great sorrow, but Jack’s cap of knowledge instructed him how it was to be obtained. In the middle of the night she called upon her familiar spirit to carry her to Lucifer. But Jack put on his coat of darkness and his shoes of swiftness, and was there as soon as her.

When she entered the place of the evil one, she gave the handkerchief to old Lucifer, who laid it upon a shelf, whence Jack took it and brought it to his master, who showed it to the lady the next day, and so saved his life.

On that day, she saluted the prince, telling him he must show her the lips tomorrow morning that she kissed last night, or lose his head. “Ah,” he replied, “if you kiss none but mine, I will”

“That is neither here nor there,” said she; “if you do not, death’s your portion!” At midnight she went as before, and was angry with old Lucifer for letting the handkerchief go.

“But now,” quoth she, “I will be too hard for the king’s son, for I will kiss thee, and he is to show me thy lips.”

Which she did, and Jack, who was standing by, cut off the devil’s head and brought it under his invisible coat to his master, who the next morning pulled it out by the horns before the lady. Thus broke, the enchantment and the evil spirit left her, and she appeared in all her beauty. They were married the next morning, and soon after went to the court of King Arthur, where Jack, for his many great exploits, was made one of the Knights of the Round Table.

Having been successful in all his undertakings, Jack resolved not to remain idle, but to perform what services he could for the honor of his king and country, and besought King Arthur to fit him out with a horse and money to enable him to travel in search of strange and new adventures. “For,” said he, “there are many giants yet living in the remotest part of Wales, to the unspeakable damage of your majesty’s liege subjects; wherefore, may it please you to encourage me, I do not doubt but in a short time to cut them off root and branch, and so rid all the realm of those giants and monsters of nature.” When the king had heard this noble request, he furnished Jack with all necessaries, and Jack started on his

pursuit, taking with him the cap of knowledge, sword of sharpness, shoes of swiftness, and invisible coat, the better to complete the dangerous enterprises which now lay before him.

Jack traveled over vast hills and wonderful mountains, and on the third day came to a large wood, which he had no sooner entered than he heard dreadful shrieks and cries. Casting his eyes round, he beheld with terror a huge giant dragging along a fair lady and a knight by the hair of their heads, with as much ease as if they had been a pair of gloves. At this sight Jack shed tears of pity, and then, alighting from his horse, he put on his invisible coat, and taking with him his sword of sharpness, at length with a swinging stroke cut off both the giant's legs below the knee, so that his fall made the trees to tremble.

At this the courteous knight and his fair lady, after returning Jack their hearty thanks, invited him home, there to refresh his strength after the frightful encounter, and receive some ample reward for his good services. But Jack vowed he would not rest until he had found out the giant's den. The knight, hearing this, was very sorrowful, and replied, "Noble stranger, it is too much to run a second risk; this monster lived in a den under yonder mountain, with a brother more fierce and fiery than himself. Therefore, if you should go thither, and perish in the attempt, it would be a heartbreaking to me and my lady. Let me persuade you to go with us, and desist from any further pursuit."

"Nay," quoth Jack, "were there twenty, not one should escape my fury. But when I have finished my task, I will come and pay my respects to you."

Jack had not ridden more than a mile and a half; when the cave mentioned by the knight appeared to view, near the entrance of which he beheld the giant sitting upon a block of timber, with a knotted iron club by his side, waiting, as he supposed, for his brother's return with his barbarous prey. His goggle eyes were like flames of fire, his countenance grim and ugly, and his cheeks like a couple of large fitches of bacon, while the bristles of his beard resembled rods of iron wire, and the locks that hung down upon his brawny shoulders were like curled snakes or hissing adders.

Jack alighted from his horse, and, putting on the coat of darkness, approached near the giant, and said softly, "Oh! are you there? It will not be long ere I shall take you fast by the beard."

The giant all this while could not see him, on account of his invisible coat, so that Jack, coming up close to the monster, struck a blow with his sword at his head, but, missing his aim, he cut off the nose instead. At this, the giant roared like claps of thunder, and began to lay about him with his iron club like one stark mad. But Jack, running behind, drove his sword up to the hilt in the giant's back, which caused him to fall down dead. This done, Jack cut off the giant's head, and sent it, with his brother's head also, to King Arthur, by a Waggoner he hired for that purpose.

Jack now resolved to enter the giants' cave in search of his treasure, and, passing along through a great many windings and turnings, he came at length to a large room paved with freestone, at the upper end of which was a boiling



caldron, and on the right hand a large table, at which the giants used to dine. Then he came to a window, barred with iron, through which he looked and beheld a vast of miserable captives, who, seeing him, cried out, "Alas! young man, art thou come to be one amongst us in this miserable den?"

"Ay," quoth Jack, "but pray tell me what is the meaning of your captivity?"

"We are kept here," said one, "till such time as the giants have a wish to feast, and then the fattest among us is slaughtered! And many are the times they have dined upon murdered men!"

"Say you so," quoth Jack, and straightway unlocked the gate and let them free, who all rejoiced like condemned malefactors at sight of a reprieve. Then searching the giants' coffers, he shared the gold and silver equally amongst them.

It was about sunrise the next day when Jack, after seeing the captives on their way to their respective places of abode, mounted his horse to proceed on his journey, and, by the help of his directions, reached the knight's house about noon. He was received here with all demonstrations of joy by the knight and his lady, who in an honorable respect to Jack prepared a feast which lasted many days, all the gentry in the neighborhood being of the company. The worthy knight was likewise pleased to present him with a beautiful ring, on which was engraved a picture of the giant dragging the distressed knight and his lady, with this motto:

We are in sad distress, you see,  
Under a giant's fierce command,  
But gain our lives and liberty  
By valiant Jack's victorious hand.

But in the midst of all this mirth a messenger brought the dismal tidings that one Thunderdell, a giant with two heads, having heard of the death of his two kinsmen, came from the northern dales to be revenged on Jack, and was within a mile of the knight's seat, the country people flying before him like chaff. But Jack was no whit daunted, and said, "Let him come! I have a tool to pick his teeth; and you, ladies and gentlemen, walk but forth into the garden, and you shall witness this giant Thunderdell's death and destruction."

The situation of this knight's house was in the midst of a small island encompassed with a moat thirty feet deep and twenty feet wide, over which lay a drawbridge. Wherefore Jack employed men to cut through this bridge on both sides, nearly to the middle; and then, dressing himself in his invisible coat, he marched against the giant with his sword of sharpness. Although the giant could not see Jack, he smelt his approach, and cried out in these words:

Fee, fi, fo, fum  
I smell the blood of an English man  
Be he alive or be he dead,  
I'll grind his bones to make me bread!

"Say'st thou so," said Jack; "then thou art a monstrous miller indeed."

At which the giant cried out again, "Art thou that villain who killed my kinsmen? Then I will tear thee with my teeth, suck thy blood, and grind thy bones to powder."

"You will catch me first," quoth Jack, and throwing off his invisible coat, so that the giant might see him, and putting on his shoes of swiftness, he ran from the giant, who followed like a walking castle, so that the very foundations of the earth seemed to shake at every step. Jack led him a long dance, in order that the gentlemen and ladies might see; and at last, to end the matter, ran lightly over the drawbridge, the giant, in full speed, pursuing him with his club. Then, coming to the middle of the bridge, the giant's great weight broke it down, and he tumbled headlong into the water, where he rolled and wallowed like a whale. Jack, standing by the moat, laughed at him all the while; but though the giant foamed to hear him scoff; and plunged from place to place in the moat, yet he could not get out to be revenged. Jack at length got a cart-rope and cast it over the two heads of the giant, and drew him ashore by a team of horses, and then cut off both his heads with his sword of sharpness, and sent them to King Arthur.

After some time spent in mirth and pastime, Jack, taking leave of the knights and ladies, set out for new adventures. Through many woods he passed, and came at length to the foot of a high mountain. Here, late at night, he found a lonesome house, and knocked at the door, which was opened by an ancient man with a head as white as snow. "Father," said Jack, "have you entertainment for a benighted traveler that has lost his way?"

"Yes," said the old man; "you are right welcome to my poor cottage." Whereupon Jack entered, and down they sat together, and the old man began to discourse as follows:

"Son, I am sensible you are the great conqueror of giants, and behold, my son, on the top of this mountain is an enchanted castle, maintained by a giant named Galligantus, who, by the help of an old conjurer, betrays many knights and ladies into his castle, where by magic art they are transformed into sundry shapes and forms; but, above all, I lament the misfortune of a duke's daughter, whom they fetched from her father's garden, carrying her through the air in a burning chariot drawn by fiery dragons, when they secured her within the castle, and transformed her into the shape of a white hind. And though many knights have tried to break the enchantment, and work her deliverance, yet no one could accomplish it, on account of two dreadful griffins which are placed at the castle gate, and which destroy every one who comes near. But you, my son, being furnished with an invisible coat, may pass by them undiscovered, where on the gates of the castle you will find engraven in large letters by what means the enchantment may be broken."

The old man having ended, Jack gave him his hand, and promised that in the morning he would venture his life to free the lady.

In the morning Jack arose and put on his invisible coat and magic cap and shoes, and prepared himself for the enterprise. Now, when he had reached the top of the mountain he soon discovered the two fiery griffins, but passed them

without fear, because of his invisible coat. When he had got beyond them, he found upon the gates of the castle a golden trumpet hung by a silver chain, under which these lines were engraved:

Whoever shall this trumpet blow,  
Shall soon the giant overthrow,  
And break the black enchantment straight;  
So all shall be in happy state.

Jack had no sooner read this but he blew the trumpet, at which the castle trembled to its vast foundations, and the giant and conjurer were in horrid confusion, biting their thumbs and tearing their hair, knowing their wicked reign was at an end. Then the giant stooping to take up his club, Jack at one blow cut off his head; whereupon the conjurer, mounting up into the air, was carried away in a whirlwind. Thus was the enchantment broken, and all the lords and ladies who had so long been transformed into birds and beasts returned to their proper shapes, and the castle vanished away in a cloud of smoke.

This being done, the head of Galligantus was likewise, in the accustomed manner, conveyed to the Court of King Arthur, where the very next day, Jack followed, with the knights and ladies who had been so honorably delivered. Whereupon, as a reward for his good services, the king prevailed upon the afore-said duke to bestow his daughter in marriage on honest Jack. So married they were, and the whole kingdom was filled with joy at the wedding. Furthermore, the king bestowed on Jack a noble habitation, with a very beautiful estate thereto belonging, where he and his lady lived in great joy and happiness all the rest of their days.

## LADY FEATHERFLIGHT

**Tradition Bearer:** Elizabeth Hoar

**Source:** Newell, W. W. "Lady Featherflight." *Journal of American Folklore* 6 (1893): 54–62.

**Date:** 1891

**Original Source:** England

**National Origin:** England

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The following narrative is based largely on "The Girl as Helper in the Hero's Flight" (AT 313). An episode in which the helpful giant's daughter is imperiled by the foolishness of a group of villagers is substituted for the more common "Forgotten Fiancée" (*Motif D* 2003). The final brief episode of stealing the giant's treasure is reminiscent of "Jack and the Beanstalk" (AT 328).

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A poor woman, living on the edge of a wood, came at last to where she found nothing in the cupboard for the next day's breakfast. She called her boy Jack, and said, "You must now go into the wide world; if you stay here, there will be two of us to starve. I have nothing for you but this piece of black bread. On the other side of the forest lies the world. Find your way to it, and gain your living honestly." With that she bade him good-bye and he started. He knew the way some distance into the thickest of the forest, for he had often been there for fagots. But after walking all day, he saw no farm, path, or tree, and knew that he was lost. Still he traveled on and on, as long as the daylight lasted, and then lay down and slept.

The next morning he ate the black bread, and wandered on all day. At night he saw lights before him, and was guided by them to a large palace, where he knocked for a long time in vain. At last the door was opened, and a lovely lady appeared, who said as she saw him, "Go away as quickly as you can. My father will soon come home, and he will surely eat you."

Jack said, "Can't you hide me, and give me something to eat, or I shall fall down dead at your door?"

At first she refused, but afterwards yielded to Jack's prayers, and told him to come in and hide behind the oven. Then she gave him food, and told him that her father was a giant, who ate men and women. Perhaps she could keep him overnight, as she had already supper prepared.

After a while, the giant came banging at the door, shouting, "Featherflight, let me in; let me in!" As she opened the door he came in, saying, "Where have you stowed the man? I smelt him all the way through that wood."

Featherflight said, "Oh father, he is nothing but a poor, little, thin boy! He would make but half a mouthful, and his bones would stick in your throat; and beside he wants to work for you; perhaps you can make him useful. But sit down to supper now, and after supper I will show him to you."

So she set before him half of a fat heifer, a sheep, and a turkey, which he swallowed so fast that his hair stood on end. When he had finished, Featherflight beckoned to Jack, who came trembling from behind the oven. The giant looked at him scornfully and said, "Indeed, as you say, he is but half a mouthful. But there is room for flesh there, and we must fatten him up for a few days; mean-while he must earn his victuals. See here, my young snip, can you do a day's work in a day?"

And Jack answered bravely, "I can do a day's work in a day as well as another."

So the giant said, "Well, go to bed now. I will tell you in the morning your work." So Jack went to bed, and Lady Featherflight showed him; while the giant lay down on the floor with his head in Featherflight's lap, and she combed his hair and brushed his head till he went fast asleep.

The next morning Jack was called bright and early, and was taken out to the farmyard, where stood a large barn, unroofed by a late tempest. Here the giant stopped and said, "Behind this barn you will find a hill of feathers; thatch

me this barn with them, and earn your supper, and, look you! if it be not done when I come back tonight, you shall be fried in meal, and swallowed whole for supper.” Then he left, laughing to himself as he went down the road.

Jack went bravely to work and found a ladder and basket; he filled the basket, and ran up the ladder, and then tried hard to make a beginning on the thatch. As soon as he placed a handful of feathers, half would fly away as he wove them in. He tried for hours with no success, until at last half of the hill was scattered to the four winds, and he had not finished a hand-breadth of the roof.

Then he sat down at the foot of the ladder and began to cry, when out came Lady Featherflight, with the basket on her arm, which she set down at his feet, saying, “Eat now, and cry after. Meantime I will try to think what I can do to help you.”

Jack felt cheered, and went to work, while Lady Featherflight walked round the barn, singing as she went, “Birds of land and birds of sea, Come and thatch this roof for me.” As she walked round the second time, the sky grew dark, and a heavy cloud hid the sun and came nearer and nearer to the earth, separating at last into hundreds and thousands of birds. Each, as it flew, dropped a feather on the roof, and tucked it neatly in; and when Jack’s meal was finished the roof was finished, too.

Then Featherflight said, “Let us talk and enjoy ourselves till my father the giant comes home.” So they wandered round the grounds and the stables, and Lady Featherflight told of the treasure in the strong room, till Jack wondered why he was born without a sixpence. Soon they went back to the house, and Jack helped, and Lady Featherflight prepared supper, which tonight was fourteen loaves of bread, two sheep, and a jack-pudding, by way of finish, which would almost have filled the little house where Jack was born.

Soon the giant came home, thundered at the door again, and shouted, “Let me in, let me in!” Featherflight served him with the supper already laid, and the giant ate it with great relish. As soon as he had finished, he called to Jack, and asked him about his work. Jack said, “I told you I could do a day’s work in a day as well as another. You’ll have no fault to find.” The giant said nothing, and Jack went to bed. Then, as before, the giant lay down on the floor with his head in Featherflight’s lap. She combed his hair and brushed his head till he fell fast asleep.

The next morning the giant called Jack into the yard, and looked at his day’s work. All he said was, “This is not your doing,” and he proceeded to a heap of seed, nearly as high as the barn, saying, “Here is your day’s work. Separate the seeds, each into its own pile. Let it be done when I come home tonight, or you shall be fried in meal, and I shall swallow you, bones and all.”

Then the giant went off down the road, laughing as he went. Jack seated himself before the heap, took a handful of seeds, put corn in one pile, rye in another, oats in another, and had not begun to find an end of the different kinds when noon had come, and the sun was right over head. The heap was no smaller, and Jack was tired out, so he sat down, hugged his knees, and cried.

Out came Featherflight, with a basket on her arm, which she put down before Jack, saying, "Eat now, and cry after." So Jack ate with a will, and Lady Featherflight walked round and round the heap, singing as she went, "Birds of earth and birds of sea, Come and sort this seed for me."

As she walked round the heap for the second time, still singing, the ground about her looked as if it was moving. From behind each grain of sand, each daisy stem, each blade of grass, there came some little insect, gray, black, brown, or green, and began to work at the seeds. Each chose some one kind, and made a heap by itself. When Jack had finished a hearty meal, the great heap was divided into countless others; and Jack and Lady Featherflight walked and talked to their hearts' content for the rest of the day.

As the sun went down the giant came home, thundered at the door again, and shouted, "Let me in; let me in!"

Featherflight greeted him with his supper, already laid, and he sat down and ate, with a great appetite, four fat pigs, three fat pullets, and an old gander. He finished off with a jack-pudding. Then he was so sleepy he could not keep his head up; all he said was, "Go to bed, youngster; I'll see your work tomorrow." Then, as before, the giant laid his head down on the floor with his head in Featherflight's lap. She combed his hair and brushed his head, and he fell fast asleep.

The next morning the giant called Jack into the farmyard earlier than before. "It is but fair to call you early, for I have work more than a strong man can well do." He showed him a heap of sand, saying, "Make me a rope to tether my herd of cows, that they may not leave the stalls before milking time." Then he turned on his heel, and went down the road laughing.

Jack took some sand in his hands, gave a twist, threw it down, went to the door, and called out, "Featherflight! Featherflight! This is beyond you: I feel myself already rolled in meal, and swallowed, bones and all."

Out came Featherflight, saying with good cheer, "Not so bad as that. Sit down, and we will plan what to do." They talked and planned all the day. Just before the giant came home, they went up to the top of the stairs to Jack's room; then Featherflight pricked Jack's finger and dropped a drop of blood on each of the three stairs. Then she came down and prepared the supper, which tonight was a brace of turkeys, three fat geese, five fat hens, six fat pigeons, seven fat woodcocks, and half a score of quail, with a jack-pudding.

When he had finished, the giant turned to Featherflight with a growl, "Why so sparing of food tonight? Is there no good meal in the larder? This boy whets my appetite. Well for you, young sir, if you have done your work. Is it done?"

"No, sir," said Jack boldly. "I said I could do a day's work in a day as well as another, but no better."

The giant said, "Featherflight, prick him for me with the larding needle, hang him in the chimney corner well wrapped in bacon, and give him to me for my early breakfast."

Featherflight says, "Yes, father." Then, as before, the giant laid his head down on the floor with his head in Featherflight's lap. She combed his hair, and brushed his head, and he fell fast asleep.

Jack goes to bed, his room at the top of the stairs. As soon as the giant is snoring in bed, Featherflight softly calls Jack and says, "I have the keys of the treasure house; come with me." They open the treasure house, take out bags of gold and silver, and loosen the halter of the best horse in the best stall in the best stable. Jack mounts with Featherflight behind, and off they go.

At three o'clock in the morning, not thinking of his order the night before, the giant wakes and calls, "Jack, get up."

"Yes, sir," says the first drop of blood.

At four o'clock the giant wakes, turns over, and says, "Jack, get up."

"Yes, sir," says the second drop of blood.

At five o'clock the giant wakens, turns over, and says, "Jack, get up."

"Yes, sir," says the third drop of blood.

At six o'clock the giant wakens, turns over, and says, "Jack, get up," and there was no answer.

Then with great fury he says, "Featherflight has overslept herself; my breakfast won't be ready." He rushes to Featherflight's room; it is empty. He dashes downstairs to the chimney corner, to see if Jack is hanging there, and finds neither Jack nor Featherflight.

Then he suspects they have run away, and rushes back for his seven-leagued boots, but cannot find the key under his pillow. He rushes down, finds the door wide open, catches up his boots and rushes to the stable. There he finds that the best horse from the best stall from the best stable has gone. Jumping into his boots, he flies after them, swifter than the wind.

The runaways had been galloping for several hours, when Jack hears a sound behind him, and, turning, sees the giant in the distance. "O Featherflight! Featherflight! All is lost!"

But Featherflight says, "Keep steady, Jack, look in the horse's right ear, and throw behind you over your right shoulder what you find."

Jack looks and finds a little stick of wood, throws it over his right shoulder, and then there grows up behind them a forest of hard wood. "We are saved," says Jack.

"Not so certain," says Lady Featherflight, "but prick up the horse, for we have gained some time."

The giant went back for an axe, but soon hacked and hewed his way through the wood, and was on the trail again.

Jack again heard a sound, turned and saw the giant, and said to Lady Featherflight, "All is lost."

"Keep steady, Jack," says Featherflight; "look in the horse's left ear, and throw over your left shoulder what you find." Jack looked, found a drop of water, throws it over his left shoulder, and between them and the giant there arises a

large lake, and the giant stops on the other side, and shouts across, "How did you get over?"

Featherflight calls, "We drank, and our horses drank, and we drank our way through."

The giant shouts scornfully back, "Surely I am good for what you can do," and he threw himself down and drank, and drank, and drank, and then he burst.

Now they go on quietly till they come near to a town. Here they stop, and Jack says, "Climb this tree, and hide in the branches till I come with the parson to marry us. For I must buy me a suit of fine clothes before I am seen with a gay lady like yourself."

So Featherflight climbed the tree with the thickest branches she could find, and waited there, looking between the leaves into a spring below. Now this spring was used by all the wives of the townspeople to draw water for breakfast. No water was so sweet anywhere else; and early in the morning they all came with pitchers and pails for a gossip, and to draw water for the kettle. The first who came was a carpenter's wife, and as she bent over the clear spring she saw, not herself, but Featherflight's lovely face reflected in the water. She looks at it with astonishment and cries, "What! I, a carpenter's wife, and I so handsome? No, that I won't," and down she threw the pitcher, and off she went.

The next who came was the potter's wife, and as she bent over the clear spring she saw, not herself, but Featherflight's lovely face reflected in the water. She looks at it with astonishment and cries, "What! I, a potter's wife, and I so handsome? No, that I won't," and down she threw the pitcher, and off she went.

The next who came was the publican's wife, and as she bent over the clear spring she saw, not herself, but Featherflight's lovely face reflected in the water. She looks at it with astonishment and cries, "What! I, a publican's wife, and I so handsome? No, that I won't," and down she threw the pitcher, and off she went.

The next who came was the scrivener's wife, and as she bent over the clear spring she saw, not herself, but Featherflight's lovely face reflected in the water. She looks at it with astonishment and cries, "What! I, a scrivener's wife, and I so handsome? No, that I won't," and down she threw the pitcher, and off she went.

The next who came was the lacemaker's wife, and as she bent over the clear spring she saw, not herself, but Featherflight's lovely face reflected in the water. She looks at it with astonishment and cries, "What! I, a lacemaker's wife, and I so handsome? No, that I won't," and down she threw the pitcher, and off she went.

All the men in the town began to want their breakfast, and one after another went out into the market-place to ask if any one by chance had seen his wife. Each came with the same question and all received the same answers. All had seen them going, but none had seen them returning. They all began to fear foul play, and all together walked out toward the spring. When they reached it, they found the broken pitchers all about the grass, and the pails bottom upwards floating on the water.

One of them, looking over the edge, saw the face reflected, and, knowing that it was not his own, looked up. Seeing Lady Featherflight, he called to his comrades,



“Here is the witch, here is the enchantress. She has bewitched our wives. Let us kill her.” And they began to drag her out of the tree, in spite of all she could say.

Just at this moment Jack comes up, galloping back on his horse, with the parson up behind. You would not know the gaily dressed cavalier to be the poor, ragged boy who passed over the road so short a time before.

As he came near he saw the crowd and shouted, “What’s the matter? What are you doing to my wife?”

The men shouted, “We are hanging a witch; she has bewitched all our wives, and murdered them, for all we know.” The parson bade them stop, and let the Lady Featherflight tell her own story.

When she told them how their wives had mistaken her face for theirs, they were silent a moment, and then one and all cried, “If we have wedded such fools, they are well sped,” and turning walked back to the town.

The parson married Jack and Lady Featherflight on the spot, and christened them from the water of the spring, and then went home with them to the great house that Jack had bought as he passed through the town. There the newly married pair lived happily for many months, until Jack began to wish for more of the giant’s treasure, and proposed that they should go back for it. But they could not cross the water.

Lady Featherflight said, “Why not build a bridge?” And the bridge was built. They went over with wagons and horses, and brought back so heavy a load that, as the last wagonful passed over the bridge, it broke, and the gold was lost.

Jack lamented and said, “Now we can have nothing more from the giant’s treasure-house.”

But Lady Featherflight said, “Why not mend the bridge?”

So the bridge was mended, And my story’s ended.

## **THE GREEN LADY**

**Tradition Bearer:** Mary Ann Smith

**Source:** Gomme, A. B. “The Green Lady: A Folktale from Hertfordshire.” *Folklore* 7 (1896): 411–415.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** England

**National Origin:** England

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In this **variant** of “The Kind and the Unkind Girls” (AT 480), the usual **motif** of the “Cruel Stepmother” (S31) has been omitted. Instead, a father who is partial to the unkind sister motivates the heroine’s departure and subsequent adventures.

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Once upon a time there was an old man who had two daughters. Now one of these girls was a steady decent girl, and the other was a stuck-up, proud, conceited piece; but the father liked her best, and she had the most to eat and the best clothes to wear.

One day the nice girl said to her father, "Father, give me a cake and a bottle of beer, and let me go and seek my fortune." So the father gave her a cake and a bottle of beer, and she went out to seek her fortune. After she had walked a weary while through the wood she sat down by a tree to rest herself, and eat her cake and drink her beer. While she was eating, a little old man came by, and he said, "Little girl, little girl, what are you doing under my tree?"

She said, "I am going to seek my fortune, sir. I am very tired and hungry, and I am eating my dinner."

The old man said, "Little girl, little girl, give me some dinner too."

She said, "I have only some cake and a bottle of beer; if you like to have some of that, you may." The old man said he would; so he sat down, and they ate the cake and drank the beer all up.

Then the little girl was going on further, and the old man said, "I will tell you where to seek your fortune. Go on further and further into the wood, until you come to a little old cottage where the green lady lives. Knock at the door, and when she opens it tell her you've come to seek service. She will take you in; mind you be a good girl and do all she tells you to do, and you'll come to no harm." So the little girl thanked him kindly and went on her way. Presently she came to the little cottage in the wood, and she knocked at the door.

Then the door was opened by a pretty green lady, who said, "Little girl, little girl, what do you want?"

"I've come to seek service, ma'am," said the little girl.

"What can you do?" said the green lady.

"I can bake, and I can brew, and about the house can all things do," said the little girl.

"Then come in," said the green lady; and she took her into the kitchen.

"Now," said she, "you must be a very good girl; sweep the house well, make the dust fly; and mind you don't look through the keyhole, or harm will befall you." The little girl swept the house well and made the dust fly. Then the green lady said, "Now go to the well and bring in a pail of nice clean water to cook the supper in. If the water isn't clear, change it and change it till it is."

Then the little girl took a pail and went to the well. The first pail she drew, the water was so muddy and dirty she threw it away. The next pail full she drew, the water was a little clearer, but there was a silver fish in it.

The fish said, "Little girl, little girl, wash me and comb me and lay me down softly." So she washed it and combed it and laid it down softly. Then she drew another pailful. The water was a little clearer, but there was a gold fish in it.

The fish said, "Little girl, little girl, wash me and comb me and lay me down softly." So she washed it and combed it and laid it down softly.

Then she drew another pailful. This was clean water, but there was still another fish who said the same thing as the others had done; so she washed this one too, combed it and laid it down softly. Then she drew another pailful, and this was quite clear and fresh. Then the three fish raised their heads and said:

They who eat the fairies' food  
In the churchyard soon shall dwell.  
Drink the water of this well,  
And all things for thee shall be good.  
Be but honest, bold, and true,  
So shall good fortune come to you.

Then the little girl hasted to the house, swept up the kitchen, and made the dust fly quickly; for she thought she would surely be scolded for being away so long, and she was hungry too. The green lady then showed her how to cook the supper and take it into the parlor, and told her she could take some bread and milk for herself afterwards. But the little girl said she would rather have a drink of water and some of her own cake; she had found some crumbs in her pocket, you must know.

Then the green lady went into the parlor, and the little girl sat down by the fire. Then she was thinking about her place and what the fish had said, and she wondered why the green lady had told her not to look through the keyhole. She thought there could not be any harm in doing this, and she looked through the keyhole, when what should she see but the green lady dancing with a bogey! She was so surprised that she called out, "Oh! what can I see, a green lady dancing with a bogey!"

The green lady rushed out of the room and said, "What can you see?"

The little girl replied, "Nothing can I see, nothing can I spy, nothing can I see till the days high die!" [probably, *day I die*].

Then the green lady went into the parlor again to have her supper, and the little girl again looked through the keyhole. Again she sang, "Oh! what can I see, a green lady dancing with a bogey!"

The green lady rushed out, "Little girl, little girl, what can you see?"

The girl said, "Nothing can I see, nothing can I spy, nothing can I see till the days high die!"

This happened a third time, and then the green lady said, "Now you shall see no more"; and she blinded the little girl's eyes.

"But," said the green lady, "because you have been a good girl and made the dust fly, I will give you your wages and you shall go home." So she gave her a bag of money and a bundle of clothes, and sent her away. So the little girl stumbled along the path in the dark, and presently she stumbled against the well. Now there was a fine young man sitting on the brink of the well; and he told her he had been sent by the fish of the well to see her home, and would carry her bag of money and her bundle for her. He told her, too, before starting on their journey to bathe her eyes in the well. This she did; and she found her eyes

came back to her, and she could see as well as ever. So the young man and the little girl went along together until they arrived at her father's cottage; and when the bag was opened there was all sorts of money in it, and when the bundle was opened there was all sorts of fine clothes in it. And the little girl married the young man, and they lived happy ever after.

Now, when the other girl saw all the fine things her sister had got, she came to her father and said, "Father, give me a cake and a bottle of beer, and let me go and seek my fortune." Her father gave her a cake and a bottle of beer, and the same things happened to her as to her sister. But when the old man asked her for some dinner she said, "I haven't enough for myself, so I can't give you any"; and when she was at the green lady's house she didn't make the dust fly, and the green lady was cross with her; and when she went to the well and the fish got into her pails of water, she said the fishes were wet, sloppy things, and she wasn't going to mess her hands and clean frock with them, and she threw them back roughly into the well; and she said she wasn't going to drink nasty cold water for her supper when she could have nice bread and milk; and when the green lady took out her eyes for looking through the keyhole she didn't get a bag of money and a bundle of clothes for her wages, because she hadn't made the dust fly, and she had no one to help her and take her home. So she wandered about all night and all day, and she died; and no one knows where she was buried or what became of her.

## THE HISTORY OF TOM THUMB

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Hartland, Edwin Sidney. *English Fairy and Other Folktales*. London: Walter Scott, 1890, 272–285.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** *The Comical and Merry Tricks of Tom Thumb*. Paisley, ca. 1820 (chapbook).

**National Origin:** England

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In this **variant** of "Tom Thumb" (AT 700), the miraculous birth of the boy no bigger than his father's thumb is arranged by the Arthurian magician Merlin and the queen of the fairies in return for an act of kindness and because Merlin was "amused with the idea of a boy no bigger than a man's thumb." The hero's diminutive stature proves to be both a blessing and a curse during his adventures. Many chapbooks presented their narratives in verse form; therefore, the verse sections of the following tale reflect the variant's chapbook origins.

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It is said that in the days of the celebrated Prince Arthur, who was king of Britain in the year 516, there lived a great magician, called Merlin, the most learned and skilful enchanter in the world at that time.

This famous magician, who could assume any form he pleased, was traveling in the disguise of a poor beggar, and being very much fatigued, he stopped at the cottage of an honest ploughman to rest himself and asked for some refreshment.

The countryman gave him a hearty welcome, and his wife, who was a very good-hearted, hospitable woman, soon brought him some milk in a wooden bowl, and some coarse brown bread on a platter.

Merlin was much pleased with this homely repast and the kindness of the ploughman and his wife; but he could not help observing that though everything was neat and comfortable in the cottage, they seemed both to be very dispirited and unhappy. He therefore questioned them on the cause of their melancholy, and learned that they were miserable because they had no children.

The poor woman declared, with tears in her eyes, that she should be the happiest creature in the world if she had a son; and although he was no bigger than her husband's thumb, she would be satisfied.

Merlin was so much amused with the idea of a boy no bigger than a man's thumb, that he determined to pay a visit to the queen of the fairies, and request her to gratify the poor woman's wish. The droll fancy of such a little personage among the human race pleased the fairy queen too, exceedingly, and she promised Merlin that the wish should be granted. Accordingly, in a short time after, the ploughman's wife was safely delivered of a son, who, wonderful to relate! was not a bit bigger than his father's thumb.

The fairy queen, wishing to see the little fellow thus born into the world, came in at the window while the mother was sitting up in the bed admiring him. The queen kissed the child, and, giving it the name of Tom Thumb, sent for some of the fairies, who dressed her little favorite according to the instructions she gave them:

An oak-leaf hat he had for his crown;  
His shirt of web by spiders spun;  
With jacket wove of thistle's down;  
His trousers were of feathers done.  
His stockings, of apple-rind, they tie  
With eyelash from his mother's eye:  
His shoes were made of mouse's skin,  
Tann'd with the downy hair within.

It is remarkable that Tom never grew any larger than his father's thumb, which was only of an ordinary size; but as he got older he became very cunning and full of tricks. When he was old enough to play with the boys, and had lost all his own cherry-stones [used much like marbles in children's games], he used

to creep into the bags of his playfellows, fill his pockets, and, getting out unobserved, would again join in the game.

One day, however, as he was coming out of a bag of cherry-stones, where he had been pilfering as usual, the boy to whom it belonged chanced to see him. "Ah, ha! my little Tommy," said the boy, "so I have caught you stealing my cherry-stones at last, and you shall be rewarded for your thievish tricks." On saying this, he drew the string tight round his neck, and gave the bag such a hearty shake, that poor little Tom's legs, thighs, and body were sadly bruised. He roared out with pain, and begged to be let out, promising never to be guilty of such bad practices again.

A short time afterwards his mother was making a batter-pudding, and Tom, being very anxious to see how it was made, climbed up to the edge of the bowl; but unfortunately his foot slipped, and he plumped over head and ears into the batter, unobserved by his mother, who stirred him into the pudding-bag, and put him in the pot to boil.

The batter had filled Tom's mouth, and prevented him from crying; but, on feeling the hot water, he kicked and struggled so much in the pot, that his mother thought that the pudding was bewitched, and, instantly pulling it out of the pot, she threw it to the door. A poor tinker, who was passing by, lifted up the pudding, and, putting it into his budget, he then walked off. As Tom had now got his mouth cleared of the batter, he then began to cry aloud, which so frightened the tinker that he flung down the pudding and ran away. The pudding being broke to pieces by the fall, Tom crept out covered over with the batter, and with difficulty walked home. His mother, who was very sorry to see her darling in such a woeful state, put him into a tea-cup, and soon washed off the batter; after which she kissed him, and laid him in bed.

Soon after the adventure of the pudding, Tom's mother went to milk her cow in the meadow, and she took him along with her. As the wind was very high, for fear of being blown away, she tied him to a thistle with a piece of fine thread. The cow soon observed the oak-leaf hat, and, liking the appearance of it, took poor Tom and the thistle at one mouthful. While the cow was chewing the thistle Tom was afraid of her great teeth, which threatened to crush him in pieces, and he roared out as loud as he could, "Mother, mother!"

"Where are you, Tommy, my dear Tommy?" said his mother.

"Here, mother," replied he, "in the red cow's mouth."

His mother began to cry and wring her hands; but the cow, surprised at the odd noise in her throat, opened her mouth and let Tom drop out. Fortunately his mother caught him in her apron as he was falling to the ground, or he would have been dreadfully hurt. She then put Tom in her bosom and ran home with him.

Tom's father made him a whip of a barley straw to drive the cattle with, and having one day gone into the fields, he slipped a foot and rolled into the furrow. A raven, which was flying over, picked him up, and flew with him to the top of a giant's castle that was near the seaside, and there left him.

Tom was in a dreadful state, and did not know what to do; but he was soon more dreadfully frightened; for old Grumbo the giant came up to walk on the terrace, and observing Tom, he took him up and swallowed him like a pill.

The giant had no sooner swallowed Tom than he began to repent what he had done; for Tom began to kick and jump about so much that he felt very uncomfortable, and at last threw him up again into the sea. A large fish swallowed Tom the moment he fell into the sea, which was soon after caught, and bought for the table of King Arthur. When they opened the fish in order to cook it, every one was astonished at finding such a little boy, and Tom was quite delighted at regaining his liberty. They carried him to the king, who made Tom his dwarf, and he soon grew a great favorite at court; for by his tricks and gambols he not only amused the king and queen, but also all the knights of the Round Table.

It is said that when the king rode out on horseback, he frequently took Tom along with him, and if a shower came on, he used to creep into his majesty's waistcoat pocket, where he slept till the rain was over.

King Arthur one day interrogated Tom about his parents, wishing to know if they were as small as he was, and what circumstances they were in. Tom told the king that his father and mother were as tall as any of the persons about court, but in rather poor circumstances. On hearing this, the king carried Tom to his treasury, the place where he kept all his money, and told him to take as much money as he could carry home to his parents, which made the poor little fellow caper with joy. Tom went immediately to procure a purse, which was made of a water-bubble, and then returned to the treasury, where he received a silver threepenny-piece to put into it.

Our little hero had some difficulty in lifting the burden upon his back; but he at last succeeded in getting it placed to his mind, and set forward on his journey. However, without meeting with any accident, and after resting himself more than a hundred times by the way, in two days and two nights he reached his father's house in safety.

Tom had traveled forty-eight hours with a huge silver-piece on his back, and was almost tired to death, when his mother ran out to meet him, and carried him into the house.

Tom's parents were both happy to see him, and the more so as he had brought such an amazing sum of money with him; but the poor little fellow was excessively wearied, having traveled half a mile in forty-eight hours, with a huge silver threepenny-piece on his back. His mother, in order to recover him from the fatigue he had undergone, placed him in a walnut shell by the fireside, and feasted him for three days on a hazel-nut, which made him very sick; for a whole nut used to serve him a month.

Tom soon recovered; but as there had been a fall of rain, and the ground very wet, he could not travel back to King Arthur's court; therefore his mother, one day when the wind was blowing in that direction, made a little parasol of cambric paper, and tying Tom to it, she gave him a puff into the air with her mouth,

which soon carried him to the king's palace. The king, queen, and all the nobility were happy to see Tom again at court, where he delighted them by his dexterity at tilts and tournaments; but his exertions to please them cost him very dear, and brought on such a severe fit of illness that his life was despaired of.

However, the queen of the fairies, hearing of his indisposition, came to court in a chariot drawn by flying mice, and placing Tom by her side, drove through the air without stopping till they arrived at her palace. After restoring him to health, and permitting him to enjoy all the gay diversion of Fairy-land, the queen commanded a strong current of air to arise, on which she placed Tom, who floated upon it like a cork in the water, and sent him instantly to the royal palace of King Arthur.

Just at the time when Tom came flying across the courtyard of the palace, the cook happened to be passing with the king's great bowl of furmenty [wheat pudding], which was a dish his majesty was very fond of: but unfortunately the poor little fellow fell plump into the middle of it, and splashed the hot furmenty about the cook's face.

The cook, who was an ill-natured fellow, being in a terrible rage at Tom for frightening and scalding him with the furmenty, went straight to the king, and represented that Tom had jumped into the royal furmenty, and thrown it down out of mere mischief. The king was so enraged when he heard this, that he ordered Tom to be seized and tried for high treason; and there being no person who dared to plead for him, he was condemned to be beheaded immediately.

On hearing this dreadful sentence pronounced, poor Tom fell a-trembling with fear, but, seeing no means of escape, and observing a miller close to him gaping with his great mouth, as country boobies do at a fair, he took a leap, and fairly jumped down his throat. This exploit was done with such activity that not one person present saw it, and even the miller did not know the trick which Tom had played upon him. Now, as Tom had disappeared, the court broke up, and the miller went home to his mill.

When Tom heard the mill at work, he knew he was clear of the court, and therefore he began to tumble and roll about, so that the poor miller could get no rest, thinking he was bewitched; so he sent for a doctor. When the doctor came, Tom began to dance and sing; and the doctor, being as much frightened as the miller, sent in haste for five other doctors and twenty learned men.

When they were debating upon the cause of this extraordinary occurrence, the miller happened to yawn, when Tom, embracing the opportunity, made another jump, and alighted safely upon his feet on the middle of the table.

The miller, who was very much provoked at being tormented by such a little pigmy creature, fell into a terrible rage, and, laying hold of Tom, he then opened the window, and threw him into the river. At the moment the miller let Tom drop a large salmon swimming along at the time saw him fall, and snapped him up in a minute. A fisherman caught the salmon, and sold it in the market to the steward of a great lord. The nobleman, on seeing the fish, thought it so



uncommonly fine that he made a present of it to King Arthur, who ordered it to be dressed immediately. When the cook cut open the fish, he found poor Tom, and ran to the king with him; but his majesty, being engaged with state affairs, ordered him to be taken away, and kept in custody till he sent for him.

The cook was determined that Tom should not slip out of his hands this time, so he put him into a mouse-trap, and left him to peep through the wires. Tom had remained in the trap a whole week, when he was sent for by King Arthur, who pardoned him for throwing down the furmenty, and took him again into favor. On account of his wonderful feats of activity, Tom was knighted by the king, and went under the name of the renowned Sir Thomas Thumb. As Tom's clothes had suffered much in the batter-pudding, the furmenty, and the insides of the giant, miller, and fishes, his majesty ordered him a new suit of clothes, and to be mounted as a knight.

Of Butterfly's wings his shirt was made,  
His boots of chicken's bide;  
And by a nimble fairy blade,  
Well learned in the tailoring trade,  
His clothing was supplied.  
A needle dangled by his side;  
A dapper mouse he used to ride,  
Thus strutted Tom in stately pride!

It was certainly very diverting to see Tom in this dress, and mounted on the mouse, as he rode out a-hunting with the king and nobility, who were all ready to expire with laughter at Tom and his fine prancing charger.

One day, as they were riding by a farmhouse, a large cat, which was lurking about the door, made a spring, and seized both Tom and his mouse. She then ran up a tree with them, and was beginning to devour the mouse; but Tom boldly drew his sword, and attacked the cat so fiercely that she let them both fall, when one of the nobles caught him in his hat, and laid him on a bed of down, in a little ivory cabinet.

The queen of the fairies came soon after to pay Tom a visit, and carried him back to Fairy-land, where he remained several years. During his residence there, King Arthur, and all the persons who knew Tom, had died; and as he was desirous of being again at court, the fairy queen, after dressing him in a suit of clothes, sent him flying through the air to the palace, in the days of King Thunstone, the successor of Arthur. Every one flocked round to see him, and being carried to the king, he was asked who he was—whence he came—and where he lived? Tom answered:

My name is Tom Thumb,  
From the fairies I've come.  
When King Arthur shone,  
This court was my home.

In me he delighted,  
 By him I was knighted;  
 Did you never hear of Sir Thomas Thumb?

The king was so charmed with this address that he ordered a little chair to be made, in order that Tom might sit upon his table, and also a palace of gold, a span high, with a door an inch wide, to live in. He also gave him a coach, drawn by six small mice.

The queen was so enraged at the honors conferred on Sir Thomas that she resolved to ruin him, and told the king that the little knight had been saucy to her.

The king sent for Tom in great haste, but being fully aware of the danger of royal anger, he crept into an empty snail-shell, where he lay for a considerable time, until he was almost starved with hunger; but at last he ventured to peep out, and perceiving a fine large butterfly on the ground, near the place of his concealment, he approached very cautiously, and getting himself placed astride on it, was immediately carried up into the air. The butterfly flew with him from tree to tree and from field to field, and at last returned to the court, where the king and nobility all strove to catch him; but at last poor Tom fell from his seat into a watering-pot, in which he was almost drowned.

When the queen saw him she was in a rage, and said he should be beheaded; and he was again put into a mousetrap until the time of his execution.

However, a cat, observing something alive in the trap, patted it about till the wires broke, and set Thomas at liberty.

The king received Tom again into favor, which he did not live to enjoy, for a large spider one day attacked him; and although he drew his sword and fought well, yet the spider's poisonous breath at last overcame him:

He fell dead on the ground where he stood,  
 And the spider suck'd every drop of his blood.

King Thunstone and his whole court were so sorry at the loss of their little favorite, that they went into mourning, and raised a fine white marble monument over his grave, with the following epitaph:

Here lyes Tom Thumb, King Arthur's knight,  
 Who died by a spider's cruel bite.  
 He was well known in Arthur's court,  
 Where he afforded gallant sport;  
 He rode at tilt and tournament,  
 And on a mouse a-hunting went,  
 Alive he filled the court with mirth;  
 His death to sorrow soon gave birth.  
 Wipe, wipe your eyes, and shake your head  
 And cry, Alas Tom Thumb is dead!

## THE DEMON TREGEAGLE

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Hartland, Edwin Sidney. *English Fairy and Other Folktales*. London: Walter Scott, 1890, 158–167.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Hunt, Robert. *Popular Romances of the West of England*. 1st series, 133. London: John Camden Hotten, 1865.

**National Origin:** England

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The **legend** of “The Demon Tregeagle” satisfies a range of functions commonly served by this **genre**. Tregeagle’s fate cautions against not only the depredations that are committed by great sinners, but his punishment warns the community about the consequences of social transgressions in general. The inevitable results of Church corruption are dramatized by the obligation of subsequent, morally responsible, clerics to hold the deathless demon at bay. The chastisement of the religious hierarchy is made explicit in the following passage, “‘To bring him from the grave has been to me so dreadful a task, that I leave him to your care, and that of the Prior’s by whom he was so beloved.’ Having said this, the defendant left the court.” On the other hand, the actions of St. Petroc validate both his power and benevolence, as well as his intimate relationship to his namesake community, Padstow (“Petroc’s stowe [place]”). At a more mundane level, the legend explains local features of the environment such as a bar of sand off the coast of Porthieven. Two final issues concerning the legend should be addressed. The reference to “bell, book, and candle” alludes to an excommunication rite for members of the Roman Catholic Church who have committed a particularly heinous sin. The tasks imposed on Tregeagle have many traditional precedents, for example, “Making a Rope of Sand” (AT 1174).

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Thrice he began to tell his doleful tale,  
And thrice the sighs did swallow up his voice.

—Thomas Sackville

**W**ho has not heard of the wild spirit Tregeagle? He haunts equally the moor, the rocky coasts, and the blown sand-hills of Cornwall. From north to south, from east to west, this doomed spirit is heard of, and to the day of judgment he is doomed to wander, pursued by avenging fiends. Forever endeavoring to perform some task by which he hopes to secure repose, and being forever defeated. Who has not heard the howling of Tregeagle? When the storms come with all their strength from the Atlantic, and urge themselves

upon the rocks around the Land's End, the howls of the spirit are louder than the roaring of the winds. When calms rest upon the ocean, and the waves can scarcely form upon the resting waters, low wailings creep along the coast. These are the wailings of this wandering soul. When midnight is on the moor, or on the mountains, and the night winds whistle amidst the rugged cairns, the shrieks of Tregagle are distinctly heard. We know then that he is pursued by the demon dogs, and that till daybreak he must fly with all speed before them. The voice of Tregagle is everywhere, and yet he is unseen by human eye. Every reader will at once perceive that Tregagle belongs to the mythologies of the oldest nations, and that the traditions of this wandering spirit in Cornwall, which center upon one tyrannical magistrate, are but the appropriation of stories which belong to every age and country. Tradition thus tells Tregagle's tale.

There are some men who appear to be from their births given over to the will of tormenting demons. Such a man was Tregagle. He is as old as the hills, yet there are many circumstances in the story of his life which *appear* to remove him from this remote antiquity. Modern legends assert him to belong to comparatively modern times, and say that, without doubt, he was one of the Tregagles who once owned Trevorder, near Bodmin. We have not, however, much occasion to trouble ourselves with the man or his life; it is with the death and the subsequent existence of a myth that we are concerned.

Certain it is that the man Tregagle was diabolically wicked. He seems to have been urged on from one crime to another until the cup of sin was overflowing.

Tregagle was wealthy beyond most men of his time, and his wealth purchased for him that immunity which the Church, in her degenerate days, too often accorded to those who could aid the priesthood with their gold or power. As a magistrate he was tyrannical and unjust, and many an innocent man was wantonly sacrificed by him for the purpose of hiding his own dark deeds. As a landlord he was rapacious and unscrupulous, and frequently so involved his tenants in his toils that they could not escape his grasp. The stain of secret murder clings to his memory, and he is said to have sacrificed a sister whose goodness stood between him and his demon passions; his wife and children perished Victims to his cruelties. At length death drew near to relieve the land of a monster whose name was a terror to all who heard it. Devils waited to secure the soul they had won, and Tregagle in terror gave to the priesthood wealth, that they might fight with them and save his soul from eternal fire. Desperate was the struggle, but the powerful exorcisms of the banded brotherhood of a neighboring monastery drove back the evil ones, and Tregagle slept with his fathers, safe in the custody of the churchmen who buried him with high honors in St. Breock Church. They sang chants and read prayers above his grave, to secure the soul which they thought they had saved. But Tregagle was not fated to rest. Satan desired still to gain possession of such a gigantic sinner, and we can only refer what ensued to the influence of the wicked spiritings of his ministers.

A dispute arose between two wealthy families respecting the ownership of extensive lands around Bodmin. The question had been rendered more difficult by the nefarious conduct of Tregeagle, who had acted as steward to one of the claimants, and who had destroyed ancient deeds, forged others, and indeed made it appear that he was the real proprietor of the domain. Large portions of the land Tregeagle had sold, and other parts were leased upon long terms, he having received all the money and appropriated it. His death led to inquiries, and then the transactions were gradually brought to light. Involving, as this did, large sums of money—and indeed it was a question upon which turned the future well-doing or ruin of a family. It was fought by the lawyers with great pertinacity. The legal questions had been argued several times before the judges at the assizes. The trials had been deferred, new trials had been sought for and granted, and every possible plan known to the lawyers for postponing the settlement of a suit had been tried. A day was at length fixed, upon which a final decision must be come to, and a special jury was sworn to administer justice between the contending parties. Witnesses innumerable were examined as to the validity of a certain deed, and the balance of evidence was equally suspended. The judge was about to sum up the case and refer the question to the jury, when the defendant in the case, coming into Court, proclaimed aloud that he had yet another witness to produce. There was a strange silence in the judgment hall. It was felt that something chilling to the soul was amongst them, and there was a simultaneous throb of terror as Tregeagle was led into the witness-box.

When the awe-struck assembly had recovered, the lawyers for the defendant commenced their examination, which was long and terrible. The result, however, was the disclosure of an involved system of fraud, of which the honest defendant had been the victim, and the jury unhesitatingly gave a verdict in his favor.

The trial over, everyone expected to see the specter witness removed. There, however, he stood powerless to fly, although he evidently desired to do so. Spirits of darkness were waiting to bear him away, but some spell of holiness prevented them from touching him. There was a struggle with the good and the evil angels for this sinner's soul, and the assembled court appeared frozen with horror. At length the judge with dignity commanded the defendant to remove his witness.

“To bring him from the grave has been to me so dreadful a task, that I leave him to your care, and that of the Prior's by whom he was so beloved.” Having said this, the defendant left the court.

The churchmen were called in, and long were, the deliberations between them and the lawyers as to the best mode of disposing of Tregeagle.

They could resign him to the devil at once, but by long trial the worst of crimes might be absolved, and as good churchmen they could not sacrifice a human soul. The only thing was to give the spirit some task, difficult beyond the power of human nature, which might be extended far into eternity. Time

might thus gradually soften the obdurate soul, which still retained all the black dyes of the sins done in the flesh, that by infinitely slow degrees repentance might exert its softening power. The spell therefore put upon Tregagle was, that as long as he was employed on some endless assigned task, there should be hope of salvation, and that he should be secure from the assaults of the devil as long as he labored steadily. A moment's rest was fatal; labor unresting, and forever, was his doom.

One of the lawyers remembering that Dosmery Pool was bottomless, and that a thorn bush which had been flung into it, but a few weeks before, had made its appearance in Falmouth harbor, proposed that Tregagle might be employed to empty this profound lake. Then one of the churchmen, to make the task yet more enduring, proposed that it should be performed by the aid of a limpid shell having a hole in it.

This was agreed to, and the required incantations were duly made. Bound by mystical spells, Tregagle was removed to the dark moors, and duly set to work. Year after year passed by, and there day and night, summer and winter, storm and shine, Tregagle was bending over the dark water, working hard with his perforated shell; yet the pool remained at the same level.

His old enemy the devil kept a careful eye on the doomed one, resolving, if possible, to secure so choice an example of evil. Often did he raise tempests sufficiently wild, as he supposed, to drive Tregagle from his work, knowing that if he failed for a season to labor, he could seize and secure him. These were long tried in vain; but at length an auspicious hour presented itself.

Nature was at war with herself; the elements had lost their balance, and there was a terrific struggle to recover it. Lightnings flashed, and coiled like fiery snakes around the rocks of Roughtor. Fire-balls fell on the desert moors and hissed in the accursed lake. Thunders pealed through the heavens, and echoed from hill to hill; an earthquake shook the solid earth, and terror was on all living. The winds arose and raged with a fury which was irresistible, and hail beat so mercilessly on all things that it spread death around. Long did Tregagle stand the "pelting of the pitiless storm," but at length he yielded to its force and fled. The demons in crowds were at his heels. He doubled, however, on his pursuers and returned to the lake; but so rapid were they that he could not rest the required moment to dip his shell in the now seething waters.

Three times he fled round the lake, and the evil ones pursued him. Then, feeling that there was no safety for him near Dosmery Pool, he sprang swifter than the wind across it, shrieking with agony, and thus—since the devils cannot cross water, and were obliged to go round the lake—he gained on them and fled over the moor.

Away, away went Tregagle, faster and faster the dark spirits pursuing, and they had nearly overtaken him, when he saw Roach Rock and its chapel before him. He rushed up the rocks, with giant power clambered to the eastern window, and dashed his head through it, thus securing the shelter of its sanctity.

The defeated demons retired, and long and loud were their wild wailings in the air. The inhabitants of the moors and of the neighboring towns slept not a wink that night.

Tregeagle was safe, his head was within the holy church, though his body was exposed on a bare rock to the storm. Earnest were the prayers of the blessed hermit in his cell on the rock, to be relieved from his nocturnal and sinful visitor.

In vain were the recluse's prayers. Day after day, as he knelt at the altar, the ghastly head of the doomed sinner grinned horribly down upon him. Every holy ejaculation fell upon Tregeagle's ear like molten iron. He writhed and shrieked under the torture; but legions of devils filled the air, ready to seize him, if for a moment he withdrew his head from the sanctuary. Sabbath after Sabbath the little chapel on the rock was rendered a scene of sad confusion by the interruption which Tregeagle caused. Men trembled with fear at his agonizing cries, and women swooned. At length the place was deserted, and even the saint of the rock was wasting to death by the constant perturbation in which he was kept by the unholy spirit, and the demons who, like carrion birds, swarmed around the holy cairn. Things could not go on thus. The monks of Bodmin and the priests from the neighboring churches gathered together, and the result of their long and anxious deliberations was that Tregeagle, guarded by two saints, should be taken to the north coast, near Padstow, and employed in making trusses of sand, and ropes of sand with which to bind them. By powerful spell Tregeagle was removed from Roach, and fixed upon the sandy shores of the Padstow district. Sinners are seldom permitted to enjoy any peace of soul. As the ball of sand grew into form, the tides rose, and the breakers spread out the sands again a level sheet; again was it packed together and again washed away. Toil! Toil! Toil! Day and night unrestingly, sand on sand grew with each hour, and ruthlessly the ball was swept, by one blow of a sea wave, along the shore.

The cries of Tregeagle were dreadful; and as the destruction of the sand heap was constantly recurring, a constantly increasing despair gained the mastery over hope, and the ravings of the baffled soul were louder than the roarings of the winter tempest.

Baffled in making trusses of sand, Tregeagle seized upon the loose particles and began to spin them into a rope. Long and patiently did he pursue his task, and hope once more rose like a star out of the midnight darkness of despair. A rope was forming when a storm came up with all its fury from the Atlantic, and swept the particles of sand away over the hills.

The inhabitants of Padstow had seldom any rest. At every tide the howlings of Tregeagle banished sleep from each eye. But now so fearful were the sounds of the doomed soul, in the madness of the struggle between hope and despair, that, the people fled the town, and clustered upon the neighboring plains, praying, as with one voice, to be relieved from the sad presence of this monster.

St. Petroc, moved by the tears and petitions of the people, resolved to remove the spirit; and by the intense earnestness of his prayers, after long wrestling, he subdued Tregeagle to his will. Having chained him with the bonds

which the saint had forged with his own hands, every link of which had been welded with a prayer, St. Petroc led the spirit away from the north coast, and stealthily placed him on the southern shores.

In those days Ella's Town, now Heiston, was a flourishing port. Ships sailed into the estuary, up to the town, and they brought all sorts of merchandise, and returned with cargoes of tin from the mines of Breage and Wendron.

The wily monk placed his charge at Bareppa, and there condemned him to carry sacks of sand across the estuary of the Loo, and to empty them at Porthleven, until the beach was clean down to the rocks. The priest was a good observer. He knew that the sweep of the tide was from Trewavas Head round the coast towards the Lizard, and that the sand would be carried back steadily and speedily as fast as the spirit could remove it.

Long did Tregagle labor; and of course in vain. His struggles were giant-like to perform his task, but he saw the sands return as regularly as he removed them. The sufferings of the poor fishermen who inhabited the coast around Porthleven were great. As the howlings of Tregagle disturbed the dwellers in Padstow, so did they now distress those toil-worn men.

When sorrow is highest,  
Relief is nighest.

And a mischievous demon-watcher, in pure wantonness, brought that relief to those fishers of the sea.

Tregagle was laden with a sack of sand of enormous size, and was wading across the mouth of the estuary, when one of those wicked devils, who were kept ever near Tregagle, in very idleness tripped up the heavily laden spirit. The sea was raging with the irritation of a passing storm; and as Tregagle fell, the sack was seized by the waves, and its contents poured out across this arm of the sea.

There, to this day, it rests a bar of sand, fatally destroying the harbor of Ella's Town. The rage of the inhabitants of this seaport—now destroyed—was great; and, with all their priests, away they went to the Loo Bar, and assailed their destroyer. Against human anger Tregagle was proof. The shock of tongues fell harmlessly on his ear, and the assault of human weapons was unavailing.

By the aid of the priests, and faith-inspired prayers, the bonds were once more placed upon Tregagle; and he was, by the force of bell, book, and candle, sent to the Land's End. There he would find no harbor to destroy, and but few people to terrify. His task was to sweep the sands from Porthcurnow Cove round the headland called Tol-Peden-Penwith, into Nanjisal Cove. Those who know that rugged headland, with its cubical masses of granite, piled in Titanic grandeur one upon another, will appreciate the task; and when to all the difficulties are added the strong sweep of the Atlantic current—that portion of the Gulf stream which washes our southern shores—it will be evident that the melancholy spirit has indeed a task which must endure until the world shall end.



Even until today is Tregagle laboring at his task. In calms his wailing is heard; and those sounds which some call the “soughing of the wind,” are known to be the moanings of Tregagle; while the coming storms are predicated by the fearful roarings of this condemned mortal.

## THE STORY OF MR. FOX

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Hartland, Edwin Sidney. *English Fairy and Other Folktales*. London: Walter Scott, 1890, 25–27.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** England

**National Origin:** England

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“The Story of Mr. Fox,” commonly referred to as “The Robber Bridegroom” (AT 955 and Grimm 40) is a grisly tale with an international distribution. Joseph Jacobs (1890) ties the tale to Malone’s *Variorum Shakespeare* (1790), as a gloss to *Much Ado About Nothing* (I:i, 146) “Like the old tale, my Lord, It is not so, nor ‘twas not so, but, indeed, God forbid it should be so.” The “old tale” to which the character Benedick refers is “Mr. Fox.” This tale like many **variants** of “The Bluebeard” tale (AT 312)—see page 360 of this volume for a French example of the latter **tale type**—empowers a female protagonist confronted by a victimizing male.

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Once upon a time there was a young lady called Lady Mary, who had two brothers. One summer they all three went to a country seat of theirs, which they had not before visited. Among the other gentry in the neighborhood who came to see them was a Mr. Fox, a bachelor, with whom they, particularly the young lady, were much pleased. He used often to dine with them, and frequently invited Lady Mary to come and see his house. One day that her brothers were absent elsewhere, and she had nothing better to do, she determined to go thither, and accordingly set out unattended. When she arrived at the house and knocked at the door, no one answered.

At length she opened it and went in; over the portal of the door was written, “Be bold, be bold, but not too bold.” She advanced; over the staircase was the same inscription. She went up; over the entrance of a gallery, the same again. Still she went on, and over the door of a chamber found written:

Be bold, be bold, but not too bold,  
Lest that your heart’s blood should run cold!

She opened it; it was full of skeletons and tubs of blood. She retreated in haste, and, coming downstairs, saw from a window Mr. Fox advancing towards the house with a drawn sword in one hand, while with the other he dragged along a young lady by her hair. Lady Mary had just time to slip down and hide herself under the stairs before Mr. Fox and his victim arrived at the foot of them. As he pulled the young lady upstairs, she caught hold of one of the banisters with her hand, on which was a rich bracelet. Mr. Fox cut it off with his sword. The hand and bracelet fell into Lady Mary's lap, who then contrived to escape unobserved, and got safe home to her brothers' house.

A few days afterwards Mr. Fox came to dine with them as usual. After dinner the guests began to amuse each other with extraordinary anecdotes, and Lady Mary said she would relate to them a remarkable dream she had lately had.

"I dreamt," said she, "that as you, Mr. Fox, had often invited me to your house, I would go there one morning. When I came to the house I knocked at the door, but no one answered. When I opened the door, over the hall I saw written, 'Be bold, be bold, but not too bold.' But," said she, turning to Mr. Fox, and smiling, "It is not so, nor it was not so."

Then she pursued the rest of the story, concluding at every turn with, "It is not so, nor it was not so," until she came to the room full of skeletons, when Mr. Fox took up the burden of the tale, and said:

It is not so, nor it was not so,  
And God forbid it should be so!

which he continued to repeat at every subsequent turn of the dreadful story, until she came to the circumstance of his cutting off the young lady's hand, when, upon his saying, as usual:

It is not so, nor it was not so,  
And God forbid it should be so!

Lady Mary retorts by saying:

But it is so, and it was so,  
And here the hand I have to show!

at the same moment producing the hand and bracelet from her lap, whereupon the guests drew their swords, and instantly cut Mr. Fox into a thousand pieces.

## THE MILLER AT THE PROFESSOR'S EXAMINATION

**Tradition Bearer:**

**Source:** Wright, Thomas. "The Miller at the Professor's Examination." *Folk-Lore Record* 2 (1879): 173–176.

**Date:** Unavailable

Original Source: England

National Origin: England

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The following joke illustrates the ways in which humor can be used to critique folly. In this instance, the pretensions of academe are exposed by a member of the working class.

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There once came to England a famous foreign professor, and before he came he gave notice that he would examine the students of all the colleges in England. After a time he had visited all but Cambridge, and he was on his road thither to examine publicly the whole university. Great was the bustle in Cambridge to prepare for the reception of the professor, and great also were the fears of the students, who dreaded the time when they must prove their acquirements before one so famous for his learning. As the period of his arrival approached their fears increased, and at last they determined to try some expedient which might avert the impending trial, and for this purpose several of the students were disguised in the habits of common laborers, and distributed in groups of two or three at convenient distances from each other along the road by which the professor was expected.

He had in his carriage arrived at the distance of a few miles from Cambridge when he met the first of these groups of laborers, and the coachman drew up his horses to inquire of them the distance. The professor was astonished to hear them answer in Latin. He proceeded on his way, and, after driving about half a mile, met with another group of laborers at work on the road, to whom a similar question was put by the coachman. The professor was still more astonished to hear them give answer in Greek. "Ah!" thought he, "they must be good scholars at Cambridge, when even the common laborers on the roads talk Latin and Greek. It won't do to examine them in the same way as other people." So all the rest of the way he was musing on the mode of examination he should adopt, and, just as he reached the outskirts of the town, he came to the determination that he would examine them *by signs*. As soon, therefore, as he had alighted from his carriage, he lost no time in making known this novel method of examination.

Now the students had never calculated on such a result as this from their stratagem, and they were, as might well be expected, sadly disappointed. There was one student in particular who had been studying very hard, and who was expected by everybody to gain the prize at the examination, and, as the idlest student in the university had the same chance of guessing the signs of the professor as himself, he was in very low spirits about it.

When the day of examination arrived, instead of attending it, he was walking sadly and mournfully by the banks of the river, near the mill, and it happened that the miller, who was a merry fellow and used to talk with this student

as he passed the mill in his walks, saw him, and asked him what was the matter with him. Then the student told him all about it, and how the great professor was going to examine by signs, and how he was afraid that he should not get through the examination.

"Oh! if that's all," said the miller, "don't be low about the matter. Did you never hear that a clown may sometimes teach a scholar wisdom? Only let me put on your clothes, with your cap and gown, and I'll go to the examination instead of you; and if I succeed you shall have the credit of it, and if I fail I will tell them who I am."

"But," said the student, "everybody knows that I have but one eye."

"Never mind that," said the miller; "I can easily put a black patch over one of mine." So they changed clothes, and the miller went to the professor's examination in the student's cap and gown, with a patch on his eye.

Well, just as the miller entered the lecture-room, the professor had tried all the other students, and nobody could guess the meaning of his signs or answer his questions. So the miller stood up, and the professor, putting his hand in his coat pocket, drew out an apple, and held it up towards him. The miller likewise put his hand in his pocket, and drew out a crust of bread, which he in like manner held out towards the professor. Then the professor put the apple in his pocket, and pointed at the miller with one finger: the miller in return pointed at him with two: the professor pointed with three: and the miller held out his clenched fist. "Right!" said the professor; and he adjudged the prize to the miller.

The miller made all haste to communicate these good tidings to his friend the student, who was waiting at the mill; and the student, having resumed his own clothes, hastened back to hear the prize given out to him. When he arrived at the lecture-room, the professor was on his legs explaining to the assembled students the meaning of the signs which himself and the student who had gained the prize made use of.

"First," said he, "I held out an apple, signifying thereby the fall of mankind through Adam's sin, and he very properly held up a piece of bread, which signified that by Christ, the bread of life, mankind was regenerated. Then I held out one finger, which meant that there is one God in the Trinity; he held out two fingers, signifying that there are two; I held out three fingers, meaning that there are three; and he held out his clenched fist, which was as much as to say that the three are one."

Well, the student who got the prize was sadly puzzled to think how the miller knew all this, and as soon as the ceremony of publishing the name of the successful candidate was over he hastened to the mill, and told him all the professor had said.

"Ah!" said the miller, "I'll tell you how it was. When I went in the professor looked mighty fierce, and he put his hand in his pocket, and fumbled about for some time, and at last he pulled out an apple, and he held it out as though he would throw it at me. Then I put my hand in my pocket, and could find

nothing but an old crust of bread, and so I held it out in the same way, meaning that if he threw the apple at me I would throw the crust at him. Then he looked still more fiercely, and held out his one finger, as much as to say he would poke my one eye out, and I held out two fingers, meaning that if he poked out my one eye I would poke out his two, and then he held out three of his fingers, as though he would scratch my face, and I clenched my fist and shook it at him, meaning that if he did I would knock him down. And then he said I deserved the prize.”

# IRELAND

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## DEATH OF CUCHULAIN

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Gregory, Lady Isabella Augusta Perse. *Cuchulain of Muirthemne: The Story of the Men of the Red Branch of Ulster*. London: John Murray, 1902, 334–350.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Ireland

**National Origin:** Ireland

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Cuchulain is the central hero of the Ulster **cycle** of Irish **myth**. His name, “Culann’s Hound,” was bestowed on him when as a child he killed a savage dog that attacked him belonging to the smith Culann. In recompense, the boy gave himself in service to the smith as his “watch dog.” Cuchulain was trained by the famous woman warrior Scáthach, and distinguished himself as the foremost of the elite Red Branch Knights, protectors of Ulster’s king Conchobar mac Nessa. The narrative of his final battle and Conall’s campaign of revenge against the victorious forces who had conspired to bring about the hero’s death includes the extraordinarily moving lament of Emer over the death of her husband, Cuchulain.

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Cuchulain went on then to the house of his mother, Dechtire, to bid her farewell. And she came out on the lawn to meet him, for she knew well he was going out to face the men of Ireland, and she brought out wine in a vessel to him, as her custom was when he passed that way. But when he took the vessel in his hand, it was red blood that was in it. “My grief!” he said, “my mother Dechtire, it is no wonder others to forsake me, when you yourself offer me a drink of blood.” Then she filled the vessel a second, and a third time, and each time when she gave it to him, there was nothing in it but blood.

Then anger came on Cuchulain, and he dashed the vessel against a rock, and broke it, and he said, "The fault is not in yourself, my mother Dechtire, but my luck is turned against me, and my life is near its end, and I will not come back alive this time from facing the men of Ireland."

Then Dechtire tried hard to persuade him to go back and to wait till he would have the help of Conall. "I will not wait," he said, "for anything you can say; for I would not give up my great name and my courage for all the riches of the world. And from the day I first took arms till this day, I have never drawn back from a fight or a battle. And it is not now I will begin to draw back," he said, "for a great name outlasts life."

Then he went on his way, and Cathbad, that had followed him, went with him. And presently they came to a ford, and there they saw a young girl, thin and white-skinned and having yellow hair, washing and ever washing, and wringing out clothing that was stained crimson red, and she crying and keening all the time. "Little Hound," said Cathbad, "do you see what it is that young girl is doing? It is your red clothes she is washing, and crying as she washes, because she knows you are going to your death against Maeve's great army. And take the warning now and turn back again."

"Dear master," said Cuchulain, "you have followed me far enough; for I will not turn back from my vengeance on the men of Ireland that are come to burn and to destroy my house and my country. And what is it to me, the woman of the Sidhe to be washing red clothing for me? It is not long till there will be clothing enough, and armor and arms, lying soaked in pools of blood, by my own sword and my spear. And if you are sorry and loth to let me go into the fight, I am glad and ready enough myself to go into it, though I know as well as you yourself I must fall in it. Do not be hindering me any more, then," he said, "for, if I stay or if I go, death will meet me all the same. But go now to Emain, to Conchubar and to Emer [Cuchulain's wife], and bring them life and health from me, for I will never go back to meet them again. It is my grief and my wound, I to part from them! And O Laeg [Cuchulain's charioteer!]" he said, "we are going away under trouble and under darkness from Emer now, as it is often we came back to her with gladness out of strange places and far countries."

Then Cathbad left him, and he went on his way. And after a while he saw three hags, and they blind of the left eye, before him in the mud, and they having a venomous hound they were cooking with charms on rods of the rowan tree. And he was going by them, for he knew it was not for his good they were there.

But one of the hags called to him, "Stop a while with us, Cuchulain."

"I will not stop with you," said Cuchulain.

"That is because we have nothing better than a dog to give you," said the hag. "If we had a grand, big cooking-hearth, you would stop and visit us; but because it is only a little we have to offer you, you will not stop. But he that will not show respect for the small, though he is great, he will get no respect himself."

Then he went over to her, and she gave him the shoulder-blade of the hound out of her left hand, and he ate it out of his left hand. And he put it down on his left thigh, and the hand that took it was struck down, and the thigh he put it on was struck through and through, so that the strength that was in them before left them.

Then he went down the road of Meadhon-Luachair, by Slieve Fuad, and his enemy, Erc, son of Cairbre, saw him in the chariot, and his sword shining red in his hand, and the light of his courage plain upon him, and his hair spread out like threads of gold that change their color on the edge of the anvil under the smith's band, and the Crow of Battle in the air over his head.

"Cuchulain is coming at us," said Erc to the men of Ireland, "and let us be ready for him." So they made a fence of shields linked together, and Erc put a couple of the men that were strongest here and there, to let on to be fighting one another, that they might call Cuchulain to them; and he put a Druid with every couple of them, and he bid the Druid to ask Cuchulain's spears of him, for it would be hard for him to refuse a Druid. For it was in the prophecy of the children of Calatin that a king would be killed by each one of those spears in that battle.

And he bid the men of Ireland to give out shouts, and Cuchulain came against them in his chariot, doing his three thunder feats, and he used his spear and his sword in such a way, that their heads, and their hands, and their feet, and their bones, were scattered through the plain of Muirthemne; like the sands on the shore, like the stars in the sky, like the dew in May, like snow-flakes and hailstones, like leaves of the trees, like buttercups in a meadow, like grass under the feet of cattle on a fine summer day. It is red that plain was with the slaughter Cuchulain made when he came crashing over it.

Then he saw one of the men that was put to quarrel with the other, and the Druid called to him to come and hinder them, and Cuchulain leaped towards them. "Your spear to me," cried the Druid.

"I swear by the oath of my people," said Cuchulain, "you are not so much in want of it as I am in want of it myself. The men of Ireland are upon me," he said, "and I am upon them."

"I will put a bad name on you if you refuse it to me," said the Druid.

"There was never a bad name put on me yet, on account of any refusal of mine," said Cuchulain, and with that he threw the spear at him, and it went through his head, and it killed the men that were on the other side of him.

Then Cuchulain drove through the host, and Lugaid, son of Curoi, got the spear. "Who is it will fall by this spear, children of Calatin?" said Lugaid.

"A king will fall by it," said they. Then Lugaid threw the spear at Cuchulain's chariot, and it went through and hit the driver, Laeg, son of Rianganabra, and he fell back, and his bowels came out on the cushions of the chariot.

"My grief!" said Laeg, "it is hard I am wounded."

Then Cuchulain drew the spear out, and Laeg said his farewell to him, and Cuchulain said, "Today I will be a fighter and a chariot-driver as well."



Then he saw the other two men that were put to quarrel with one another, and one of them called out it would be a great shame for him not to give him his help. Then Cuchulain leaped towards them.

“Your spear to me, Cuchulain,” said the Druid. “I swear by the oath my people swear by,” said he, “you are not in such want of the spear as I am myself, for it is by my courage, and by my arms, that I have to drive out the four provinces of Ireland that are sweeping over Muirthemne today.”

“I will put a bad name upon you,” said the Druid. “I am not bound to give more than one gift in the day, and I have paid what is due to my name already,” said Cuchulain. Then the Druid said, “I will put a bad name on the province of Ulster, because of your refusal.”

“Ulster was never dispraised yet for any refusal of mine,” said Cuchulain, “or for anything I did unworthily. Though little of my life should be left to me, Ulster will not be reproached for me today.” With that he threw his spear at him, and it went through his head, and through the heads of the nine men that were behind him, and Cuchulain went through the host as he did before.

Then Erc, son of Cairbre Niafer, took up his spear. “Who will fall by this?” he asked the children of Calatin.

“A king will fall by it,” they said.

“I heard you say the same thing of the spear that Lugaid threw a while ago,” said Erc.

“That is true,” said they, “and the king of the chariot-drivers of Ireland fell by it, Cuchulain’s driver Laeg, son of Rianganabra.”

With that, Erc threw the spear, and it went through the Grey of Macha [Cuchulain’s horse]. Cuchulain drew the spear out, and they said farewell to one another. And then the Grey went away from him, with half his harness hanging from his neck, and he went into Glas-linn, the grey pool in Slieve Fuad.

Then Cuchulain drove through the host, and he saw the third couple disputing together, and he went between them as he did before. And the Druid asked his spear of him, but he refused him. “I will put a bad name on you,” said the Druid.

“I have paid what is due to my name today,” said he; “my honor does not bind me to give more than one request in a day.”

“I will put a bad name upon Ulster because of your refusal.”

“I have paid what is due for the honor of Ulster,” said Cuchulain.

“Then I will put a bad name on your kindred,” said the Druid.

“The news that I have been given a bad name shall never go back to that place I am never to go back to myself; for it is little of my life that is left to me,” said Cuchulain. With that he threw his spear at him, and it went through him, and through the heads of the men that were along with him.

“You do your kindness unkindly, Cuchulain,” said the Druid, as he fell.

Then Cuchulain drove for the last time through the host, and Lugaid took the spear, and he said, “Who will fall by this spear, children of Calatin?”

“A king will fall by it,” said they. “I heard you saying that a king would fall by the spear Erc threw a while ago.”

“That is true,” they said, “and the Grey of Macha fell by it, that was the king of the horses of Ireland.”

Then Lugaid threw the spear, and it went through and through Cuchulain’s body, and he knew he had got his deadly wound; and his bowels came out on the cushions of the chariot, and his only horse went away from him, the Black Sainglain, with half the harness hanging from his neck, and left his master, the king of the heroes of Ireland, to die upon the plain of Muirthemne.

Then Cuchulain said, “There is great desire on me to go to that lake beyond, and to get a drink from it.”

“We will give you leave to do that,” they said, “if you will come back to us after.”

“I will bid you come for me if I am not able to come back myself,” said Cuchulain.

Then he gathered up his bowels into his body, and he went down to the lake. He drank a drink and he washed himself, and he returned back again to his death, and he called to his enemies to come and meet him.

There was a pillar-stone west of the lake, and his eye lit on it, and he went to the pillar-stone, and he tied himself to it with his breast-belt, the way he would not meet his death lying down, but would meet it standing up. Then his enemies came round about him, but they were in dread of going close to him, for they were not sure but he might be still alive.

“It is a great shame for you,” said Erc, son of Cairbre, “not to strike the head off that man, in revenge for his striking the head off my father.”

Then the Grey of Macha came back to defend Cuchulain as long as there was life in him, and the hero-light was shining above him. And the Grey of Macha made three attacks against them, and he killed fifty men with his teeth, and thirty with each of his hoofs. So there is a saying, “It is not sharper work than this was done by the Grey of Macha, the time of Cuchulain’s death.”

Then a bird came and settled on his shoulder. “It is not on that pillar birds were used to settle,” said Erc.

Then Lugaid came and lifted up Cuchulain’s hair from his shoulders, and struck his head off, and the men of Ireland gave three heavy shouts, and the sword fell from Cuchulain’s hand, and as it fell, it struck off Lugaid’s right hand, so that it fell to the ground. Then they cut off Cuchulain’s hand, in satisfaction for it, and then the light faded away from about Cuchulain’s head, and left it as pale as the snow of a single night. Then all the men of Ireland said that as it was Maeve had gathered the army, it would be right for her to bring away the head to Cruachan.

“I will not bring it with me; it is for Lugaid that struck it off to bring it with him,” said Maeve. And then Lugaid and his men went away, and they brought away Cuchulain’s head and his right hand with them, and they went south, towards the Lifé river.

At that time the army of Ulster was gathering to attack its enemies, and Conall was out before them, and he met the Grey of Macha, and his share of blood dripping from him. And then he knew that Cuchulain was dead, and himself and the Grey of Macha went looking for Cuchulain's body. And when they saw his body at the pillar-stone, the Grey of Macha went and laid his head in Cuchulain's breast.

"That body is a heavy care to the Grey of Macha," said Conall.

Then Conall went after the army, thinking in his own mind what way he could get satisfaction for Cuchulain's death. For it was a promise between himself and Cuchulain that whichever of them would be killed the first, the other would get satisfaction for his death.

"And if I am the first that is killed," said Cuchulain at that time, "how long will it be before you get satisfaction for me?"

"Before the evening of the same day," said Conall, "I will have got satisfaction for you. And if it is I that will die before you," he said, "how long will it be before you get satisfaction for me?"

"Your share of blood will not be cold on the ground," said Cuchulain, "when I will have got satisfaction for you."

So Conall followed after Lugaid to the river Lifé.

Lugaid was going down to bathe in the water, but he said to his chariot-driver, "Look out there over the plain, for fear would any one come at us unknown."

The chariot-driver looked around him. "There is a man coming on us," he said, "and it is in a great hurry he is coming; and you would think he has all the ravens in Ireland flying over his head, and there are flakes of snow speckling the ground before him."

"It is not in friendship the man comes that is coming like that," said Lugaid. "It is Conall Cearnach it is, with Dub-dearg, and the birds that you see after him, they are the sods the horse has scattered in the air from his hoofs, and the flakes of snow that are speckling the ground before him, they are the froth that he scatters from his mouth and from the bit of his bridle. Look again," said Lugaid, "and see what way is he coming."

"It is to the ford he is coming, the same way the army passed over," said the chariot-driver.

"Let him pass by us," said Lugaid, "for I have no mind to fight with him."

But when Conall came to the middle of the ford, he saw Lugaid and his chariot-driver, and he went over to them. "Welcome is the sight of a debtor's face," said Conall. "The man you owe a debt to is asking payment of you now, and I myself am that man," he said, "for the sake of my comrade, Cuchulain, that you killed. And I am standing here now, to get that debt paid."

They agreed then to fight it out on the plain of Magh Argetnas, and in the fight Conall wounded Lugaid with his spear. From that they went to a place called Ferta Lugdac. "I would like that you would give me fair play," said Lugaid.

“What fair play?” said Conall Cearnach.

“That you and I should fight with one hand,” said he, “for I have the use of but one hand.”

“I will do that,” said Conall. Then Conall’s hand was bound to his side with a cord, and then they fought for a long time, and one did not get the better of the other. And when Conall was not gaining on him, his horse, Dub-dearg, that was near by, came up to Lugaid, and took a bite out of his side.

“Misfortune on me,” said Lugaid, “it is not right or fair that is of you, Conall.”

“It was for myself to do what is right and fair,” said Conall.

“I made no promise for a beast, that is without training and without sense.”

“It is well I know you will not leave me till you take my head, as I took Cuchulain’s head from him,” said Lugaid. “Take it, then, along with your own head. Put my kingdom with your kingdom, and my courage with your courage; for I would like that you would be the best champion in Ireland.”

Then Conall made an end of him, and he went back, bringing Cuchulain’s head along with him to the pillar stone where his body was.

And by that time Emer had got word of all that had happened, and that her husband had got his death by the men of Ireland, and by the powers of the children of Calatin. And it was Levarcham brought her the story, for Conall Cearnach had met her on his way, and had bade her go and bring the news to Emain Macha; and there she found Emer, and she sitting in her upper room, looking over the plain for some word from the battle.

And all the women came out to meet Levarcham, and when they heard her story, they made an outcry of grief and sharp cries, with loud weeping and burning tears; and there were long dismal sounds going through Emain, and the whole country round was filled with crying. And Emer and her women went to the place where Cuchulain’s body was, and they gathered round it there, and gave themselves to crying and keening.

And when Conall came back to the place, he laid the head with the body of Cuchulain, and he began to lament along with them, and it is what he said, “It is Cuchulain had prosperity on him, a root of valor from the time he was but a soft child; there never fell a better hero than the hero that fell by Lugaid of the Lands. And there are many are in want of you,” he said, “and until all the chief men of Ireland have fallen by me, it is not fitting there should ever be peace.

“It is grief to me, he to have gone into the battle without Conall being at his side; it was a pity for him to go there without my body beside his body. Och! It is he was my foster-son, and now the ravens are drinking his blood; there will not be either laughter or mirth, since the Hound has gone astray from us.”

“Let us bury Cuchulain now,” said Emer.

“It is not right to do that,” said Conall, “until I have avenged him on the men of Ireland. And it is a great shouting I hear about the plain of Muirthemne, and it is full the country is of crying after Cuchulain; and it is good at keeping

the country and watching the boundaries the man was that is here before me, a cross-hacked body in a pool of blood. And it is well it pleased Lugaid, son of Curoi, to be at the killing of Cuchulain, for it was Cuchulain killed the chiefs and the children of Deaguid round Fain, son of Foraoi, and round Curoi, son of Daire himself. And this shouting has taken away my wits and my memory from me," he said, "and it is hard for me, Cuchulain not to answer these cries, and I to be without him now; for there is not a champion in Ireland that was not in dread of the sword in his hand. And it is broken in halves my heart is for my brother, and I will bring my revenge through Ireland now, and I will not leave a tribe without wounding, or true blood without spilling, and the whole world will be told of my rout to the end of life and time, until the men of Munster and Connaught and Leinster will be crying for the rising they made against him. And without the spells of the children of Calatin, the whole of them would not have been able to do him to death."

After that complaint, rage and madness came on Conall, and he went forward in his chariot to follow after the rest of the men of Ireland, the same way as he had followed after Lugaid.

And Emer took the head of Cuchulain in her hands, and she washed it clean, and put a silk cloth about it, and she held it to her breast; and she began to cry heavily over it, and it is what she said:

"Ochone!" said she, "it is good the beauty of this head was, though it is low this day, and it is many of the kings and princes of the world would be keening it if they knew the way it is now, and the poets and the Druids of Ireland and of Alban; and many were the goods and the jewels and the rents and the tributes that you brought home to me from the countries of the world, with the courage and the strength of your hands!"

And she made this complaint:

"Och, head! Ochone, O head! you gave death to great heroes, to many hundreds; my head will lie in the same grave, the one Stone will be made for both of us.

"Och, hand! Ochone, hand that was once gentle. It is often it was put under my head; it is dear that hand was to me!

"Dear mouth! Ochone, kind mouth that was sweet-voiced telling stories; since the time love first came on your face, you never refused either weak or strong!

"Dear the man, dear the man, that would kill the whole of a great host; dear his cold bright hair, and dear his bright cheeks!

"Dear the king, dear the king, that never gave a refusal to any; thirty days it is tonight since my body lay beside your body.

"Och, two spears! Ochone, two spears, Och, shield! Och, deadly sword! Let them be given to Conall of the battles; there was never any wage given like that.

"I am glad, I am glad, Cuchulain of Muirthemne, I never brought red shame on your face, for any unfaithfulness against you.

“Happy are they, happy are they, who will never hear the cuckoo again forever, now that the Hound has died from us.

“I am carried away like a branch on the stream; I will not bind up my hair today. From this day I have nothing to say that is better than Ochone!”

And then she said, “It is long that it was showed to me in a vision of the night, that Cuchulain would fall by the men of Ireland, and it appeared to me Dundéalgan to be falling to the ground, and his shield to be split from lip to border, and his sword and his spears broken in the middle, and I saw Conall doing deeds of death before me, and myself and yourself in the one death. And oh! my love,” she said, “we were often in one another’s company, and it was happy for us; for if the world had been searched from the rising of the sun to sunset, the like would never have been found in one place, of the Black Sainglain and the Grey of Macha, and Laeg the chariot-driver, and myself and Cuchulain. And it is breaking my heart is in my body, to be listening to the pity and the sorrowing of women and men, and the harsh crying of the young men of Ulster keening Cuchulain, and Ulster to be in its weakness, and without strength to revenge itself upon the men of Ireland.”

And after she made that complaint, she brought Cuchulain’s body to Dundéalgan; and they all cried and keened about him until such time as Conall Cearnach came back from making his red rout through the army of the men of Ireland.

For he was not satisfied to make a slaughter of the men of Munster and Connaught, without reddening his hand in the blood of Leinster as well.

And when he had done that, he came to Dundéalgan, and his men along with him, but they made no rejoicing when they went back that time. And he brought the heads of the men of Ireland along with him in a gad, and he laid them out on the green lawn, and the people of the house gave three great shouts when they saw the heads.

And Emer came out, and when she saw Conall Cearnach, she said, “My great esteem and my welcome before you, king of heroes, and may your many wounds not be your death; for you have avenged the treachery done on Ulster, and now what you have to do is to make our grave, and to lay us together in the grave, for I will not live after Cuchulain.

“And tell me, Conall,” she said, “whose are those heads all around on the lawn, and which of the great men of Ireland did they belong to?”

And she was asking, and Conall was answering, and it is what she said, “Tell me, Conall, whose are those heads, for surely you have reddened your arms with them. Tell me the names of the men whose heads are there upon the ground.”

And Conall said, “Daughter of Forgall of the Horses, young Emer of the sweet words, it is in revenge for the Hound of Feats I brought these heads here from the south.”

“Whose is the great black head, with the smooth cheek redder than a rose; it is at the far end, on the left side, the head that has not changed its color?”

"It is the head of the king of Meath, Erc, son of Cairbre of Swift Horses; I brought his head with me from far off, in revenge for my own foster-son."

"Whose is that head there before me, with soft hair, with smooth eyebrows, its eyes like ice, its teeth like blossoms; that head is more beautiful in shape than the others?"

"A son of Maeve; a destroyer of harbors, yellow-haired Maine, man of horses; I left his body without a head; all his people fell by my hand."

"O great Conall, who did not fail us, whose head is this you hold in your hand? Since the Hound of Feats is not living, what do you bring in satisfaction for his head?"

"The head of the son of Fergus of the Horses, a destroyer in every battle-field, my sister's son of the narrow tower; I have struck his head from his body."

"Whose is that head to the west, with fair hair, the head that is spoiled with grief? I used to know his voice; I was for a while his friend."

"That is he that struck down the Hound, Lugaid, son of Curoi of the Rhymes. His body was laid out straight and fair, I struck his head off afterwards."

"Whose are those two heads farther out, great Conall of good judgment? For the sake of your friendship, do not hide the names of the men put down by your arms."

"The heads of Laigaire and Clar Cuilt, two men that fell by my wounds. It was they wounded faithful Cuchulain; I made my weapons red in their blood."

"Whose are those heads farther to the east, great Conall of bright deeds? The hair of the two is of the one color; their cheeks are redder than a calf's blood."

"Brave Cullain and hardy Cunlaid, two that were used to overcome in their anger. There to the east, Emer, are their heads; I left their bodies in a red pool."

"Whose are those three heads with evil looks I see before me to the north? Their faces blue, their hair black; even hard Conall's eye turns from them."

"Three of the enemies of the Hound, daughters of Calatin, wise in enchantments; they are the three witches killed by me, their weapons in their hands."

"O great Conall, father of kings, whose is that head that would overcome in the battle? His bushy hair is gold-yellow; his headdress is smooth and white like silver."

"It is the head of the son of Red-Haired Ross, son of Necht Min, that died by my strength. This, Emer, is his head; the high king of Leinster of Speckled Swords."

"O great Conall, change the story. How many of the men that harmed him fell by your hand that does not fail, in satisfaction for the head of Cuchulain?"

"It is what I say, ten and seven scores of hundreds is the number that fell, back to back, by the anger of my hard sword and of my people."

"O Conall, what way are they, the women of Ireland, after the Hound? Are they mourning the son of Sualtim? Are they showing respect through their grief?"

"O Emer, what shall I do without my Cuchulain, my fine nursling, going in and out from me, tonight?"

“O Conall, lift me to the grave. Raise my stone over the grave of the Hound; since it is through grief for him I go to death, lay my mouth to the mouth of Cuchulain.

“I am Emer of the Fair Form; there is no more vengeance for me to find; I have no love for any man. It is sorrowful my stay is after the Hound.”

And after that Emer bade Conall to make a wide, very deep grave for Cuchulain; and she laid herself down beside her gentle comrade, and she put her mouth to his mouth, and she said, “Love of my life, my friend, my sweetheart, my one choice of the men of the earth, many is the woman, wed or unwed, envied me till today: and now I will not stay living after you.”

And her life went out from her, and she herself and Cuchulain were laid in the one grave by Conall. And he raised the one stone over them, and he wrote their names in Ogham, and he himself and all the men of Ulster keened them.

But the three times fifty queens that loved Cuchulain saw him appear in his Druid chariot, going through Emain Macha; and they could hear him singing the music of the Sidhe [fairies].

## THREE MEN OF GALWAY

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Michaelis, Kate Woodbridge. “An Irish Folk-Tale.” *Journal of American Folklore* 23 (1910): 425–428.

**Date:** 1910

**Original Source:** Ireland

**National Origin:** Ireland

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In a narrative built on **motifs** commonly found in both “The Robber Brothers” (AT 1525R) and “The Rich and the Poor Peasant” (AT 1535), a **trickster** gets the better of two older and exploitive cousins; **variants** of the same tales usually pit brothers against one another. The concluding sentence of the tale may be intended as social commentary on America and the waves of immigrants who left Ireland during this period.

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**O**ver beyant [beyond], on the road to Galway, there were three cabins that stood side by side, each the same as all the rest; and in them lived three cousins, with their three mothers and their three cows. Times was hard then in Ireland, and has been since, and the cousins had to work hard to put bread in their stomachs and breath in their bodies; so one day the eldest cousin says to the others, “Let us drive our cows to market and sell them for a good price, and be rich then!” and the others agreed.



Now, it chanced that the youngest cousin's cow was very lean entirely, the smallest and poorest of all the cows in the land; and as the three walked together, the other two said teasing words to him, because it was little his cow would bring in the market.

At last the youngest cousin got vexed indeed, and says he to his cousins, "Go you to the market with your large and fine cows, me and my cow will bide here. I will kill her and sell the hide and tallow." So he bided, and the others went on. Well, after he was tired of being vexed, he up and killed his little cow, and began to strip the hide off her carcass. While he worked, and mind you, it was not the nicest of work, who should come hopping along but a big magpie, head on one side, looking wise indeed.

"Peck-peck!" says he, like any human, for he caught a smell of the blood; so up he hopped on the hide to see what it was all about; and immediate the youngest cousin whipped over the hide, master Magpie inside, and started for the nearest tavern, hide and bird under his arm.

When he got to the tavern, in he marched, bold as you please, calling out for a nip of whiskey to stay his stomach, for it was near to starving the poor boy was. So the barmaid—she was the daughter of the host—she looked him over, and, seeing that he was dressed the poorest and had nought with him but a bundle of bloody hide, just served him with the worst but one of the whiskeys of the world. As soon as the cousin got the taste of it on his tongue, he put his foot on the bundle of hide, and the magpie within screeched out loud.

"And what's that?" says the girl.

"'Tis my magpie, warning me," says the cousin.

"And what is he after warning you?" says the girl.

"He's warning me of the poorness of the whiskey," says he. So the girl, not believing him at all, nodded her head to herself, and put before him the one other whiskey that could be worse. Now, the minute he smelled of it, down came the cousin's foot as hard as might be, and loud screeched out the poor craythur below.

"And this is poorer still, he tells me," says the youngest cousin.

"Faix, and it's right he is," says the girl. So she ran and called her father, who came, all in a hurry, to see the bird that was telling tales on his whiskeys. When he had talked with the cousin, and the bird had cocked the bright eye at it, nothing would suit him but he must own it; so he offered money for it, till at last the youngest cousin went off with his pockets full of gold, and the bird biding behind at the tavern.

When the two older cousins came back from the market, it was long faces they had, for never a one had asked to buy their cows, and they were foot-sore and weary. When they saw the youngest cousin sitting by his door and counting over his gold, they were dumb-struck. When they could get breath to question him, he boasted that he had killed and stripped his cow, rolled a magpie in its hide, and taken it to the public-house, where he had sold it to the landlord for all that gold.

“And is it buying bloody magpies he is?” asked the cousins.

“Faix, and it is,” says he.

As soon as morning comes, up gets the two cousins, kills their fine fat cows, strips them, catches two magpies, wraps them in the skins, and hurries off with them to the nearest inn. Then, of course, the landlord just laughs in their faces, and when they talk back, drives them out with hard words. Home they came, pocket-empty, and vexed indeed with the youngest cousin. Now, it chanced that he, hiding safe from them, heard the threats they made. So when the night came, he coaxed his old mother to sleep in his bed, and himself got well into the chimney. In came the two cousins, creeping easy, fell upon the poor mother, who was the aunt of the two of them, heaven rest her soul! and left her cold and dead. Up came the youngest cousin out of the chimney, fixed up his mother in her best clothes all fine, and carried her on his back to the house of a farmer who had the best well in all the country round. As it was early, he propped his old mother against the well, her back to the house, and when it was light, went to the door and asked to buy wine for himself and for her.

“It’s bashful she is,” says he to the daughter of the farmer, “and never a step will she come into the house. Go you out with the wine and give it to her. It’s hard of hearing she is,” says he, “so you must pinch her and shake her well if she does not turn round.”

Out went the girl with the wine, called loud, bellowed, then, at the last, up and shook her good, when into the well, head and heels, went she. At that the girl she ran away screaming out; and when she did not come back, the youngest cousin went out and found his mother deep in the well. And the storming of the man! Crying out and stomping his feet, and saying that it was all the mother he had in the world! At this came out the farmer and gave him all the gold he had in the house to stop his noise, lest the people going by should hear it. And the farmer took the old woman out of the well that very day, for fear she should spoil the water; for it was a very good well, that was.

When the two cousins got up next morning, who should they see but the youngest cousin with a great bag of gold.

“And how come you alive?” said they, well vexed.

“Faix,” says he, “it was my mother you killed, and I’ve been to the village beyant and sold her for all this gold. It’s a great price they are paying for old hags for gunpowder,” says he.

So the two of them lost no time in killing their mothers, put them in bags, and hurried off to the village, calling out, loud, “Old hags for gunpowder! Old hags for gunpowder!” and then the people were quite mad with them. They fell upon them and beat them, and shut them up in the jail, for killing of their mothers, nice tidy old dames that they were!

Well, after they got out again, they came home; and there they found the youngest cousin living on the best to be had, and they didn’t like it at all, at all. It was a great deal they said to him about the lot of trouble he had given them;

and they were so vexed at him, that he saw he had best beware. So he kept far away from them. But one day he was searching after rabbits, which he well liked for his supper, and had just caught two, when he saw the two cousins after him; and before he could hide from them, they were upon him, had him tied, and in a bag, ready to put an end to him. But just as they were tying the bag, he managed slyly to break the foot of each rabbit he had caught, one the left, and the other the right, and let them go free; and off they scudded, one to the right and the other to the left. Now, the two cousins also liked well, rabbits for supper; and, having the youngest cousin fast tied, they left him there in the bag, and off they ran, chasing the rabbits.

Now, it chanced well for the youngest cousin that while they were pursuing of the woods in search of the rabbits, along came a jobber, driving a herd of cattle to the fair; and he heard the youngest cousin in the bag singing out gay that he was going to heaven, for he had heard the jobber going by. The jobber, he was having a hard time, poor man, and he had heard that heaven was a fine place.

“And how do you get there?” says he to the cousin in the bag.

“Get you into this bag, and I will show you,” says the youngest cousin. So the jobber cut the strings of the bag, and out leapt the cousin and put the jobber in the bag in his place, tied fast the strings, and bid him wait for the angels to carry him straight to heaven. Then home went the youngest cousin by the shortest road, driving of the herd of cattle before him.

After a bit, came back the two cousins, with no rabbits and bad in their tempers, picked up the bag, and threw it, man and all, into a hole without a bottom, and went home. And, behold! when they turned the corner, there was the youngest cousin, large as life, and a great deal more natural, smoking his pipe after the milking of his new cows. And beside his stool was the bag of gold the jobber had left behind him on the ground.

“And is it out of the hole you are?” says they, hardly trusting to their eyesight.

“It is, indeed,” says he, “and it’s much obliged to you I am for putting me in. Mind that gold now!”

“And where did you get it?” said they.

“In the bottom of the hole,” says he, “and it’s many a bag I had to leave behind me when I climbed out. There was but two I had time for; and one I gave to a jobber passing by, for a fine herd of cattle that was just after eating its supper in the field beyant.”

Then the two cousins, they just fell on his neck, and they said they would forgive him everything, and never kill him again, if he would but tell them how to get to that hole, for the way had gone clean out of their minds.

So off the three went, side by side, as pleasant as you please; and when they came to the hole, “One at a time!” says the youngest cousin; so he tied the eldest cousin well into a bag, and pitched him into the hole. But when he could find no bottom to it, he began to cry out and to curse.

“Faix, and what may that noise be?” says the middle cousin.

“It’s our cousin crying out for joy at the bags of gold,” says the youngest cousin; then the middle cousin ran quick to the bag and got in without help, he was so feared that the eldest cousin would get the biggest share of the gold. Then the youngest cousin tied him up well and pitched him down into the well. And there the two of them are to this very day.

But the youngest cousin took his pick of the three cabins, and he married a fine wife and had plenty of children, and money to spare for every one of them; and when he died, he left a cabin apiece to three of them, but the rest of his family went over to America, and very likely they are dead by now.

# SCOTLAND

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## THE BAKER OF BEAULY

**Tradition Bearer:** Dr. Corbet

**Source:** MacBain, Alexander, and W. A. Clouston. "The Baker of Beauly': A Highland Version of the Tale of 'The Three Precepts.'" *Folklore* 3 (1892): 183–192.

**Date:** 1887

**Original Source:** Scotland

**National Origin:** Scotland

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The following **variant** of "The Three Precepts" (AT 150 as "Advice of the Fox") stresses the value of good counsel over money. By choosing wisdom over wages, the protagonist acquires both. Currently, Scotland (along with England, Northern Ireland, and Wales) is one of the four constituent countries of the United Kingdom. Lying immediately to the north of England on the island of Great Britain, political conflicts with that nation marked long periods of Scottish history. The Battle of Culloden (1746) was the final clash between the Jacobites who supported the claims of Charles Edward Stuart to the British throne and the British troops of King George II. The battle resulted in a decisive defeat of the Jacobites, and, since the majority of Prince Charles' forces were Highland Scots, a brutal suppression of that culture.

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**A**t the time of the Battle of Culloden there lived in Beauly a widow who had an only son, whose name was Donald Fraser. He went along with the rest of the Clan Fraser to the battle. The rebels were defeated, and Donald fled to Beauly as fast as his legs could carry him. His poor mother was glad to see him back again unslain, unslain, sound and healthy, poor,

hungry, and tired as he was. He, however, knew that his life would be endangered if he stayed in his mother's bothy [simple shelter] for one night, as the red-coats were in pursuit of those that helped the Prince, though it was by the press-gang the most of the Frasers were compelled to join Lord Lovat, who was afterwards beheaded. He was thus a wanderer for three years, taking shelter in the hills, hollows, rocks, woods, and caves that lie between the Bannock Loch and Birds' Loch in the heights of Beaully. On a certain day at the end of three years, he says to his mother, "Woman, I feel tired of my life; we are now reduced to poverty, and destitute of both meat and clothes. I will go and try if I can get work, come what may."

"You will not go," says she, "till first you get your mother's bannock [griddle baked cake made of oatmeal] and blessing."

She made a Beltane bannock ready for him in the morning, and thus with the bannock and his mother's blessing he set out for Inverness. There he got no work to do. From Inverness he proceeded to Nairn, where he got work. He took up his lodgings in the house of an old man who had an only daughter. By-and-by Donald began to court the girl and married her. On the night of the wedding whatever came into Donald's head, he got up, put on his clothes, went away and left her there. On he traveled till he arrived at Keith, where he tried to get work, but failed. Thence he proceeded to Huntly, but could find no work there. At last he was on the verge of starvation, for bread or drink he had not tasted since he had left Nairn. There was no alternative for him but to go and beg. He went into a baker's shop and said, "In the name of God, give me something to eat, for I am dying of hunger."

"Bread or drink you will not get from me, you nasty beast," says the baker. "If I were giving to every one of your class that comes the way, I would not have much left to myself."

"Oh," says poor Donald, "don't allow me to die of hunger; give me food, and I will do anything you ask me."

"What could you do?" says the baker.

"I can work," says Donald.

"But," says the baker, "I don't want a workman just now, and I am sure you cannot bake."

"But could I not learn?" says Donald.

"Undoubtedly you could learn," says the baker, "but it would take you seven years to do so."

"Give me food," says Donald, "and tomorrow morning I'm your man."

He served the baker for seven years, and at the end of the seven years, says the baker to Donald, "I am well pleased with you. You served your time honestly, and today I do not know where there is a better tradesman than you. I do not know how I will get on without you, but if you will stay with me for another seven years, I will give you this (mentioning the wages) for the past seven years and the seven to come."

“Tomorrow morning,” says Donald, “I’m your man.”

He served the baker for the second seven years, and at the end of the seven years the same agreement was made between them as at the end of the first seven years, with this difference, however, that at the end of the seven years Donald was to receive double the wages he had got for the fourteen years he had already served. They agreed as usual, and honest Donald served the baker for twenty-one years. At the expiry of the twenty-one years, the baker says to Donald, “You are now at the end of three seven years, and if you will serve me for another period of seven years, I will give you as much pay for the seven as you have to get for the twenty-one that are past.”

“No, I will not stay for one year more,” says Donald. “I will go home and see my wife.”

“Your wife,” says the baker; “have you a wife? You’re a strange man; you have been here for twenty-one years, and no one ever heard you say you had a wife. But now,” says the baker, “which would you rather: your three wages or three advices?”

“Oh,” says Donald, “I cannot answer that question till I get the advice of a wiser man than myself; but I will tell you in the morning.”

Donald came down early in the morning as he had promised.

“What now?” asked the baker. “Which are you going to take—the three wages or the three advices?”

“The three advices,” says Donald.

“Well, the first advice is,” says the baker. “Keep the proper roundabout road; the second advice is: Do not stay in a house where there is a young, beautiful wife, with an old surly husband; and the third advice is: Think thrice before you ever lift your hand to strike anyone. And here is money for you to take you home, and also three loaves of bread; but remember that you will neither look at them nor take them asunder till you do so at your wife’s knee, so that they may be the means of making peace between you, for you are so long away from her that it is hard to say whether she is alive or dead, or how will she welcome you.”

Donald at once set off for Nairn. His intention was to stay the first night at Keith, and next night he would be at home. On the road between Huntly and Keith he overtook a peddler, who greeted him kindly, and asked him where he was going. Donald told him he was going to Keith. The peddler said he was very glad, as he was going there too; and the conversation they would have on the road would make them feel the journey shorter.

Thus they went along till they came to a wood, when the peddler said, “There is a short cut through this wood which will shorten our journey to Keith by three miles, besides taking the road.”

“Take it, then,” says Donald. “Dear have I paid for the advice. I’ll take the road.”

The peddler took the short cut through the wood, but did not proceed far when Donald heard cries of “Murder! Murder!”

Off he set through the wood to help the peddler, who was after being robbed by two robbers.

“You now see the force of my advice,” Donald says. “You are robbed, and you may be thankful you were not murdered, let alone the time we have lost. We will not reach Keith tonight.”

They came to a farmer’s house at the roadside, and as it was late, and they were still a good way from Keith, they went in and asked if they could get lodgings for the night. This they got from the inmates, who were sitting round a good fire, in a frank and pleasant manner. They also got a good warming and plenty to eat.

Donald saw the farmer’s wife, a young and charming woman. An old, grey, blear-eyed, unkempt man came in after her. But when he had come in, Donald says to the peddler, “I will not stay here any longer. Dear have I paid for the advice.”

“Surely you are not going to take the road at this time of night,” says the peddler; “and if you won’t stay in the house, you can sleep in the barn.”

Donald agreed to this proposal, and he went to sleep in the barn with his clothes on. He had a wisp of straw for a pillow, a wisp of straw for a bolster, a wisp of straw on both sides of him, and a wisp above him. He was so buried in straw that he had barely room to breathe.

He had scarcely slept, when two persons came in, and sat on the straw right on the top of him. Uncomfortable as he was, he dared not complain or open his mouth, but with a scissors he had in his pocket he cut off a small piece of the coat of the man that was sitting near his head, which was going into his mouth and eyes, and he put the piece he had cut off into his waistcoat-pocket. The man and woman, for such they happened to be, now began courting at the hardest. At last the woman said, “What a pity that old and nasty *bodach* (earl) wasn’t dead. If you would place the razor on his neck, I would send it through his throat myself.”

This was what happened. When Donald came out of the barn in the morning, the poor peddler was in the hands of the officers of the law. He was handcuffed, and was being taken away to Aberdeen on the charge of having murdered the farmer. In the morning the farmer was found dead with his throat cut.

Donald followed them to Aberdeen; the peddler was taken before the Lords; he was condemned, and the judge put on the black cap to pronounce the sentence of death. At this moment Donald gets up in court, and says, “My Lord, if you please, can a man that has not been summoned to court as a witness speak?”

“What have you to say?” asked his Lordship.

Donald then related the circumstances of the barn, and requested that the young widow’s sweetheart be brought into court in the clothes he wore on the night of the murder, and that he (Donald) could give proof that the young man was guilty and the peddler innocent.

The young man was taken into court, and when he was placed at the bar, Donald asked if there was a tailor in the court-house.

“Yes,” says a man, rising opposite him.



“Try,” says Donald to the tailor, “if there is a piece cut off from the skirt of his coat.”

“Yes,” says the tailor.

Thereupon Donald produced from his waistcoat-pocket the piece he had cut off from the man’s coat, and giving it to the tailor, asked him if it suited the piece wanting in the coat.

“Yes,” says the tailor, “it is the very piece that was cut off from the skirt of the coat.”

Donald then related the circumstances of the case a second time. The man and woman were both executed in Aberdeen for this murder, and the peddler was free.

Donald now set out for Nairn to visit his wife, but, before leaving the town, he bought a pistol, powder, and shot. “Who knows,” says he, “what may happen to me before I reach my journey’s end?”

At last the good man arrived at Nairn at night, but well did he find out the house of his loving wife. He opened the door, and upon going in, he at once knew his wife’s voice as she and another man were quarreling. He charged his pistol to shoot the man; but here he remembered his third advice the baker gave him, “Think thrice before you lift your hand to strike any man.”

When the man stopped quarreling, the woman began and said, “You young rascal, I have only yourself, and little pleasure have I ever got from you or your father before you. He left me the night we were married, and it is not known whether he is dead or alive; but he left you behind him to be a burden on me.”

When Donald heard this, he was thankful he did not shoot his son; so he marched in where the pair were, took the loaves of white bread off his back, and broke them on his wife’s knee. Out of the first loaf tumbled the wages of the first seven years; out of the second, the wages of the second seven years, and out of the third the wages of the third seven years. Afterwards they lived together as happy as people could wish for.

## THE RED CALF

**Tradition Bearer:** Mrs. Moir

**Source:** “Three Folktales from Old Meldrum, Aberdeenshire.” *Folk-Lore Journal* 2 (1884): 72–74.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Scotland

**National Origin:** Scotland

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The following **variant** of the “Cinderella” plot (AT 510A) adds elements of the closely related **tale type** “The Little Red Ox” (AT 511A).

Specifically, the heroine's benefactor is a red calf, her abusive family attempts to cause the slaughter of the helpful animal, and the girl escapes with the calf's help. Compare "The Red Calf" to the Italian "Cinderella" (page 270).

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Once, a long time ago, there was a gentleman had two lassies. The oldest was ugly and ill natured, but the youngest was a bonnie lassie and good; but the ugly one was the favorite with her father and mother. So they ill used the youngest in every way, and they sent her into the woods to herd cattle, and all the food she got was a little porridge and whey.

Well, amongst the cattle was a red calf, and one day it said to the lassie, "Gee [give] that porridge and whey to the doggie, and come wi' me."

So the lassie followed the calf through the wood, and they came to a bonnie hoosie [house], where there was a nice dinner ready for them; and after they had feasted on everything nice they went back to the herding.

Every day the calf took the lassie away, and feasted her on dainties; and every day she grew bonnier. This disappointed the father and mother and the ugly sister. They expected that the rough usage she was getting would take away her beauty; and they watched and watched until they saw the calf take the lassie away to the feast. So they resolved to kill the calf; and not only that, but the lassie was to be compelled to kill him with an axe. Her ugly sister was to hold his head, and the lassie who loved him had to give the blow and kill him.

She could do nothing but greet [weep]; but the calf told her not to greet, but to do as he bade her; and his plan was that instead of coming down on his head she was to come down on the lassie's head who was holding him, and then she was to jump on his back and they would run off. Well, the day came for the calf to be killed, and everything was ready—the ugly lassie holding his head, and the bonnie lassie armed with the axe. So she raised the axe, and came down on the ugly sister's head; and in the confusion that took place she got on the calf's back and they ran away.

And they ran and better nor ran till they came to a meadow where grew a great lot of rashes [rushes]; and, as the lassie had not on many clothes, they pu'ed rashes, and made a coatie for her. And they set off again and traveled, and traveled, till they came to the king's house. They went in, and asked if they wanted a servant. The mistress said she wanted a kitchen lassie, and she would take Rashin-Coatie.

So Rashin-Coatie said she would stop, if they keepit the calf too. They were willing to do that. So the lassie and the calf stoppit in the king's house, and everybody was well pleased with her; and when Yule came, they said she was to stop at home and make the dinner, while all the rest went to the kirk [church]. After they were away the calf asked if she would like to go. She said she would, but she had no clothes, and she could not leave the dinner. The calf said he

would give her clothes, and make the dinner too. He went out, and came back with a grand dress, all silk and satin, and such a nice pair of slippers. The lassie put on the dress, and before she left she said:

Ilka peat gar anither burn,  
An' ilka spit gar anither turn,  
An' ilka pot gar anither play,  
Till I come frae the kirk on gude Yule day.

So she went to the kirk, and nobody kent [knew] it was Rashin-Coatie. They wondered who the bonnie lady could be; and, as soon as the young prince saw her, he fell in love with her, and resolved he would find out who she was, before she got home; but Rashin-Coatie left before the rest, so that she might get home in time to take off her dress, and look after the dinner. When the prince saw her leaving, he made for the door to stop her; but she jumped past him, and in the hurry lost one of her shoes. The prince kept the shoe, and Rashin-Coatie got home all right, and the folk said the dinner was very nice.

Now the prince was resolved to find out who the bonnie lady was, and he sent a servant through all the land with the shoe. Every lady was to try it on, and the prince promised to marry the one it would fit. That servant went to a great many houses, but could not find a lady that the shoe would go on, it was so little and neat.

At last he came to a henwife's house, and her daughter had little feet. At first the shoe would not go on, but she paret [pared] her feet, and clippit [clipped] her toes, until the shoes went on. Now the prince was very angry. He knew it was not the lady that he wanted; but, because he had promised to marry whoever the shoe fitted, he had to keep his promise.

The marriage day came, and, as they were all riding to the kirk, a little bird flew through the air, and it sang:

Clippit feet an' paret taes is on the saidle set;  
But bonnie feet an' braw feet sits in the kitchen neuk.

"What's that ye say?" said the prince.

"Oh," says the henwife, "would ye mind what a feel bird says?"

But the prince said, "Sing that again, bonnie birdie."

So the bird sings:

Clippit feet an' paret taes is on the saidle set;  
But bonnie feet an' braw feet sits in the kitchen neuk.

The prince turned his horse and rode home, and went straight to his father's kitchen, and there sat Rashin-Coatie. He kent her at once, she was so bonnie; and when she tried on the shoe it fitted her, and so the prince married Rashin-Coatie, and they lived happy, and built a house for the red calf, who had been so kind to her.

# WALES

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## THE LEGEND OF SAVADDAN LAKE

**Tradition Bearer:** Isaac C. Hughes

**Source:** “The Legend of Savaddan Lake.” *Folklore* 19 (1908): 459–463.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Wales

**National Origin:** Wales

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Wales, one the four constituent countries of the United Kingdom, occupies the southwest portion of the island of Great Britain. The following Welsh **legend** accounts both for the origin of Savaddan Lake and for the “Church of St. Gastayn.” An important theme of the narrative is the inevitable and all-encompassing destruction that is wrought by impiety. Extraordinary acts of devotion are required to atone for such transgressions.

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**N**ot far from the foot of the Black Mountains of Brecon, in a low lovely fertile valley, under the shadow of Mount Troedd, lies Savaddan Lake (the Llangorse Lake of our maps). The following tradition is told regarding it.

Many years ago, when all the surrounding country was under Prince Tewdryg, the bed of the lake was occupied by Savaddan, a town identified with the Roman Loventium. It was, at the time of our story, ruled by a maiden, the beautiful and high-spirited Gwenonwy, who was under Tewdryg’s suzerainty. From far and wide came suitors for her hand and throne, but none found such favor as the noble Gruffydd, youngest son of a neighboring prince named Meigyr. He was all that her heart could desire, yet the maiden Princess dared not wed him, for her father on his deathbed had demanded, and received her promise, never to become the bride of one who was not her equal both in birth and fortune.

She was a rich and powerful Princess, while he, though of good birth, was poor. After long delays Gruffydd determined to bring matters to a crisis, and went one night to the Princess's bower and urged her to forget her oath and wed him, regardless of her promise.

"Never," replied the Princess, "shall it be said that the daughter of the noble Ieuan broke her word. I love you, Gruffydd; but my honor is dearer to me than even your love. You, too, are a Prince, and of a noble family. Use your good arm and sword as your fathers have done, and gain wealth as they did, and come to me a year hence my equal as well in fortune as in rank. For a year and a day I will wait and pray for you; return to me within that time a bridegroom worthy of Gwenonwy's hand, or return no more."

The Prince then left Savaddan and his love, and went to the court of Tewdryg, and for ten months fought under his banner against Madoc, the rebel lord of Skenpeth, gaining much honor but little wealth. At last the war ended, and Gruffydd resolved to make a final appeal to the love of Gwenonwy. Leaving Tewdryg's capital, he arrived on the third day of his journey at Bryn-yr-Allt, a monastery on the mountain side overlooking Savaddan. Here he asked and obtained shelter for the night. He had not slept long when he was awakened by the sound of voices in the refectory, which was separated from his room only by a thin wooden partition.

He overheard a conversation between Owen the Sub-Prior and another monk, Father Aeddan, from which he learnt that the Prior was expected to return next day, bringing with him mules laden with precious stones and jeweled robes, bequeathed to the monastery by Howell, Prince of Cwmdru, whom he had attended on his deathbed. Gruffydd determined, on hearing this, to waylay and rob the Prior. He went to a spring, named Codvan's Well, by which the Prior must pass, attacked him and left him for dead, and carried off his mules with their loads to Savaddan.

He told Gwenonwy his story, and was received by her with favor. Meanwhile the monks who had gone out to meet the Prior found him lying insensible, but he recovered sufficiently to tell them who the murderer was before he died. That night an order arrived from Princess Gwenonwy that a monk from the monastery should attend that night at the Palace to unite her to Gruffydd, Prince of Bronllys. In the evening a vast assembly thronged the royal chapel to witness the marriage.

Father Owen performed the ceremony, and as the young pair knelt before him for the final benediction, the priest stepped forward, and in a loud authoritative tone exclaimed, "Rise, Gruffydd of Bronllys, thou murderer; and thou, too, lady accomplice in his crime, inasmuch as thou hast not avenged it. Wedded, yet unblest, hear God's decree. Thou, Prince, hast shed sacred blood, and thou, Princess, rejoicest in the unholy deed. Therefore God shall visit you with a great and terrible punishment. In His mercy He will bear with you for a time, but in the fourth generation the blow will fall not only on yourselves, but on all your unblest seed. It shall be; God hath spoken it."

Without the blessing of the Church upon her union, the kneeling Princess rose in a rage, and, turning to her guards, she said, "This presumptuous man has dared to offer an insult to a Princess of Savaddan within her own palace walls. Hence with him to the guard tower. Let him there await the fulfillment of his prophecy. Should he still live at the fourth generation, and his words prove vain, he shall die. It shall be; I have spoken it."

Many long and weary years the good father spent in a lonely cell at Savaddan, while the town and Court were given up to debauchery and vice.

Meanwhile Gruffydd and Gwenonwy, now growing old, saw springing up around them a goodly family of children and grandchildren. Soon Myvig, their eldest grandson, married, and in due course a child was born. This was the long-dreaded advent of the fourth generation; still there was no evidence of the predicted punishment.

On the fortieth day from the birth of Myvig's son, the Princess, persuading herself that Owen's curse was merely an idle threat, summoned all her family and friends to a great banquet in honor of the young prince's birth. On the appointed day the great hall of the palace was full. The feast was at its height, and wine was flowing freely, when four guards entered, leading the venerable Sub-Prior.

The Prince taunted him with the non-fulfillment of his prophecy, but he only repeated that vengeance was at hand unless the guilty ones repented. The Prince ordered that he be shut up in the topmost room of the watch-tower, which should then be burnt to the ground. And this was done.

Father Aeddán, now Prior, heard of what had happened, and from the monastery above watched the town and flames of the burning tower shoot up towards the sky. After the tower had fallen, a mist came down upon the valley and hid the town. While the Prior prayed the mist gradually rose, and the valley was seen entirely filled with a vast lake. No trace of the lost town ever appeared save a cradle containing a sleeping child, the infant son of Myvig, the last of the princes of Savaddan.

Lifting the child from its cradle, Father Aeddán bore it to the monastery. Naming it Gastayn, he taught it all that the good monks could teach. Gastayn afterwards expressed a desire to embrace the ascetic life, and built a hut on the lake's edge in a sheltered spot. There he spent a life of great piety and rigor, in continual prayer for the souls of his wicked progenitors. His holiness and learning was so famed that one of the royal princes of South Wales entrusted his sons to Gastayn's care. Following in the footsteps of their pious tutor, they became renowned for the purity and sanctity of their lives, some of them, indeed, even obtaining the glorious crown of martyrdom. Gastayn, at his death, was buried in his hermitage, where in after years a church was built which to this day bears the name of the "Church of St. Gastayn."

Such is the legend told by the country folk in the neighborhood, who still gravely tell you that on a calm summer's day it is possible to see the church tower through the waters of the lake, and even to hear the bells ring!



# ***Central Europe***





# GERMANY

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## HANSEL AND GRETTEL

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Lang, Andrew. *The Blue Fairy Book*. London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1889, 251–258.

**Date:** ca. 1812–1814

**Original Source:** Grimm, Jacob and Wilhelm. *Kinder- und Hausmärchen (Children's and Household Tales)*.

**National Origin:** Germany

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Germany's location in west central Europe and on the Baltic and North Seas made for a rich repertoire of folktales. The scholarship of the Brothers Grimm, Jacob (1785–1863) and Wilhelm (1786–1859), rather than the geographic location of their homeland, led to certain tales as becoming virtual archetypes of their types. “Hansel and Grettel” (AT 327A, Grimm Tale 15) is one such tale. **Variants** of the narrative are distributed cross-culturally; this version illustrates well the contrasts and parallelism that is typical of the **ordinary folktale** (or **märchen**). The innocent children are contrasted to the cruel and cynical stepmother and witch (who may, in fact, be one in the same). Birds lead them into disaster, but a bird also saves them. Many other examples of this pattern become apparent on reading the tale.

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Once upon a time there dwelt on the outskirts of a large forest a poor woodcutter with his wife and two children; the boy was called Hansel and the girl Grettel. He had always little enough to live on, and once, when there was a great famine in the land, he couldn't even provide them with

daily bread. One night, as he was tossing about in bed, full of cares and worry, he sighed and said to his wife, "What's to become of us? how are we to support our poor children, now that we have nothing more for ourselves?"

"I'll tell you what, husband," answered the woman; "early tomorrow morning we'll take the children out into the thickest part of the wood; there we shall light a fire for them and give them each a piece of bread; then we'll go on to our work and leave them alone. They won't be able to find their way home, and we shall thus be rid of them."

"No, wife," said her husband, "that I won't do; how could I find it in my heart to leave my children alone in the wood? The wild beasts would soon come and tear them to pieces."

"Oh! you fool," said she, "then we must all four die of hunger, and you may just as well go and plane the boards for our coffins"; and she left him no peace till he consented.

"But I can't help feeling sorry for the poor children," added the husband.

The children, too, had not been able to sleep for hunger, and had heard what their stepmother had said to their father. Grettel wept bitterly and spoke to Hansel, "Now it's all up with us."

"No, no, Grettel," said Hansel, "don't fret yourself; I'll be able to find a way to escape, no fear." And when the old people had fallen asleep he got up, slipped on his little coat, opened the back door and stole out. The moon was shining clearly, and the white pebbles which lay in front of the house glittered like bits of silver. Hansel bent down and filled his pocket with as many of them as he could cram in. Then he went back and said to Grettel, "Be comforted, my dear little sister, and go to sleep: God will not desert us"; and he lay down in bed again.

At daybreak, even before the sun was up, the woman came and woke the two children, "Get up, you lie-abeds, we're all going to the forest to fetch wood." She gave them each a bit of bread and said, "There's something for your luncheon, but don't you eat it up before, for it's all you'll get." Grettel took the bread under her apron, as Hansel had the stones in his pocket. Then they all set out together on the way to the forest. After they had walked for a little, Hansel stood still and looked back at the house, and this maneuver he repeated again and again.

His father observed him, and said, "Hansel, what are you gazing at there, and why do you always remain behind? Take care, and don't lose your footing."

"Oh! father," said Hansel, "I am looking back at my white kitten, which is sitting on the roof, waving me a farewell."

The woman exclaimed, "What a donkey you are! That isn't your kitten, that's the morning sun shining on the chimney." But Hansel had not looked back at his kitten, but had always dropped one of the white pebbles out of his pocket on to the path.

When they had reached the middle of the forest the father said, "Now, children, go and fetch a lot of wood, and I'll light a fire that you may not feel cold."

Hansel and Grettel heaped up brushwood till they had made a pile nearly the size of a small hill.

The brushwood was set fire to, and when the flames leaped high the woman said, “Now lie down at the fire, children, and rest yourselves: we are going into the forest to cut down wood; when we’ve finished we’ll come back and fetch you.”

Hansel and Grettel sat down beside the fire, and at midday ate their little bits of bread. They heard the strokes of the axe, so they thought their father was quite near. But it was no axe they heard, but a bough he had tied on a dead tree, and that was blown about by the wind. And when they had sat for a long time their eyes closed with fatigue, and they fell fast asleep.

When they awoke at last it was pitch dark. Grettel began to cry, and said, “How are we ever to get out of the wood?”

But Hansel comforted her. “Wait a bit,” he said, “till the moon is up, and then we’ll find our way sure enough.” And when the full moon had risen he took his sister by the hand and followed the pebbles, which shone like new three penny bits, and showed them the path. They walked on through the night, and at daybreak reached their father’s house again.

They knocked at the door, and when the woman opened it she exclaimed, “You naughty children, what a time you’ve slept in the wood! We thought you were never going to come back.” But the father rejoiced, for his conscience had reproached him for leaving his children behind by themselves.

Not long afterward there was again great dearth in the land, and the children heard their mother address their father thus in bed one night, “Everything is eaten up once more; we have only half a loaf in the house, and when that’s done it’s all up with us. The children must be got rid of; we’ll lead them deeper into the wood this time, so that they won’t be able to find their way out again. There is no other way of saving ourselves.”

The man’s heart smote him heavily, and he thought, “Surely it would be better to share the last bite with one’s children!” But his wife wouldn’t listen to his arguments, and did nothing but scold and reproach him. If a man yields once he’s done for, and so, because he had given in the first time, he was forced to do so the second.

But the children were awake, and had heard the conversation. When the old people were asleep Hansel got up, and wanted to go out and pick up pebbles again, as he had done the first time; but the woman had barred the door, and Hansel couldn’t get out. But he consoled his little sister, and said, “Don’t cry, Grettel, and sleep peacefully, for God is sure to help us.”

At early dawn the woman came and made the children get up. They received their bit of bread, but it was even smaller than the time before. On the way to the wood Hansel crumbled it in his pocket, and every few minutes he stood still and dropped a crumb on the ground. “Hansel, what are you stopping and looking about you for?” said the father. “I’m looking back at my little pigeon, which is sitting on the roof waving me a farewell,” answered Hansel.

“Fool!” said the wife; “that isn’t your pigeon, it’s the morning sun glittering on the chimney.” But Hansel gradually threw all his crumbs on the path. The woman led the children still deeper into the forest farther than they had ever been in their lives before. Then a big fire was lit again, and the mother said, “Just sit down there, children, and if you’re tired you can sleep a bit; we’re going into the forest to cut down wood, and in the evening when we’re finished we’ll come back to fetch you.”

At midday Grettel divided her bread with Hansel, for he had strewn his all along their path. Then they fell asleep, and evening passed away, but nobody came to the poor children. They didn’t awake till it was pitch dark, and Hansel comforted his sister, saying, “Only wait, Grettel, till the moon rises, then we shall see the bread-crumbs I scattered along the path; they will show us the way back to the house.” When the moon appeared they got up, but they found no crumbs, for the thousands of birds that fly about the woods and fields had picked them all up.

“Never mind,” said Hansel to Grettel; “you’ll see we’ll find a way out”; but all the same they did not. They wandered about the whole night, and the next day, from morning till evening, but they could not find a path out of the wood. They were very hungry, too, for they had nothing to eat but a few berries they found growing on the ground. And at last they were so tired that their legs refused to carry them any longer, so they lay down under a tree and fell fast asleep.

On the third morning after they had left their father’s house they set about their wandering again, but only got deeper and deeper into the wood, and now they felt that if help did not come to them soon they must perish. At midday they saw a beautiful little snow-white bird sitting on a branch, which sang so sweetly that they stopped still and listened to it. And when its song was finished it flapped its wings and flew on in front of them. They followed it and came to a little house, on the roof of which it perched; and when they came quite near they saw that the cottage was made of bread and roofed with cakes, while the window was made of transparent sugar.

“Now we’ll set to,” said Hansel, “and have a regular blow-out. I’ll eat a bit of the roof, and you, Grettel, can eat some of the window, which you’ll find a sweet morsel.” Hansel stretched up his hand and broke off a little bit of the roof to see what it was like, and Grettel went to the casement and began to nibble at it.

Thereupon a shrill voice called out from the room inside, “Nibble, nibble, little mouse, Who’s nibbling my house?”

The children answered, “Tis Heaven’s own child, The tempest wild,” and went on eating, without putting themselves about. Hansel, who thoroughly appreciated the roof, tore down a big bit of it, while Grettel pushed out a whole round window-pane, and sat down the better to enjoy it.

Suddenly the door opened, and an ancient dame leaning on a staff hobbled out. Hansel and Grettel were so terrified that they let what they had in their hands fall. But the old woman shook her head and said, “Oh, ho! you dear children, who led you here? Just come in and stay with me, no ill shall befall you.”

She took them both by the hand and let them into the house, and laid a most sumptuous dinner before them—milk and sugared pancakes, with apples and nuts. After they had finished, two beautiful little white beds were prepared for them, and when Hansel and Grettel lay down in them they felt as if they had got into heaven.

The old woman had appeared to be most friendly, but she was really an old witch who had waylaid the children, and had only built the little bread house in order to lure them in. When anyone came into her power she killed, cooked, and ate him, and held a regular feast-day for the occasion. Now witches have red eyes, and cannot see far, but, like beasts, they have a keen sense of smell, and know when human beings pass by. When Hansel and Grettel fell into her hands she laughed maliciously, and said jeeringly, “I’ve got them now; they sha’n’t escape me.”

Early in the morning, before the children were awake, she rose up, and when she saw them both sleeping so peacefully, with their round rosy cheeks, she muttered to herself, “That’ll be a dainty bite.” Then she seized Hansel with her bony hand and carried him into a little stable, and barred the door on him; he might scream as much as he liked, it did him no good. Then she went to Grettel, shook her till she awoke, and cried, “Get up, you lazy-bones, fetch water and cook something for your brother. When he’s fat I’ll eat him up.” Grettel began to cry bitterly, but it was of no use; she had to do what the wicked witch bade her.

So the best food was cooked for poor Hansel, but Grettel got nothing but crab-shells. Every morning the old woman hobbled out to the stable and cried, “Hansel, put out your finger, that I may feel if you are getting fat.” But Hansel always stretched out a bone, and the old dame, whose eyes were dim, couldn’t see it, and thinking always it was Hansel’s finger, wondered why he fattened so slowly. When four weeks had passed and Hansel still remained thin, she lost patience and determined to wait no longer. “Hi, Grettel,” she called to the girl, “be quick and get some water. Hansel may be fat or thin, I’m going to kill him tomorrow and cook him.”

Oh! how the poor little sister sobbed as she carried the water, and how the tears rolled down her cheeks! “Kind heaven help us now!” she cried; “if only the wild beasts in the wood had eaten us, then at least we should have died together.”

“Just hold your peace,” said the old hag; “it won’t help you.”

Early in the morning Grettel had to go out and hang up the kettle full of water, and light the fire. “First we’ll bake,” said the old dame; “I’ve heated the oven already and kneaded the dough.” She pushed Grettel out to the oven, from which fiery flames were already issuing. “Creep in,” said the witch, “and see if it’s properly heated, so that we can shove in the bread.” For when she had got Grettel in she meant to close the oven and let the girl bake, that she might eat her up too. But Grettel perceived her intention, and said, “I don’t know how I’m to do it; how do I get in?”

“You silly goose!” said the hag, “the opening is big enough; see, I could get in myself,” and she crawled toward it, and poked her head into the oven. Then Grettel gave her a shove that sent her right in, shut the iron door, and drew the bolt. Gracious! How she yelled, it was quite horrible; but Grettel fled, and the wretched old woman was left to perish miserably.

Grettel flew straight to Hansel, opened the little stable door, and cried, “Hansel, we are free; the old witch is dead.” Then Hansel sprang like a bird out of a cage when the door is opened. How they rejoiced, and fell on each other’s necks, and jumped for joy, and kissed one another! And as they had no longer any cause for fear, they went in the old hag’s house, and here they found, in every corner of the room, boxes with pearls and precious stones.

“These are even better than pebbles,” said Hansel, and crammed his pockets full of them; and Grettel said, “I too will bring something home,” and she filled her apron full.

“But now,” said Hansel, “let’s go and get well away from the witch’s wood.” When they had wandered about for some hours they came to a big lake. “We can’t get over,” said Hansel; “I see no bridge of any sort or kind.”

“Yes, and there’s no ferry-boat either,” answered Grettel; “but look, there swims a white duck; if I ask her she’ll help us over,” and she called out, “Here are two children, mournful very, Seeing neither bridge nor ferry; Take us upon your white back, And row us over, quack, quack!”

The duck swam toward them, and Hansel got on her back and bade his little sister sit beside him. “No,” answered Grettel, “we should be too heavy a load for the duck: she shall carry us across separately.”

The good bird did this, and when they were landed safely on the other side, and had gone for a while, the wood became more and more familiar to them, and at length they saw their father’s house in the distance. Then they set off to run, and bounding into the room fell on their father’s neck. The man had not passed a happy hour since he left them in the wood, but the woman had died. Grettel shook out her apron so that the pearls and precious stones rolled about the room, and Hansel threw down one handful after the other out of his pocket. Thus all their troubles were ended, and they lived happily ever afterward.

My story is done. See! There runs a little mouse; anyone who catches it may make himself a large fur cap out of it.

## THE CRYSTAL COFFIN

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Lang, Andrew. *The Green Fairy Book*. London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1892, 290–295.

**Date:** ca. 1812

**Original Source:** Grimm, Jacob and Wilhelm. *Kinder- und Hausmärchen (Children's and Household Tales)*.

**National Origin:** Germany

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The following narrative is a **variant** of the **ordinary folktale** most widely known in English as “Sleeping Beauty” (AT 410). In the following variant, the protagonist is of humble rather than noble birth. His ultimate good fortune is more the work of fate, curiosity, and circumstance than of any conscious quest. The elevation of the tailor in social status as the conclusion of the tale is typical of this **genre** in European tradition. “The Glass Coffin” is Tale 163 in the Grimm’s corpus.

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**N**ow let no one say that a poor tailor can’t get on in the world, and, indeed, even attain to very high honor. Nothing is required but to set the right way to work, but of course the really important thing is to succeed.

A very bright active young tailor once set off on his travels, which led him into a wood, and as he did not know the way he soon lost himself. Night came on, and there seemed to be nothing for it but to seek out the best resting-place he could find. He could have made himself quite comfortable with a bed of soft moss, but the fear of wild beasts disturbed his mind, and at last he determined to spend the night in a tree.

He sought out a tall oak tree, climbed up to the top, and felt devoutly thankful that his big smoothing-iron was in his pocket, for the wind in the tree-tops was so high that he might easily have been blown away altogether.

After passing some hours of the night, not without considerable fear and trembling, he noticed a light shining at a little distance, and hoping it might proceed from some house where he could find a better shelter than in the top of the tree, he cautiously descended and went towards the light. It led him to a little hut all woven together of reeds and rushes. He knocked bravely at the door, which opened, and by the light which shone from within he saw an old gray-haired man dressed in a coat made of bright-colored patches. “Who are you, and what do you want?” asked the old man roughly.

“I am a poor tailor,” replied the youth. “I have been benighted in the forest, and I entreat you to let me take shelter in your hut till morning.”

“Go your way,” said the old man in a sulky tone, “I’ll have nothing to do with tramps. You must just go elsewhere.”

With these words he tried to slip back into his house, but the tailor laid hold of his coat-tails, and begged so hard to be allowed to stay that the old fellow, who was by no means as cross as he appeared, was at length touched by his entreaties, let him come in, and after giving him some food, showed him quite a nice bed in one corner of the room. The weary tailor required no rocking to rest,



but slept sound till early morning, when he was roused from his slumbers by a tremendous noise. Loud screams and shouts pierced the thin walls of the little hut. The tailor, with new-born courage, sprang up, threw on his clothes with all speed and hurried out. There he saw a huge black bull engaged in a terrible fight with a fine large stag. They rushed at each other with such fury that the ground seemed to tremble under them and the whole air to be filled with their cries. For some time it appeared quite uncertain which would be the victor, but at length the stag drove his antlers with such force into his opponent's body that the bull fell to the ground with a terrific roar, and a few more strokes finished him.

The tailor, who had been watching the fight with amazement, was still standing motionless when the stag bounded up to him, and before he had time to escape forked him up with its great antlers, and set off at full gallop over hedges and ditches, hill and dale, through wood and water. The tailor could do nothing but hold on tight with both hands to the stag's horns and resign himself to his fate. He felt as if he were flying along. At length the stag paused before a steep rock and gently let the tailor down to the ground.

Feeling more dead than alive, he paused for a while to collect his scattered senses, but when he seemed somewhat restored the stag struck such a blow on a door in the rock that it flew open. Flames of fire rushed forth, and such clouds of steam followed that the stag had to avert its eyes. The tailor could not think what to do or which way to turn to get away from this awful wilderness, and to find his way back amongst human beings once more.

As he stood hesitating, a voice from the rock cried to him, "Step in without fear, no harm shall befall you."

He still lingered, but some mysterious power seemed to impel him, and passing through the door he found himself in a spacious hall, whose ceiling, walls, and floor were covered with polished tiles carved all over with unknown figures. He gazed about, full of wonder, and was just preparing to walk out again when the same voice bade him, "Tread on the stone in the middle of the hall, and good luck will attend you."

By this time he had grown so courageous that he did not hesitate to obey the order, and hardly had he stepped on the stone than it began to sink gently with him into the depths below. On reaching firm ground he found himself in a hall of much the same size as the upper one, but with much more in it to wonder at and admire. Round the walls were several niches, in each of which stood glass vessels filled with some bright-colored spirit or bluish smoke. On the floor stood two large crystal boxes opposite each other, and these attracted his curiosity at once. Stepping up to one of them, he saw within it what looked like a model in miniature of a fine castle surrounded by farms, barns, stables, and a number of other buildings. Everything was quite tiny, but so beautifully and carefully finished that it might have been the work of an accomplished artist. He would have continued gazing much longer

at this remarkable curiosity had not the voice desired him to turn round and look at the crystal coffin which stood opposite. What was his amazement at seeing a girl of surpassing loveliness lying in it! She lay as though sleeping, and her long, fair hair seemed to wrap her round like some costly mantle. Her eyes were closed, but the bright color in her face, and the movement of a ribbon, which rose and fell with her breath, left no doubt as to her being alive.

As the tailor stood gazing at her with a beating heart, the maiden suddenly opened her eyes, and started with delighted surprise.

“Great heavens!” she cried, “my deliverance approaches! Quick, quick, help me out of my prison; only push back the bolt of this coffin and I am free.”

The tailor promptly obeyed, when she quickly pushed back the crystal lid, stepped out of the coffin and hurried to a corner of the hall, when she proceeded to wrap herself in a large cloak. Then she sat down on a stone, desired the young man to come near, and, giving him an affectionate kiss, she said, “My long-hoped-for deliverer, kind heaven has led you to me, and has at length put an end to all my sufferings. You are my destined husband, and, beloved by me, and endowed with every kind of riches and power, you shall spend the remainder of your life in peace and happiness. Now sit down and hear my story. I am the daughter of a wealthy nobleman. My parents died when I was very young, and they left me to the care of my eldest brother, by whom I was carefully educated. We loved each other so tenderly, and our tastes and interests were so much alike that we determined never to marry, but to spend our entire lives together. There was no lack of society at our home. Friends and neighbors paid us frequent visits, and we kept open house for all. Thus it happened that one evening a stranger rode up to the castle and asked for hospitality, as he could not reach the nearest town that night. We granted his request with ready courtesy, and during supper he entertained us with most agreeable conversation, mingled with amusing anecdotes. My brother took such a fancy to him that he pressed him to spend a couple of days with us, which, after a little hesitation, the stranger consented to do. We rose late from table, and whilst my brother was showing our guest to his room I hurried to mine, for I was very tired and longed to get to bed. I had hardly dropped off to sleep when I was roused by the sound of some soft and charming music. Wondering whence it could come, I was about to call to my maid who slept in the room next mine, when, to my surprise, I felt as if some heavy weight on my chest had taken all power from me, and I lay there unable to utter the slightest sound. Meantime, by the light of the night lamp, I saw the stranger enter my room, though the double doors had been securely locked. He drew near and told me that through the power of his magic arts he had caused the soft music to waken me, and had made his way through bolts and bars to offer me his hand and heart. My repugnance to his magic was so great that I would not condescend to give any answer. He waited motionless

for some time, hoping no doubt for a favorable reply, but as I continued silent he angrily declared that he would find means to punish my pride, and therewith he left the room in a rage.

“I spent the night in the greatest agitation, and only fell into a doze towards morning. As soon as I awoke I jumped up, and hurried to tell my brother all that had happened, but he had left his room, and his servant told me that he had gone out at daybreak to hunt with the stranger.

“My mind misgave me. I dressed in all haste, had my palfrey saddled, and rode off at full gallop towards the forest, attended by one servant only. I pushed on without pausing, and ere long I saw the stranger coming towards me, and leading a fine stag. I asked him where he had left my brother, and how he had got the stag, whose great eyes were overflowing with tears. Instead of answering he began to laugh, and I flew into such a rage that I drew a pistol and fired at him; but the bullet rebounded from his breast and struck my horse in the forehead. I fell to the ground, and the stranger muttered some words, which robbed me of my senses.

“When I came to myself I was lying in a crystal coffin in this subterranean vault. The Magician appeared again, and told me that he had transformed my brother into a stag, had reduced our castle and all its defenses to miniature and locked them up in a glass box, and after turning all our household into different vapors had banished them into glass phials. If I would only yield to his wishes he could easily open these vessels, and all would then resume their former shapes.

“I would not say a word more than I had done previously, and he vanished, leaving me in my prison, where a deep sleep soon fell on me. Amongst the many dreams which floated through my brain was a cheering one of a young man who was to come and release me, and today, when I opened my eyes, I recognized you and saw that my dream was fulfilled. Now help me to carry out the rest of my vision. The first thing is to place the glass box which contains my castle on this large stone.”

As soon as this was done the stone gently rose through the air and transported them into the upper hall, whence they easily carried the box into the outer air. The lady then removed the lid, and it was marvelous to watch the castle, houses, and farmyards begin to grow and spread themselves till they had regained their proper size. Then the young couple returned by means of the movable stone, and brought up all the glass vessels filled with smoke. No sooner were they uncorked than the blue vapors poured out and became transformed to living people, in whom the lady joyfully recognized her many servants and attendants.

Her delight was complete when her brother (who had killed the Magician under the form of a bull) was seen coming from the forest in his proper shape, and that very day, according to her promise, she gave her hand in marriage to the happy young tailor.

## PRINCE FICKLE AND FAIR HELENA

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Lang, Andrew. *The Green Fairy Book*. London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1894, 216–221.

**Date:** ca. 1812

**Original Source:** Grimm, Jacob and Wilhelm. *Kinder- und Hausmärchen (Children's and Household Tales)*.

**National Origin:** Germany

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This tale (Grimm Tale 186, “The True Sweetheart”) combines a plot that is best known in English as “Cinderella” (AT 510A) with elements of “The Forsaken Fiancée: Service as a Menial” (AT 884). The theme of both **tale types**, the rewards of perseverance and virtue, is intensified by combining the two related plots.

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There was once upon a time a beautiful girl called Helena. Her own mother had died when she was quite a child, and her stepmother was as cruel and unkind to her as she could be. Helena did all she could to gain her love, and performed the heavy work given her to do cheerfully and well; but her stepmother’s heart wasn’t in the least touched, and the more the poor girl did the more she asked her to do.

One day she gave Helena twelve pounds of mixed feathers and bade her separate them all before evening, threatening her with heavy punishment if she failed to do so.

The poor child sat down to her task with her eyes so full of tears that she could hardly see to begin. And when she had made one little heap of feathers, she sighed so deeply that they all blew apart again. And so it went on, and the poor girl grew more and more miserable. She bowed her head in her hands and cried, “Is there no one under heaven who will take pity on me?”

Suddenly a soft voice replied, “Be comforted, my child: I have come to help you.” Terrified to death, Helena looked up and saw a Fairy standing in front of her, who asked in the kindest way possible, “Why are you crying, my dear?”

Helena, who for long had heard no friendly voice, confided her sad tale of woe to the Fairy, and told her what the new task she had been given to do was, and how she despaired of ever accomplishing it.

“Don’t worry yourself about it any more,” said the kind Fairy; “lie down and go to sleep, and I’ll see that your work is done all right.” So Helena lay down, and when she awoke all the feathers were sorted into little bundles; but when she turned to thank the good Fairy she had vanished.

In the evening her stepmother returned and was much amazed to find Helena sitting quietly with her work all finished before her.

She praised her diligence, but at the same time racked her brain as to what harder task she could set her to do.

The next day she told Helena to empty a pond near the house with a spoon which was full of holes. Helena set to work at once, but she very soon found that what her stepmother had told her to do was an impossibility. Full of despair and misery, she was in the act of throwing the spoon away, when suddenly the kind Fairy stood before her again, and asked her why she was so unhappy?

When Helena told her of her stepmother's new demand she said, "Trust to me and I will do your task for you. Lie down and have a sleep in the meantime."

Helena was comforted and lay down, and before you would have believed it possible the Fairy roused her gently and told her the pond was empty. Full of joy and gratitude, Helena hurried to her stepmother, hoping that now at last her heart would be softened towards her. But the wicked woman was furious at the frustration of her own evil designs, and only thought of what harder thing she could set the girl to do.

Next morning she ordered her to build before evening a beautiful castle, and to furnish it all from garret to basement. Helena sat down on the rocks which had been pointed out to her as the site of the castle, feeling very depressed, but at the same time with the lurking hope that the kind Fairy would come once more to her aid.

And so it turned out. The Fairy appeared, promised to build the castle, and told Helena to lie down and go to sleep in the meantime. At the word of the Fairy the rocks and stones rose and built themselves into a beautiful castle, and before sunset it was all furnished inside, and left nothing to be desired. You may think how grateful Helena was when she awoke and found her task all finished.

But her stepmother was anything but pleased, and went through the whole castle from top to bottom, to see if she couldn't find some fault for which she could punish Helena. At last she went down into one of the cellars, but it was so dark that she fell down the steep stairs and was killed on the spot.

So Helena was now mistress of the beautiful castle, and lived there in peace and happiness. And soon the noise of her beauty spread abroad, and many wooers came to try and gain her hand.

Among them came one Prince Fickle by name, who very quickly won the love of fair Helena. One day, as they were sitting happily together under a lime tree in front of the castle, Prince Fickle broke the sad news to Helena that he must return to his parents to get their consent to his marriage. He promised faithfully to come back to her as soon as he could and begged her to await his return under the lime tree where they had spent so many happy hours.

Helena kissed him tenderly at parting on his left cheek, and begged him not to let anyone else kiss him there while they were parted, and she promised to sit and wait for him under the lime tree, for she never doubted that the Prince would be faithful to her and would return as quickly as he could.

And so she sat for three days and three nights under the tree without moving. But when her lover never returned, she grew very unhappy, and determined to set out to look for him. She took as many of her jewels as she could carry, and three of her most beautiful dresses, one embroidered with stars, one with moons, and the third with suns, all of pure gold. Far and wide she wandered through the world, but nowhere did she find any trace of her bridegroom. At last she gave up the search in despair. She could not bear to return to her own castle where she had been so happy with her lover, but determined rather to endure her loneliness and desolation in a strange land. She took a place as herd-girl with a peasant, and buried her jewels and beautiful dresses in a safe and hidden spot.

Every day she drove the cattle to pasture, and all the time she thought of nothing but her faithless bridegroom. She was very devoted to a certain little calf in the herd, and made a great pet of it, feeding it out of her own hands. She taught it to kneel before her, and then she whispered in its ear:

Kneel, little calf, kneel;  
Be faithful and leal [loyal],  
Not like Prince Fickle,  
Who once on a time  
Left his fair Helena Under the lime.

After some years passed in this way, she heard that the daughter of the king of the country she was living in was going to marry a Prince called "Fickle." Everybody rejoiced at the news except poor Helena, to whom it was a fearful blow, for at the bottom of her heart she had always believed her lover to be true.

Now it chanced that the way to the capital led right past the village where Helena was, and often when she was leading her cattle forth to the meadows Prince Fickle rode past her, without ever noticing the poor herd-girl, so engrossed was he in thoughts of his new bride. Then it occurred to Helena to put his heart to the test and to see if it weren't possible to recall herself to him. So one day as Prince Fickle rode by she said to her little calf:

Kneel, little calf, kneel;  
Be faithful and leal,  
Not like Prince Fickle,  
Who once on a time  
Left his poor Helena Under the lime.

When Prince Fickle heard her voice it seemed to him to remind him of something, but of what he couldn't remember, for he hadn't heard the words distinctly, as Helena had only spoken them very low and with a shaky voice. Helena herself had been far too moved to let her see what impression her words had made on the Prince, and when she looked round he was already far away. But she noticed how slowly he was riding, and how deeply sunk he was in thought, so she didn't quite give herself up as lost.

In honor of the approaching wedding a feast lasting many nights was to be given in the capital. Helena placed all her hopes on this, and determined to go to the feast and there to seek out her bridegroom.

When evening drew near she stole out of the peasant's cottage secretly, and, going to her hiding-place, she put on her dress embroidered with the gold suns, and all her jewels, and loosed her beautiful golden hair, which up to now she had always worn under a kerchief, and, adorned thus, she set out for the town.

When she entered the ballroom all eyes were turned on her, and everyone marveled at her beauty, but no one knew who she was. Prince Fickle, too, was quite dazzled by the charms of the beautiful maiden, and never guessed that she had once been his own ladylove. He never left her side all night, and it was with great difficulty that Helena escaped from him in the crowd when it was time to return home. Prince Fickle searched for her everywhere, and longed eagerly for the next night, when the beautiful lady had promised to come again.

The following evening the fair Helena started early for the feast.

This time she wore her dress embroidered with silver moons, and in her hair she placed a silver crescent. Prince Fickle was enchanted to see her again, and she seemed to him even more beautiful than she had been the night before. He never left her side, and refused to dance with anyone else. He begged her to tell him who she was, but this she refused to do. Then he implored her to return again next evening, and this she promised him she would.

On the third evening Prince Fickle was so impatient to see his fair enchantress again, that he arrived at the feast hours before it began, and never took his eyes from the door. At last Helena arrived in a dress all covered with gold and silver stars, and with a girdle of stars round her waist, and a band of stars in her hair. Prince Fickle was more in love with her than ever, and begged her once again to tell him her name.

Then Helena kissed him silently on the left cheek, and in one moment Prince Fickle recognized his old love. Full of remorse and sorrow, he begged for her forgiveness, and Helena, only too pleased to have got him back again, did not, you may be sure, keep him waiting very long for her pardon, and so they were married and returned to Helena's castle, where they are no doubt still sitting happily together under the lime tree.

## SNOW-WHITE AND ROSE-RED

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Lang, Andrew. *The Blue Fairy Book*. London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1894, 259–265.

**Date:** ca. 1812

**Original Source:** Grimm, Jacob and Wilhelm. *Kinder- und Hausmärchen (Children's and Household Tales)*.

**National Origin:** Germany

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In this **variant** of “Two Girls, the Bear and the Dwarf” (AT 426), attributes of the dwarf are consistent with those found in Germanic folklore. That is, dwarves are said to hoard treasure and sport long, full beards. The malice of this particular dwarf is revealed not only by his behavior toward his benefactors, but in the general antipathy shown toward him by the animals that, before his appearance had been docile and protective toward the human characters in the tale.

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A poor widow once lived in a little cottage with a garden in front of it, in which grew two rose trees, one bearing white roses and the other red. She had two children, who were just like the two rose trees; one was called Snow-white and the other Rose-red, and they were the sweetest and best children in the world, always diligent and always cheerful; but Snow-white was quieter and more gentle than Rose-red. Rose-red loved to run about the fields and meadows, and to pick flowers and catch butterflies; but Snow-white sat at home with her mother and helped her in the household, or read aloud to her when there was no work to do. The two children loved each other so dearly that they always walked about hand in hand whenever they went out together, and when Snow-white said, “We will never desert each other,” Rose-red answered, “No, not as long as we live”; and the mother added, “Whatever one gets she shall share with the other.”

They often roamed about in the woods gathering berries and no beast offered to hurt them; on the contrary, they came up to them in the most confident manner; the little hare would eat a cabbage leaf from their hands, the deer grazed beside them, the stag would bound past them merrily, and the birds remained on the branches and sang to them with all their might.

No evil ever befell them; if they tarried late in the wood and night overtook them, they lay down together on the moss and slept till morning, and their mother knew they were quite safe, and never felt anxious about them. Once, when they had slept all night in the wood and had been wakened by the



morning sun, they perceived a beautiful child in a shining white robe sitting close to their resting-place. The figure got up, looked at them kindly, but said nothing, and vanished into the wood. And when they looked round about them they became aware that they had slept quite close to a precipice, over which they would certainly have fallen had they gone on a few steps further in the darkness. And when they told their mother of their adventure, she said what they had seen must have been the angel that guards good children.

Snow-white and Rose-red kept their mother's cottage so beautifully clean and neat that it was a pleasure to go into it. In summer Rose-red looked after the house, and every morning before her mother awoke she placed a bunch of flowers before the bed, from each tree a rose. In winter Snow-white lit the fire and put on the kettle, which was made of brass, but so beautifully polished that it shone like gold. In the evening when the snowflakes fell their mother said, "Snow-white, go and close the shutters," and they drew round the fire, while the mother put on her spectacles and read aloud from a big book and the two girls listened and sat and span. Beside them on the ground lay a little lamb, and behind them perched a little white dove with its head tucked under its wings.

One evening as they sat thus cozily together someone knocked at the door as though he desired admittance. The mother said, "Rose-red, open the door quickly; it must be some traveler seeking shelter." Rose-red hastened to unbar the door, and thought she saw a poor man standing in the darkness outside; but it was no such thing, only a bear, who poked his thick black head through the door. Rose-red screamed aloud and sprang back in terror, the lamb began to bleat, the dove flapped its wings, and Snow-white ran and hid behind her mother's bed.

But the bear began to speak, and said, "Don't be afraid: I won't hurt you. I am half frozen, and only wish to warm myself a little."

"My poor bear," said the mother, "lie down by the fire, only take care you don't burn your fur." Then she called out, "Snow-white and Rose-red, come out; the bear will do you no harm; he is a good, honest creature." So they both came out of their hiding-places, and gradually the lamb and dove drew near too, and they all forgot their fear. The bear asked the children to beat the snow a little out of his fur, and they fetched a brush and scrubbed him till he was dry. Then the beast stretched himself in front of the fire, and growled quite happily and comfortably.

The children soon grew quite at their ease with him, and led their helpless guest a fearful life. They tugged his fur with their hands, put their small feet on his back, and rolled him about here and there, or took a hazel wand and beat him with it; and if he growled they only laughed. The bear submitted to everything with the best possible good nature, only when they went too far he cried, "Oh! children, spare my life!"

"Snow-white and Rose-red, Don't beat your lover dead."

When it was time to retire for the night, and the others went to bed, the mother said to the bear, "You can lie there on the hearth, in heaven's name; it

will be shelter for you from the cold and wet.” As soon as day dawned the children led him out, and he trotted over the snow into the wood. From this time on the bear came every evening at the same hour, and lay down by the hearth and let the children play what pranks they liked with him; and they got so accustomed to him that the door was never shut till their black friend had made his appearance.

When spring came, and all outside was green, the bear said one morning to Snow-white, “Now I must go away, and not return again the whole summer.”

“Where are you going to, dear bear?” asked Snow-white.

“I must go to the wood and protect my treasure from the wicked dwarfs. In winter, when the earth is frozen hard, they are obliged to remain underground, for they can’t work their way through; but now, when the sun has thawed and warmed the ground, they break through and come up above to spy the land and steal what they can; what once falls into their hands and into their caves is not easily brought back to light.”

Snow-white was quite sad over their friend’s departure, and when she unbarred the door for him, the bear, stepping out, caught a piece of his fur in the door-knocker, and Snow-white thought she caught sight of glittering gold beneath it, but she couldn’t be certain of it; and the bear ran hastily away, and soon disappeared behind the trees.

A short time after this the mother sent the children into the wood to collect fagots. They came in their wanderings upon a big tree which lay felled on the ground, and on the trunk among the long grass they noticed something jumping up and down, but what it was they couldn’t distinguish. When they approached nearer they perceived a dwarf with a wizened face and a beard a yard long. The end of the beard was jammed into a cleft of the tree, and the little man sprang about like a dog on a chain, and didn’t seem to know what he was to do.

He glared at the girls with his fiery red eyes, and screamed out, “What are you standing there for? Can’t you come and help me?”

“What were you doing, little man?” asked Rose-red.

“You stupid, inquisitive goose!” replied the dwarf; “I wanted to split the tree, in order to get little chips of wood for our kitchen fire; those thick logs that serve to make fires for coarse, greedy people like yourselves quite burn up all the little food we need. I had successfully driven in the wedge, and all was going well, but the cursed wood was so slippery that it suddenly sprang out, and the tree closed up so rapidly that I had no time to take my beautiful white beard out, so here I am stuck fast, and I can’t get away; and you silly, smooth-faced, milk-and-water girls just stand and laugh! Ugh! what wretches you are!”

The children did all in their power, but they couldn’t get the beard out; it was wedged in far too firmly. “I will run and fetch somebody,” said Rose-red.

“Crazy blockheads!” snapped the dwarf; “what’s the good of calling anyone else? You’re already two too many for me. Does nothing better occur to you than that?”

“Don’t be so impatient,” said Snow-white, “I’ll see you get help,” and taking her scissors out of her pocket she cut off the end of his beard.

As soon as the dwarf felt himself free he seized a bag full of gold which was hidden among the roots of the tree, lifted it up, and muttered aloud, “Curse these rude wretches, cutting off a piece of my splendid beard!” With these words he swung the bag over his back, and disappeared without as much as looking at the children again.

Shortly after this Snow-white and Rose-red went out to get a dish of fish. As they approached the stream they saw something which looked like an enormous grasshopper springing toward the water as if it were going to jump in. They ran forward and recognized their old friend the dwarf. “Where are you going to?” asked Rose-red; “you’re surely not going to jump into the water?”

“I’m not such a fool,” screamed the dwarf. “Don’t you see that cursed fish is trying to drag me in?” The little man had been sitting on the bank fishing, when unfortunately the wind had entangled his beard in the line; and when immediately afterward a big fish bit, the feeble little creature had no strength to pull it out; the fish had the upper fin, and dragged the dwarf toward him. He clung on with all his might to every rush and blade of grass, but it didn’t help him much; he had to follow every movement of the fish, and was in great danger of being drawn into the water. The girls came up just at the right moment, held him firm, and did all they could to disentangle his beard from the line; but in vain, beard and line were in a hopeless muddle. Nothing remained but to produce the scissors and cut the beard, by which a small part of it was sacrificed.

When the dwarf perceived what they were about he yelled to them, “Do you call that manners, you toad-stools! to disfigure a fellow’s face? It wasn’t enough that you shortened my beard before, but you must now needs cut off the best bit of it. I can’t appear like this before my own people. I wish you’d been in Jericho first.” Then he fetched a sack of pearls that lay among the rushes, and without saying another word he dragged it away and disappeared behind a stone.

It happened that soon after this the mother sent the two girls to the town to buy needles, thread, laces, and ribbons. Their road led over a heath where huge boulders of rock lay scattered here and there. While trudging along they saw a big bird hovering in the air, circling slowly above them, but always descending lower, till at last it settled on a rock not far from them. Immediately afterward they heard a sharp, piercing cry. They ran forward, and saw with horror that the eagle had pounced on their old friend the dwarf, and was about to carry him off. The tender-hearted children seized hold of the little man, and struggled so long with the bird that at last he let go his prey.

When the dwarf had recovered from the first shock he screamed in his screeching voice, “Couldn’t you have treated me more carefully? You have torn

my thin little coat all to shreds, useless, awkward hussies that you are!” Then he took a bag of precious stones and vanished under the rocks into his cave.

The girls were accustomed to his ingratitude, and went on their way and did their business in town. On their way home, as they were again passing the heath, they surprised the dwarf pouring out his precious stones on an open space, for he had thought no one would pass by at so late an hour. The evening sun shone on the glittering stones, and they glanced and gleamed so beautifully that the children stood still and gazed on them. “What are you standing there gaping for?” screamed the dwarf, and his ashen-gray face became scarlet with rage. He was about to go off with these angry words when a sudden growl was heard, and a black bear trotted out of the wood. The dwarf jumped up in great fright, but he hadn’t time to reach his place of retreat, for the bear was already close to him.

Then he cried in terror, “Dear Mr. Bear, spare me! I’ll give you all my treasure. Look at those beautiful precious stones lying there. Spare my life! what pleasure would you get from a poor feeble little fellow like me? You won’t feel me between your teeth. There, lay hold of these two wicked girls, they will be a tender morsel for you, as fat as young quails; eat them up, for heaven’s sake.” But the bear, paying no attention to his words, gave the evil little creature one blow with his paw, and he never moved again.

The girls had run away, but the bear called after them, “Snow-white and Rose-red, don’t be afraid; wait, and I’ll come with you.” Then they recognized his voice and stood still, and when the bear was quite close to them his skin suddenly fell off, and a beautiful man stood beside them, all dressed in gold. “I am a king’s son,” he said, “and have been doomed by that unholy little dwarf, who had stolen my treasure, to roam about the woods as a wild bear till his death should set me free. Now he has got his well-merited punishment.”

Snow-white married him, and Rose-red his brother, and they divided the great treasure the dwarf had collected in his cave between them. The old mother lived for many years peacefully with her children; and she carried the two rose trees with her, and they stood in front of her window, and every year they bore the finest red and white roses.

## **JACK MY HEDGE HOG**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Lang, Andrew. *The Green Fairy Book*. London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1892, 290–295.

**Date:** ca. 1812–1814

**Original Source:** Grimm, Jacob and Wilhelm. *Kinder- und Hausmärchen (Children’s and Household Tales)*.

**National Origin:** Germany

Originally “Hans My Hedgehog” in the Grimms’ corpus (Tale 108), Lang renames the tale “Jack My Hedgehog” with the inclusion of this **variant** of AT 441 in his anthology. The theme of the animal husband who is associated with the forest is common in the world’s folktales. In some cases, the spouse or suitor is menacing. In the present narrative, however, the protagonist is depicted as a recluse who rewards virtue and punishes dishonorable behavior.

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**T**here was once a farmer who lived in great comfort. He had both lands and money, but, though he was so well off, one thing was wanting to complete his happiness; he had no children. Many and many a time, when he met other farmers at the nearest market town, they would tease him, asking how it came about that he was childless. At length he grew so angry that he exclaimed, “I must and will have a child of some sort or kind, even should it only be a hedgehog!”

Not long after this his wife gave birth to a child, but though the lower half of the little creature was a fine boy, from the waist upwards it was a hedgehog, so that when his mother first saw him she was quite frightened, and said to her husband, “There now, you have cursed the child yourself.”

The farmer said, “What’s the use of making a fuss? I suppose the creature must be christened, but I don’t see how we are to ask anyone to be sponsor to him, and what are we to call him?”

“There is nothing we can possibly call him but Jack my Hedgehog,” replied the wife.

So they took him to be christened, and the parson said, “You’ll never be able to put that child in a decent bed on account of his prickles.” Which was true, but they shook down some straw for him behind the stove, and there he lay for eight years. His father grew very tired of him and often wished him dead, but he did not die, but lay on there year after year.

Now one day there was a big fair at the market town to which the farmer meant to go, so he asked his wife what he should bring her from it. “Some meat and a couple of big loaves for the house,” said she.

Then he asked the maid what she wanted, and she said a pair of slippers and some stockings.

Lastly he said, “Well, Jack my Hedgehog, and what shall I bring you?”

“Daddy,” said he, “do bring me a bagpipe.” When the farmer came home he gave his wife and the maid the things they had asked for, and then he went behind the stove and gave Jack my Hedgehog the bagpipes.

When Jack had got his bagpipes he said, “Daddy, do go to the smithy and have the house cock shod for me; then I’ll ride off and trouble you no more.” His father, who was delighted at the prospect of getting rid of him, had the cock

shod, and when it was ready Jack my Hedgehog mounted on its back and rode off to the forest, followed by all the pigs and asses which he had promised to look after.

Having reached the forest he made the cock fly up to the top of a very tall tree with him, and there he sat looking after his pigs and donkeys, and he sat on and on for several years till he had quite a big herd; but all this time his father knew nothing about him.

As he sat up in his tree he played away on his pipes and drew the loveliest music from them. As he was playing one day a King, who had lost his way, happened to pass close by, and hearing the music he was much surprised, and sent one of his servants to find out where it came from. The man peered about, but he could see nothing but a little creature which looked like a cock with a hedgehog sitting on it, perched up in a tree. The King desired the servant to ask the strange creature why it sat there, and if it knew the shortest way to his kingdom.

On this Jack my Hedgehog stepped down from his tree and said he would undertake to show the King his way home if the King on his part would give him his written promise to let him have whatever first met him on his return.

The King thought to himself, "That's easy enough to promise. The creature won't understand a word about it, so I can just write what I choose."

So he took pen and ink and wrote something, and when he had done Jack my Hedgehog pointed out the way and the King got safely home.

Now when the King's daughter saw her father returning in the distance she was so delighted that she ran to meet him and threw herself into his arms. Then the King remembered Jack my Hedgehog, and he told his daughter how he had been obliged to give a written promise to bestow whatever he first met when he got home on an extraordinary creature which had shown him the way. The creature, said he, rode on a cock as though it had been a horse, and it made lovely music, but as it certainly could not read he had just written that he would not give it anything at all. At this the Princess was quite pleased, and said how cleverly her father had managed, for that of course nothing would induce her to have gone off with Jack my Hedgehog.

Meantime Jack minded his asses and pigs, sat aloft in his tree, played his bagpipes, and was always merry and cheery. After a time it so happened that another King, having lost his way, passed by with his servants and escort, wondering how he could find his way home, for the forest was very vast. He too heard the music, and told one of his men to find out whence it came. The man came under the tree, and looking up to the top there he saw Jack my Hedgehog astride on the cock.

The servant asked Jack what he was doing up there. "I'm minding my pigs and donkeys; but what do you want?" was the reply. Then the servant told him they had lost their way, and wanted some one to show it them. Down came Jack my Hedgehog with his cock, and told the old King he would show him the right

way if he would solemnly promise to give him the first thing he met in front of his royal castle.

The King said, "Yes," and gave Jack a written promise to that effect.

Then Jack rode on in front pointing out the way, and the King reached his own country in safety.

Now he had an only daughter who was extremely beautiful, and who, delighted at her father's return, ran to meet him, threw her arms round his neck and kissed him heartily. Then she asked where he had been wandering so long, and he told her how he had lost his way and might never have reached home at all but for a strange creature, half-man, half-hedgehog, which rode a cock and sat up in a tree making lovely music, and which had shown him the right way. He also told her how he had been obliged to pledge his word to give the creature the first thing which met him outside his castle gate, and he felt very sad at the thought that she had been the first thing to meet him.

But the Princess comforted him, and said she should be quite willing to go with Jack my Hedgehog whenever he came to fetch her, because of the great love she bore to her dear old father.

Jack my Hedgehog continued to herd his pigs, and they increased in number till there were so many that the forest seemed full of them. So he made up his mind to live there no longer, and sent a message to his father telling him to have all the stables and outhouses in the village cleared, as he was going to bring such an enormous herd that all who would might kill what they chose. His father was much vexed at this news, for he thought Jack had died long ago. Jack my Hedgehog mounted his cock, and driving his pigs before him into the village, he let every one kill as many as they chose, and such a hacking and hewing of pork went on as you might have heard for miles off.

Then said Jack, "Daddy, let the blacksmith shoe my cock once more; then I'll ride off, and I promise you I'll never come back again as long as I live." So the father had the cock shod, and rejoiced at the idea of getting rid of his son.

Then Jack my Hedgehog set off for the first kingdom, and there the King had given strict orders that if anyone should be seen riding a cock and carrying a bagpipe he was to be chased away and shot at, and on no account to be allowed to enter the palace. So when Jack my Hedgehog rode up the guards charged him with their bayonets, but he put spurs to his cock, flew up over the gate right to the King's windows, let himself down on the sill, and called out that if he was not given what had been promised him, both the King and his daughter should pay for it with their lives. Then the King coaxed and entreated his daughter to go with Jack and so save both their lives.

The Princess dressed herself all in white, and her father gave her a coach with six horses and servants in gorgeous liveries and quantities of money. She stepped into the coach, and Jack my Hedgehog with his cock and pipes took his place beside her. They both took leave, and the King fully expected never to set eyes on them again. But matters turned out very differently from what he had

expected, for when they had got a certain distance from the town Jack tore all the Princess's smart clothes off her, and pricked her all over with his bristles, saying, "That's what you get for treachery. Now go back, I'll have no more to say to you." And with that he hunted [chased] her home, and she felt she had been disgraced and put to shame till her life's end.

Then Jack my Hedgehog rode on with his cock and bagpipes to the country of the second King to whom he had shown the way. Now this King had given orders that, in the event of Jack's coming the guards were to present arms, the people to cheer, and he was to be conducted in triumph to the royal palace.

When the King's daughter saw Jack my Hedgehog, she was a good deal startled, for he certainly was very peculiar looking; but after all she considered that she had given her word and it couldn't be helped. So she made Jack welcome and they were betrothed to each other, and at dinner he sat next her at the royal table, and they ate and drank together.

When they retired to rest the Princess feared lest Jack should kiss her because of his prickles, but he told her not to be alarmed as no harm should befall her. Then he begged the old King to place a watch of four men just outside his bedroom door, and to desire them to make a big fire. When he was about to lie down in bed he would creep out of his hedgehog skin, and leave it lying at the bedside; then the men must rush in, throw the skin into the fire, and stand by till it was entirely burnt up.

And so it was, for when it struck eleven, Jack my Hedgehog went to his room, took off his skin and left it at the foot of the bed. The men rushed in, quickly seized the skin and threw it on the fire, and directly it was all burnt Jack was released from his enchantment and lay in his bed a man from head to foot, but quite black as though he had been severely scorched.

The King sent off for his physician in ordinary, who washed Jack all over with various essences and salves, so that he became white and was a remarkably handsome young man. When the King's daughter saw him she was greatly pleased, and next day the marriage ceremony was performed, and the old King bestowed his kingdom on Jack my Hedgehog.

After some years Jack and his wife went to visit his father, but the farmer did not recognize him, and declared he had no son; he had had one, but that one was born with bristles like a hedgehog, and had gone off into the wide world. Then Jack told his story, and his old father rejoiced and returned to live with him in his kingdom.

## **MOTHER HOLLE**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Lang, Andrew. *The Red Fairy Book*. London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1890, 303–306.

**Date:** ca. 1812–1814



**Original Source:** Grimm, Jacob and Wilhelm. *Kinder- und Hausmärchen (Children's and Household Tales)*.

**National Origin:** Germany

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“Mother Holle,” titled “Frau Hölle” (literally, “Mrs. Hell”) in the Grimms’ collection (Grimm 24) is a **variant** of the “The Kind and the Unkind Girls” (AT 480). The punishment meted out to the unkind sister is in keeping with the name of the old woman in the tale’s title. The fact that she also dispenses rewards should discourage taking the name “Mrs. Hell” too literally, however.

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Once upon a time there was a widow who had two daughters; one of them was pretty and clever, and the other ugly and lazy. But as the ugly one was her own daughter, she liked her far the best of the two, and the pretty one had to do all the work of the house, and was in fact the regular maid of all work. Every day she had to sit by a well on the high road, and spin till her fingers were so sore that they often bled. One day some drops of blood fell on her spindle, so she dipped it into the well meaning to wash it, but, as luck would have it, it dropped from her hand and fell right in. She ran weeping to her stepmother, and told her what had happened, but she scolded her harshly, and was so merciless in her anger that she said, “Well, since you’ve dropped the spindle down, you must just go after it yourself, and don’t let me see your face again until you bring it with you.”

Then the poor girl returned to the well, and not knowing what she was about, in the despair and misery of her heart she sprang into the well and sank to the bottom. For a time she lost all consciousness, and when she came to herself again she was lying in a lovely meadow, with the sun shining brightly overhead, and a thousand flowers blooming at her feet. She rose up and wandered through this enchanted place, till she came to a baker’s oven full of bread, and the bread called out to her as she passed, “Oh! take me out, take me out, or I shall be burnt to a cinder. I am quite done enough.”

So she stepped up quickly to the oven and took out all the loaves one after the other.

Then she went on a little farther and came to a tree laden with beautiful rosy-cheeked apples, and as she passed by it called out, “Oh I shake me, shake me, my apples are all quite ripe.”

She did as she was asked, and shook the tree till the apples fell like rain and none were left hanging. When she had gathered them all up into a heap she went on her way again, and came at length to a little house, at the door of which sat an old woman.

The old dame had such large teeth that the girl felt frightened and wanted to run away, but the old woman called after her, “What are you afraid of, dear

child? Stay with me and be my little maid, and if you do your work well I will reward you handsomely; but you must be very careful how you make my bed—you must shake it well till the feathers fly; then people in the world below say it snows, for I am Mother Holle.”

She spoke so kindly that the girl took heart and agreed readily to enter her service. She did her best to please the old woman, and shook her bed with such a will that the feathers flew about like snow-flakes; so she led a very easy life, was never scolded, and lived on the fat of the land. But after she had been some time with Mother Holle she grew sad and depressed, and at first she hardly knew herself what was the matter. At last she discovered that she was homesick, so she went to Mother Holle and said, “I know I am a thousand times better off here than I ever was in my life before, but notwithstanding, I have a great longing to go home, in spite of all your kindness to me. I can remain with you no longer, but must return to my own people.”

“Your desire to go home pleases me,” said Mother Holle, “and because you have served me so faithfully, I will show you the way back into the world myself.”

So she took her by the hand and led her to an open door, and as the girl passed through it there fell a heavy shower of gold all over her, till she was covered with it from top to toe.

“That’s a reward for being such a good little maid,” said Mother Holle, and she gave her the spindle too that had fallen into the well.

Then she shut the door, and the girl found herself back in the world again, not far from her own house; and when she came to the courtyard the old hen, who sat on the top of the wall, called out, “Click, clock, clack, Our golden maid’s come back.”

Then she went in to her stepmother, and as she had returned covered with gold she was welcomed home.

She proceeded to tell all that had happened to her, and when the mother heard how she had come by her riches, she was most anxious to secure the same luck for her own idle, ugly daughter; so she told her to sit at the well and spin. In order to make her spindle bloody, she stuck her hand into a hedge of thorns and pricked her finger. Then she threw the spindle into the well, and jumped in herself after it. Like her sister she came to the beautiful meadow, and followed the same path. When she reached the baker’s oven the bread called out as before, “Oh! take me out, take me out, or I shall be burnt to a cinder. I am quite done enough.”

But the good-for-nothing girl answered, “A pretty joke, indeed; just as if I should dirty my hands for you!”

And on she went. Soon she came to the apple tree, which cried, “Oh! Shake me, shake me, my apples are all quite ripe.”

“I’ll see myself farther,” she replied, “one of them might fall on my head.”

And so she pursued her way. When she came to Mother Holle's house she wasn't the least afraid, for she had been warned about her big teeth, and she readily agreed to become her maid.

The first day she worked very hard, and did all her mistress told her, for she thought of the gold she would give her; but on the second day she began to be lazy, and on the third she wouldn't even get up in the morning. She didn't make Mother Holle's bed as she ought to have done, and never shook it enough to make the feathers fly. So her mistress soon grew weary of her, and dismissed her, much to the lazy creature's delight.

"For now," she thought, "the shower of golden rain will come."

Mother Holle led her to the same door as she had done her sister, but when she passed through it, instead of the gold rain a kettle full of pitch came showering over her.

"That's a reward for your service," said Mother Holle, and she closed the door behind her.

So the lazy girl came home all covered with pitch, and when the old hen on the top of the wall saw her, it called out, "Click, clock, clack, Our dirty slut's come back."

But the pitch remained sticking to her, and never as long as she lived could it be got off.

## **THE NIXY**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Lang, Andrew. *The Yellow Fairy Book*. London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1894, 108–113.

**Date:** ca. 1843

**Original Source:** Grimm, Jacob and Wilhelm. *Kinder- und Hausmärchen (Children's and Household Tales)*.

**National Origin:** Germany

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Nixies are water spirits from Germanic tradition. Although they are shape-shifters, they usually appear in tales in human form. The belief in these beings is likely to serve a cautionary function regarding the dangers of drowning posed by isolated bodies of water. Lang's folktale is listed as Tale 181 in the Grimms' collection. The plot is the same as "The Nix of the Mill Pond" (AT 316).

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**T**here was once upon a time a miller who was very well off, and had as much money and as many goods as he knew what to do with. But sorrow comes in the night, and the miller all of a sudden became so poor that

at last he could hardly call the mill in which he sat his own. He wandered about all day full of despair and misery, and when he lay down at night he could get no rest, but lay awake all night sunk in sorrowful thoughts.

One morning he rose up before dawn and went outside, for he thought his heart would be lighter in the open air. As he wandered up and down on the banks of the mill-pond he heard a rustling in the water, and when he looked near he saw a white woman rising up from the waves. He realized at once that this could be none other than the nixy of the mill-pond, and in his terror he didn't know if he should fly away or remain where he was. While he hesitated the nixy spoke, called him by his name, and asked him why he was so sad.

When the miller heard how friendly her tone was, he plucked up heart and told her how rich and prosperous he had been all his life up till now, when he didn't know what he was to do for want and misery.

Then the nixy spoke comforting words to him, and promised that she would make him richer and more prosperous than he had ever been in his life before, if he would give her in return the youngest thing in his house.

The miller thought she must mean one of his puppies or kittens, so promised the nixy at once what she asked, and returned to his mill full of hope. On the threshold he was greeted by a servant with the news that his wife had just given birth to a boy.

The poor miller was much horrified by these tidings, and went in to his wife with a heavy heart to tell her and his relations of the fatal bargain he had just struck with the nixy. "I would gladly give up all the good fortune she promised me," he said, "if I could only save my child." But no one could think of any advice to give him, beyond taking care that the child never went near the mill-pond.

So the boy thrived and grew big, and in the meantime all prospered with the miller, and in a few years he was richer than he had ever been before. But all the same he did not enjoy his good fortune, for he could not forget his compact with the nixy, and he knew that sooner or later she would demand his fulfillment of it. But year after year went by, and the boy grew up and became a great hunter, and the lord of the land took him into his service, for he was as smart and bold a hunter as you would wish to see. In a short time he married a pretty young wife, and lived with her in great peace and happiness.

One day when he was out hunting a hare sprang up at his feet, and ran for some way in front of him in the open field. The hunter pursued it hotly for some time, and at last shot it dead. Then he proceeded to skin it, never noticing that he was close to the mill-pond, which from childhood up he had been taught to avoid. He soon finished the skinning, and went to the water to wash the blood off his hands. He had hardly dipped them in the pond when the nixy rose up in the water, and seizing him in her wet arms she dragged him down with her under the waves. When the hunter did not come home in the evening his wife grew very anxious, and when his game bag was found close to the mill-pond she

guessed at once what had befallen him. She was nearly beside herself with grief, and roamed round and round the pond calling on her husband without ceasing. At last, worn out with sorrow and fatigue, she fell asleep and dreamt that she was wandering along a flowery meadow, when she came to a hut where she found an old witch, who promised to restore her husband to her.

When she awoke next morning she determined to set out and find the witch; so she wandered on for many a day, and at last she reached the flowery meadow and found the hut where the old witch lived. The poor wife told her all that had happened and how she had been told in a dream of the witch's power to help her.

The witch counseled her to go to the pond the first time there was a full moon, and to comb her black hair with a golden comb, and then to place the comb on the bank. The hunter's wife gave the witch a handsome present, thanked her heartily, and returned home.

Time dragged heavily till the time of the full moon, but it passed at last, and as soon as it rose the young wife went to the pond, combed her black hair with a golden comb, and when she had finished, placed the comb on the bank; then she watched the water impatiently. Soon she heard a rushing sound, and a big wave rose suddenly and swept the comb off the bank, and a minute after the head of her husband rose from the pond and gazed sadly at her. But immediately another wave came, and the head sank back into the water without having said a word. The pond lay still and motionless, glittering in the moonshine, and the hunter's wife was not a bit better off than she had been before.

In despair she wandered about for days and nights, and at last, worn out by fatigue, she sank once more into a deep sleep, and dreamt exactly the same dream about the old witch. So next morning she went again to the flowery meadow and sought the witch in her hut, and told her of her grief. The old woman counseled her to go to the mill-pond the next full moon and play upon a golden flute, and then to lay the flute on the bank.

As soon as the next moon was full the hunter's wife went to the mill-pond, played on a golden flute, and when she had finished placed it on the bank. Then a rushing sound was heard, and a wave swept the flute off the bank, and soon the head of the hunter appeared and rose up higher and higher till he was half out of the water. Then he gazed sadly at his wife and stretched out his arms towards her. But another rushing wave arose and dragged him under once more. The hunter's wife, who had stood on the bank full of joy and hope, sank into despair when she saw her husband snatched away again before her eyes.

But for her comfort she dreamt the same dream a third time, and betook herself once more to the old witch's hut in the flowery meadow. This time the old woman told her to go the next full moon to the mill-pond, and to spin there with a golden spinning-wheel, and then to leave the spinning-wheel on the bank.

The hunter's wife did as she was advised, and the first night the moon was full she sat and spun with a golden spinning-wheel, and then left the wheel on

the bank. In a few minutes a rushing sound was heard in the waters, and a wave swept the spinning-wheel from the bank. Immediately the head of the hunter rose up from the pond, getting higher and higher each moment, till at length he stepped on to the bank and fell on his wife's neck.

But the waters of the pond rose up suddenly, overflowed the bank where the couple stood, and dragged them under the flood. In her despair the young wife called on the old witch to help her, and in a moment the hunter was turned into a frog and his wife into a toad. But they were not able to remain together, for the water tore them apart, and when the flood was over they both resumed their own shapes again, but the hunter and the hunter's wife found themselves each in a strange country, and neither knew what had become of the other.

The hunter determined to become a shepherd, and his wife too became a shepherdess. So they herded their sheep for many years in solitude and sadness.

Now it happened once that the shepherd came to the country where the shepherdess lived. The neighborhood pleased him, and he saw that the pasture was rich and suitable for his flocks. So he brought his sheep there, and herded them as before. The shepherd and shepherdess became great friends, but they did not recognize each other in the least.

But one evening when the moon was full they sat together watching their flocks, and the shepherd played upon his flute. Then the shepherdess thought of that evening when she had sat at the full moon by the mill-pond and had played on the golden flute; the recollection was too much for her, and she burst into tears. The shepherd asked her why she was crying, and left her no peace till she told him all her story. Then the scales fell from the shepherd's eyes, and he recognized his wife, and she him. So they returned joyfully to their own home, and lived in peace and happiness ever after.

# HUNGARY

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## THE BOY WHO COULD KEEP A SECRET

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Lang, Andrew. *The Crimson Fairy Book*. London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1903, 37–46.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Jones, W. Henry, and L. Kropf. *The Folktales of the Magyars*. London: E. Stock, 1889.

**National Origin:** Hungary

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The Magyars came to the mountainous area of Central Europe that constitutes contemporary Hungary from Central Asia, eventually becoming the nation's principal ethnic group. References to the Sultan in the tale locate events in the period during which the Turkish Ottoman Empire expanded into Hungary and other areas of Central Europe in the early decades of the sixteenth century. The drawing of a sword as the test of leadership and the sword's rattling in its scabbard to warn the bearer are central to the plot of this narrative. The **motif** of the magic sword is cross-culturally distributed.

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Once upon a time there lived a poor widow who had one little boy. At first sight you would not have thought that he was different from a thousand other little boys; but then you noticed that by his side hung the scabbard of a sword, and as the boy grew bigger the scabbard grew bigger too. The sword which belonged to the scabbard was found by the little boy sticking out of the ground in the garden, and every day he pulled it up to see if it would go into the scabbard. But though it was plainly becoming longer and longer, it was some time before the two would fit.

However, there came a day at last when it slipped in quite easily. The child was so delighted that he could hardly believe his eyes, so he tried it seven times, and each time it slipped in more easily than before. But pleased though the boy was, he determined not to tell anyone about it, particularly not his mother, who never could keep anything from her neighbors.

Still, in spite of his resolutions, he could not hide altogether that something had happened, and when he went in to breakfast his mother asked him what was the matter.

“Oh, mother, I had such a nice dream last night,” said he; “but I can’t tell it to anybody.”

“You can tell it to me,” she answered. “It must have been a nice dream, or you wouldn’t look so happy.”

“No, mother; I can’t tell it to anybody,” returned the boy, “till it comes true.”

“I want to know what it was, and know it I will,” cried she, “and I will beat you till you tell me.”

But it was no use, neither words nor blows would get the secret out of the boy; and when her arm was quite tired and she had to leave off, the child, sore and aching, ran into the garden and knelt weeping beside his little sword. It was working round and round in its hole all by itself, and if anyone except the boy had tried to catch hold of it, he would have been badly cut. But the moment he stretched out his hand it stopped and slid quietly into the scabbard.

For a long time the child sat sobbing, and the noise was heard by the king as he was driving by. “Go and see who it is that is crying so,” said he to one of his servants, and the man went.

In a few minutes he returned saying, “Your Majesty, it is a little boy who is kneeling there sobbing because his mother has beaten him.”

“Bring him to me at once,” commanded the monarch, “and tell him that it is the king who sends for him, and that he has never cried in all his life and cannot bear anyone else to do so.” On receiving this message the boy dried his tears and went with the servant to the royal carriage. “Will you be my son?” asked the king.

“Yes, if my mother will let me,” answered the boy. And the king bade the servant go back to the mother and say that if she would give her boy to him, he should live in the palace and marry his prettiest daughter as soon as he was a man.

The widow’s anger now turned into joy, and she came running to the splendid coach and kissed the king’s hand. “I hope you will be more obedient to his Majesty than you were to me,” she said; and the boy shrank away half-frightened. But when she had gone back to her cottage, he asked the king if he might fetch something that he had left in the garden, and when he was given permission, he pulled up his little sword, which he slid into the scabbard.

Then he climbed into the coach and was driven away.



After they had gone some distance the king said, "Why were you crying so bitterly in the garden just now?"

"Because my mother had been beating me," replied the boy.

"And what did she do that for?" asked the king again.

"Because I would not tell her my dream."

"And why wouldn't you tell it to her?"

"Because I will never tell it to anyone till it comes true," answered the boy.

"And won't you tell it to me either?" asked the king in surprise.

"No, not even to you, your Majesty," replied he.

"Oh, I am sure you will when we get home," said the king smiling, and he talked to him about other things till they came to the palace.

"I have brought you such a nice present," he said to his daughters, and as the boy was very pretty they were delighted to have him and gave him all their best toys.

"You must not spoil him," observed the king one day, when he had been watching them playing together. "He has a secret which he won't tell to anyone."

"He will tell me," answered the eldest princess; but the boy only shook his head.

"He will tell me," said the second girl.

"Not I," replied the boy.

"He will tell me," cried the youngest, who was the prettiest too.

"I will tell nobody till it comes true," said the boy, as he had said before; "and I will beat anybody who asks me."

The king was very sorry when he heard this, for he loved the boy dearly; but he thought it would never do to keep anyone near him who would not do as he was bid. So he commanded his servants to take him away and not to let him enter the palace again until he had come to his right senses.

The sword clanked loudly as the boy was led away, but the child said nothing, though he was very unhappy at being treated so badly when he had done nothing. However, the servants were very kind to him, and their children brought him fruit and all sorts of nice things, and he soon grew merry again, and lived amongst them for many years till his seventeenth birthday. Meanwhile the two eldest princesses had become women, and had married two powerful kings who ruled over great countries across the sea. The youngest one was old enough to be married too, but she was very particular, and turned up her nose at all the young princes who had sought her hand.

One day she was sitting in the palace feeling rather dull and lonely, and suddenly she began to wonder what the servants were doing, and whether it was not more amusing down in their quarters. The king was at his council and the queen was ill in bed, so there was no one to stop the princess, and she hastily ran across the gardens to the houses where the servants lived. Outside she noticed a youth who was handsomer than any prince she had ever seen, and in a moment she knew him to be the little boy she had once played with.

“Tell me your secret and I will marry you,” she said to him; but the boy only gave her the beating he had promised her long ago, when she asked him the same question. The girl was very angry, besides being hurt, and ran home to complain to her father.

“If he had a thousand souls, I would kill them all,” swore the king.

That very day a gallows was built outside the town, and all the people crowded round to see the execution of the young man who had dared to beat the king’s daughter. The prisoner, with his hands tied behind his back, was brought out by the hangman, and amidst dead silence his sentence was being read by the judge when suddenly the sword clanked against his side. Instantly a great noise was heard and a golden coach rumbled over the stones, with a white flag waving out of the window. It stopped underneath the gallows, and from it stepped the king of the Magyars, who begged that the life of the boy might be spared.

“Sir, he has beaten my daughter, who only asked him to tell her his secret. I cannot pardon that,” answered the princess’s father.

“Give him to me, I’m sure he will tell me the secret; or, if not, I have a daughter who is like the Morning Star, and he is sure to tell it to her.”

The sword clanked for the third time, and the king said angrily, “Well, if you want him so much you can have him; only never let me see his face again.” And he made a sign to the hangman. The bandage was removed from the young man’s eyes, and the cords from his wrists, and he took his seat in the golden coach beside the king of the Magyars. Then the coachman whipped up his horses, and they set out for Buda [western portion of the city that became Budapest in the nineteenth century].

The king talked very pleasantly for a few miles, and when he thought that his new companion was quite at ease with him, he asked him what was the secret which had brought him into such trouble. “That I cannot tell you,” answered the youth, “until it comes true.”

“You will tell my daughter,” said the king, smiling.

“I will tell nobody,” replied the youth, and as he spoke the sword clanked loudly. The king said no more, but trusted to his daughter’s beauty to get the secret from him.

The journey to Buda was long, and it was several days before they arrived there. The beautiful princess happened to be picking roses in the garden, when her father’s coach drove up. “Oh, what a handsome youth! Have you brought him from fairyland?” cried she, when they all stood upon the marble steps in front of the castle.

“I have brought him from the gallows,” answered the king; rather vexed at his daughter’s words, as never before had she consented to speak to any man.

“I don’t care where you brought him from,” said the spoiled girl. “I will marry him and nobody else, and we will live together till we die.”

“You will tell another tale,” replied the king, “when you ask him his secret. After all he is no better than a servant.”

“That is nothing to me,” said the princess, “for I love him. He will tell his secret to me, and will find a place in the middle of my heart.”

But the king shook his head, and gave orders that the lad was to be lodged in the summer-house.

One day, about a week later, the princess put on her finest dress, and went to pay him a visit. She looked so beautiful that, at the sight of her, the book dropped from his hand, and he stood up speechless. “Tell me,” she said, coaxingly, “what is this wonderful secret? Just whisper it in my ear, and I will give you a kiss.”

“My angel,” he answered, “be wise, and ask no questions, if you wish to get safely back to your father’s palace; I have kept my secret all these years, and do not mean to tell it now.”

However, the girl would not listen, and went on pressing him, till at last he slapped her face so hard that her nose bled. She shrieked with pain and rage, and ran screaming back to the palace, where her father was waiting to hear if she had succeeded. “I will starve you to death, you son of a dragon,” cried he, when he saw her dress streaming with blood; and he ordered all the masons and bricklayers in the town to come before him.

“Build me a tower as fast as you can,” he said, “and see that there is room for a stool and a small table, and for nothing else. The men set to work, and in two hours the tower was built, and they proceeded to the palace to inform the king that his commands were fulfilled. On the way they met the princess, who began to talk to one of the masons, and when the rest were out of hearing she asked if he could manage to make a hole in the tower, which nobody could see, large enough for a bottle of wine and some food to pass through.

“To be sure I can,” said the mason, turning back, and in a few minutes the hole was bored.

At sunset a large crowd assembled to watch the youth being led to the tower, and after his misdeeds had been proclaimed he was solemnly walled up. But every morning the princess passed him in food through the hole, and every third day the king sent his secretary to climb up a ladder and look down through a little window to see if he was dead. But the secretary always brought back the report that he was fat and rosy.

“There is some magic about this,” said the king.

This state of affairs lasted some time, till one day a messenger arrived from the Sultan bearing a letter for the king, and also three canes. “My master bids me say,” said the messenger, bowing low, “that if you cannot tell him which of these three canes grows nearest the root, which in the middle, and which at the top, he will declare war against you.”

The king was very much frightened when he heard this, and though he took the canes and examined them closely, he could see no difference between them. He looked so sad that his daughter noticed it, and inquired the reason.

“Alas! my daughter,” he answered, “how can I help being sad? The Sultan has sent me three canes, and says that if I cannot tell him which of them grows

near the root, which in the middle, and which at the top, he will make war upon me. And you know that his army is far greater than mine.”

“Oh, do not despair, my father,” said she. “We shall be sure to find out the answer”; and she ran away to the tower, and told the young man what had occurred.

“Go to bed as usual,” replied he, “and when you wake, tell your father that you have dreamed that the canes must be placed in warm water. After a little while one will sink to the bottom; that is the one that grows nearest the root. The one which neither sinks nor comes to the surface is the cane that is cut from the middle; and the one that floats is from the top.”

So, the next morning, the princess told her father of her dream, and by her advice he cut notches in each of the canes when he took them out of the water, so that he might make no mistake when he handed them back to the messenger. The Sultan could not imagine how he had found out, but he did not declare war.

The following year the Sultan again wanted to pick a quarrel with the king of the Magyars, so he sent another messenger to him with three foals, begging him to say which of the animals was born in the morning, which at noon, and which in the evening. If an answer was not ready in three days, war would be declared at once. The king’s heart sank when he read the letter. He could not expect his daughter to be lucky enough to dream rightly a second time, and as a plague had been raging through the country, and had carried off many of his soldiers, his army was even weaker than before. At this thought his face became so gloomy that his daughter noticed it, and inquired what was the matter.

“I have had another letter from the Sultan,” replied the king, “and he says that if I cannot tell him which of three foals was born in the morning, which at noon, and which in the evening, he will declare war at once.”

“Oh, don’t be cast down,” said she, “something is sure to happen”; and she ran down to the tower to consult the youth.

“Go home, idol of my heart, and when night comes, pretend to scream out in your sleep, so that your father hears you. Then tell him that you have dreamt that he was just being carried off by the Turks because he could not answer the question about the foals, when the lad whom he had shut up in the tower ran up and told them which was foaled in the morning, which at noon, and which in the evening.”

So the princess did exactly as the youth had bidden her; and no sooner had she spoken than the king ordered the tower to be pulled down, and the prisoner brought before him. “I did not think that you could have lived so long without food,” said he, “and as you have had plenty of time to repent your wicked conduct, I will grant you pardon, on condition that you help me in a sore strait. Read this letter from the Sultan; you will see that if I fail to answer his question about the foals, a dreadful war will be the result.”

The youth took the letter and read it through. "Yes, I can help you," replied he; "but first you must bring me three troughs, all exactly alike. Into one you must put oats, into another wheat, and into the third barley. The foal which eats the oats is that which was foaled in the morning; the foal which eats the wheat is that which was foaled at noon; and the foal which eats the barley is that which was foaled at night." The king followed the youth's directions, and, marking the foals, sent them back to Turkey, and there was no war that year.

Now the Sultan was very angry that both his plots to get possession of Hungary had been such total failures, and he sent for his aunt, who was a witch, to consult her as to what he should do next.

"It is not the king who has answered your questions," observed the aunt, when he had told his story. "He is far too stupid ever to have done that! The person who has found out the puzzle is the son of a poor woman, who, if he lives, will become King of Hungary. Therefore, if you want the crown yourself, you must get him here and kill him."

After this conversation another letter was written to the Court of Hungary, saying that if the youth, now in the palace, was not sent to Turkey within three days, a large army would cross the border. The king's heart was sorrowful as he read, for he was grateful to the lad for what he had done to help him; but the boy only laughed, and bade the king fear nothing, but to search the town instantly for two youths just like each other, and he would paint himself a mask that was just like them. And the sword at his side clanked loudly.

After a long search twin brothers were found, so exactly resembling each other that even their own mother could not tell the difference. The youth painted a mask that was the precise copy of them, and when he had put it on, no one would have known one boy from the other. They set out at once for the Sultan's palace, and when they reached it, they were taken straight into his presence. He made a sign for them to come near; they all bowed low in greeting. He asked them about their journey; they answered his questions all together, and in the same words. If one sat down to supper, the others sat down at the same instant. When one got up, the others got up too, as if there had been only one body between them. The Sultan could not detect any difference between them, and he told his aunt that he would not be so cruel as to kill all three.

"Well, you will see a difference tomorrow," replied the witch, "for one will have a cut on his sleeve. That is the youth you must kill." And one hour before midnight, when witches are invisible, she glided into the room where all three lads were sleeping in the same bed. She took out a pair of scissors and cut a small piece out of the boy's coat-sleeve which was hanging on the wall, and then crept silently from the room. But in the morning the youth saw the slit, and he marked the sleeves of his two companions in the same way, and all three went down to breakfast with the Sultan. The old witch was standing in the window and pretended not to see them; but all witches have eyes in the backs of

their heads, and she knew at once that not one sleeve but three were cut, and they were all as alike as before. After breakfast, the Sultan, who was getting tired of the whole affair and wanted to be alone to invent some other plan, told them they might return home. So, bowing low with one accord, they went.

The princess welcomed the boy back joyfully, but the poor youth was not allowed to rest long in peace, for one day a fresh letter arrived from the Sultan, saying that he had discovered that the young man was a very dangerous person, and that he must be sent to Turkey at once, and alone. The girl burst into tears when the boy told her what was in the letter which her father had bade her to carry to him. "Do not weep, love of my heart," said the boy, "all will be well. I will start at sunrise tomorrow."

So next morning at sunrise the youth set forth, and in a few days he reached the Sultan's palace. The old witch was waiting for him at the gate, and whispered as he passed, "This is the last time you will ever enter it." But the sword clanked, and the lad did not even look at her. As he crossed the threshold fifteen armed Turks barred his way, with the Sultan at their head.

Instantly the sword darted forth and cut off the heads of everyone but the Sultan, and then went quietly back to its scabbard. The witch, who was looking on, saw that as long as the youth had possession of the sword, all her schemes would be in vain, and tried to steal the sword in the night, but it only jumped out of its scabbard and sliced off her nose, which was of iron. And in the morning, when the Sultan brought a great army to capture the lad and deprive him of his sword, they were all cut to pieces, while he remained without a scratch.

Meanwhile the princess was in despair because the days slipped by, and the young man did not return, and she never rested until her father let her lead some troops against the Sultan. She rode proudly before them, dressed in uniform; but they had not left the town more than a mile behind them, when they met the lad and his little sword. When he told them what he had done they shouted for joy, and carried him back in triumph to the palace; and the king declared that as the youth had shown himself worthy to become his son-in-law, he should marry the princess and succeed to the throne at once, as he himself was getting old, and the cares of government were too much for him. But the young man said he must first go and see his mother, and the king sent him in state, with a troop of soldiers as his bodyguard.

The old woman was quite frightened at seeing such an array draw up before her little house, and still more surprised when a handsome young man, whom she did not know, dismounted and kissed her hand, saying, "Now, dear mother, you shall hear my secret at last! I dreamed that I should become King of Hungary, and my dream has come true. When I was a child, and you begged me to tell you, I had to keep silence, or the Magyar king would have killed me. And if you had not beaten me nothing would have happened that has happened, and I should not now be King of Hungary."

## THE GENIUS

**Tradition Bearer:** Benedek Elek

**Source:** Gaster, M. "Székeley Tales." *Folklore* 4 (1893): 331–339.

**Date:** ca. 1893

**Original Source:** Hungarian Székeley

**National Origin:** Hungarian

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The Székeley (or Székellers) are among the three most historically prominent ethnic groups of Hungary—along with the Magyars and Saxons. Currently, the largest population of Székellers lives in Transylvania (Romania). Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, in fact, explicitly claims a Székeley ancestry. "The Genius" is a **variant** of "The Magic Ring" (AT 560).

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There was once a king. This king had but one only son; but, the good God alone knows why, he was so furiously angry with him one day that he drove him out of the house to go where he liked—up or down! In vain the queen took his part, in vain she made the whole village weep for the dear child torn from her heart; there was no pardon; the little prince must go away. The prince set out then very sadly; he went strolling on over hill and dale. As he goes, he hears someone, very much out of breath, running behind him, and calling out his name. He turns back, and sees a servant from the court. He has brought him a watch, sent after him by his dear mother. The prince took the watch, put it in his pocket, and then went on.

As he goes along he takes the watch out and opens the case, and then some invisible being, or something, speaks, and says, "What are your commands, my soul, my dear good master?"

The prince was astonished at this, very much so; his astonishment was so great that he did not say a single word, but put the watch back in his pocket.

All at once the road branched off in two directions; the one leading to a huge great wood, the other to a large city. He considered which he should take. It would be well to go into the town and pass the night there, but he had not a single stray kreuzer. He therefore went towards the wood, thinking that he can at least make a fire there, perhaps, too, he will be able to catch a bird, then he will gather strawberries and mushrooms, and have such a supper that the king himself can't do better.

He went into the wood, therefore, and there chose out a great tree, under which he sat down. He takes out his watch to see what o'clock it is, then that invisible being, or something, speaks again, and asks him, "What are your commands, my soul, my dear good master?"

Thus answered the prince, "Well, if you want me to give commands, then make me something to eat, and out of the ground too."

Scarcely had the prince looked round when there before him stood a table spread with all sorts of good dainty dishes. The little prince fell to manfully; then he lay down in the soft grass, and did not get up till the sun shone on his stomach.

He started off again and went strolling on until he came to such a great high mountain that it was impossible to see either the end, or the length, or the top of it. He looked right, he looked left, he looked up, he went round about, this way and that, but he could not find any means of getting over it in any way, it was so lofty and so steep. But he looked and looked about until he found a hole which led into the mountain. He entered this hole, but he had hardly gone the distance of a good gun-shot when he got into such intense darkness that he could not move either backwards or forwards. He puts his hand in his pocket to get a match, and while he was feeling for a match the watch touched his hand, and he took it out.

"What are your commands, my soul, my dear good master?" asked the genius again.

"I command you," said the prince, "to get me some light from somewhere."

As he gave the command, a lighted wax-taper was already in his hand, and by its light he strolled further on. He went deeper and deeper in, until all at once the passage began to widen out. There he found a house. He pushed the door open, and there finds an old dwarf. He greets him in a becoming manner.

"God give you good day, my dear Mr. Father; pray how are you, how does your precious health serve you?"

"Good day," answered the dwarf; "I am well; but who are you, and what sort of business are you upon that you come here, where not even a mouse comes?"

The prince told the story of his sad fate with very bitter lamentations, so that the dwarf's heart was sad for him. He encouraged and comforted him, telling him not to grieve at all, for he will procure him just such a place as the one he has left. Then he told him that beyond the mountain there was a powerful but good-hearted king; he, too, had had an only son, but he had been lost in the wars. Now, if he will go to this king, who will soon be killed by grief, and will say that he is his lost son, the king would grieve no more, and he would not be a world-wanderer. The prince resolved upon this, and the dwarf carefully instructed him what he was to say to the king. "Say that you are called Paul, that you left home seven years ago, and did not write because you were taken prisoner, and kept in such grievous captivity that you were unable either to write a letter or send a message. Then ask this, too, whether the three little sisters whom you left alive at the time of your departure are still living."

The prince thanked him much for his good advice, took leave of the dwarf, and with that set off out of the mountain. When he got out he took out his



watch and gave this command to the genius, "Take me to the other side of this mountain, to the king whose only son was lost while soldiering."

"Good, my soul, my dear good master," said the genius, "only shut your eyes."

The prince shut his eyes, and felt that his feet did not touch the ground, and that he was flying as quick as thought. But this did not last long; again his feet touched the ground, and then the genius said, "Now open your eyes!"

The prince opened them and looked round; and then—behold a wonder! He was standing before the gateway of a palace, which was even more splendid than his father's. When he had taken a good look round at the palace and its environs, he pushed the gate open and went at once to the king. He did not trouble himself much, to be sure, but fell upon the king's neck at once, embraced him and kissed him, saying, "My precious dear good father, my illustrious father, my lord, I have not seen you for just seven years, and I began to think I should never see you again in this life!"

The king was amazed and astounded, looked at the boy from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot, before, behind, and every way, but still he could not exactly recognize him as his own dear son. However, he answered all questions in such a way that the king distrusted him no longer, and in his great joy he made such a feast that even the Wallachian parson had wine instead of brandy with his puliszka [porridge and curds], and even the lame began to dance.

All three princesses were living, and the prince thought it would be a good thing to present his "sisters" with some handsome gift. He took out his watch and ordered the genius to bring the three girls three bouquets of golden flowers, such as human eye had never seen. Not an hour had passed, when all three golden bouquets were there. He sent them to the rooms of the three young ladies as secretly as possible, so that one knew nothing about the other.

Well, time waxes and wanes. One evening there was a great ball at the royal palace, and the youngest princess placed the beautiful golden bouquet in her bosom. Then, all at once, there was such a brilliant light that they might just as well have put out the wax candles. The elder princesses did not bring their bouquets, and each thought that their sister had stolen hers. They set upon her to make her give back their flowers.

"I shall certainly not give them up!" said the little princess. "If you have any too, fetch them out; they are sure to be where you put them."

At this both the girls run away, and come back each with a golden bouquet. And then there was such a flood of light that not even the sun could have shone more brightly.

News of this went through the whole land; everyone talked of nothing but the wonderful golden bouquets. The king could not praise his son enough for having thought of his sisters even in his captivity, and for having managed to be so economical as to be able to buy three golden bouquets. But the major-domo

shook his head, and said to the king, "Now, my illustrious king, don't be angry, but there is some diablerie in this, and I wager that if your Majesty commands that a golden bridge shall be built from your Majesty's palace to my palace by tomorrow morning, the duke will do this, too."

The king laughed the major-domo to scorn, but the latter persisted, until at last he promised to put his son to the test.

The king had his son up, and told him of his desire. He was an old man, but he liked what was fine, and he thought that, as a person who had seen the world, he would perhaps know some possible way of building a golden bridge.

The prince told him just to wait till the morning, as he could not say anything until then. Then, when they had separated, the prince took out his watch, and told the genius of the king's wish.

"It is no matter, my soul, my dear good master," said the spirit; "the bridge will be there by morning."

And so it was! But it was so beautiful, so glittering, that when the king got up and looked out of window he almost fell backwards in his great astonishment. He had his son called at once, and said to him, "Well, you have done this well, my son; but if you can do so much, then you can do more also. If you don't build a palace of pure, fine gold, seven stories high, by tomorrow morning, and if this palace does not stand upon a slender diamond foot, I will have your head cut off!"

The king thought, however, that his son would not be able to do this, and he was already rejoicing that he would be able to put him to death; for he was afraid that he would send him to hell with his diablerie. The prince himself did not believe that the genius would be able to build such a palace; nevertheless, he told him what the king wanted. Thereupon he went to bed, and in the morning he got up. And pray, was not the seven-storied palace standing before his window! He was almost killed with astonishment; and the king still more. They were obliged to sprinkle him with cold water, he was so faint with intense amazement.

But the king had still not had wonders enough. The next day a courtyard was wanted for the golden palace. When he had this, he wished for a garden, in which all, even to the smallest blade of grass, should be of gold and diamonds. For this he allowed three days.

"Good," thought the prince, "I will do this, too; but if he is not satisfied with this, I will leave him, as St. Paul did the Wallachians."

For he had only stayed till now for the sake of the little princess. But the major-domo proposed to the king that they should go out hunting until the turn came for the garden, and take the duke with them; for he remembered that before the war he was very fond of hunting. They at once determined that they would go hunting. But before they set out, the major-domo told the prince that it would be well for him to leave that beautiful watch of his at home, for it might easily be spoilt in the forest, and then there was no master-workman to mend it here, as there was abroad. The prince took his advice, and left the watch in his room.

But they had scarcely reached the forest when the major-domo, who had watched the prince when he was talking to his watch one night, ran home, climbed up into the prince's room by the window, took the watch out, and opened it. The genius sprang out as usual, but he asked a different question. This is what he asked, "What are your commands, you thief, my robber-master?"

"I command you to take me to a place where even the wind seldom goes, and no one but a mouse ever comes."

In an instant the major-domo was where he wished to be, and the prince's watch with him.

The prince comes home from hunting in the evening, goes straight to his room, and looks for his watch the first thing. He looks for it, but does not find it. He turns over and looks through everything, but in vain: his watch is gone! gone! gone! Oh, the prince is sad! For what is he to do without a watch? There will be an end to his life if he does not suddenly make himself scarce. As quick as thought he ran out of the palace, and went straight ahead.

For seven days and seven nights he went on and on without stopping, he made inquiries in all directions, but did not come upon any trace of the precious treasure. On the eighth day, just at sundown, he reached a little hut. He pushes the door open. And then he finds that the Sun himself lives there, and was just then about to go to bed. He wishes him good-evening properly, and begs pardon for disturbing him so late.

"Pray what is your business, my son?" the Sun asked him.

He tells him that he is looking for such and such a major-domo.

"Oh, my dear son," answered the Sun, "I travel round the world, but only from east to west, and he whom you seek does not go that way, or I should certainly have seen him. But see, not far from here lives the King of the Winds; his sons travel over all parts of the world, he will certainly know about your major-domo."

The prince thanked him for the good advice, wished the Sun a peaceful good-night, and with that he went to the King of the Winds. But he, too, only said that neither he nor his sons had seen any such major-domo, and he must certainly have crept into some place such as the wind itself very seldom wanders into. Perhaps the King of the Mice would be able to direct him. He went to the King of the Mice. The King of the Mice immediately summoned all the mice there were, and inquired whether they had not seen such and such a major-domo.

"Might their eyes fall out if they had seen him," so answered they every one. The prince was just going to turn back very sadly, when there hobbled forward a lame mouse. The King of the Mice asks him, too, whether he had not seen a major-domo.

"Why, to be sure I have seen him," answered the lame mouse; "I have just come from there; but he lives under-ground, in a stone cave, and in such a small hole that even I can scarcely get in."

The prince was delighted, and asked the mouse only to take him to the cave, and they will soon contrive something when they are there. They came to the cave, and there they began to consult what they were to do now.

At last they determined that the mouse should creep into the hole, gnaw through the watch-chain while the major-domo was asleep, and bring the watch out to the prince.

When a good half-hour had passed, the mouse came with the watch; and in return the prince caused the genius to fetch so much corn that the mouse was able to live like a lord upon it all his life. The major-domo they left in the cave, where he neither lived nor died, and whence he would never escape by his own efforts.

The prince now went back to the court of his second father, and they were just then burying him!

The kingdom he had left to his youngest daughter, for she was the cleverest. They had only just buried the king when the two elder girls married two kings' sons, and he asked the youngest. We must say, by the way, he confessed that he was not the princesses' brother, and had only given himself out as the king's son to comfort him, and by advice of the dwarf.

Well, the youngest princess did not need much asking. They quickly took boards, made benches and tables, and held three such wedding-feasts all at once that, maybe, they have not come to an end yet.

## THE LAD WHO KNEW EVERYTHING

**Tradition Bearer:** Benedek Elek

**Source:** Gaster, M. "Székeley Tales." *Folklore* 4 (1893): 339–344.

**Date:** ca. 1893

**Original Source:** Hungarian Székeley

**National Origin:** Hungarian

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In this **variant** of "The Animal Languages" (AT 670), the gift of animal languages brings wealth and status to a poor youth. Unlike most other versions of the tale, "The Lad Who Knew Everything" takes a tragic turn. Compare this narrative with the more typical comic conclusions of "The Billy Goat and the King" (Volume 2, page 295) and "The King Who Learned the Speech of Animals" (Volume 2, page 301).

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**T**here was once a poor lad. All the great efforts he made were to no purpose, he could not make anything of them, and he only became more of a beggar every day. The poor lad was much worried and very low-spirited

to find that he was always unsuccessful in everything, whatever he attempted, and that he would have to remain a beggar all his life. Really he would not torment himself any more, he would put an end to this miserable life. All that he possessed was a rope, and with this he went into the wood, intending to hang himself.

While he was wandering sadly in the huge wood, he heard a sound of piteous lamentation; he goes towards it, and then he sees a little tiny snake writhing about on the top of a tree-trunk, which was on fire, but it was unable to escape, for it was surrounded by flames and red-hot embers, and it would be killed if it went near them.

“But,” said the poor lad to himself, “I won’t let this unreasoning animal die an innocent death, though I have determined to die myself.” With that he went up to the burning trunk, stretched out a good firm bough, and lifted the little snakelet down on it.

Ha! How profusely the poor little snake thanked him! And it would not leave its life-preserver any peace until he accompanied it to its father’s come, and allowed him also to thank him for his kindness.

“God bless you,” thought the lad, “it will prolong my life a little, at all events.”

For, words are words, but the poor lad was afraid of death. He therefore accompanied the little snakelet to his father’s home. They went slowly on until they reached a large cave. It was here that the young snake’s father lived, and he was the very King of the Snakes himself. Eh! behold a wonder! the King of the Snakes was just as big as a hay-fork, and in his head there shone such a large diamond that the poor lad almost lost the sight of his eyes when he stepped in. There lay the King of the Snakes in the middle of the cave, and when the lad stepped in he fixed his great eyes upon him.

“Well,” thought the lad, “I shall have no need to hang myself, for this snake will gobble me up at once.”

But when the aged king knew that the poor lad had pre-served his son’s life, his countenance changed at once, and he said to the lad, “God bless you, you poor boy, for saving my son’s life. In return I will make you fortunate all your life, and your descendants fortunate too; only I warn you of this, not to tell anyone in the world of my gift, for the very moment you do, your life will come to an end.”

Now the King of the Snakes whispered something in the lad’s ear, and then the poor lad felt at once that from that moment he was not the same person that he had been before. All at once he knew everything, and he knew everything in such sort that he was equally well able to talk to human beings and animals, and he could even understand the humming of the flies besides.

He thanked the King of the Snakes over and over again for his valuable gift, and said, “I thank you, illustrious King of the Snakes, for your invisible gift. I saved your child’s life, and you have saved mine, for I was resolved upon dying a horrible death!”

With that he took his leave, commending the King of the Snakes, with his entire family and all his people, to God, and then set out towards home. He went sauntering on through the wood, and all at once he hears the sparrows twittering in a tree overhead. The oldest sparrow was just then speaking and saying, "Ah! if this poor lad could know what I know, he certainly would not think of putting an end to his life, but he would grow so rich that he would not exchange even with the king."

"You don't say so!" said the other sparrows. "How would it be possible?"

"Why, this way, to be sure," said the other sparrow; "by digging up the pan of gold which is beneath the hollow willow tree, and he would be rich all his life, even if he were to distribute half to the poor."

"Hem," thinks the poor lad to himself, "I will try, anyhow, whether the old sparrow speaks the truth."

He went home, procured a spade and hoe, and in the evening returned to the wood, to the hollow tree. He began to dig, and he dug until his spade clinked against the pan.

Hurrah! he hurriedly seized hold of the pan, and the sweat just dropped from his face while he lifted the pan full of gold out of the hole.

For indeed it was full of gold to the top; the old sparrow had not lied. He took the gold home too that same evening, and the next morning he began at the lower end of the village, and did not stop until he had distributed half among the poor.

He gained great esteem in the village, you may be sure! And then, moreover, when his neighbor's cow fell ill, and he knew from its lowing what was the matter with it, and was able to cure it besides, the whole village and the neighborhood too, for a great distance round, came to him, bringing all their sick animals, and he cured them.

But when he had nothing else to do, he always wandered out in the woods and fields, and listened to what the birds were saying. One day, being very tired with wandering about so much, he sat down on the roots of a tree. While he was lying there idly, a raven overhead spoke and said, "Ah! if the person who is dozing under the tree knew what I know, he would be the king's son-in-law in a week!"

"If he knew what, then?" asked the other ravens.

"Why, this, that the king's daughter has lost her precious gold cross, and now she has bound herself not to marry anyone but the man who shall produce the gold cross, for it is a keepsake from her dear mother. The man who can find it is not yet born into this world. It is in a good place here, in the hollow of the tree. The old king, however, has had a proclamation made throughout the whole kingdom that he will give his daughter and half his kingdom to, whoever produces the gold cross."

The lad laughed to himself, and thought, "You have spoken just at the right time, you chattering raven!"

He waited for them to fly away, and then he climbed up the tree, and actually found the gold cross in the hollow.

He hastened home immediately, but before he went to the king, he had such a palace built for him that there was not its fellow for a distance of seventh-seven lands; then he sent for a tailor, and ordered such a brilliant gunya [short cloak] that he might even have been taken for a duke. When both the palace and his cloak were ready, and he had looked at himself repeatedly from head to foot in the pier-glass to see whether he looked like a gentleman (which he did, of course!), he took the gold cross and set out with it to the king's court. He went straight up into the princess's room, and told a great lie, saying that he had taken the cross away from twelve robbers.

And, the princess was so delighted, she could not think of anything in her great delight. Then, when she had had a good look at the lad, and saw that he was a handsome, knightly-looking youth, she certainly did not take back her word, but said, "Here is my hand, I am yours till death, till my coffin is closed!"

After that there was a wedding, but such a wedding that the whole country rang with it, and it was talked of besides more than seven times seven lands off. The young couple lived happily, only the wife was not pleased at her husband's always wandering in the woods and fields, nor at his constantly forgetting himself even when they went out together, and listening to the songs of all the birds. They often quarreled about this, but then they made peace again.

One day they rode out on horseback into the wood. For a good while they kept close together, but then the mistress's horse lagged a little behind. The master's horse neighed back at it, "I say, you, why are you lagging behind?"

"It is easy for you," answered the mistress's horse. "You have only one to go with besides yourself, and I have three."

On hearing this the master laughed very much.

"What are you laughing at so heartily?" asked his wife.

"That I can't tell you," answered her husband. There was great wrath at this! Her husband was laughing at her! Who could tell what he did not think about her! But she would not leave him any peace until he told her.

"Very well," said her husband, "I will tell you, but, believe me, I shall die that same instant. Do you wish me to die?"

"Don't make game of me!" burst forth the lady. "You won't die just for telling a secret to your wife."

"Well then, I will tell you. If you desire my death, let it be as you wish."

The lady only laughed. She did not believe her husband.

However, he told her from beginning to end his adventure with the snake, and when he had come to the end of his story, that moment he fell from his horse and died suddenly.

Now, indeed, the lady believed that her husband was right, but it was too late. The wonder-working doctor who could raise her husband up was not yet born. She was never comforted, not entirely even when her beautiful

little golden-haired son was born, and grew up into just such a gallant lad as his father had been. The one thing she taught her son was to keep any promise once made lest the same thing should happen to him as to his dear father.

So it was, that was the end, it was true. If anyone does not believe it, let him go and see.

## **THE GRATEFUL BEASTS**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Lang, Andrew. *The Yellow Fairy Book*. London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1894, 64–74.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Hermann R. Kletke

**National Origin:** Hungary

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The following **ordinary folktale** begins with the episode of “The Two Travelers” (AT 613) in which a blinded man learns secrets that allow him to attain wealth and social status. Most of the tale, however, follows the developmental structure of “The Grateful Animals” (AT 544). In repaying their debts of gratitude, the nonhuman characters reveal themselves to have more integrity than the antagonists of the narrative.

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**T**here was once upon a time a man and woman who had three fine-looking sons, but they were so poor that they had hardly enough food for themselves, let alone their children. So the sons determined to set out into the world and to try their luck. Before starting their mother gave them each a loaf of bread and her blessing, and having taken a tender farewell of her and their father the three set forth on their travels.

The youngest of the three brothers, whose name was Ferko, was a beautiful youth, with a splendid figure, blue eyes, fair hair, and a complexion like milk and roses. His two brothers were as jealous of him as they could be, for they thought that with his good looks he would be sure to be more fortunate than they would ever be.

One day all the three were sitting resting under a tree, for the sun was hot and they were tired of walking. Ferko fell fast asleep, but the other two remained awake, and the eldest said to the second brother, “What do you say to doing our brother Ferko some harm? He is so beautiful that everyone takes a fancy to him, which is more than they do to us. If we could only get him out of the way we might succeed better.”



“I quite agree with you,” answered the second brother, “and my advice is to eat up his loaf of bread, and then to refuse to give him a bit of ours until he has promised to let us put out his eyes or break his legs.”

His eldest brother was delighted with this proposal, and the two wicked wretches seized Ferko’s loaf and ate it all up, while the poor boy was still asleep.

When he did awake he felt very hungry and turned to eat his bread, but his brothers cried out, “You ate your loaf in your sleep, you glutton, and you may starve as long as you like, but you won’t get a scrap of ours.”

Ferko was at a loss to understand how he could have eaten in his sleep, but he said nothing, and fasted all that day and the next night. But on the following morning he was so hungry that he burst into tears, and implored his brothers to give him a little bit of their bread. Then the cruel creatures laughed, and repeated what they had said the day before; but when Ferko continued to beg and beseech them, the eldest said at last, “If you will let us put out one of your eyes and break one of your legs, then we will give you a bit of our bread.”

At these words poor Ferko wept more bitterly than before, and bore the torments of hunger till the sun was high in the heavens; then he could stand it no longer, and he consented to allow his left eye to be put out and his left leg to be broken. When this was done he stretched out his hand eagerly for the piece of bread, but his brothers gave him such a tiny scrap that the starving youth finished it in a moment and besought them for a second bit.

But the more Ferko wept and told his brothers that he was dying of hunger, the more they laughed and scolded him for his greed. So he endured the pangs of starvation all that day, but when night came his endurance gave way, and he let his right eye be put out and his right leg broken for a second piece of bread.

After his brothers had thus successfully maimed and disfigured him for life, they left him groaning on the ground and continued their journey without him.

Poor Ferko ate up the scrap of bread they had left him and wept bitterly, but no one heard him or came to his help. Night came on, and the poor blind youth had no eyes to close, and could only crawl along the ground, not knowing in the least where he was going. But when the sun was once more high in the heavens, Ferko felt the blazing heat scorch him, and sought for some cool shady place to rest his aching limbs. He climbed to the top of a hill and lay down in the grass, and as he thought under the shadow of a big tree. But it was no tree he leant against, but a gallows on which two ravens were seated. The one was saying to the other as the weary youth lay down, “Is there anything the least wonderful or remarkable about this neighborhood?”

“I should just think there was,” replied the other; “many things that don’t exist anywhere else in the world. There is a lake down there below us, and anyone who bathes in it, though he were at death’s door, becomes sound and well on the spot, and those who wash their eyes with the dew on this hill become as sharp-sighted as the eagle, even if they have been blind from their youth.”

“Well,” answered the first raven, “my eyes are in no want of this healing bath, for, Heaven be praised, they are as good as ever they were; but my wing has been very feeble and weak ever since it was shot by an arrow many years ago, so let us fly at once to the lake that I may be restored to health and strength again.” And so they flew away.

Their words rejoiced Ferko’s heart, and he waited impatiently till evening should come and he could rub the precious dew on his sightless eyes.

At last it began to grow dusk, and the sun sank behind the mountains; gradually it became cooler on the hill, and the grass grew wet with dew. Then Ferko buried his face in the ground till his eyes were damp with dewdrops, and in a moment he saw clearer than he had ever done in his life before. The moon was shining brightly, and lighted him to the lake where he could bathe his poor broken legs.

Then Ferko crawled to the edge of the lake and dipped his limbs in the water. No sooner had he done so than his legs felt as sound and strong as they had been before, and Ferko thanked the kind fate that had led him to the hill where he had overheard the ravens’ conversation. He filled a bottle with the healing water, and then continued his journey in the best of spirits. He had not gone far before he met a wolf, who was limping disconsolately along on three legs, and who on perceiving Ferko began to howl dismally.

“My good friend,” said the youth, “be of good cheer, for I can soon heal your leg,” and with these words he poured some of the precious water over the wolf’s paw, and in a minute the animal was springing about sound and well on all fours. The grateful creature thanked his benefactor warmly, and promised Ferko to do him a good turn if he should ever need it. Ferko continued his way till he came to a ploughed field. Here he noticed a little mouse creeping wearily along on its hind paws, for its front paws had both been broken in a trap.

Ferko felt so sorry for the little beast that he spoke to it in the most friendly manner, and washed its small paws with the healing water. In a moment the mouse was sound and whole, and after thanking the kind physician it scampered away over the ploughed furrows.

Ferko again proceeded on his journey, but he hadn’t gone far before a queen bee flew against him, trailing one wing behind her, which had been cruelly torn in two by a big bird. Ferko was no less willing to help her than he had been to help the wolf and the mouse, so he poured some healing drops over the wounded wing. On the spot the queen bee was cured, and turning to Ferko she said, “I am most grateful for your kindness, and shall reward you some day.” And with these words she flew away humming, gaily.

Then Ferko wandered on for many a long day, and at length reached a strange kingdom. Here, he thought to himself, he might as well go straight to the palace and offer his services to the King of the country, for he had heard that the King’s daughter was as beautiful as the day. So he went to the royal palace, and as he entered the door the first people he saw were his two

brothers who had so shamefully ill-treated him. They had managed to obtain places in the King's service, and when they recognized Ferko with his eyes and legs sound and well they were frightened to death, for they feared he would tell the King of their conduct, and that they would be hung.

No sooner had Ferko entered the palace than all eyes were turned on the handsome youth, and the King's daughter herself was lost in admiration, for she had never seen anyone so handsome in her life before. His brothers noticed this, and envy and jealousy were added to their fear, so much so that they determined once more to destroy him. They went to the King and told him that Ferko was a wicked magician, who had come to the palace with the intention of carrying off the Princess.

Then the King had Ferko brought before him, and said, "You are accused of being a magician who wishes to rob me of my daughter, and I condemn you to death; but if you can fulfill three tasks which I shall set you to do your life shall be spared, on condition you leave the country; but if you cannot perform what I demand you shall be hung on the nearest tree." And turning to the two wicked brothers he said, "Suggest something for him to do; no matter how difficult, he must succeed in it or die."

They did not think long, but replied, "Let him build your Majesty in one day a more beautiful palace than this, and if he fails in the attempt let him be hung."

The King was pleased with this proposal, and commanded Ferko to set to work on the following day. The two brothers were delighted, for they thought they had now got rid of Ferko forever. The poor youth himself was heart-broken, and cursed the hour he had crossed the boundary of the King's domain. As he was wandering disconsolately about the meadows round the palace, wondering how he could escape being put to death, a little bee flew past, and settling on his shoulder whispered in his ear, "What is troubling you, my kind benefactor? Can I be of any help to you? I am the bee whose wing you healed, and would like to show my gratitude in some way."

Ferko recognized the queen bee, and said, "Alas! how could you help me? For I have been set to do a task which no one in the whole world could do, let him be ever such a genius! Tomorrow I must build a palace more beautiful than the King's, and it must be finished before evening."

"Is that all?" answered the bee, "then you may comfort yourself; for before the sun goes down tomorrow night a palace shall be built unlike any that King has dwelt in before. Just stay here till I come again and tell you that it is finished." Having said this she flew merrily away, and Ferko, reassured by her words, lay down on the grass and slept peacefully till the next morning. Early on the following day the whole town was on its feet, and everyone wondered how and where the stranger would build the wonderful palace. The Princess alone was silent and sorrowful, and had cried all night till her pillow was wet, so much did she take the fate of the beautiful youth to heart.

Ferko spent the whole day in the meadows waiting the return of the bee. And when evening was come the queen bee flew by, and perching on his shoulder she

said, "The wonderful palace is ready. Be of good cheer, and lead the King to the hill just outside the city walls." And humming gaily she flew away again.

Ferko went at once to the King and told him the palace was finished. The whole court went out to see the wonder, and their astonishment was great at the sight which met their eyes. A splendid palace reared itself on the hill just outside the walls of the city, made of the most exquisite flowers that ever grew in mortal garden. The roof was all of crimson roses, the windows of lilies, the walls of white carnations, the floors of glowing auriculars and violets, the doors of gorgeous tulips and narcissi with sunflowers for knockers, and all round hyacinths and other sweet-smelling flowers bloomed in masses, so that the air was perfumed far and near and enchanted all who were present.

This splendid palace had been built by the grateful queen bee, who had summoned all the other bees in the kingdom to help her.

The King's amazement knew no bounds, and the Princess's eyes beamed with delight as she turned them from the wonderful building on the delighted Ferko. But the two brothers had grown quite green with envy, and only declared the more that Ferko was nothing but a wicked magician.

The King, although he had been surprised and astonished at the way his commands had been carried out, was very vexed that the stranger should escape with his life, and turning to the two brothers he said, "He has certainly accomplished the first task, with the aid no doubt of his diabolical magic; but what shall we give him to do now? Let us make it as difficult as possible, and if he fails he shall die."

Then the eldest brother replied, "The corn has all been cut, but it has not yet been put into barns; let the knave collect all the grain in the kingdom into one big heap before tomorrow night, and if as much as a stalk of corn is left let him be put to death."

The Princess grew white with terror when she heard these words; but Ferko felt much more cheerful than he had done the first time, and wandered out into the meadows again, wondering how he was to get out of the difficulty. But he could think of no way of escape. The sun sank to rest and night came on, when a little mouse started out of the grass at Ferko's feet, and said to him, "I'm delighted to see you, my kind benefactor; but why are you looking so sad? Can I be of any help to you, and thus repay your great kindness to me?"

Then Ferko recognized the mouse whose front paws he had healed, and replied, "Alas I how can you help me in a matter that is beyond any human power! Before tomorrow night all the grain in the kingdom has to be gathered into one big heap, and if as much as a stalk of corn is wanting I must pay for it with my life."

"Is that all?" answered the mouse; "that needn't distress you much. Just trust in me, and before the sun sets again you shall hear that your task is done." And with these words the little creature scampered away into the fields.

Ferko, who never doubted that the mouse would be as good as its word, lay down comforted on the soft grass and slept soundly till next morning. The day passed slowly, and with the evening came the little mouse and said, "Now there is not a single stalk of corn left in any field; they are all collected in one big heap on the hill out there."

Then Ferko went joyfully to the King and told him that all he demanded had been done. And the whole Court went out to see the wonder, and were no less astonished than they had been the first time. For in a heap higher than the King's palace lay all the grain of the country, and not a single stalk of corn had been left behind in any of the fields. And how had all this been done? The little mouse had summoned every other mouse in the land to its help, and together they had collected all the grain in the kingdom.

The King could not hide his amazement, but at the same time his wrath increased, and he was more ready than ever to believe the two brothers, who kept on repeating that Ferko was nothing more nor less than a wicked magician. Only the beautiful Princess rejoiced over Ferko's success, and looked on him with friendly glances, which the youth returned.

The more the cruel King gazed on the wonder before him, the more angry he became, for he could not, in the face of his promise, put the stranger to death. He turned once more to the two brothers and said, "His diabolical magic has helped him again, but now what third task shall we set him to do? No matter how impossible it is, he must do it or die."

The eldest answered quickly, "Let him drive all the wolves of the kingdom on to this hill before tomorrow night. If he does this he may go free; if not he shall be hung as you have said."

At these words the Princess burst into tears, and when the King saw this he ordered her to be shut up in a high tower and carefully guarded till the dangerous magician should either have left the kingdom or been hung on the nearest tree.

Ferko wandered out into the fields again, and sat down on the stump of a tree wondering what he should do next. Suddenly a big wolf ran up to him, and standing still said, "I'm very glad to see you again, my kind benefactor. What are you thinking about all alone by yourself? If I can help you in any way only say the word, for I would like to give you a proof of my gratitude."

Ferko at once recognized the wolf whose broken leg he had healed, and told him what he had to do the following day if he wished to escape with his life. "But how in the world," he added, "am I to collect all the wolves of the kingdom on to that hill over there?"

"If that's all you want done," answered the wolf, "you needn't worry yourself. I'll undertake the task, and you'll hear from me again before sunset tomorrow. Keep your spirits up." And with these words he trotted quickly away.

Then the youth rejoiced greatly, for now he felt that his life was safe; but he grew very sad when he thought of the beautiful Princess, and that he would never see her again if he left the country. He lay down once more on the grass and soon fell fast asleep.

All the next day he spent wandering about the fields, and toward evening the wolf came running to him in a great hurry and said, "I have collected together all the wolves in the kingdom, and they are waiting for you in the wood. Go quickly to the King, and tell him to go to the hill that he may see the wonder you have done with his own eyes. Then return at once to me and get on my back, and I will help you to drive all the wolves together."

Then Ferko went straight to the palace and told the King that he was ready to perform the third task if he would come to the hill and see it done. Ferko himself returned to the fields, and mounting on the wolf's back he rode to the wood close by.

Quick as lightning the wolf flew round the wood, and in a minute many hundred wolves rose up before him, increasing in number every moment, till they could be counted by thousands. He drove them all before him on to the hill, where the King and his whole Court and Ferko's two brothers were standing. Only the lovely Princess was not present, for she was shut up in her tower weeping bitterly.

The wicked brothers stamped and foamed with rage when they saw the failure of their wicked designs. But the King was overcome by a sudden terror when he saw the enormous pack of wolves approaching nearer and nearer, and calling out to Ferko he said, "Enough, enough, we don't want any more."

But the wolf on whose back Ferko sat, said to its rider, "Go on! go on!" and at the same moment many more wolves ran up the hill, howling horribly and showing their white teeth.

The King in his terror called out, "Stop a moment; I will give you half my kingdom if you will drive all the wolves away." But Ferko pretended not to hear, and drove some more thousands before him, so that everyone quaked with horror and fear.

Then the King raised his voice again and called out, "Stop! you shall have my whole kingdom, if you will only drive these wolves back to the places they came from."

But the wolf kept on encouraging Ferko, and said, "Go on! go on!" So he led the wolves on, till at last they fell on the King and on the wicked brothers, and ate them and the whole Court up in a moment.

Then Ferko went straight to the palace and set the Princess free, and on the same day he married her and was crowned King of the country. And the wolves all went peacefully back to their own homes, and Ferko and his bride lived for many years in peace and happiness together, and were much beloved by great and small in the land.

## THE GOLDEN SPINSTER

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Wratislaw, A. H. *Sixty Folk-Tales from Exclusively Slavonic Sources*. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Co., 1890, 82–89.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Collected from oral tradition by K. J. Erben

**National Origin:** Hungary

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This tale of a daughter's predicament caused by her mother's false boasting is a **variant** of "The Name of the Helper" (AT 500). The plot is best known in the form popularized by the Grimms' "Rumpelstiltskin" (Grimm 55).

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**F**ar away somewhere beyond the Red Sea, there was a certain young lord. When he had grown up in body and mind, he bethought himself that indeed it would not be a bad thing to look round him in the world and seek out a nice wife for himself, and a good mistress for his household. Well, as he determined, so he did. He went out into the world, but could not find such a one as he would have liked.

At last he went somehow into the house of a widow, who had three daughters, all maidens. The two elder were as active as wasps for work, but the youngest, who was named Hanka, was like a leaden bird for everything that wanted doing. When the young lord came to them at spinning time he was astounded. "How is it," thought he, "that Hanka can be sleeping in the chimney-corner, while the other spinsters are hard at work at their tasks?" He said to their mother, "But, old lady, tell me, why don't you make that one, too, take a distaff? She is quite a grown-up girl, and would amuse herself by work."

"Ah! Young sir," replied the mother, "I would allow her to spin with all my heart; I would fill her distaff myself; but what then? She is such a spinster, that by herself she would by morning spin up not only all our spinning materials, but all the thatch from the roof, and that into golden threads; nay, at last she would betake herself to my gray hairs; I am obliged, therefore, to give her a holiday."

"If this be so," said the delighted suitor, "and if it is God's will, you can give her to me to wife. You see, I have a nice establishment—flax, hemp, whole heaps of the finer and commoner kinds of tow; she could spin away to her heart's content." At such language the old woman did not take long for consideration, and Hanka woke from her slumbers. They brought the bridegroom expectant a handsome olive-colored handkerchief out of the clothes-chest, adorned him with periwinkles, and performed the marriage ceremony that very evening. The other spinsters were somewhat mortified at Hanka's good fortune,

but finally were content at it, hoping that they, too, would get rings on their fingers, now that the idle hand, as they nicknamed Hanka, had obtained a husband. The next day our young bridegroom ordered his horses to be harnessed, and when all was ready, placed the tearful bride beside him in a handsome carriage, gave his hand to his mother-in-law, called out "Farewell!" to the bride's sisters, and they left the village at a gallop.

For better or worse! Poor Hanka sat by her youthful husband mournful and tearful, just as if the chickens had eaten up all her bread. He talked to her enough, but Hanka was as mute as a fish. "What's the matter with you?" said he. "Don't be frightened. At my house, indeed, there will be no going to sleep for you. I shall give you all that your heart desires. You will have flax, hemp, fine and coarse tow enough for the whole winter, and I have got in a store of apples for spittle."

But our Hanka became more sorrowful the further they went. Thus they arrived in the evening at the young lord's castle, got down from the carriage, and, after supper, the future lady was conducted into a large room, in which, from top to bottom, lay nothing but spinning materials. "Well," said he, "here you have distaff, spindle, and spindle-ring, and rosy apples and a few peas for spittle—spin away! If you spin all this, by morning, into golden threads, we shall be man and wife at once if not, I shall cause you to be put to death without further ado." Thereupon the young lord went out and left the spinster to spin.

When Hanka was left alone, she didn't seat herself under the distaff, for she didn't even know how to twirl the threads, but began sorrowfully to exclaim, "Oh God! God! here I am come out to vile disgrace! Why did not my mother teach me to work and spin like my two sisters? I might then have reposed in peace at home; but, as it is, sinful creature that I am, I must perish miserably."

As she was thus expressing her feelings, the wall suddenly opened, and a little manikin stood before the terrified Hanka, with a red cap on his head and an apron girt round his waist; before him he pushed a little golden hand-cart. "Why have you your eyes so tearful?" inquired he of Hanka. "What has happened to you?"

"As if; sinful soul that I am, I should not weep," said she; "only think, they have ordered me to spin all these spinning materials into golden threads by morning, and if I don't do so, they will have me put to death without any ceremony. Oh God! God! what shall I do, forlorn in this strange world?"

"If that is all," said the manikin, "don't be frightened. I will teach you to spin golden threads cleverly; but only on this condition, that I find you this time next year in this very place. Then, if you do not guess my honorable name, you will become my wife, and I shall convey you away in this cart. But, if you guess it, I shall leave you in peace. But this I tell you: if you choose to hide yourself anywhere this time next year, and if you fly ever so far beneath the sky, I shall find you, and will wring your neck. Well, have you agreed to this?"



It was not, sooth to say, very satisfactory to Hanka; but what could the poor thing do? At length she bethought herself, "Let it be left to God, whether I perish this way or that! I agree." The manikin, on hearing this, made three circuits round her with his golden cart, seated himself under the distaff, and repeating:

Thus, Haniczka, thus!  
Thus, Haniczka, thus!  
Thus, Haniczka, thus!

taught and instructed her to spin golden threads. After this, as he came, so he departed, and the wall closed up of itself behind him.

Our damsel, from that time forth a real golden spinster, sat under the distaff, and seeing how the spinning materials decreased and the golden threads increased, spun and spun away, and by morning had not only spun up all, but had had a good sleep into the bargain.

In the morning, as soon as the young lord awoke, he dressed himself and went to visit the golden spinster. When he entered the room he was all but blinded by the glitter, and wouldn't even believe his eyes, that it was all gold. But when he had satisfied himself that so it was, he began to embrace the golden spinster, and declared her his true and lawful wife. Thus they lived in the fear of God, and if our young lord had previously loved his Haniczka for the golden spinning, he then loved her a thousand times more for the beautiful son that she in the meantime bore him.

But what? There's no footpath without an end, neither could the joy of our wedded pair endure forever. Day passed after day, till finally the appointed time approached within a span. Now our Hanka began to be more sorrowful from moment to moment; her eyes were as red as if they were baked, and she did nothing but creep like a shadow from room to room. And, indeed, it was a serious thing for a young mother to have to lose all at once her good husband and her beautiful son! Hitherto her poor husband knew nought about anything, and comforted his wife as well as he could; but she would not be comforted. When she bethought herself what a nasty dwarf she was going to obtain instead of her shapely husband, she all but dashed herself against the walls from excessive agony.

At last she managed to overcome herself, and revealed everything to her husband as it had occurred to her on that first night. He became, from horror, as pale as a whitewashed wall, and caused proclamation to be made throughout the whole district that, if anyone knew of such a dwarf, and should make known his real name, he would give him a piece of gold as large as his head.

"Ah! what a windfall such a piece of gold as that would be!" whispered neighbor to neighbor, and they dispersed on all sides, examined all corners, all but looked into the mouse holes, searched and searched as for a needle, but, after all, couldn't find anything out. Nobody knew and nobody had seen the dwarf, and as for his name, no living soul could guess it. Under such

circumstances the last day arrived; nothing had been seen or heard of the manikin, and our Hanka, with her boy at her breast, was wringing her hands at the prospect of losing her husband.

Her unhappy husband, whose eyes were almost exhausted from weeping, in order, at any rate, to escape from beholding the agony of his wife, took his gun on his shoulder, fastened his faithful hounds in a leash, and went out hunting. After hunting time—it was about the hour of afternoon luncheon—it began to lighten on all sides and in all directions, rain poured so that it would have been a shame to turn a dog out into the roads, and in this tempest all our young lord's servants sought shelter where they could, and got so lost that he remained with only one on a densely wooded unknown hill, and that as soaked and dripping as a rat. Where were they to seek shelter before the ever-increasing storm? where to dry themselves? where to obtain harbor for the night? The unlucky pair, master and servant, looked round on all sides to see whether they couldn't espy a shepherd's hut or a cattle-shed; but where nothing is, there is nothing.

Finally, when they had almost strained their eyes out of the sockets, they saw where, out of the hole of the side shaft of a mine, puffs of smoke were rolling, as from a limekiln. "Go, lad," said the young lord to the servant, "look whence this smoke issues; there must be people there. Ask them whether they will give us lodging for the night."

The servant went off and returned in a jiffy with the intelligence that neither door, nor shed, nor people were there. "Fie, you're only a duffer!" said the lord to his servant with chattering teeth. "I'll go myself; you, for a punishment, shall drip and freeze." Well, the noble lord took the job in hand, but neither could he espy anything, save that in one place smoke kept continually issuing out of the side shaft.

At last in disgust he said, "Whatever devil on devil may bring, know I must whence all this smoke comes." So he went to the hole itself, knelt beside it and peeped in. As he was thus peeping, he espied, somewhere under ground, where food was cooking in a kitchen, and covers were laid for two on a stone table. Round this table ran a little manikin in a red cap with a golden hand-cart before him, and from time to time, after making the circuit, he sang:

I've manufactured a golden spinster for the young lord,  
 She will try to guess my name tonight;  
 If she guesses my name aright, I shall leave her;  
 If she guesses it not, I shall take her:  
 My name is Martynko Klyngas.

And again he ran like mad round the table and shouted:

I'm preparing nine dishes for supper,  
 I'll place her in a silken bed;

If she guesses my name aright, I shall leave her;  
If she guesses it not, I shall take her:  
My name is Martynko Klyngas.

The young lord wanted nothing more; he ran as fast as his legs could carry him to his servant, and, as it now cleared up a little, they were fortunate enough to find a path, by which they hastened home.

He found his wife at home in agony, in misery, streaming with tears; for she thought she would not be able even to take leave of her husband, as he was so long away. "Don't afflict yourself, my wife," were the young lord's first words when he entered the room. "I know what you require; his name is Martynko Klyngas." And then he, without delay, recounted to her everything, where he had gone and what had happened to him.

Hanka could scarcely keep on her feet for joy, embraced and kissed her husband, and betook herself joyfully into the room, in which she had spent the first night, to finish spinning the golden threads. At midnight the wall opened, and the manikin with the red cap came in, as he had done that time last year, and running round her with the golden cart shouted with the utmost power of his lungs:

If you guess my name, I leave you;  
If you guess it not, I take you;  
Only guess, guess away!

"I'll have a try to guess," said Hanka; "your name is Martynko Klyngas." As soon as she had uttered this, the little dwarf seized his cart, threw his cap on the ground, and departed as he had come; the wall closed, and Hanka breathed in peace.

From that time forth she spun no more gold, and, indeed, neither was it necessary for her so to do, for they were rich enough. She and her husband lived happily together, their boy grew like a young tree by the water's side; and they bought a cow, and on the cow a bell, and here's an end to the tale I tell.

## **THE GLASS AXE**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Lang, Andrew. *The Yellow Fairy Book*. London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1894, 141–148.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Hermann R. Kletke

**National Origin:** Hungary

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“The Glass Axe” draws on the basic plot structure of “The Girl as Helper of the Hero in His Flight” (AT 313A). In the classic versions of this **tale type**, the hero has been promised to an evil supernatural figure in return for the latter’s assistance. In this **variant**, however, there is the implication that the Queen’s pregnancy resulted from some such bargain, but this is never overtly stated.

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There was once upon a time a King and Queen who had everything they could possibly wish for in this world except a child. At last, after twelve years, the Queen gave birth to a son; but she did not live long to enjoy her happiness, for on the following day she died. But before her death she called her husband to her and said, “Never let the child put his feet on the ground, for as soon as he does so he will fall into the power of a wicked Fairy, who will do him much harm.” And these were the last words the poor Queen spoke.

The boy thrived and grew big, and when he was too heavy for his nurse to carry, a chair was made for him on little wheels, in which he could wander through the palace gardens without help; at other times he was carried about on a litter, and he was always carefully watched and guarded for fear he should at any time put his feet to the ground.

But as this sort of life was bad for his health, the doctors ordered him horse exercise, and he soon became a first-rate rider, and used to go out for long excursions on horseback, accompanied always by his father’s stud-groom and a numerous retinue.

Every day he rode through the neighboring fields and woods, and always returned home in the evening safe and well. In this way many years passed, and the Prince grew to manhood, and hardly anyone remembered the Queen’s warning, though precautions were still taken, more from use and wont than for any other reason.

One day the Prince and his suite went out for a ride in a wood where his father sometimes held a hunt. Their way led through a stream whose banks were overgrown with thick brushwood. Just as the horsemen were about to ford the river, a hare, startled by the sound of the horses’ hoofs, started up from the grass and ran towards the thicket. The young Prince pursued the little creature, and had almost overtaken it, when the girth of his saddle suddenly broke in two and he fell heavily to the ground. No sooner had his foot touched the earth than he disappeared before the eyes of the horrified courtiers.

They sought for him far and near, but all in vain, and they were forced to recognize the power of the evil Fairy, against which the Queen had warned them on her death-bed. The old King was much grieved when they brought him the news of his son’s disappearance, but as he could do nothing to free him from his fate, he gave himself up to an old age of grief and loneliness, cherishing at

the same time the hope that some lucky chance might one day deliver the youth out of the hands of his enemy.

Hardly had the Prince touched the ground than he felt himself violently seized by an unseen power, and hurried away he knew not whither. A whole new world stretched out before him, quite unlike the one he had left. A splendid castle surrounded by a huge lake was the abode of the Fairy, and the only approach to it was over a bridge of clouds. On the other side of the lake high mountains rose up, and dark woods stretched along the banks; over all hung a thick mist, and deep silence reigned everywhere.

No sooner had the Fairy reached her own domain than she made herself visible, and turning to the Prince she told him that unless he obeyed all her commands down to the minutest detail he would be severely punished. Then she gave him an axe made of glass, and bade him cross the bridge of clouds and go into the wood beyond and cut down all the trees there before sunset. At the same time she cautioned him with many angry words against speaking to a black girl he would most likely meet in the wood.

The Prince listened to her words meekly, and when she had finished took up the glass axe and set out for the forest. At every step he seemed to sink into the clouds, but fear gave wings to his feet, and he crossed the lake in safety and set to work at once.

But no sooner had he struck the first blow with his axe than it broke into a thousand pieces against the tree. The poor youth was so terrified he did not know what to do, for he was in mortal dread of the punishment the wicked old Fairy would inflict on him. He wandered to and fro in the wood, not knowing where he was going, and at last, worn out by fatigue and misery, he sank on the ground and fell fast asleep.

He did not know how long he had slept when a sudden sound awoke him, and opening his eyes he saw a black girl standing beside him. Mindful of the Fairy's warning he did not dare to address her, but she on her part greeted him in the most friendly manner, and asked him at once if he were under the power of the wicked Fairy. The Prince nodded his head silently in answer.

Then the black girl told him that she too was in the power of the Fairy, who had doomed her to wander about in her present guise until some youth should take pity on her and bear her in safety to the other side of the river which they saw in the distance, and on the other side of which the Fairy's domain and power ended.

The girl's words so inspired the Prince with confidence that he told her all his tale of woe, and ended up by asking her advice as to how he was to escape the punishment the Fairy would be sure to inflict on him when she discovered that he had not cut down the trees in the wood and that he had broken her axe.

"You must know," answered the black girl, "that the Fairy in whose power we both are is my own mother, but you must not betray this secret, for it would

cost me my life. If you will only promise to try and free me I will stand by you, and will accomplish for you all the tasks which my mother sets you.”

The Prince promised joyfully all she asked; then having once more warned him not to betray her confidence, she handed him a draught to drink which very soon sunk his senses in a deep slumber.

His astonishment was great when he awoke to find the glass axe whole and unbroken at his side, and all the trees of the wood lying felled around him!

He made all haste across the bridge of clouds, and told the Fairy that her commands were obeyed. She was much amazed when she heard that all the wood was cut down, and saw the axe unbroken in his hand, and since she could not believe that he had done all this by himself, she questioned him narrowly if he had seen or spoken to the black girl. But the Prince lied manfully, and swore he had never looked up from his work for a moment. Seeing she could get nothing more out of him, she gave him a little bread and water, and showing him to a small dark cupboard she told him he might sleep there.

Morning had hardly dawned when the Fairy awoke the Prince, and giving him the glass axe again she told him to cut up all the wood he had felled the day before, and to put it in bundles ready for firewood; at the same time she warned him once more against approaching or speaking a word to the black girl if he met her in the wood.

Although his task was no easier than that of the day before, the youth set out much more cheerfully, because he knew he could count on the help of the black girl. With quicker and lighter step he crossed the bridge of clouds, and hardly had he reached the other side than his friend stood before him and greeted him cheerfully.

When she heard what the Fairy demanded this time, she answered smilingly, “Never fear,” and handed him another draught, which very soon caused the Prince to sink into a deep sleep.

When he awoke everything was done. All the trees of the wood were cut up into firewood and arranged in bundles ready for use.

He returned to the castle as quickly as he could, and told the Fairy that her commands were obeyed. She was even more amazed than she had been before, and asked him again if he had either seen or spoken to the black girl; but the Prince knew better than to betray his word, and once more lied freely.

On the following day the Fairy set him a third task to do, even harder than the other two. She told him he must build a castle on the other side of the lake, made of nothing but gold, silver, and precious stones, and unless he could accomplish this within an hour, the most frightful doom awaited him.

The Prince heard her words without anxiety, so entirely did he rely on the help of his black friend. Full of hope he hurried across the bridge, and recognized at once the spot where the castle was to stand, for spades, hammers, axes, and every other building implement lay scattered on the ground ready for the workman’s hand, but of gold, silver, and precious stones there was not a sign.

But before the Prince had time to feel despondent the black girl beckoned to him in the distance from behind a rock, where she had hidden herself for fear her mother should catch sight of her. Full of joy the youth hurried towards her, and begged her aid and counsel in the new piece of work he had been given to do.

But this time the Fairy had watched the Prince's movements from her window, and she saw him hiding himself behind the rock with her daughter. She uttered a piercing shriek so that the mountains re-echoed with the sound of it, and the terrified pair had hardly dared to look out from their hiding-place when the enraged woman, with her dress and hair flying in the wind, hurried over the bridge of clouds.

The Prince at once gave himself up for lost, but the girl told him to be of good courage and to follow her as quickly as he could. But before they left their shelter she broke off a little bit of the rock, spoke some magic words over it, and threw it in the direction her mother was coming from. In a moment a glittering palace arose before the eyes of the Fairy which blinded her with its dazzling splendor, and with its many doors and passages prevented her for some time from finding her way out of it.

In the meantime the black girl hurried on with the Prince, hastening to reach the river, where once on the other side they would forever be out of the wicked Fairy's power. But before they had accomplished half the way they heard again the rustle of her garments and her muttered curses pursuing them closely.

The Prince was terrified; he dared not look back, and he felt his strength giving way. But before he had time to despair the girl uttered some more magic words, and immediately she herself was changed into a pond, and the Prince into a duck swimming on its surface.

When the Fairy saw this her rage knew no bounds, and she used all her magic wits to make the pond disappear; she caused a hill of sand to arise at her feet, meaning it to dry up the water at once. But the sand hill only drove the pond a little farther away, and its waters seemed to increase instead of diminishing. When the old woman saw that the powers of her magic were of so little avail, she had recourse to cunning. She threw a lot of gold nuts into the pond, hoping in this way to catch the duck, but all her efforts were fruitless, for the little creature refused to let itself be caught.

Then a new idea struck the wicked old woman, and hiding herself behind the rock which had sheltered the fugitives, she waited behind it, watching carefully for the moment when the Prince and her daughter should resume their natural forms and continue their journey. She had not to wait long, for as soon as the girl thought her mother was safely out of the way, she changed herself and the Prince once more into their human shape, and set out cheerfully for the river.

But they had not gone many steps when the wicked Fairy hurried after them, a drawn dagger in her hand, and was close upon them, when suddenly,

instead of the Prince and her daughter, she found herself in front of a great stone church, whose entrance was carefully guarded by a huge monk.

Breathless with rage and passion, she tried to plunge her dagger into the monk's heart, but it fell shattered in pieces at her feet. In her desperation she determined to pull down the church, and thus to destroy her two victims forever. She stamped three times on the ground, and the earth trembled, and both the church and the monk began to shake. As soon as the Fairy saw this she retreated to some distance from the building, so as not to be hurt herself by its fall. But once more her scheme was doomed to failure, for hardly had she gone a yard from the church than both it and the monk disappeared, and she found herself in a wood black as night, and full of wolves and bears and wild animals of all sorts and descriptions.

Then her wrath gave place to terror, for she feared every moment to be torn in pieces by the beasts who one and all seemed to defy her power. She thought it wisest to make her way as best she could out of the forest, and then to pursue the fugitives once more and accomplish their destruction either by force or cunning.

In the meantime the Prince and the black girl had again assumed their natural forms, and were hurrying on as fast as they could to reach the river. But when they got there they found that there was no way in which they could cross it, and the girl's magic art seemed no longer to have any power. Then turning to the Prince she said, "The hour for my deliverance has not yet come, but as you promised to do all you could to free me, you must do exactly as I bid you now. Take this bow and arrow and kill every beast you see with them, and be sure you spare no living creature."

With these words she disappeared, and hardly had she done so than a huge wild boar started out of the thicket near and made straight for the Prince. But the youth did not lose his presence of mind, and drawing his bow he pierced the beast with his arrow right through the skull. The creature fell heavily on the ground, and out of its side sprang a little hare, which ran like the wind along the river bank. The Prince drew his bow once more, and the hare lay dead at his feet; but at the same moment a dove rose up in the air, and circled round the Prince's head in the most confiding manner. But mindful of the black girl's commands, he dared not spare the little creature's life, and taking another arrow from his quiver he laid it as dead as the boar and the hare. But when he went to look at the body of the bird he found instead of the dove a round white egg lying on the ground.

While he was gazing on it and wondering what it could mean, he heard the sweeping of wings above him, and looking up he saw a huge vulture with open claws swooping down upon him. In a moment he seized the egg and flung it at the bird with all his might, and lo and behold! instead of the ugly monster the most beautiful girl he had ever seen stood before the astonished eyes of the Prince.



But while all this was going on the wicked old Fairy had managed to make her way out of the wood, and was now using the last resource in her power to overtake her daughter and the Prince. As soon as she was in the open again she mounted her chariot, which was drawn by a fiery dragon, and flew through the air in it. But just as she got to the river she saw the two lovers in each other's arms swimming through the water as easily as two fishes.

Quick as lightning, and forgetful of every danger, she flew down upon them. But the waters seized her chariot and sunk it in the lowest depths, and the waves bore the wicked old woman down the stream till she was caught in some thorn bushes, where she made a good meal for all the little fishes that were swimming about.

And so at last the Prince and his lovely Bride were free. They hurried as quickly as they could to the old King, who received them with joy and gladness. On the following day a most gorgeous wedding feast was held, and as far as we know the Prince and his bride lived happily forever afterwards.

## THE THREE LEMONS

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Wratislaw, A. H. *Sixty Folk-Tales from Exclusively Slavonic Sources*. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Co., 1890, 82–89.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Unavailable

**National Origin:** Hungary

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This **variant** of the **ordinary folktale** “The Three Oranges” (AT 408) incorporates witches and giant ogres as helpers to the protagonist rather than giving them their usual malevolent roles. In most of its particulars, however, the narrative follows the plot of the quest for the “Orange Princess.” The **stock character** of the gypsy alludes to the historical prejudice against the Roma. See pages 163–177 for examples of three Roma folktales.

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**T**here was once upon a time an old king who had an only son. This son he one day summoned before him, and spoke to him thus, “My son, you see that my head has become white; ere long I shall close my eyes, and I do not yet know in what condition I shall leave you. Take a wife, my son! Let me bless you in good time, before I close my eyes.” The son made no reply, but became lost in thought; he would gladly with all his heart have fulfilled his father's wish, but there was no damsel in whom his heart could take delight.

Once upon a time, when he was sitting in the garden, and just considering what to do, all of a sudden an old woman appeared before him—where she came, there she came.

“Go to the glass hill, pluck the three lemons, and you will have a wife in whom your heart will take delight,” said she, and as she had appeared so she disappeared. Like a bright flash did these words dart through the prince’s soul. At that moment he determined, come what might, to seek the glass hill and pluck the three lemons. He made known his determination to his father, and his father gave him for the journey a horse, arms and armor, and his fatherly blessing.

Through forest-covered mountains, through desert plains, went our prince on his pilgrimage, for a very, very great distance; but there was nothing to be seen, nothing to be heard of the glass hill and the three lemons.

Once, quite wearied out with his long journey, he threw himself down under the cool shade of a broad lime tree. As he threw himself down, his father’s sword, which he wore at his side, clanged against the ground, and a dozen ravens began croaking at the top of the tree. Frightened by the clang of the sword, they rose on their wings, and flew into the air above the lofty tree. “Hem! till now I haven’t seen a living creature for a long while,” said the prince to himself, springing from the ground. “I will go in the direction in which the ravens have flown maybe some hope will disclose itself to me.”

He went on—he went on anew for three whole days and three nights, till at last a lofty castle displayed itself to him at a distance. “Praise be to God! I shall now at any rate come to human beings,” cried he, and proceeded further.

The castle was of pure lead; round it flew the twelve ravens, and in front of it stood an old woman—it was Jezibaba [a forest witch]—leaning on a long leaden staff. “Ah, my son! whither have you come? Here there is neither bird nor insect to be seen, much less a human being,” said Jezibaba to the prince. “Flee, if life is dear to you; for, if my son comes, he will devour you.”

“Ah! Not so, old mother, not so!” entreated the prince. “I have come to you for counsel as to whether you cannot let me have some information about the glass hill and the three lemons.”

“I have never heard of the glass hill; but stay! When my son comes home, maybe he will be able to let you have the information. But I will now conceal you somewhat; you will hide yourself under the besom [broom], and wait there concealed till I call you.”

The mountains echoed, the castle quaked, and Jezibaba whispered to the prince that her son was coming. “Foh! Foh! There is a smell of human flesh; I am going to eat it!” shouted Jezibaba’s son, while still in the doorway, and thumped on the ground with a huge leaden club, so that the whole castle quaked.

“Ah, not so, my son, not so!” said Jezibaba, soothing him. “There has come a handsome youth who wants to consult you about something.”

“Well, if he wants to consult me, let him come here.”

“Yes, indeed, my son, he shall come, but only on condition that you promise to do nothing to him.”

“Well, I’ll do nothing to him, only let him come.”

The prince was trembling like an aspen under the besom, for he saw before him through the twigs an ogre, up to whose knees he didn’t reach. Happily his life was safe-guarded, when Jezibaba bade him come out from under the besom. “Well, you beetle, why are you afraid?” shouted the giant. “Whence are you? What do you want?”

“What do I want?” replied the prince. “I’ve long been wandering in these mountains, and can’t find that which I am seeking. Now I’ve come to ask you whether you can’t give me information about the glass hill and the three lemons.”

Jezibaba’s son wrinkled his brow, but, after a while, said in a somewhat gentler voice, “There’s nothing to be seen here of the glass hill; but go to my brother in the silver castle, maybe he’ll be able to tell you something. But stay, I won’t let you go away hungry. Mother, here with the dumplings!” Old Jezibaba set a large dish upon the table, and her gigantic son sat down to it.

“Come and eat!” shouted he to the prince.

The prince took the first dumpling and began to eat, but two of his teeth broke, for they were dumplings of lead.

“Well, why don’t you eat? Maybe you don’t like them?” inquired Jezibaba’s son. “Yes, they are good; but I don’t want any just now.”

“Well, if you don’t want any just now, pocket some, and go your way.”

The good prince was obliged to put some of the leaden dumplings into his pocket. He then took leave and proceeded further.

On he went and on he went for three whole days and three nights, and the further he went, the deeper he wandered into a thickly wooded and gloomy range of mountains. Before him it was desolate, behind him it was desolate; there wasn’t a single living creature to be seen. All wearied from his long journey, he threw himself on the ground. The clang of his silver-mounted sword spread far and wide. Above him four and twenty ravens, frightened by the clash of his sword, began to croak, and, rising on their wings, flew into the air. “A good sign!” cried the prince. “I will go in the direction in which the birds have flown.”

And on he went in that direction, on he went as fast as his feet could carry him, till all at once a lofty castle displayed itself to him! He was still far from the castle, and already its walls were glistening in his eyes, for the castle was of pure silver. In front of the castle stood an old woman bent with age, leaning on a long silver staff, and this was Jezibaba. “Ah, my son! How is it that you have come here? Here there is neither bird nor insect, much less a human being!” cried Jezibaba to the prince; “if life is dear to you, flee away, for if my son comes, he will devour you!”

“Nay, old mother, he will hardly eat me. I bring him a greeting from his brother in the leaden castle.”

“Well, if you bring a greeting from the leaden castle, then come into the parlor, my son, and tell me what you are seeking.”

“What I am seeking, old mother? For ever so long a time I’ve been seeking the glass hill and the three lemons, and cannot find them; now I’ve come to inquire whether you can’t give me information about them.”

“I know nothing about the glass hill; but stay! when my son comes, maybe he will be able to give you the information. Hide yourself under the bed, and don’t make yourself known unless I call you.”

The mountains echoed with a mighty voice, the castle quaked, and the prince knew that Jezibaba’s son was coming home. “Foh! Foh! There’s a smell of human flesh; I’m going to eat it!” roared a horrible ogre already in the door-way, and thumped upon the ground with a silver club, so that the whole castle quaked.

“Ah! not so, my son, not so; but a handsome youth has come and has brought you a greeting from your brother in the leaden castle.”

“Well, if he’s been at my brother’s, and if he has done nothing to him, let him have no fear of me either; let him come out.” The prince sprang out from under the bed, and went up to him, looking beside him as if he had placed himself under a very tall pine. “Well, beetle, have you been at my brother’s?”

“Indeed, I have; and here I’ve still the dumplings, which he gave me for the journey.”

“Well, I believe you; now tell me what it is you want.”

“What I want? I am come to ask you whether you can’t give me information about the glass hill or the three lemons.”

“Hem! I’ve heard formerly about it, but I don’t know how to direct you. Meanwhile, do you know what? Go to my brother in the golden castle, he will direct you. But stay, I won’t let you go away hungry. Mother, here with the dumplings!” Jezibaba brought the dumplings on a large silver dish, and set them on the table. “Eat!” shouted her son.

The prince, seeing that they were silver dumplings, said that he didn’t want to eat just then, but would take some for his journey, if he would give him them.

“Take as many as you like, and greet my brother and aunt.” The prince took the dumplings, thanked him courteously, and proceeded further.

Three days had already passed since he quitted the silver castle, wandering continuously through densely wooded mountains, not knowing which way to go, whether to the right hand or to the left. All wearied out, he threw himself down under a wide-spreading beech, to take a little breath. His silver-mounted sword clanged on the ground, and the sound spread far and wide. “Krr, krr, krr!” croaked a flock of ravens over the traveler, scared by the clash of his sword, and flew into the air. “Praise be to God! the golden castle won’t be far off now,” cried the prince, and proceeded, encouraged, onwards in the direction in which the ravens showed him the road.

Scarcely had he come out of the valley on to a small hill, when he saw a beautiful and wide meadow, and in the midst of the meadow stood a golden

castle, just as if he were gazing at the sun; and before the gate of the castle stood an old bent Jezibaba, leaning on a golden staff “Ah! my son! what do you seek for here?” cried she to the prince. “Here there is neither bird nor insect to be seen, much less a human being! If your life is dear to you, flee, for if my son comes, he will devour you!”

“Nay, old mother, he’ll hardly eat me,” replied he. “I bring him a greeting from his brother in the silver castle.”

“Well, if you bring him a greeting from the silver castle, come into the parlor and tell me what has brought you to us.”

“What has brought me to you, old mother? I have long been wandering in this mountain range, and haven’t been able to find out where are the glass hill and the three lemons. I was directed to you, because haply you might be able to give me information about it.”

“Where is the glass hill? I cannot tell you that; but stay! When my son comes, he will counsel you which way you must go, and what you must do. Hide yourself under the table, and stay there till I call you.”

The mountains echoed, the castle quaked, and Jezibaba’s son stepped into the parlor. “Fob! Foh! There’s a smell of human flesh; I’m going to eat it!” shouted he, while still in the doorway, and thumped with a golden club upon the ground, so that the whole castle quaked.

“Gently, my son, gently!” said Jezibaba, soothing him; “there is a handsome youth come, who brings you a greeting from your brother in the silver castle. If you will do nothing to him, I will call him at once.”

“Well, if my brother has done nothing to him, neither will I do anything to him.” The prince came out from under the table and placed himself beside him, looking, in comparison, as if he had placed himself beside a lofty tower, and showed him the silver dumplings in token that he had really been at the silver castle. “Well, tell me, you beetle, what you want!” shouted the monstrous ogre; “if I can counsel you, counsel you I will; don’t fear!” Then the prince explained to him the aim of his long journey, and begged him to advise him which way to go to the glass hill, and what he must do to obtain the three lemons. “Do you see that black knoll that looms yonder?” said he, pointing with his golden club; “that is the glass hill; on the top of the hill stands a tree, and on the tree hang three lemons, whose scent spreads seven miles round. You will go up the glass hill, kneel under the tree, and hold up your hands; if the lemons are destined for you, they will fall off into your hands of themselves; but, if they are not destined for you, you will not pluck them, whatever you do. When you are on your return, and are hungry or thirsty, cut one of the lemons into halves, and you will eat and drink your fill. And now go, and God be with you! But stay, I won’t let you go hungry. Mother, here with the dumplings!” Jezibaba set a large golden dish on the table. “Eat!” said her son to the prince, “or, if you don’t want to do so now, put some into your pocket; you will eat them on the road.” The prince had no desire to eat, but put some into his pocket, saying that he would eat

them on the road. He then thanked him courteously for his hospitality and counsel, and proceeded further.

Swiftly he paced from hill into dale, from dale on to a fresh hill, and never stopped till he was beneath the glass hill itself. There he stopped, as if turned to a stone. The hill was high and smooth; there wasn't a single crack in it. On the top spread the branches of a wondrous tree, and on the tree swung three lemons, whose scent was so powerful that the prince almost fainted. *s God help me!* Now, as it shall be, so it will be. Now that I'm once here, I will at any rate make the attempt," thought he to himself; and began to climb up the smooth glass; but scarcely had he ascended a few fathoms when his foot slipped, and he himself, pop! down the hill, so that he didn't know where he was, or what he was, till he found himself on the ground at the bottom.

Wearied out, he began to throw away the dumplings, thinking that their weight was a hindrance to him. He threw away the first, and lo! the dumpling fixed itself on the glass hill. He threw a second and a third, and saw before him three steps, on which he could stand with safety.

The prince was overjoyed. He kept throwing the dumplings before him, and in every case steps formed themselves from them for him. First he threw the leaden ones, then the silver, and then the golden ones. By the steps thus constructed he ascended higher and higher till he happily attained the topmost ridge of the glass hill. Here he knelt down under the tree and held up his hands. And lo! The three beautiful lemons flew down of themselves into the palms of his hands. The tree disappeared, the glass hill crashed and vanished, and when the prince came to himself, there was no tree, no hill, but a wide plain lay extended before him.

He commenced his return homeward with delight. He neither ate nor drank, nor saw nor heard, for very joy. But when the third day came, a vacuum began to make itself felt in his stomach. He was so hungry that he would gladly have then and there betaken himself to the leaden dumplings if his pocket hadn't been empty. His pocket was empty, and all around was just as bare as the palm of his hand. Then he took a lemon out of his pocket and cut it into halves; and what came to pass? Out of the lemon sprang a beautiful damsel, who made a reverence before him, and cried out, "Have you made ready for me to eat? Have you made ready for me to drink? Have you made pretty dresses ready for me?"

"I have nothing, beautiful creature, for you to eat, nothing for you to drink, nothing for you to put on," said the prince, in a sorrowful voice, and the beautiful damsel clapped her white hands thrice before him, made a reverence and vanished.

"Aha! now I know what sort of lemons these are," said the prince; "stay! I won't cut them up so lightly." From the cut one he ate and drank to his satisfaction, and thus refreshed, proceeded onwards.

But on the third day a hunger three times worse than the preceding, assailed him. "God help me!" said he; "I have still one remaining over. I'll cut it up."

He then took out the second lemon, cut it in halves, and lo! a damsel still more beautiful than the preceding one placed herself before him. "Have you made ready for me to eat? Have you made ready for me to drink? Have you made pretty dresses ready for me?"

"I have not, dear soul! I have not!" and the beautiful damsel clapped her hands thrice before him, made a reverence, and vanished.

Now he had only one lemon remaining; he took it in his hand and said, "I will not cut you open save in my father's house," and therewith proceeded onwards. On the third day he saw, after long absence, his native town. He didn't know himself how he got there, when he found himself at once in his father's castle. Tears of joy bedewed his old father's cheeks, "Welcome, my son! Welcome a hundred times," he cried, and fell upon his neck. The prince related how it had gone with him on his journey, and the members of the household how anxiously they had waited for him.

On the next day a grand entertainment was prepared; lords and ladies were invited from all quarters; and beautiful dresses, embroidered with gold and studded with pearls were got ready. The lords and ladies assembled, took their seats at the tables, and waited expectantly to see what would happen. Then the prince took out the last lemon, cut it in halves, and out of the lemon sprang a lady thrice as beautiful as had been the preceding ones. "Have you made ready for me to eat? Have you made ready for me to drink? Have you got pretty dresses ready for me?"

"I have, my dear soul, got everything ready for you," answered the prince, and presented the handsome dresses to her. The beautiful damsel put on the beautiful clothes, and all rejoiced at her extraordinary beauty. Ere long the betrothal took place, and after the betrothal a magnificent wedding.

Now was fulfilled the old king's wish; he blessed his son, resigned the kingdom into his hands, and ere long died.

The first thing that occurred to the new king after his father's death was a war, which a neighboring king excited against him. Now he was constrained for the first time to part from his hard-earned wife. Lest, therefore, anything should happen to her in his absence, he caused a throne to be erected for her in a garden beside a lake, which no one could ascend, save the person to whom she let down a silken cord, and drew that person up to her.

Not far from the royal castle lived an old woman, the same that had given the prince the counsel about the three lemons. She had a servant, a gipsy, whom she was in the habit of sending to the lake for water. She knew very well that the young king had obtained a wife, and it annoyed her excessively that he had not invited her to the wedding, nay, had not even thanked her for her good advice.

One day she sent her maidservant to the lake for water. She went, drew water, and saw a beautiful image in the water. Under the impression that this was her own reflection, she banged her pitcher on the ground, so that it flew

into a thousand pieces. "Are you worthy," said she, "that so beautiful a person as myself should carry water for an old witch like you?" As she uttered this she looked up, and lo! It wasn't her own reflection that she saw in the water, but that of the beautiful queen. Ashamed, she picked up the pieces and returned home.

The old woman, who knew beforehand what had occurred, went out to meet her with a fresh pitcher, and asked her servant, for appearance's sake, what had happened to her. The servant related all as it had occurred. "Well, that's nothing!" said the old woman. "But, do you know what? Go you once more to the lake, and ask the lady to let down the silken cord and draw you up, promising to comb and dress her hair. If she draws you up, you will comb her hair, and when she falls asleep, stick this pin into her head. Then dress yourself in her clothes and sit there as queen."

It wasn't necessary to use much persuasion to the gipsy; she took the pin, took the pitcher, and returned to the lake. She drew water and looked at the beautiful queen. "Dear me! How beautiful you are! Ah! you are beautiful!" she screamed, and looked with coaxing gestures into her eyes. "Yes," said she; "but you would be a hundred times more beautiful if you would let me comb and dress your hair; in truth, I would so twine those golden locks that your lord could not help being delighted." And thus she jabbered, thus she coaxed, till the queen let down the silken cord and drew her up.

The nasty gipsy combed, separated, and plaited the golden hair till the beautiful queen fell sound asleep. Then the gipsy drew out the pin, and stuck it into the sleeping queen's head. At that moment a beautiful white dove flew off the golden throne, and not a vestige remained of the lovely queen save her handsome clothes, in which the gipsy speedily dressed herself, took her seat in the place where the queen sat before, and gazed into the lake; but the beautiful reflection displayed itself no more in the lake, for even in the queen's clothes the gipsy nevertheless remained a gipsy.

The young king was successful in overcoming his enemies, and made peace with them. Scarcely had he returned to the town, when he went to the garden to seek his delight, and to see whether anything had happened to her. But who shall express his astonishment and horror, when, instead of his beautiful queen, he beheld a sorry gipsy. "Ah, my dear, my very dear one, how you have altered!" sighed he, and tears bedewed his cheeks.

"I have altered, my beloved! I have altered; for anxiety for you has tortured me," answered the gipsy, and wanted to fall upon his neck; but the king turned away from her and departed in anger. From that time forth he had no settled abode, no rest; he knew neither day nor night; but merely mourned over the lost beauty of his wife, and nothing could comfort him.

Thus agitated and melancholy, he was walking one day in the garden. Here, as he moved about at haphazard, a beautiful white dove flew on to his hand from a high tree, and looked with mournful gaze into his bloodshot eyes. "Ah,



my dove! why are you so sad? Has your mate been transformed like my beautiful wife?" said the young king, talking to it and caressingly stroking its head and back. But feeling a kind of protuberance on its head, he blew the feathers apart, and behold! the head of a pin! Touched with compassion, the king extracted the pin; that instant the beautiful mourning dove was changed into his beautiful wife.

She narrated to him all that had happened to her, and how it had happened; how the gipsy had deluded her, and how she had stuck the pin into her head. The king immediately caused the gipsy and the old woman to be apprehended and burnt without further ado.

From that time forth nothing interfered with his happiness, neither the might of his enemies nor the spite of wicked people. He lived with his beautiful wife in peace and love; he reigned prosperously, and is reigning yet, if he be yet alive.

# *Eastern Europe*



# ASHKENAZIM

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## RETURN OF A CANTONIST

**Tradition Bearer:** Mrs. D. Rivkin

**Source:** Verschleiser, Emanuel. *Interview of H. Kleinfeld. American Life Histories: Manuscripts from the Federal Writers' Project, 1936–1940.* Manuscript Division, Library of Congress. *American Memory.* Library of Congress, Washington, DC, June 10, 2007.

**Date:** 1938

**Original Source:** Russia

**National Origin:** Ashkenazim

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The Ashkenazim are descended from West German Jewish communities that became a presence in the area with the advent of the medieval period (500–1000 C.E.). Members of the group established communities not only in Germany, but also throughout Central and Eastern Europe. Separation between the Ashkenazi Jewish communities and the Middle Eastern (Mizrahim) and Mediterranean (Sephardim) communities led to the development of distinctive traditions, including religious customs and *linguas franca* (most significantly Yiddish). The following **personal experience narrative** attests to the difficulty of perpetuating Ashkenazic religious and cultural traditions in the face of antisemitic political systems. The collector of this oral memoir states,

At the time of Czar Nicolai I [1825–1856], small Jewish children were caught in the streets, taken into far Russian provinces, brought up as Christians and given to the army. They were called “Cantonists.” Many stories grew up about them, relating dramatic reunions, return to the Jewish faith, etc.

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I was looking out through the window. It was a clear snowy morning a carriage stopped at our door and a gentleman stepped out and came in to our house. I was not surprised because many Christian gentlemen came to our house. My father was dealing in hemp which he bought up from the local estates and sent off to far places, even Germany. We lived in the provincial county seat of Wietebesk. The gentleman began to inquire of my father about his family, how many brothers he had and all the history of his family.

My mother was scared and told my father. "I beg you, guard your tongue, you are always talking."

And after some more talk, when father asked the gentleman why all those questions, the stranger fell on my father's neck, saying, "I am your brother."

He was one of the "Cantonists." And he told us his whole history. When he was a child he was caught by the Czar catchers, taken with many other Jewish children; taken far away to be brought up as a Russian soldier and a Christian. But he never forgot that he was a Jew. He had talent as a musician and so was given musical education and became later a famous pianist. When he became a free man he made many times inquiries about his family because he never forgot that he is a Jew. At last he found his family and he is happy, and he wants to remain with us, he said, and become a Jew again. My mother had some fears but my father overcame them. The man remained in our house and returned to the Jewish faith.

My sister, a young girl of eighteen, fell in love with him. He was a man in his fifties but there was something compelling, inspiring in the man. She wanted to marry him. My father and mother were in despair. They threatened and cried, but nothing helped. She went away with him, married him. Although he formally returned to the Jewish faith, my father considered him a Christian and he sat Shiva (seven-day mourning) and tore his clothing, as is the Jewish custom, when somebody died. For him his daughter was dead.

She lived with him in Riga. She had with him two children. When she gave birth to the second child she died in milk-fever (milk in her breasts became poisoned). In her death agonies she cried that God punished her because she married a Christian.

## **HOW RABBI JOSHUA WENT TO PARADISE ALIVE**

**Tradition Bearer:** K. Heisler

**Source:** Verschleiser, Emanuel. *Interview of H. Kleinfeld. American Life Histories: Manuscripts from the Federal Writers' Project, 1936–1940.* Manuscript Division, Library of Congress. *American Memory.* Library of Congress, Washington, DC, June 10, 2007.

**Date:** 1938

**Original Source:** Galicia (now Poland and the Ukraine)

**National Origin:** Ashkenazim

While the following comic narrative extols the power of religious devotion, the Rabbi's ultimate success results from wit. Therefore, the protagonist plays the role of a **trickster** whose ability is magnified by outmaneuvering the master deceiver.

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**T**he great Rabbi Joshua was wrapped up all his life in the study of the Torah and knew little about the everyday world. A man doesn't live forever. His time came and God said, to the Angel of Death, "Go to Reb Joshua, take his holy soul and bring it before my throne but I command you that whatever he ask of you thou it be the biggest and hardest thing you shall give it to him.... Not many such pious men live on the earth."

The angel went to carry out God's command and he come to Reb Joshua. He stood before him and said, "Your time has come and you must leave this world for the other world. God himself sent me to you that I should take your soul to Him. But before I take you soul God has commanded me to fulfill one wish of yours. It may be hard to fulfill but I will do it. Because you found favor in God's eyes. So consider well.... Any desire I will do it even if it is most difficult, because you found favor in God's eyes. Well, what is your wish?"

"I ask of you," said Reb Joshua "that you show me my place in Paradise."

"Your request in very difficult to fulfill," the angel answered, "but alas I have to fulfill God's wish. Get ready. You will not be able to enter paradise but we will come near the wall of paradise and you will be able to see your place looking thru a gateway."

Reb Joshua was afraid to follow him. How can one believe the Angel of Death? Just when I will be contemplating something he will use his knife on my throat and there will be no help for it. Such a fellow isn't to be trusted. "Come and lose no time" the Angel of Death said, "you have only a few minutes to live."

"If you want me to go with you," Reb Joshua said, "give me your sword because I am greatly afraid of you."

The Angel of Death gave Reb Joshua his sword and led Reb Joshua through valleys and deserts until they came to Paradise. The angel then lifted Reb Joshua to the wall of paradise and Reb Joshua saw all the pious men sitting in happiness and peace. At the sight of this he lost all desire to return to our world. Why should he have to die first in order to enter paradise? He would rather save himself the pains of dying and enter paradise alive. Without much ado he jumped over the fence into paradise. The Angel of Death has no right to enter paradise. So Reb Joshua remained there alive.

The Angel of Death went with a complaint to the Almighty that Reb Joshua deceived him.

God answered, "That isn't deceiving. To deceive the Angel of Death in permissible. You want to kill him so he has a right to try to get away from you."

## THE DYBBUK OF BUNKER STREET

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Polacheck, Hilda. *Chicago Folklore. American Life Histories: Manuscripts from the Federal Writers' Project, 1936–1940*. Manuscript Division, Library of Congress. *American Memory*. Library of Congress, Washington, DC, June 10, 2007.

**Date:** 1939

**Original Source:** Unavailable

**National Origin:** Ashkenazim

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As a Diasporic community, the Ashkenazim are globally dispersed, but retain a coherent core of religious practices and traditional beliefs. The concept of an entity called the dybbuk is one such belief. A dybbuk is a detached soul of a person who, though dead, has not been allowed to enter the afterworld. The entity attaches itself to a living person, and in cases such as the one in this **personal experience narrative**, may serve to bring about the death of the host. In the immigrant context detailed below, belief in the dybbuk may function to reinforce traditional mores and moral codes or to explain forces (in this instance, a typhoid epidemic) that are not an element of the traditional worldview of the community.

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**Y**es, I remember the story of the Dybbuk of Bunker Street. It was back in 1902, when the story got around that a dybbuk was going from house to house, making people sick. I was just eight years old then; my mother wanted to have a birthday party for me, but she didn't have enough money, so she took me to a nickel-show. On the way home, she told me she would buy some ice-cream for supper. But when we got home, our small kitchen was crowded with neighbors.

My father had been brought home from the clothing factory where he worked. I remember seeing him in bed. He looked very pale. I heard the women saying something about the dybbuk having gotten into him. My mother ran for the doctor and I was told to go out and pray. But I sat on the steps of the dark hall just outside the kitchen.

Two old women came into the hall. I guess they did not see me. I heard one of them say, "If a dybbuk gets into a God fearing person, and a holy Rabbi can be found who knows how to force the dybbuk out of the body, the person will get well. But if the dybbuk gets into a sinner, who does not eat kosher food and who does not daven, (pray) he hasn't got a chance. He will die."

Two days later my father was dead. I did not think he was a sinner. I did not think he had time to be a sinner. He worked every day and ate all his meals

at home. And my mother cooked only kosher food. I did not understand the whole business.

My mother got a job in the factory where my father worked, but she did not earn as much as he had. She used to get me ready for school before she went to work in the morning and give me a penny for a roll. This was my lunch. After school I played on the street or in the dirty alley, till my mother came home.

I remember that house on Bunker Street where the dybbuk was supposed to go from place to place. That house was built for one family, but when we lived there, six families were living in the house. No one had a bath room. There was one toilet in the hall for the six families, and some of them had as many as six or eight kids.

When my father was alive and my mother did not have to go to work, she used to bathe me in a wash tub in the kitchen. We had two rooms, a bedroom and a kitchen. She used to keep my clothes clean. I remember I had a white blouse with embroidery ruffles on the collar and the cuffs. It would take my mother an hour to iron this shirt, but she did not mind it. She used to heat the iron on a coal stove and it took a long time to get the iron hot. She used to like to dress me up on Saturdays and take me for a walk to look in the windows of the big store on Halsted Street. But she got awful mean after my father died. All she did in the evening was cry and fight with me. She stopped bathing me and I never wore that white blouse again. Sometimes I used to wonder if the dybbuk got into my mother. Maybe she was tired.

We had many Irish neighbors and a lot of them were sick, too. But the old Jewish women said that the dybbuk only made Jews sick. I used to play with a little Irish boy who was in my room in school. He lived next door to us. He had three brothers and two sisters, and the whole family got sick. They all died except the little boy. He'd a been better off if he had died. When he was ten years old he was sent to reform school. He was in jail most of his life.

Do I believe it was a dybbuk? Well, I don't know. It must-a been something that made people sick and mean. My mother did not get sick, but she was plenty mean. I got sick of hearing her fight, and when I was twelve, I ran away from home. One day I was hungry, so I stole two apples from the grocery stand. The grocery man caught me, and I was sent to reform school. The first time my mother came to see me, in the reform school, she said the dybbuk must have gotten into me. I guess she felt bad when I was sent to reform school. She used to bring me apples and sometimes an orange.

I remember another dybbuk story which the old women used to tell. A few doors from where we lived, there was a large stable where the horses and wagons of a large department store on State Street used to be kept. Every morning the drivers used to hitch the horses to the wagons and go down town to get the wagons loaded for deliveries. They used to deliver goods all over. Sometimes they went to Evanston and as far north as Highland Park.



Well, one of the drivers lived on bunker Street, and he started out to deliver goods. On the way he took sick and he was brought home. That evening some women came to see my mother, and I heard them say that the dybbuk surely had the driver. I was out on the street near the stable when the horses and wagon came back from the day's deliveries, and I heard the driver tell one of the other men that the people in Evanston to whom he had delivered goods, were sick, too. "Do you think the dybbuk traveled to Evanston?" he asked laughing.

A couple of weeks later, some ladies came around and they looked at all the houses and there was some talk that the flies brought the sickness. But the old women stuck to their dybbuk. They said that a dybbuk can enter the smallest and the largest thing. So maybe the dybbuk got into the flies. The flies may have stayed on the horses, or the harness and that is how the sickness got to Evanston. Then a few weeks later, I heard one of the drivers say that people in Evanston, called the sickness typhoid fever. That they had found out that Bunker Street was overcrowded. That so many people using one toilet made the water back up after heavy rains and then the flies were all over the toilets, and then they flew into the houses and got on the food and that is what caused the sickness.

But the best dybbuk story of all was the one about a young Jewish girl who ran away with a young Irish feller. Everybody on Bunker Street was having fits. The Jews said the dybbuk would surely get into the girl, and the Irish said that some devil would get the feller. But the girl's father got sick and died and the feller's two sisters and mother died from the same sickness, but nothing happened to the girl and the feller. So the story of the dybbuk was gradually forgotten.

All I got to say is that whether it was a dybbuk or typhoid fever, all my hard luck started when my father died. If I hadn't been sent to reform school, I wouldn't have landed in jail. Yes, I served ten years. When I came out of reform school, I was sixteen years old. I went to live with my mother, but she kept throwing it up to me that I disgraced her by being sent to reform school, so I lit out and ran away.

There was a gang hanging around Bunker Street and I joined them. We used to steal anything we could lay our hands on, then spend the money on eating, drinking and going to burlesque shows. Sometimes we got arrested, but one of the big shots used to get us out. I use to pass the house once in a while, where my mother lived, but I never went in. Then I heard she died and the relatives buried her. They did not tell me about it, so I was not at the funeral. I can never forget that.

Well, one day I was caught sticking up a man with a gun in my hand, and the big shot could not get me off. So I was sent up for [ten?] years. When I came out, I went to see an uncle. He told me that my mother had left me five hundred dollars from a lodge policy. I was sick of the life I was living, so I took the

money and opened a little cigar store. And as you see, I still have the store. I make enough to live on.

Just the other day, one of the old neighbors came into the store. What do you think we talked about? The Dybbuk of Bunker Street.

## CONTEMPT FOR HIS TORTURERS

**Tradition Bearer:** Mr. Wollman

**Source:** Roth, Terry, and Sam Schwartz. *Interview of Mr. Wollman. American Life Histories: Manuscripts from the Federal Writers' Project, 1936–1940*. Manuscript Division, Library of Congress. *American Memory*. Library of Congress, Washington, DC. <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/wpaintro/wpahome.html> (October 16, 2005).

**Date:** 1939

**Original Source:** Poland

**National Origin:** Ashkenazim

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The Ashkenazim (or Ashkenazic Jews) are the descendants of the medieval Jewish communities located in Germany and the surrounding territory. As noted above (“Return of a Cantonist,” page 141), many Ashkenazim eventually migrated to Eastern European countries, particularly Poland and Russia. The following **legend** portrays an appropriate survival attitude for adverse conditions. Although religion is an important component of the narrative, it transmits a social secular message as distinct from a religious truth in the context Mr. Wollman reports.

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I’ll relate you a story my friend he told me.

In the olden days, about one hundred years ago, the Jews in Poland were the middle element, between the peasantry and the big landlords. They used to collect taxes from the peasants for the big landlords.

There was one Jew, he had about six daughters to marry and he was the one that collected the taxes. The landlord was the nobility. So since he had about six daughters to marry, he took down some money that he collected, and he married them off. Then he didn’t have money to pay to the landlords. Those days, the landlord was the absolutely Czar of his peasants.

So, you’ll pardon me, since he didn’t have the money, he went to the landlord and he said to leave down his pants and flog him. Because he didn’t have the money to pay. So they flogged him and they let him to rest off a week and another day they flogged him and let him to rest. So the Jewish fellow went to the Rabbi and he told the Rabbi, “What shall I do? They are flogging me and it hurts.”

So the Rabbi answered him. “What do you care? He’s only a goy (non-Jew). It doesn’t mean anything.”

Why did he tell me that? Because he’s a married man and has five children. And he was out of work at that time. So he related that story in connection with his condition. This is the philosophy of the Hasidism. That he looked with contempt on his torturers. No matter how they torture him, he doesn’t care.

## ONE THOUSAND RUBLES

**Tradition Bearer:** K. Heisler

**Source:** Verschleiser, Emanuel. *Interview of H. Kleinfeld. American Life Histories: Manuscripts from the Federal Writers’ Project, 1936–1940*. Manuscript Division, Library of Congress. *American Memory*. Library of Congress, Washington, DC, June 10, 2007.

**Date:** 1938

**Original Source:** Russia

**National Origin:** Ashkenazim

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This joke features a Jewish **trickster** turning the tables on “a gentleman” (presumably a non-Jew) who had intended to test the protagonist’s sincerity. A subtext of the narrative is the conflict between Jew and Gentile in both the European and American contexts.

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A merchant went once for a walk. What does a Jew and a merchant think about especially when business is bad? He thinks how to help himself. If he would at least have one thousand rubles he could help himself, if not he is lost. He will be bankrupt. He is so engrossed in his thoughts that he is talking out loud, “Ai, if I would only find one thousand rubles! I have to have a thousand rubles. Nine hundred even wouldn’t help.”

Behind him walked a gentleman who heard what the Jew said. He thinks to himself, “I will try the Jew.” He takes out of his pocket nine hundred rubies and throws them on the ground.

The Jew sees the nine hundred rubles, he isn’t lazy, he picks them up and hides them.

The gentleman sees it, comes running, “Listen,” he says, “didn’t you say that you wouldn’t pick up less than a thousand.”

“I’ll tell you,” answers the Jew, “I reminded myself that I have home a hundred rubles.”

# POLAND

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## THE SPIRIT OF A BURIED MAN

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Wratislaw, A. H. *Sixty Folk-Tales from Exclusively Slavonic Sources*. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Co., 1890, 121–125.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Unavailable

**National Origin:** Poland

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Bordered on the west by the central European country of Germany and on the east, north, and south by other eastern European countries, the Polish folktale corpus maintains features of both regions. For example, the scholarship notes that Polish **märchens** often omit the beginning, middle, and closing **formulas** of other Eastern European **variants** (Brzozowska-Krajka 2006). The following tale incorporates the familiar **tale type** of “The Grateful Dead” (AT 505), but it portrays the hero as utilizing the powers of transformation with which he has been rewarded to save a king and win a princess as in “The Man Who Flew Like a Bird and Swam Like a Fish” (AT 665). As in many tales of transformation, the hero’s identity is verified by a token taken from him when he was in animal form.

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A poor scholar was going by the highway into a town, and found under the walls of the gate the body of a dead man, unburied, trodden by the feet of the passers-by. He had not much in his purse, but willingly gave enough to bury him, that he might not be spat upon and have sticks thrown at him. He performed his devotions over the fresh heaped-up grave, and went on into the world to wander.

In an oak wood sleep overpowered him, and when he awoke, he espied with wonderment a bag full of gold. He thanked the unseen beneficent hand, and came to the bank of a large river, where it was necessary to be ferried over. The two ferrymen, observing the bag full of gold, took him into the boat, and just at an eddy took from him the gold and threw him into the water. As the waves carried him away insensible, he by accident clutched a plank, and by its aid floated successfully to the shore.

It was not a plank, but the spirit of the buried man, who addressed him in these words, "You honored my remains by burial; I thank you for it. In token of gratitude I will teach you how you can transform yourself into a crow, into a hare, and into a deer." Then he taught him the spell. The scholar, when acquainted with the spell, could with ease transform himself into a crow, into a hare, and into a deer.

He wandered far, he wandered wide, till he wandered to the court of a mighty king, where he remained as an archer in attendance at the court. This king had a beautiful daughter, but she dwelt on an inaccessible island, surrounded on all sides by the sea. She dwelt in a castle of copper, and possessed a sword such that he who brandished it could conquer the largest army. Enemies had invaded the territory of the king; he needed and desired the victorious sword. But how to obtain it, when nobody had up to that time succeeded in getting on to the lonely island? He therefore made proclamation that whoever should bring the victorious sword from the princess should obtain her hand, and, moreover, should sit upon the throne after him. No one was venturesome enough to attempt it, till the wandering scholar, then an archer attached to the court, stood before the king announcing his readiness to go, and requesting a letter, that on receipt of that token the princess might give up the weapon to him. All men were astonished, and the king entrusted him with a letter to his daughter.

He went into the forest, without knowing in the least that another archer attached to the court was dogging his steps. He first transformed himself into a hare, then into a deer, and darted off with haste and speed; he traversed no small distance, till he stood on the shore of the sea. He then transformed himself into a crow, flew across the water of the sea, and didn't rest till he was on the island. He went into the castle of copper, delivered to the beautiful princess the letter from her father, and requested her to give him the victorious sword.

The beautiful princess looked at the archer. He captured her heart at once. She asked inquisitively how he had been able to get to her castle, which was on all sides surrounded by water and knew no human footsteps. Thereupon the archer replied that he knew secret spells by which he could transform himself into a deer, a hare, and a crow.

The beautiful princess, therefore, requested the archer to transform himself into a deer before her eyes. When he made himself into a graceful deer, and began to fawn and bound, the princess secretly pulled a tuft of fur from his back.

When he transformed himself again into a hare, and bounded with pricked up ears, the princess secretly, pulled a little fur off his back. When he changed himself into a crow and began to fly about in the room, the princess secretly pulled a few feathers from the bird's wings. She immediately wrote a letter to her father and delivered up the victorious sword.

The young scholar flew across the sea in the form of a crow, then ran a great distance in that of a deer, till in the neighborhood of the wood he bounded as a hare. The treacherous archer was already there in ambush, saw when he changed himself into a hare, and recognized him at once. He drew his bow, let fly the arrow, and killed the hare. He took from him the letter and carried off the sword, went to the castle, delivered to the king the letter and the sword of victory, and demanded at once the fulfillment of the promise that had been made.

The king, transported with joy, promised him immediately his daughter's hand, mounted his horse, and rode boldly against his enemies with the sword. Scarcely had he espied their standards, when he brandished the sword mightily several times, and that towards the four quarters of the world. At every wave of the sword large masses of enemies fell dead on the spot, and others, seized with panic, fled like hares. The king returned joyful with victory, and sent for his beautiful daughter, to give her to wife to the archer who brought the sword.

A banquet was prepared. The musicians were already striking up, the whole castle was brilliantly lighted; but the princess sat sorrowful beside the assassin-archer. She knew at once that he was in nowise the man whom she saw in the castle on the island, but she dared not ask her father where the other handsome archer was; she only wept much and secretly: her heart beat for the other.

The poor scholar, in the hare's skin, lay slain under the oak, lay there a whole year, till one night he felt himself awakened from a mighty sleep, and before him stood the well-known spirit, whose body he had buried. He told him what had happened to him, brought him back to life, and said, "Tomorrow is the princess's wedding; hasten, therefore, to the castle without a moment's delay; she will recognize you; the archer, too, who killed you treacherously, will recognize you."

The young man sprang up promptly, went to the castle with throbbing heart, and entered the grand saloon, where numerous guests were eating and drinking. The beautiful princess recognized him at once, shrieked with joy, and fainted; and the assassin-archer, the moment he set eyes on him, turned pale and green from fear.

Then the young man related the treason and murderous act of the archer, and in order to prove his words, turned himself in presence of all the assembled company into a graceful deer, and began to fawn upon the princess. She placed the tuft of fur pulled off him in the castle on the back of the deer, and the fur immediately grew into its place. Again he transformed himself into a hare, and similarly the piece of fur pulled off, which the princess had kept, grew into its

place immediately on contact. All looked on in astonishment till the young man changed himself into a crow. The princess brought out the feathers which she had pulled from its wings in the castle, and the feathers immediately grew into their places.

Then the old king commanded the assassin-archer to be put to death. Four horses were led out, all wild and unbroken. He was bound to them by his hands and feet, the horses were started off by the whip, and at one bound they tore the assassin-archer to pieces.

The young man obtained the hand of the young and charming princess. The whole castle was in a brilliant blaze of light, they drank, they ate with mirth; and the princess did not weep, for she possessed the husband that she wished for.

## PRINCE UNEXPECTED

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Wratislaw, A. H. *Sixty Folk-Tales from Exclusively Slavonic Sources*. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Co., 1890, 108–120.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Unavailable

**National Origin:** Poland

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The hero in this **variant** of “The Girl as Helper in the Hero’s Flight” (AT 313) is rescued by the shape-shifting youngest daughter of the immortal Bony lord of the underworld. The **motifs** of twelve sisters, a subterranean sojourn, the transformation of a princess into a flower, and a hero who enters a trance provoked considerable speculation about the solar and seasonal symbolism in this tale among nineteenth-century folklorists.

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**T**here was a king and queen who had been married for three years, but had no children, at which they were both much distressed. Once upon a time the king found himself obliged to make a visit of inspection round his dominions; he took leave of his queen, set off and was not at home for eight months.

Towards the end of the ninth month the king returned from his progress through his country, and was already hard by his capital city, when, as he journeyed over an uninhabited plain during the most scorching heat of summer, he felt such excessive thirst that he sent his servants round about to see if they could find water anywhere and let him know of it at once. The servants

dispersed in various directions, sought in vain for a whole hour, and returned without success to the king.

The thirst-tormented king proceeded to traverse the whole plain far and wide himself, not believing that there was not a spring somewhere or other; on he rode, and on a level spot, on which there had not previously been any water, he espied a well with a new wooden fence round it, full to the brim with spring water, in the midst of which floated a silver cup with a golden handle. The king sprang from his horse and reached after the cup with his right hand; but the cup, just as if it were alive and had eyes, darted quickly on one side and floated again by itself. The king knelt down and began to try to catch it, now with his right hand, now with his left, but it moved and dodged away in such a manner that, not being able to seize it with one hand, he tried to catch it with both. But scarcely had he reached out with both hands when the cup dived like a fish, and floated again on the surface. "Hang it!" thought the king, "I can't help myself with the cup, I'll manage without it." He then bent down to the water, which was as clear as crystal and as cold as ice, and began in his thirst to drink.

Meanwhile his long beard, which reached down to his girdle, dipped into the water. When he had quenched his thirst, he wanted to get up again—something was holding his beard and wouldn't let it go. He pulled once and again, but it was of no use; he cried out therefore in anger, "Who's there? let go!"

"It's I, the subterranean king, immortal Bony, and I shall not let go till you give me that which you left unknowingly at home, and which you do not expect to find on your return." The king looked into the depth of the well, and there was a huge head like a tub, with green eyes and a mouth from ear to ear, which was holding the king by the beard with extended claws like those of a crab, and was laughing mischievously.

The king thought that a thing of which he had not known before starting, and which he did not expect on his return, could not be of great value, so he said to the apparition, "I give it." The apparition burst with laughter and vanished with a flash of fire, and with it vanished also the well, the water, the wooden fence, and the cup; and the king was again on a hillock by a little wood kneeling on dry sand, and there was nothing more. The king got up, crossed himself, sprang on his horse, hastened to his attendants, and rode on.

In a week or maybe a fortnight the king arrived at his capital; the people came out in crowds to meet him; he went in procession to the great court of the palace and entered the corridor. In the corridor stood the queen awaiting him, and holding close to her bosom a cushion, on which lay a child, beautiful as the moon, kicking in swaddling clothes. The king recollected himself, sighed painfully, and said within himself, "This is what I left without knowing and found without expecting!" And bitterly, bitterly did he weep. All marveled, but nobody dared to ask the cause. The king took his son, without saying a word, in his arms, gazed long on his innocent face; carried him into the palace himself, laid him in the cradle, and, suppressing his sorrow, devoted himself to the



government of his realm, but was never again cheerful as formerly, since he was perpetually tormented by the thought that some day Bony would claim his son.

Meanwhile weeks, months, and years flowed on, and no one came for his son. The prince, named "Unexpected," grew and developed, and eventually became a handsome youth. The king also in course of time regained his usual cheerfulness; and forgot what had taken place, but alas everybody did not forget so easily.

Once the prince, while hunting in a forest, became separated from his suite and found himself in a savage wilderness. Suddenly there appeared before him a hideous old man with green eyes, who said, "How do you do, Prince Unexpected? You have made me wait for you a long time."

"Who are you?"

"That you will find out hereafter, but now, when you return to your father, greet him from me, and tell him that I should be glad if he would close accounts with me, for if he doesn't soon get out of my debt of himself, he will repent it bitterly." After saying this the hideous old man disappeared, and the prince in amazement turned his horse, rode home and told the king his adventure.

The king turned as pale as a sheet, and revealed the frightful secret to his son. "Don't cry, father!" replied the prince, "it isn't a great misfortune! I shall manage to force Bony to renounce the right over me, which he tricked you out of in so underhand a manner, and if in the course of a year I do not return, it will be a token that we shall see each other no more." The prince prepared for his journey, the king gave him a suit of steel armor a sword, and a horse, and the queen hung round his neck a cross of pure gold. At leave-taking they embraced affectionately, wept heartily, and the prince rode off.

On he rode one day, two days, three days, and at the end of the fourth day at the setting of the sun he came to the shore of the sea, and in the self-same bay espied twelve dresses, white as snow, though in the water, as far as the eye could reach, there was no living soul to be seen; only twelve white geese were swimming at a distance from the shore. Curious to know to whom they belonged, he took one of the dresses, let his horse loose in a meadow, concealed himself in a neighboring thicket, and waited to see what would come to pass.

Thereupon the geese, after disporting themselves on the sea, swam to the shore; eleven of them went to the dresses, each threw herself on the ground and became a beautiful damsel, dressed herself with speed, and flew away into the plain. The twelfth goose, the last and prettiest of all, did not venture to come out on the shore, but only wistfully stretched out her neck, looking on all sides. On seeing the prince she called out with a human voice, "Prince Unexpected, give me my dress; I will be grateful to you in return."

The prince hearkened to her, placed the dress on the grass, and modestly turned away in another direction. The goose came out on the grass, changed herself into a damsel, dressed herself hastily, and stood before the prince; she was young and more beautiful than eye had seen or ear heard of.

Blushing, she gave him her white hand, and, casting her eyes down, said with a pleasing voice, "I thank you, good prince, for hearkening to me: I am the youngest daughter of immortal Bony; he has twelve young daughters, and rules in the subterranean realm. My father, prince, has long been expecting you and is very angry; however, don't grieve, and don't be frightened, but do as I tell you. As soon as you see King Bony, fall at once on your knees, and, paying no regard to his outcry, upbraiding, and threats, approach him boldly. What will happen afterwards you will learn, but now we must part." On saying this the princess stamped on the ground with her little foot; the ground sprang open at once, and they descended into the subterranean realm, right into Bony's palace, which shone all underground brighter than our sun.

The prince stepped boldly into the reception-room. Bony was sitting on a golden throne with a glittering crown on his head; his eyes gleamed like two saucers of green glass and his hands were like the nippers of a crab. As soon as he espied him at a distance, the prince fell on his knees, and Bony yelled so horribly that the vaults of the subterranean dominion quaked; but the prince boldly moved on his knees towards the throne, and, when he was only a few paces from it, the king smiled and said, "Thou hast marvelous luck in succeeding in making me smile; remain in our subterranean realm, but before thou becomest a true citizen thereof thou art bound to execute three commands of mine; but because it is late today, we will begin tomorrow; meanwhile go to thy room."

The prince slept comfortably in the room assigned to him, and early on the morrow Bony summoned him and said, "We will see, prince, what thou canst do. In the course of the following night build me a palace of pure marble; let the windows be of crystal, the roof of gold, an elegant garden round about it, and in the garden seats and fountains; if thou buildest it, thou wilt gain thyself my love; if not, I shall command thy head to be cut off."

The prince heard it, returned to his apartment, and was sitting mournfully thinking of the death that threatened him, when outside at the window a bee came buzzing and said, "Let me in!" He opened the lattice, in flew the bee, and the princess, Bony's youngest daughter, appeared before the wondering prince. "What are you thus thinking about, Prince Unexpected?"

"Alas! I am thinking that your father wishes to deprive me of life."

"Don't be afraid! lie down to sleep, and when you get up tomorrow morning your palace will be ready."

So, too, it came to pass. At dawn the prince came out of his room and espied a more beautiful palace than he had ever seen, and Bony, when he saw it, wondered, and wouldn't believe his own eyes. "Well! thou hast won this time, and now thou hast my second command. I shall place my twelve daughters before thee tomorrow; if thou dost not guess which of them is the youngest, thou wilt place thy head beneath the axe."

"I unable to recognize the youngest princess!" said the prince in his room; "what difficulty can there be in that?"

“This,” answered the princess, flying into the room in the shape of a bee, “that if I don’t help you, you won’t recognize me; for we are all so alike that even our father only distinguishes us by our dress.”

“What am I to do?”

“What, indeed! That will be the youngest over whose right eye you espy a ladycow [lady bug, a small beetle]; only look well. Adieu!”

On the morrow King Bony again summoned Prince Unexpected. The princesses stood in a row side by side, all dressed alike and with eyes cast down. The prince looked and marveled how alike all the princesses were; he went past them once, twice—he did not find the appointed token; the third time he saw a ladycow over the eyebrow of one, and cried out, “This is the youngest princess!”

“How the deuce have you guessed it?” said Bony angrily. “There must be some trickery here. I must deal with your lordship differently. In three hours you will come here again, and will show your cleverness in my presence. I shall light a straw, and you will stitch a pair of boots before it goes out, and if you don’t do it you will perish.”

The prince returned desponding and found the bee already in his apartment. “Why pensive again, prince?”

“How shouldn’t I be pensive, when your father wants me to stitch him a pair of boots, for what sort of cobbler am I?”

“What else will you do?”

“What am I to do? I shan’t stitch the boots, and I’m not afraid of death—one can but die once!”

“No, prince, you shall not die! I will endeavor to rescue you, and we will either escape together or perish together! We must flee—there’s nothing else to be done.” Saying this, the princess spat on one of the window-panes, and the spittle immediately froze.

She then went out of the room with the prince, locked the door after her, and threw the key far away; then, taking each other by the hands, they ascended rapidly, and in a moment found themselves on the very spot whence they had descended into the subterranean realm; there was the self-same sea, the self-same shore overgrown with rushes and thorn bushes, the self-same fresh meadow, and in the meadow cantered the prince’s well-fed horse, who, as soon as he descried his rider, came galloping straight to him. The prince didn’t stop long to think, but sprang on his horse, the princess seated herself behind him, and off they set as swift as an arrow.

King Bony at the appointed hour did not wait for Prince Unexpected, but sent to ask him why he did not appear. Finding the door locked, the servants knocked at it vigorously, and the spittle answered them from the middle of the room in the prince’s voice, “Anon!”

The servants carried this answer to the king; he waited, waited, no prince; he therefore again sent the same servants, who heard the same answer, “Anon!” and carried what they had heard to the king.

“What’s this? Does he mean to make fun of me?” shouted the king in wrath, “Go at once, break the door open and conduct him to me!”

The servants hurried off, broke open the door, and rushed in. What, indeed? there was nobody there, and the spittle on the pane of glass was splitting with laughter at them. Bony all but burst with rage, and ordered them all to start off in pursuit of the prince, threatening them with death if they returned empty-handed. They sprang on horseback and hastened away after the prince and princess.

Meanwhile Prince Unexpected and the princess, Bony’s daughter, were hurrying away on their spirited horse, and amidst their rapid flight heard “tramp, tramp,” behind them. The prince sprang from the horse, put his ear to the ground and said, “They are pursuing us.”

“Then,” said the princess, “we have no time to lose.” Instantly she transformed herself into a river, changed the prince into a bridge, the horse into a raven, and the grand highway beyond the bridge divided into three roads. Swiftly on the fresh track hastened the pursuers, came on to the bridge, and stood stupefied; they saw the track up to the bridge, but beyond it disappeared, and the highway divided into three roads. There was nothing to be done but to return, and they came with nought. Bony shouted with rage, and cried out, “A bridge and a river! It was they. How was it that ye did not guess it? Back, and don’t return without them!” The pursuers recommenced the pursuit.

“I hear ‘tramp, tramp!’” whispered the princess, Bony’s daughter, affrightedly to Prince Unexpected, who sprang from the saddle, put his ear to the ground, and replied, “They are making haste, and are not far off.” That instant the princess and prince, and with them also their horse, became a gloomy forest, in which were roads, by-roads, and footpaths without number, and on one of them it seemed that two riders were hastening on a horse.

Following the fresh track, the pursuers came up to the forest, and when they espied the fugitives in it, they hastened speedily after them. On and on hurried the pursuers, seeing continually before them a thick forest, a wide road and the fugitives on it; now, now they thought to overtake them, when the fugitives and the thick forest suddenly vanished, and they found themselves at the self-same place whence they had started in pursuit. They returned, therefore, again to Bony empty-handed.

“A horse, a horse! I’ll go myself! they won’t escape out of my hands!” yelled Bony, foaming at the mouth, and started in pursuit.

Again the princess said to Prince Unexpected, “Methinks they are pursuing us, and this time it is Bony, my father, himself, but the first church is the boundary of his dominion, and he won’t be able to pursue us further. Give me your golden cross.” The prince took off his affectionate mother’s gift and gave it to the princess, and in a moment she was transformed into a church, he into the priest, and the horse into the bell; and that instant up came Bony.

“Monk!” Bony asked the priest, “hast thou not seen some travelers on horseback?”

“Only just now Prince Unexpected rode this way with the princess, Bony’s daughter. They came into the church, performed their devotions, gave money for a mass for your good health, and ordered me to present their respects to you if you should ride this way.” Bony, too, returned empty-handed. But Prince Unexpected rode on with the princess, Bony’s daughter, in no further fear of pursuit.

They rode gently on, when they saw before them a beautiful town, into which the prince felt an irresistible longing to go. “Prince,” said the princess, “don’t go; my heart forebodes misfortune there.”

“I’ll only ride there for a short time, and look round the town, and we’ll then proceed on our journey.”

“It’s easy enough to ride thither, but will it be as easy to return? Nevertheless, as you absolutely desire it, go, and I will remain here in the form of a white stone till you return; be circumspect, my beloved; the king, the queen, and the princess, their daughter, will come out to meet you, and with them will be a beautiful little boy—don’t kiss him, for, if you do, you will forget me at once, and will never set eyes on me more in the world—I shall die of despair. I will wait for you here on the road for three days, and if on the third day you don’t return, remember that I perish, and perish all through you.” The prince took leave and rode to the town, and the princess transformed herself into a white stone, and remained on the road.

One day passed, a second passed, the third also passed, and nothing was seen of the prince. Poor princess! He had not obeyed her counsel; in the town, the king, the queen, and the princess their daughter, had come out to meet him, and with them walked a little boy, a curly-headed chatterbox, with eyes as bright as stars. The child rushed straight into the prince’s arms, who was so captivated by the beauty of the lad that he forgot everything, and kissed the child affectionately. That moment his memory was darkened, and he utterly forgot the princess, Bony’s daughter.

The princess lay as a white stone by the wayside, one day, two days, and when the third day passed and the prince did not return from the town, she transformed herself into a cornflower, and sprang in among the rye by the roadside.

“Here I shall stay by the roadside; maybe some passer-by will pull me up or trample me into the ground,” said she, and tears like dew-drops glittered on the azure petals. Just then an old man came along the road, espied the corn-flower in the rye by the wayside, was captivated by its beauty, extracted it carefully from the ground, carried it into his dwelling, set it in a flower-pot, watered it, and began to tend it attentively. But—O marvel!—ever since the time that the cornflower was brought into his dwelling, all kind of wonders began to happen in it. Scarcely was the old man awake, when everything in the house was

already set in order, nowhere was the least atom of dust remaining. At noon he came home—dinner was all ready, the table set; he had but to sit down and eat as much as he wanted.

The old man wondered and wondered, till at last terror took possession of him, and he betook himself for advice to an old witch of his acquaintance in the neighborhood. “Do this,” the witch advised him, “get up before the first morning dawn, before the cocks crow to announce daylight, and notice diligently what begins to stir first in the house, and that which does stir, cover with this napkin: what will happen further, you will see.”

The old man didn’t close his eyes the whole night, and as soon as the first gleam appeared and things began to be visible in the house, he saw how the cornflower suddenly moved in the flower-pot, sprang out, and began to stir about the room; when simultaneously everything began to put itself in its place; the dust began to sweep itself clean away, and the fire kindled itself in the stove. The old man sprang cleverly out of his bed and placed the cloth on the flower as it endeavored to escape, when lo! the flower became a beautiful damsel—the princess, Bony’s daughter.

“What have you done?” cried the princess. “Why have you brought life back again to me? My betrothed, Prince Unexpected, has forgotten me, and, therefore, life has become distasteful to me.”

“Your betrothed, Prince Unexpected, is going to be married today; the wedding feast is ready, and the guests are beginning to assemble.”

The princess wept, but after awhile dried her tears, dressed herself in frieze, and went into the town like a village girl. She came to the royal kitchen, where there was great noise and bustle. She went up to the clerk of the kitchen with humble and attractive grace, and said in a sweet voice, “Dear sir, do me one favor; allow me to make a wedding-cake for Prince Unexpected.”

Occupied with work, the first impulse of the clerk of the kitchen was to give the girl a rebuff, but when he looked at her, the words died on his lips, and he answered kindly, “Ah, my beauty of beauties! Do what you will; I will hand the prince your cake myself.”

The cake was soon baked, and all the invited guests were sitting at table. The clerk of the kitchen himself placed a huge cake on a silver dish before the prince; but scarce had the prince made a cut in the side of it, when lo an unheard-of marvel displayed itself in the presence of all. A gray tom-pigeon and a white hen-pigeon came out of the cake; the tom-pigeon walked along the table, and the hen-pigeon walked after him, cooing:

Stay, stay, my pigeonet, oh stay!  
 Don’t from thy true love flee away;  
 My faithless lover I pursue,  
 Prince Unexpected like unto,  
 Who Bony’s daughter did betray.

Scarcely had Prince Unexpected heard this cooing of the pigeon, when he regained his lost recollection, bounced from the table, rushed to the door, and behind the door the princess, Bony's daughter, took him by the hand; they went together down the corridor, and before them stood a horse saddled and bridled.

Why delay? Prince Unexpected and the princess, Bony's daughter, sprang on the horse, started on the road, and at last arrived happily in the realm of Prince Unexpected's father. The king and queen received them with joy and merriment, and didn't wait long before they prepared them a magnificent wedding, the like of which eye never saw and ear never heard of.

## TWARDOWSKI THE MAGICIAN

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Lach-Szyrma, W. S. "Slavonic Folk-Lore." *Folk-Lore Record* 4 (1881): 59–62.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Poland

**National Origin:** Poland

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The following **legend** turns the historical Polish physician and scientist into a Renaissance Faust. A number of **validating devices** are utilized to encourage acceptance of the narrative. Locally well-known figures such as the mythical Krakus who rescued the town of Cracow by killing the dragon Smok Wawelski and King Sigismund Augustus and local landmarks such as the silver-mines of Olkusz and Hawk's Rock give an illusion of credibility to the more fantastic elements of the tale.

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**J**ohn Twardowski is said to have been a doctor of medicine in the university of Cracow, and probably was a man in advance of his age in knowledge of natural science. He is said to have studied the occult sciences in books of magic, and secretly to have gone forth from the city to Podgorice, where he summoned the demon to his presence. Like Doctor Faust in the legend, and sorcerers in general, he signed a contract with his own blood. The demon was to do everything he was ordered, and have no power over Twardowski until he met him at Rome. It is needless to say that Twardowski never went to Italy afterwards.

Twardowski was wont to perform his magical incantations on the mountains of Krzemionki, or on the tumulus of Krakus, the mythic founder of Cracow. This idea of a supernatural hallow around the mounds or barrows of the prehistoric race is not confined to Eastern Europe. In Cornwall also there is a belief in some

of these barrows having a mystical connection and being haunted by spirits. The tomb of Krakus is a large prehistoric mound of great antiquity outside the city, not unlike many of our British barrows. It was, of course, a haunted place.

Twardowski must have given the demon much trouble. He ordered him to collect an enormous quantity of silver and bury it at Olkusz. The silver-mines of Olkusz are evidence of the veracity of this legend. He had to do other hard things. He compelled him to bring a huge rock to Piaskowa, and fix it with the sharp point down. The Hawk's Rock is still pointed at by the peasants as a record of Twardowski's powers.

The art of levitation he understood like most sorcerers. He had a painted horse on which he flew where he would (perhaps a more elegant edition of the broomstick of the British witches. Twardowski was a nobleman, and it would have been undignified doubtless for a noble-man to ride on a broomstick.)

He could go on the Vistula in a boat without sail or oar. (Query, might not this be something more than a folk legend, and Twardowski, who it seems was an able mechanician, have constructed a water velocipede to astonish the people?)

His grandest achievement, which may possibly be an historical event, though it is difficult to believe such credulity in a king of the sixteenth century, was his summoning Queen Barbara Radzivil. King Sigismund Augustus had married this celebrated beauty in 1548, and was devotedly attached to her. But in 1551 Queen Barbara, beloved by the king and nation, only six months after her coronation, died (May 12, 1551). King Augustus was inconsolable, and his terrible loss preyed on his mind. In the delirium of his bereavement he told his courtiers that nothing could console him but the sight of his beloved queen again, or of her spirit. The request was unreasonable, but the nobles humored the royal widower's fancy. He made an offer of five hundred pieces of gold for a sight of Queen Barbara's spirit. The bribe was heavy, but none of the spiritualists or necromancers of the period could earn it.

In his distress Gonska, the king's buffoon, is said to have visited Twardowski, and asked him to relieve the king and earn the five hundred pieces. Twardowski declared his readiness to summon Queen Barbara, even in the palace at Cracow where she had lived. At the appointed night King Sigismund Augustus descended into the palace vaults to behold his loved one. Twardowski, begging him neither to speak nor move, performed some incantations, and then, amidst blue fire, there appeared what seemed Queen Barbara in a white robe. The king was consoled by the vision, and paid Twardowski his fee, which was earned, it is said, by a Miss Przelawska, a Lutheran girl, who had fled from persecution to Twardowski, and who, being very like Queen Barbara, acted the ghost's part.

At length the demon resolved to trap Twardowski. Disguised as a servant he went to the magician asking his help for his master, who was ill. As Twardowski felt himself safe in Gallicia, he went unsuspectingly. He entered an inn in the village to which the messenger conducted him. He never thought of looking at



the sign-board, which bore the fatal name of "Rome." A flock of crows and owls, however, gathered on the roof. The demon entered in his best attire, but with horns and hoofs only too imperfectly concealed. Twardowski saw his danger in a moment. Knowing the helplessness of his foe against a baptized child, he snatched from the cradle the innkeeper's innocent babe. Under the babe's defense he foiled his foe for some time, for the fiend could not touch him without hurting the sinless child. At length Twardowski, who was a match for the demon even in the Hotel de Rome, was appealed to by the devil as a man of honor. "*Verbum nobile debet esset stabile.*" Twardowski, bad though he was, could not break his word, even to the "Father of Lies." He put back the baby, and at once went up the chimney. But his honorable conduct was not allowed to be the cause of his final ruin.

As he was borne in the air by the demon over Cracow, the memory of a hymn to the Virgin, which he had composed when a child, came to his mind. He sang it lustily in his dire trial. The fiend was as transfixed over Cracow as over Helston, but he did not drop him on earth. Twardowski remains still there, floating in the air, and the peasants say he may sometimes be seen on a fine night moving between the stars, awaiting his doom.

# ROMA

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## JACK AND HIS GOLDEN SNUFF-BOX

**Tradition Bearer:** John Roberts

**Source:** Groome, Francis Hindes. *Gypsy Folk Tales*. London: Hurst & Blackett, 1899, 209–220.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Roma (Welsh)

**National Origin:** Roma

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The Roma are an ethnic group, popularly known by the term Gypsies, a term that is now considered derogatory by the Roma (or Romani) people. This widely distributed group is believed to have originated in South Asia before settling throughout Europe, the British Isles, and the Americas. Historically, the Roma have been subjected to discrimination that has ranged from the negative stereotyping that appears in other narratives in this collection (see, for example, “The Three Lemons,” page 130) to campaigns of “ethnic cleansing.” In contrast, “Jack and His Snuff-box” present a diametrically opposed positive image of the Roma. The tale bears some similarities to the South Asian narrative “The Charmed Ring” (Volume 2, page 176), but the Indian tale is a **variant** of “The Magic Ring” (AT 560). This tale, collected from Welsh Rom (singular of “Roma”) John Roberts, more closely resembles an “Aladdin” tale (AT 561). In addition to its positive depiction of Roma characters, the following tale includes elements of Roma culture, such as the use of unique family whistles by means of which families can identify each other and an example of the Angloromani dialect (for example, Dordi translates to “look-ye”).

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Once upon a time there was an old man and an old woman, and they had one son, and they lived in a great forest. And their son never saw any other people in his life, but he knew that there was some more in the world besides his own father and mother, because he had lots of books, and he used to read every day about them. And when he read about some pretty young women, he used to go mad to see some of them. Till one day, when his father was out cutting wood, he told his mother that he wished to go away to look for his living in some other country, and to see some other people besides them two. And he said, "I see nothing at all here but great trees around me; and if I stay here, maybe I shall go mad before I see anything."

The young man's father was out all this time, when the conversation was going on between him and his poor old mother.

The old woman begins by saying to her son before leaving, "Well, well, my poor boy, if you want to go, it's better for you to go, and God be with you." (The old woman thought for the best when she said that.) "But stop a bit before you go. Which would you like best for me to make you—a little cake and to bless you, or a big cake and to curse you?"

"Dear! dear!" said he, "make me a big cake. Maybe I shall be hungry on the road."

The old woman made the big cake, and she went on top of the house, and she cursed him as far as she could see him.

He presently meets with his father, and the old man says to him, "Where are you going, my poor boy?" When the son told the father the same tale as he told his mother, "Well," says his father, "I'm sorry to see you going away, but if you've made your mind to go, it's better for you to go."

The poor lad had not gone far, till his father called him back; when the old man drew out of his pocket a golden snuff-box, and said to him, "Here, take this little box, and put it in your pocket, and be sure not to open it till you are near your death."

And away went poor Jack upon his road, and walked till he was tired and hungry, for he had eaten all his cake upon the road; and by this time night was upon him, as he could hardly see his way before him. He could see some light a long way before him, and he made up to it, and found the back door and knocked at it, till one of the maidservants came and asked him what he wanted. He said that night was on him, and he wanted to get some place to sleep. The maidservant called him in to the fire, and gave him plenty to eat, good meat and bread and beer; and as he was eating his refreshments by the fire, there came the young lady to look at him. And she loved him well, and he loved her. And the young lady ran to tell her father, and said there was a pretty young man in the back kitchen. And immediately the gentleman came to him, and questioned him, and asked what work he could do. He said, the silly fellow, that he could do anything. (Jack meant that he could do any foolish bit of work, what would be wanted about the house.)

“Well,” says the gentleman to him, “at eight o’clock in the morning I must have a great lake and some of the largest man-of-war vessels sailing before my mansion, and one of the largest vessels must fire a royal salute, and the last round break the leg of the bed where my young daughter is sleeping on. And if you don’t do that, you will have to forfeit your life.”

“All right,” said Jack. And away he went to his bed, and said his prayers quietly, and slept till it was near eight o’clock, and he had hardly any time to think what he was to do, till all of a sudden he remembered about the little golden box that his father gave him. And he said to himself, “Well, well, I never was so near my death as I am now”; and then he felt in his pocket, and drew the little box out.

And when he opened it, there hopped out three little red men and asked Jack, “What is your will with us?”

“Well,” said Jack, “I want a great lake and some of the largest man-of-war vessels in the world before this mansion, and one of the largest vessels to fire a royal salute, and the last round to break one of the legs of the bed where this young lady is sleeping on.”

“All right,” said the little men; “go to sleep.”

Jack had hardly time to bring the words out of his mouth, to tell the little men what to do, but what it struck eight o’clock, when bang, bang went one of the largest man-of-war vessels; and it made Jack jump out of bed to look through the window. And I can assure you it was a wonderful sight for him to see, after being so long with his father and mother living in a wood. By this time Jack dressed himself, and said his prayers, and came down laughing, because he was proud, he was, because the thing was done so well.

The gentleman comes to him, and says to him, “Well, my young man, I must say that you are very clever indeed. Come and have some breakfast.” And the gentleman tells him, “Now there are two more things you have to do, and then you shall have my daughter in marriage.” Jack gets his breakfast, and has a good squint at the young lady, and also she at him. (However, I must get on again with my dear little story.)

The other thing that the gentleman told him to do was to fell all the great trees for miles around by eight o’clock in the morning; and, to make my long story short, it was done, and it pleased the gentleman well. The gentleman said to him, “The other thing you have to do” (and it was the last thing), “you must get me a great castle standing on twelve golden pillars; and there must come regiments of soldiers, and go through their drill. At eight o’clock the commanding officer must say, ‘Shoulder up’.”

“All right,” said Jack; when the third and last morning came and the three great feats were finished, when he had the young daughter in marriage.

But, oh dear! there is worse to come yet.

The gentleman now makes a large hunting party, and invites all the gentlemen around the country to it, and to see the castle as well. And by this time

Jack has a beautiful horse and a scarlet dress to go with them. On that morning his valet, when putting Jack's clothes by, after changing them to go a-hunting, put his hand in one of Jack's waist-coat pockets and pulled out the little golden snuff-box, as poor Jack left behind in a mistake. And that man opened the little box, and there hopped the three little red men out, and asked him what he wanted with them.

"Well," said the valet to them, "I want this castle to be moved from this place far and far across the sea."

"All right," said the little red men to him, "do you wish to go with it?"

"Yes," said he.

"Well, get up," said they to him; and away they went, far and far over the great sea.

Now the grand hunting party comes back, and the castle upon the twelve golden pillars disappeared, to the great disappointment of those gentleman as did not see it before. That poor silly Jack is threatened by taking his beautiful young wife from him, for taking them in the way he did. But the gentleman is going to make a 'greement with him, and he is to have a twelvemonths and a day to look for it; and off he goes with a good horse and money in his pocket.

Now poor Jack goes in search of his missing castle, over hills, dales, valleys, and mountains, through woolly woods and sheepwalks, farther than I can tell you tonight or ever intend to tell you. Until at last he comes up to the place where lives the King of all the little mice in the world. There was one of the little mice on sentry at the front gate going up to the palace, and did try to stop Jack from going in.

He asked the little mouse, "Where does the King live? I should like to see him." This one sent another with him to show him the place; and when the King saw him, he called him in. And the King questioned him, and asked him where he was going that way. Well, Jack told him all the truth, that he had lost the great castle, and was going to look for it, and he had a whole twelvemonths and a day to find it out.

And Jack asked him whether he knew anything about it; and the King said, "No, but I am the King of all the little mice in the world, and I will call them all up in the morning, and maybe they have seen something of it."

Then Jack got a good meal and bed, and in the morning he and the King went on to the fields; and the King called all the mice together, and asked them whether they had seen the great beautiful castle standing on golden pillars. And all the little mice said, "No, there was none of them had seen it."

The old King said to him that he had two other brothers, "One is the King of all the frogs; and my other brother, who is the oldest, he is the King of all the birds in the world. And if you go there, maybe they know something about it" (the missing castle). The King said to him, "Leave your horse here with me till you come back, and take one of my best horses under you, and give this cake

to my brother; he will know then who you got it from. Mind and tell him I am well, and should like dearly to see him."

And then the King and Jack shook hands together. And when Jack was going through the gates, the little mouse asked him should he go with him; and Jack said to him, "No, I shall get myself into trouble with the King."

And the little thing told him, "It will be better for you to have me go with you; maybe I shall do some good to you sometime without you knowing it."

"Jump up, then."

And the little mouse ran up the horse's leg, and made it dance; and Jack put the mouse in his pocket. Now Jack, after wishing good-morning to the King, and pocketing the little mouse which was on sentry, trudged on his way. And such a long way he had to go, and this was his first day. At last he found the place; and there was one of the frogs on sentry, and gun upon his shoulder, and did try to hinder Jack not to go in. And when Jack said to him that he wanted to see the King, he allowed him to pass; and Jack made up to the door. The King came out, and asked him his business; and Jack told him all from beginning to ending.

"Well, well, come in."

He gets good entertainment that night; and in the morning the King made a curious sound, and collected all the frogs in the world. And he asked them, did they know or see anything of a castle that stood upon twelve golden pillars. And they all made a curious sound, Kro-kro, kro-kro, and said, "No."

Jack had to take another horse, and a cake to his brother which is the King of all the fowls of the air. And as Jack was going through the gates, the little frog which was on sentry asked John should he go with him. Jack refused him for a bit; but at last he told him to jump up, and Jack put him in his other waistcoat pocket. And away he went again on his great long journey; it was three times as long this time as it was the first day; however, he found the place, and there was a fine bird on sentry. And Jack passed him, and he never said a word to him. And he talked with the King, and told him everything, all about the castle.

"Well," said the King to him, "you shall know in the morning from my birds whether they know anything or not."

Jack put up his horse in the stable, and then went to bed, after having something to eat. And when he got up in the morning, the King and he went on to some fields, and there the King made some funny noise, and there came all the fowls that were in all the world. And the King asked them, Did they see the fine castle? and all the birds answered, "No."

"Well," said the king, "where is the great bird?"

They had to wait, then, for a long time for eagle to make his appearance, when at last he came all in a perspiration, after sending two little birds high up in the sky to whistle on him to make all the haste he possibly could. The King asked the great bird, Did he see the great castle?

And the bird said, "Yes, I came from there where it now is."

"Well," says the King, "this young gentleman has lost it, and you must go with him back to it. But stop till you get a bit of something to eat first."

They killed a thief, and sent the best part of it to feed the eagle on his journey over the seas, and had to carry Jack on his back. Now, when they came in sight of the castle, they did not know what to do to get the little golden box.

Well, the little mouse said to them, "Leave me down, and I will get the little box for you." So the mouse stole himself in the castle, and had a hold of the box; and when he was coming down the stairs, fell it down, and very near being caught. He came running out with it, laughing his best.

"Have you got it?" Jack said to him.

He said, "Yes"; and off they went back again, and left the castle behind. As they were all of them (Jack, mouse, frog, and eagle) passing over the great sea, they fell to quarreling about which it was that got the little box, till down it slipped into the water. (It was by them looking at it, and handing it from one hand to the other, that they dropped the little box in the bottom of the sea.)

"Well, well," said the frog, "I knew as I would have to do something, so you had better let me go down in the water."

And they let him go, and he was down for three days and three nights; and up he comes, and shows his nose and little mouth out of the water. And all of them asked him, "Did he get it?" and he told them, "No."

"Well, what are you doing there, then?"

"Nothing at all," he said; "only I want my full breath"; and the poor little frog went down the second time, and he was down for a day and a night, and up he brings it.

And away they did go, after being there four days and nights and, after a long tug over seas and mountains, arrive at the old King's palace, who is the master of all the birds in the world. And the King is very proud to see them, and has a hearty welcome and a long conversation. Jack opens the little box, and told the little men to go back and to bring the castle here to them. "And all of you make as much haste back again as you possibly can."

The three little men went off; and when they came near the castle, they were afraid to go to it, till the gentleman and lady and all the servants were gone out to some dance. And there was no one left behind there, only the cook and another maid with her. And it happened to be that a poor Gypsy woman, knowing that the family was going from home, made her way to the castle to try to tell the cook's fortune for a bit of victuals, was there at the time. And the little red men asked her, "Which would she rather—go or stop behind?"

And she said, "I will go with you."

And they told her to run upstairs quick. She was no sooner up and in one of the drawing-rooms than there comes just in sight the gentleman and lady and all the servants. But it was too late. Off they went at full speed, and the Gypsy woman laughing at them through the window, making motion for them to stop,

but all to no purpose. They were nine days on their journey, in which they did try to keep the Sunday holy, by one of the little men turned to be priest, the other the clerk, and third presided at the organ, and the three women were the singers (cook, housemaid, and Gypsy woman), as they had a grand chapel in the castle already. Very remarkable, there was a discord made in the music, and one of the little men ran up one of the organ-pipes to see where the bad sound came from, when he found out that it only happened to be that the three women were laughing at the little red man stretching his little legs full length on the bass pipes, also his two arms the same time, with his little red nightcap, what he never forgot to wear, and what they never witnessed before, could not help calling forth some good merriment while on the face of the deep. And, poor things! Through them not going on with what they begun with, they very near came to danger, as the castle was once very near sinking in the middle of the sea.

At length, after merry journey, they come again to Jack and the King. The King was quite struck with the sight of the castle; and going up the golden stairs, wishing to see the inside, when the first one that attracted his attention was the poor Gypsy woman. And he said to her, "How are you, sister?"

She said to him, "I am very well. How are you?"

"Quite well," said he to her; "come into my place, to have a talk with you, and see who you are, and who your people are."

The old Gypsy woman told him that some of her people were some of them from the Lovells, Stanleys, Lees, and I don't know all their names. The King and Jack was very much pleased with the Gypsy woman's conversation, but poor Jack's time was drawing to a close of a twelvemonths and a day. And he, wishing to go home to his young wife, gave orders to the three little men to get ready by the next morning at eight o'clock to be off to the next brother, and to stop there for one night; also to proceed from there to the last or the youngest brother, the master of all the mice in the world, in such place where the castle shall be left under his care until it's sent for. Jack takes a farewell of the King, and thanks him very much for his hospitality, and tells him not to be surprised when he shall meet again in some other country.

Away went Jack and his castle again, and stopped one night in that place; and away they went again to the third place, and there left the castle under his care. As Jack had to leave the castle behind, he had to take to his own horse, which he left there when he first started. The king liked the Gypsy woman well, and told her that he would like if she would stay there with him; and the Gypsy woman did stay with him until she was sent for by Jack.

Now poor Jack leaves his castle behind and faces towards home; and after having so much merriment with the three brothers every night, Jack became sleepy on horseback, and would have lost the road if it was not for the little men a-guiding him. At last he arrives, weary and tired, and they did not seem to receive him with any kindness whatever, because he did not find the stolen



castle. And to make it worse, he was disappointed in not seeing his young and beautiful wife to come and meet him, through being hindered by her parents. But that did not stop long. Jack put full power on.

Jack dispatched the little men off to bring the castle from there, and they soon got there; and the first one they seen outside gather sticks to put on the fire was the poor Gypsy woman. And they did whistle to her, when she turned around smartly and said to them, “Dordi! dordi! How are you, comrades? Where do you come from, and where are you going?”

“Well, to tell the truth, we are sent to take this castle from here. Do you wish to stop here or to come with us?”

“I would like better to go with you than to stay here.”

“Well, come on, my poor sister.”

Jack shook hands with the King, and returned many thanks for his kingly kindness. When, all of a sudden, the King, seeing the Gypsy woman, which he fell in so much fancy with, and whom he so much liked, was going to detain the castle until such time he could get her out. But Jack, perceiving his intentions, and wanting the Gypsy woman himself for a nurse, instructed the little men to spur up and put speed on. And off they went, and were not long before they reached their journey’s end, when out comes the young wife to meet him with a fine lump of a young son.

Now, to make my long story short, Jack, after completing what he did, and to make a finish for the poor broken-hearted Gypsy woman, he has the loan of one of his father-in-law’s largest man-of-wars, which is laying by anchor, and sends the three little men in search of her kinsfolk, so as they may be found, and to bring them to her. After long searching they are found and brought back, to the great joy of the woman and delight of his wife’s people-in-law, for after a bit they became very fond of each other. When they came on land, Jack’s people allowed them to camp on their ground near a beautiful river; and the gentlemen and ladies used to go and see for them every day. Jack and his wife had many children, and had some of the Gypsy girls for nurses; and the little children were almost half Gypsies, for the girls continually learning them our language. And the gentleman and the lady were delighted with them. And the last time I was there, I played my harp for them, and got to go again.

## MADE OVER TO THE DEVIL

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Groome, Francis Hindes. *Gypsy Folk Tales*. London: Hurst & Blackett, 1899, 125–128.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Roma (Romania/Ukraine)

**National Origin:** Roma

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The following tale was drawn from the section of Eastern Europe formerly known as Burkovina (or Burkowina), an area currently split between Romania and Ukraine. A relatively common feature of oral performance, as distinct from literary texts, is the occasional “omission” of linking details. “Made over to the Devil,” a **variant** of “The Girl as Helper in the Hero’s Flight” (AT 313), exemplifies this feature. For this reason, it is useful to compare the current version of the **tale type** with the more detailed Polish variant of the same narrative, “Prince Unexpected” (page 152).

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**T**here was a rich man, and he went into the forest, and fell into a bog with his carriage. And his wife brought forth a son, and he knew it not. And the Devil came forth, and said, “What will you give me if I pull you out?”

“I will give you what you want.”

“Give me what you have at home.”

“I have horses, oxen.”

“Give me that which you have not seen.”

“I will.”

“Make a covenant with me.”

He made a covenant with him, and the Devil pulled him out of the mud, and the man went home. By the time he got home he had forgotten the covenant.

The boy was twenty years old. “Make me a cake, mother, for I’m off to the place my father pledged me to.” And he went far over the mountains, and came to the Devil’s house. There was an old woman in the house, and a daughter of the Devil’s, and she asked him, “Whither art going, lad?”

“I have come to the lord here, to serve.”

And the girl saw him, and he pleased her. “I may tell you that he is my father. My father will turn himself into a horse, and will tell you to mount him and traverse the world. And do you make yourself an iron club and an iron curry-comb, and hit him with the club, for he will not stoop, and get on his back, and as you go keep hitting him on the head.”

He traversed the world, and came home, put him in the stable, and went to the maiden.

“My father didn’t fling you?”

“No, for I kept hitting him on the head.”

The Devil called him, and took a jar of poppy-seed, and poured it out on the grass, and told him to gather it all up, and fill the jar, for, “If you don’t, I will cut off your head.”

He went to the maiden, and wept.

“What are you weeping for?”

“Your father has told me to fill the jar with poppy-seed; and if I don’t, he will cut off my head.”

She said, “Fear not.” She went outside and gave a whistle, and the mice came as many as all the blades of grass and the leaves.

And they asked, “What do you want, mistress?”

“Gather the poppy-seed and fill the jar.”

And the mice came and picked up the grains of poppy-seed one by one, and filled the jar. The Devil saw it. “You’re a clever chap. Here is one more task for you: drain the marsh, and plough it, and sow it, and tomorrow bring me roasted maize. And if you do not, I shall cut your head off.”

He went to the maiden and wept. “Your father has told me to drain the marsh, and give him roasted maize tomorrow.”

“Fear not.”

She went outside, and took the fiery whip. And she struck the marsh once, and it was dried up; a second time she struck, and it was ploughed; the third time she struck, it was sowed; the fourth time she struck, and the maize was roasted; and in the morning he gave him roasted maize.

She said to him, “We are three maidens. He will make us all alike, will call you to guess which is the eldest, which is the middle one, and which the youngest; and you will not be able to guess, for we shall be all just alike. I shall be at the top, and notice my feet, for I shall keep tapping one foot on the other; the middle one will be in the middle, and the eldest fronting you, and so you will know.”

The Devil said to him, “One more task I will give you. Fell the whole forest, and stack it by tomorrow.”

He went to the maiden, and the maiden asked him, “Have you a father and mother?”

“I have.”

“Ah! let us fly, for my father will kill you. Take the whetstone, and take a comb; I have a towel.”

They set out and fled. The Devil arose, saw that the forest is not felled. “Go and call him to me.”

Ho, ho! there is neither the lad nor the maiden.

“Hah! go after them.”

They went, and the two saw them coming after them. And she said to him, “I will make myself a field of wheat, and do you make yourself to be looking at the wheat, and they will ask you, ‘Didn’t a maiden and a lad pass by?’”

“Bah! they passed when I was sowing the wheat.”

“Go back, for we shall not catch them.”

They went back. “We did not catch them.”

“On the road did not you find anything?”

“We found a field of wheat and a peasant.”

“Go back, for the field of wheat was she, and he was the peasant.”

They saw them again. She said to the lad, "I will turn a somersault and make myself an old church, and do you turn a somersault and make yourself an old monk, and they will ask you, 'Didn't a maiden and a lad pass by?'"

"They passed just as I began the church."

"Ah! go back, for we shall never catch them. When he was beginning the church! It is old now."

"Did you not find anything on the road?"

"We found a church and a monk."

"The church was she, and he was the monk. I will go myself."

They saw him. "Now my father is coming; we shall not escape. Flung the comb."

He flung the comb, and it became a forest from earth to sky. Whilst he was gnawing away the forest, they got a long way ahead. He was catching them up; she cried, "Flung the whetstone."

He flung the whetstone, and it became a rock of stone from earth even to heaven. Whilst he, the Devil, was making a hole in the rock, they got a long way ahead. Again he is catching them up.

"Father is catching us up." She flung the towel, and it became a great water and a mill.

They halted on the bank.

And he cried, "Harlot, how did you cross the water?"

"Fasten the millstone to your neck, and jump into the water."

He fastened the millstone to his neck, and jumped into the water, and was choked.

She said, "Fear not, for my father is choked."

He went to his father with the maiden. His father rejoiced; but the maiden said to the lad, "I will go to expiate my father's sins, for I choked him. I go for three years."

She took her ring, and broke it in half, and gave one half to him. "Keep that, and do not lose it." She departed for three years.

He forgot her, and made preparations to marry. He was holding his wedding. She came, and he knew her not.

"Drink a glass of brandy."

She drank out of his glass, and flung the half of the ring into the glass, and gave it to him. When he drank, he got it into his mouth, and he took it in his hand and looked at it, and he took his half and fitted the two together. "Hah! this is my wife; this one saved me from death."

And he quashed that marriage, and took his first wife and lived with her.

## **THE VAMPIRE**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Groome, Francis Hindes. *Gypsy Folk Tales*. London: Hurst & Blackett, 1899, 14–18.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Roma (Romania)

**National Origin:** Roma

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Author Francis Hinds Groom glosses the word “bee” as “a species of assembly very popular in Wallachia (modern Romania). If any family has some particular work to do on any particular account, they invite the neighborhood to come and work for them. When the work is completed there is high glee, singing and dancing, and story-telling” (14). Certain elements of the tale are cross-culturally distributed. For example, it is noted that the “old woman saw he [Nita’s suitor] had cock’s feet.” Unusual feet (cock’s feet, hooves, feet turned backwards, for example) are commonly marks of demons, revenants, or other malevolent supernaturals in the world’s folk traditions. The ability to produce a gaze that injures or kills, as the tale notes “Then he looked,” is most familiar as the concept of the “evil eye.” The act of transformation by performing inverted acts (in this case, the flower turning into a girl by turning a somersault) is found in both initiation and in the shape-shifting acts of witches and werewolves, especially in Eastern Europe.

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There was an old woman in a village. And grown-up maidens met and span, and made a “bee.” And the young sparks [“eligible” young men] came and laid hold of the girls, and pulled them about and kissed them. But one girl had no sweetheart to lay hold of her and kiss her. And she was a strapping lass, the daughter of wealthy peasants; but three whole days no one came near her. And she looked at the big girls, her comrades. And no one troubled himself with her. Yet she was a pretty girl, a prettier was not to be found.

Then came a fine young spark, and took her in his arms and kissed her, and stayed with her until cock-crow. And when the cock crowed at dawn he departed. The old woman saw he had cock’s feet. And she kept looking at the lad’s feet, and she said, “Nita, my lass, did you see anything?”

“I didn’t notice.”

“Then didn’t I see he had cock’s feet?”

“Let be, mother, I didn’t see it.”

And the girl went home and slept; and she arose and went off to the spinning, where many more girls were holding a “bee.” And the young sparks came, and took each one his sweetheart. And they kissed them, and stayed a while, and went home. And the girl’s handsome young spark came and took her in his arms and kissed her and pulled her about, and stayed with her till midnight. And the cock began to crow. The young spark heard the cock crowing, and

departed. What said the old woman who was in the hut, “Nita, did you notice that he had horse’s hoofs?”

“And if he had, I didn’t see.”

Then the girl departed to her home. And she slept and arose in the morning, and did her work that she had to do. And night came, and she took her spindle and went to the old woman in the hut. And the other girls came, and the young sparks came, and each laid hold of his sweetheart. But the pretty girl looks at them. Then the young sparks gave over and departed home. And only the girl remained neither a long time nor a short time. Then came the girl’s young spark.

Then what will the girl do? She took heed, and stuck a needle and thread in his back. And he departed when the cock crew, and she knew not where he had gone to. Then the girl arose in the morning and took the thread, and followed up the thread, and saw him in a grave where he was sitting. Then the girl trembled and went back home.

At night the young spark that was in the grave came to the old woman’s house and saw that the girl was not there. He asked the old woman, “Where’s Nita?”

“She has not come.”

Then he went to Nita’s house, where she lived, and called, “Nita, are you at home?”

Nita answered, [“I am”].

“Tell me what you saw when you came to the church. For if you don’t tell me I will kill your father.”

“I didn’t see anything.”

Then he looked, and he killed her father, and departed to his grave.

Next night he came back. “Nita, tell me what you saw.”

“I didn’t see anything.”

“Tell me, or I will kill your mother, as I killed your father. Tell me what you saw.”

“I didn’t see anything.”

Then he killed her mother, and departed to his grave. Then the girl arose in the morning. And she had twelve servants. And she said to them, “See, I have much money and many oxen and many sheep; and they shall come to the twelve of you as a gift, for I shall die tonight. And it will fare ill with you if you bury me not in the forest at the foot of an apple tree.”

At night came the young spark from the grave and asked, “Nita, are you at home?”

“I am.”

“Tell me, Nita, what you saw three days ago, or I will kill you, as I killed your parents.”

“I have nothing to tell you.”

Then he took and killed her. Then, casting a look, he departed to his grave.

So the servants, when they arose in the morning, found Nita dead. The servants took her and laid her out decently. They sat and made a hole in the wall and passed her through the hole, and carried her, as she had bidden, and buried her in the forest by the apple tree.

And half a year passed by, and a prince went to go and course hares with greyhounds and other dogs. And he went to hunt, and the hounds ranged the forest and came to the maiden's grave. And a flower grew out of it, the like of which for beauty there was not in the whole kingdom. So the hounds came on her monument, where she was buried, and they began to bark and scratched at the maiden's grave. Then the prince took and called the dogs with his horn, and the dogs came not. The prince said, "Go quickly thither."

Four huntsmen arose and came and saw the flower burning like a candle. They returned to the prince, and he asked them, "What is it?"

"It is a flower, the like was never seen."

Then the lad heard, and came to the maiden's grave, and saw the flower and plucked it. And he came home and showed it to his father and mother. Then he took and put it in a vase at his bed-head where he slept. Then the flower arose from the vase and turned a somersault, and became a full-grown maiden. And she took the lad and kissed him, and bit him and pulled him about, and slept with him in her arms, and put her hand under his head. And he knew it not. When the dawn came she became a flower again.

In the morning the lad rose up sick, and complained to his father and mother, "Mammy, my shoulders hurt me, and my head hurts me."

His mother went and brought a wise woman and tended him. He asked for something to eat and drink. And he waited a bit, and then went to his business that he had to do. And he went home again at night. And he ate and drank and lay down on his couch, and sleep seized him. Then the flower arose and again became a full-grown maiden. And she took him again in her arms, and slept with him, and sat with him in her arms. And he slept. And she went back to the vase. And he arose, and his bones hurt him, and he told his mother and his father.

Then his father said to his wife, "It began with the coming of the flower. Something must be the matter, for the boy is quite ill. Let us watch tonight, and post ourselves on one side, and see who comes to our son."

Night came, and the prince laid himself in his bed to sleep. Then the maiden arose from the vase, and became there was never anything more fair—as burns the flame of a candle. And his mother and his father, the king, saw the maiden, and laid hands on her. Then the prince arose out of his sleep, and saw the maiden that she was fair. Then he took her in his arms and kissed her, and lay down in his bed, slept till day.

And they made a marriage and ate and drank. The folk marveled, for a being so fair as that maiden was not to be found in all the realm. And he dwelt with her half a year, and she bore a golden boy, two apples in his hand. And it pleased the prince well.

Then her old sweetheart heard it, the vampire who had made love to her, and had killed her. He arose and came to her and asked her, "Nita, tell me, what did you see me doing?"

"I didn't see anything."

"Tell me truly, or I will kill your child, your little boy, as I killed your father and mother. Tell me truly."

"I have nothing to tell you."

And he killed her boy. And she arose and carried him to the church and buried him.

At night the vampire came again and asked her, "Tell me, Nita, what you saw."

"I didn't see anything."

"Tell me, or I will kill the lord whom you have wedded."

Then Nita arose and said, "It shall not happen that you kill my lord. God send you burst."

The vampire heard what Nita said, and burst. Ay, he died, and burst for very rage. In the morning Nita arose and saw the floor swimming two hand's-breadth deep in blood. Then Nita bade her father-in-law take out the vampire's heart with all speed. Her father-in-law, the king, hearkened, and opened him and took out his heart, and gave it into Nita's hand. And she went to the grave of her boy and dug the boy up, applied the heart, and the boy arose. And Nita went to her father and to her mother, and anointed them with the blood, and they arose. Then, looking on them, Nita told all the troubles she had borne, and what she had suffered at the hands of the vampire.



# ROMANIA

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## MANOLI

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Mawr, Mrs. E. B. "Manoli: A Legend of the 13th Century." *Roumanian Fairy Tales and Legends*. London: H. K. Lewis, 1881, 97–105.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Romania

**National Origin:** Romania

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Radu the Black, according to Romanian tradition, was the founder of Wallachia (one of the three major principalities that along with Transylvania and Moldavia constitute modern Romania) in the late thirteenth century. The **legend** of Manoli maintains a dual focus on the dedication to the fidelity of the tragic lovers Manoli and Flora and the ruthless duplicity of Radu.

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**A** brilliant cortège winds along the banks of a river; a crowd of powerful nobles respectfully surround their Chief, whose great height and manly expression, seem to indicate him worthy of being the Commander amongst them all. In his immediate neighborhood, nine artisans may be observed; they also yield obedience to a Chief, noted for his superior experience and knowledge.

The river below, the river whose waters roll through a country so wild, here shooting up into cascades, and there falling back murmuring on the pointed rocks worn and sharpened by their beatings; lower down, flowing evenly along—sometimes subdued, sometimes in revolt—emblematic alike of life, will, impatience, and human resignation; this river is the Argis, and the country through which it flows is called *Lesser Wallachia*.

The Chief whom we see surrounded by his nobles, mounted on their splendid horses, with gorgeous trappings, is *Radu the Black*, Prince of the country, and founder of the Principality.

This brilliant cavalcade is in reality a pious pilgrimage, in search of a suitable site, to be consecrated by the erection of a Monastery, unequalled for beauty of position, and richness of design.

This is also why, amongst so illustrious a company are to be found the nine masons, headed by the master hand of all the masons—the renowned *Manoli*.

A young shepherd comes in sight, playing on his flute, a *Doïna* (National wail) of his country.

“Shepherd,” cried Radu, stopping him, “thou must often with thy flocks have explored the banks of the Argis; tell me, hast thou never seen a wall hidden amongst the green brushwood of the nut trees?”

“Yes, Prince, I have seen a wall which was begun to be built, and my dogs howled at it, as if they had been howling for a death.”

“Right,” said the Prince, with satisfaction, “it is there that our Monastery shall rise”; then calling Manoli and his masons, “Listen,” he said, “I wish you to build me an edifice, so noble and beautiful, that its equal shall never be found, neither in the present nor in the future. I promise to you all, treasures, titles, and estates, which shall make you equals with the Boyards [nobles] of my court. I promise, on the honor of a Prince, and you know you may rely on my promises. Wait I don’t thank me yet! My word is sacred, and again I say, what I promise I always carry out; if you *do not succeed*, I will have you walled up living, in the foundation of the Monastery, which shall be built by cleverer hands than yours.”

Terror, and ambition, two great incentives for all men! So the masons get quickly to work; they measure the ground; they dig the soil; and soon a majestic wall begins to rise. Satisfied with their work, and certain of success, they fall asleep and dream of the lands, and treasures, and titles, which their skillfulness is to bring them.

Morning comes, the golden rays of the sun dart over the waters of the Argis; the cool morning air, and the desire to continue their work—only interrupted for needful repose—arouse the masons; they seize their tools, and walk quickly to recommence their labors; but, alas! that wall, those solid foundations, all, all, during the night, had crumbled and disappeared.

Instead of sitting down and complaining, the masons recommenced their task; they think of the Prince, and of his oath, and they Work and tremble, and tremble and work. At length, at the end of the day—a long summer’s day, they have repaired the terrible disaster, and when evening comes, they again seek repose.

Again morning, and again sunlight reveals the crumbled walls!

In despair, the workmen recommence; for has not the Prince sworn his terrible oath? But when night comes, they no longer dream of treasures and titles, but of the terrible chastisement which awaits them.

When they again awake, all is ruin, and this happens four times to them.

The fourth night, notwithstanding his anxiety, Manoli sleeps, and he dreams a strange and terrible dream. He awakes, and calls his comrades. "Listen," he says, "to what has been told to me while I was asleep. A voice whispered to me that all our work will be in vain; that each night, the work of each day will be destroyed, unless we wall up, living, in our edifice, the first woman, be she wife or sister, who in the early morning comes to bring our food."

The prospects of the honors which the construction of the Monastery was to bring them; the riches and titles with which their work was to be recompensed—decided the workmen, and they each swore a solemn oath, to wall up while living, be she sister, or wife, the first woman who should come amongst them next day.

Morning arrived, clear and pure, as if it would not light on one despairing heart. Manoli anxiously looks into the distance, his oath strikes him with terror; but he is ambitious, and why should he refuse to sacrifice some one, to insure his own safety, and the success of his labor? Looking at it in this light, the engagement becomes a sacred duty; it is humane even, to secure the safety of several, at the price of one, and Manoli begins to regard the proceeding as heroic. Yet he is restless, and gets on a hillock to look around him, to see still further; he even mounts a scaffolding, and his eyes scan fearfully the surrounding plain.

Distant, far distant, he sees something advancing. Who comes in such haste? In truth, it is a woman, careful and diligent, bringing the early morning meal to the man she loves. See, with light quick step, she comes nearer and nearer, she is recognized. It is the beautiful Flora, the wife of Manoli. Everything disappears from Manoli's sight, the sun is dark, and swollen; instead of light, there is the darkness of the tomb.

He falls on his knees, and, joining his hands, calls, "Oh, Lord, God; open the cataracts of Heaven, shower on the earth torrents of water, turn the streamlets into lakes, oh, Merciful Savior, that my wife may not be able reach me here!" Did God listen to his prayer? Shortly clouds covered the sky, and heavy rain began to fall, but Flora continued her way. Was not her husband waiting? What mattered these obstacles?

Against stream and torrent, she still advances, and Manoli watching her, again kneels, joins his hands, and cries, "Oh, my God, send a wind to twist and tear up the plantains, to overthrow the mountains, and to force my wife to return to the valley!"

The wind rises and whistles in the forest, uproots the plantains, to overthrow mountains, yet Flora only hastens more quickly to reach her husband and at length arrives at the fatal spot. Then the masons tremble at the sight, but tremble with joy.

While Manoli, grief stricken, takes his wife in his arms and says, "Listen, my dear, to amuse ourselves, we are going to pretend to build you up in these walls, it will be I, who will place you there, so remain very quiet."

Flora laughingly consented, for she loved Manoli and had full confidence in him. Manoli sighed heavily, but though sighing, began to build the wall, which already reaches to the ankles of Flora—to her knees—higher and higher. Flora laughs no longer, but, seized with terror, cries, “Manoli, oh, Manoli, leave off this cruel joking, the wall presses on me, it will crush me.”

Manoli is silent, but works on, the wall still rises, and is now level with her waist.

Again she cries, “Manoli! Manoli! stay your hand; soon I shall no longer see you; I love you so; you are sacrificing me, and yet you say you love me too.”

Manoli works on, and to console himself, thinks, “Shortly I shall hear no longer her complaining; suffering is not so bad, when one does not witness it.”

The work proceeds—the wall rises even to her eye-brows—at length she is hid from sight entirely. Manoli moves away, but still hears the faint moaning voice of his wife. “Manoli, Manoli, the wall is pressing on me, and my life is dying out.”

The day was magnificent on which the Prince came to kneel and give thanks at the beautiful Monastery the best proportioned, and the finest in style and grandeur which had ever been built. The master masons, Manoli amongst them, swelling with pride, waited, at the top of the scaffolding, the visit, the praise, and the recompense of Raddi their Prince.

“Well, is it true,” said the Prince, “that you could never imagine, or construct, an edifice more splendid than this? Can no other Sovereign signalize his power and his wealth by a finer building than this?”

The masons inflamed with pride and emulation, cried with a triumphant air, “Know, Prince, that we are the Master Masons, whose science and skill is unrivalled: we might be able, even, to create a greater work than this.”

The Prince turned aside with a wicked smile.

“Wait up here for me,” he said, “I will go down to fully examine the edifice from below, and I will come up again and make my observations to you.” Hurrying from the scaffolding, he gave a quick sign, and command to the people below, who speedily knocked away, props, poles, and planks, and the masons fell from the great height to an instantaneous death. Manoli, alone caught at a projecting carving, and passing from one to another, would soon have reached the ground, but there came from the wall which he was touching, the cry, “Manoli, Manoli, the cold wall is pressing on me, my body is crushed, and my life is dying out.” At this sound, Manoli, turns giddy and faint, and falls to the earth.

On the spot where he fell, there springs a fountain of clear sparkling water, but its taste is salt and bitter, as the tears which are shed in Romania, even now, when any one relates the sorrows and the sacrifice of Flora, the wife of Manoli.

## THE FISHERMAN AND THE BOYARD'S DAUGHTER

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Mawr, Mrs. E. B. *Roumanian Fairy Tales and Legends*. London: H. K. Lewis, 1881, 90–96.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Romania

**National Origin:** Romania

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From the mid-fifteenth century to the early twentieth century the noble class (the “boyards” or “boyars”) were the prevailing political force in Romania, particularly in the principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia. The pre-twentieth century nonboyard audiences of the preceding tale would find considerable satisfaction in the fisherman’s gaining the advantage of his noble wife by means of “The Silence Wager” (AT 1351). For the upper class, it undoubtedly functioned as a **cautionary tale**.

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Once on a time there was a good-looking fisherman, young and intelligent. Every time that he went through the court of a certain Boyard [nobleman], Mariola, the daughter of this Boyard, would call him to her, purchase his fish, and give him money to ten times its value. So much money did he gain in this way, that he began to be indifferent to its possession and yet each day Mariola would still be a customer.

On one of these occasions, while she was handing him the money, she touched his hand and gave it a squeeze; the fisherman grew as red as a beet-root, and looked down, but regaining confidence, began to give himself airs, and twirl his moustache.

Gradually they entered into conversation, and she learned that he was unmarried, and became altogether charmed with the replies she drew from him. Although he was but a fisherman, she fell desperately in love with him, and giving him a purse of gold, she bade him go and buy clothing suitable for a gentleman, and then to come back to her to shew her if they were becoming to him.

After having bought a *caftan*, and other things fit for a real Boyard, he dressed himself in them, and came to exhibit himself to Mariola. She almost failed to recognize him, for both his carriage and dress were far above one of his station, and she could no longer restrain the love which she had for him in her heart, and gave him to understand that he might be her husband if he wished. The fisherman hesitated, knowing that he was no match for a Boyard’s daughter; but finding that she still insisted, with much bashfulness, and twirling his *caciula* (cap) from hand to hand, he eventually consented.

On hearing this astounding intelligence, the Boyard was very angry, saying that a fisherman was no match for his child; but as he loved Mariola so tenderly, and seeing that her heart was set upon the marriage, eventually he consented to her prayer.

Mariola again gave a purse of gold to her intended, bidding him buy wedding garments and all that was necessary. Shortly he presented himself, clad in a rich suit embroidered thickly with gold; Mariola conducted him to her father's presence, and they were at once affianced. Not many days after this, the wedding took place, and they took their seats at the banquet given in honor of the occasion.

There was a rule in those days, that the newly married pair should each eat from one lightly boiled egg; the fisherman cut a thin slice of bread, and was going to dip it into the egg, when Mariola caught his arm, saying, "No! I must eat of it first; I am a Boyard's daughter, and you are only a fisherman."

No reply did he make, but rising quietly from the table, quitted the banquet hall, to the astonishment of many of the guests, who did not know that he had been a fisherman.

The bride was very troubled at the mistake she had made, and sat biting her lips with dismay and chagrin. Being unable to support her position, she withdrew to her bedroom, and locked herself in.

All night long sleep would not come to her, and she could only think of her absent bridegroom. At early morning she went to her father to demand permission to go in search of her husband. Her father tried to dissuade her from taking such a step, but in vain, and she set off on her errand.

She traversed the town, the country, villages, country again—again villages; until at length, in one of these small villages, she saw him meanly dressed, and acting as servant at a wayside inn. Approaching him quickly, she began to address him, but he would not appear to know her, and continued his occupation. She entreated him only to speak one word to her, but he only shrugged his shoulders, and turned away his head.

The master of the inn seeing this interruption, called, "How is it that you interfere with my servant, and prevent his working? Don't you see that he is dumb? If you are as respectable as your appearance would show, I advise you to go away and leave him alone."

"He is not dumb," cried she, "he is my husband, and left me for a simple misunderstanding."

The villagers, who had collected around, were astonished at what she said, for she did not look like one who would be poking fun at them.

The innkeeper was also incredible, saying, that a man who was able to speak, would not remain a whole week without uttering a word. In truth, all around took him to be a mute, and used to converse with him by signs. He had already gained their goodwill, by his usefulness and good temper.

Mariola seeing that no one would believe her story, offered to make a bet, that in three days she would make her husband speak, if she were allowed always to be at his side; that if she did not succeed she would consent to be hung. This bet was accepted and legalized by the Prefect of the village.

The following day was to be the first of the trial the fisherman at the beginning of this, knew nothing of the bet, though later on, he got a whisper of it.

Mariola was constantly entreating for one little word. "My darling," she said, "I have been very wrong; I married you because I loved you, I bind myself never again, in all our life-time, to commit such a fault; soften your heart and speak one word to me." Yet no answer—only a shrug of the shoulders, as if he did not understand what she was saying.

The first day passed—came the second day; that passed too, and yet not a sound.

On the third day, Mariola began to tremble with fear, and followed the fisherman wherever he went, still begging him to speak only one word to her. He, on the other hand, fearing to be overcome by her tears, fled from her presence.

The three days have passed, all the villagers are taken up with the affair of the dumb servant at the inn, and the pretty looking girl, who had mistaken him for some one else, and brought this misfortune on herself.

The scaffold was erected, the people had congregated together to see the end of this tragedy; the officials were there, who, against their will, were bound to carry out the punishment.

The executioner approached Mariola, and led her to the scaffold, saying, that as she had failed to make the dumb man speak, she must accept the forfeit of her life.

Sighing, she turned her head once more towards her impassive husband, but seeing no yielding from him, she prepared herself to die. Loosening her hair, making the sign of the cross, she commended herself in prayer to God. All the spectators were moved at the sight. On the steps of the scaffold, with the Priest at her side, once more she turned towards the fisherman, crying, "My dear husband, pray come to my rescue, one word from you will suffice." Shaking his head, he looked in another direction.

With the noose in his hand, waited the executioner; soon he adjusted it round Mariola's pretty neck—one more minute and all would have been over; but the fisherman, stretching forth his hand, called—"Stop!"

All the people were struck with astonishment, and tears of joy rolled down their cheeks. The executioner withdrew the noose, and the fisherman, looking severely at Mariola, asked, "Will you again taunt me with being a fisherman?"

With great emotion she cried, "Forgive me, my dear husband, I own my fault, and will never wound your feelings again."

"Let her come down," said he, "for she is indeed my wife"; and taking her by the hand, he led her back to their home, where their life was one banquet of happiness and prosperity in future.

## THE STORY OF THE SWAN MAIDEN AND THE KING

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Gaster, M. *Rumanian Bird and Beast Stories*. London: Folk-Lore Society, 1915, 249–254.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Romania

**National Origin:** Romania

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The following **ordinary folktale** embeds the **tale type** “The Singing Bone” (AT 780) within the framework of “The Swan Maiden” (AT 400). As noted previously (for example, “The Three Lemons,” page 130), a gypsy appears as a malevolent **stock figure**. In addition, “The Story of the Swan Maiden and the King” provides another instance of the Romanian belief in transformation by means of turning somersaults (discussed in the introduction to “The Vampire,” page 173).

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Once upon a time a king went out hunting, and after he had been hunting in the forest for a long time without finding anything, he found himself suddenly in an open plain, in which there was a huge lake, and in the midst of the lake he saw there a bird swimming about, the like of which he had never seen before. It was a swan.

Drawing his bow, he wanted to shoot it. To his surprise it spoke to him in a human voice, and said, “Do not kill me.”

So he tried his best to catch it, and succeeded. Pleased with the capture of the bird, he carried it home alive, and gave it to the cook to kill it to make a meal of it for him. The cook was a Gypsy. She whetted her knife and went to the bird to cut its throat, when, to her astonishment, the bird turned three somersaults, and there stood before her a most beautiful maiden, more beautiful than she had ever seen before. So she ran to the king and told him what had happened.

The king, who first thought that the cook was trying to play some trickery with him, did not listen to her, but when she persisted in her tale, the king, driven by curiosity, went into the kitchen, and there he saw a girl more beautiful than any that he had ever yet set his eyes upon. He asked her who she was, and she said she was the swan who was swimming on the lake, that she had willfully gone away from her mother, who lived in the land of fairies, and that she had left two sisters behind. So the king took her into the palace and married her.

The Gypsy, who was a pretty wench, had thought that the king would marry her, and when she saw what had happened, she was very angry. But she



managed to conceal her anger, and tried to be kind to the new queen, biding her time all the while.

The king and queen lived on for a while in complete happiness, and after a time a child was born unto her.

It so happened that the king had to go on a long journey, leaving the wife and child in the care of the Gypsy. One day the Gypsy came to the queen, and said to her, "Why do you always sit in the palace? Come, let us walk a little in the garden, to hear the birds singing, and to see the beautiful flowers."

The queen, who had no suspicion, took the advice of the Gypsy, and went with her for a walk into the garden. In the middle of the garden there was a deep well, and the Gypsy said artfully to the young queen, "Just bend over the well, and look into the water below, and see whether your face has remained so beautiful as it was on the first day when you turned into a maiden from being a swan."

The queen bent over the well to look down into the depths, and that was what the Gypsy was waiting for, for no sooner did the queen bend over the well, than, getting hold of her by her legs, she threw her down head foremost into the well and drowned her.

When the king came home and did not find the queen, he asked what had happened, and where she was. The Gypsy, who had meanwhile taken charge of the child, and looked after it very carefully, said to the king that the young queen, pining for her old home, had turned again into a swan and flown away.

The king was deeply grieved when he heard this, but believing what the Gypsy had told him, he thought that nothing could be done, and resigned himself to the loss of his wife. The Gypsy woman looked after the child with great care, hoping thereby that she might win the king's love, and that he would marry her. A month, a year passed, and nothing was heard of the wife. And the king, seeing the apparent affection of the Gypsy for the child, decided at last to marry her, and fixed the day of the wedding.

Out of the fountain into which the queen had been thrown, there grew a willow tree with three branches, one stem in the middle and two branching out right and left. Not far from the garden there lived a man who had a large flock of sheep. One day he sent his boy to lead the sheep to the field. On his way the boy passed the king's garden with the well in the middle of it.

As the boy had left his flute at home, when he saw the willow he thought he would cut one of the branches and make a flute. Going into the garden, he cut the middle stem, and made a flute of it. When he put it to his lips, the flute by itself began to play as follows, "O boy, do not blow too hard, for my heart is aching for my little babe which I left behind in the cradle, and to suckle at the black breast of a Gypsy."

When the boy heard what the flute was playing, not understanding what it meant, he was greatly astonished, and ran home to tell his father what had

happened with the flute. The father, angry that he had left the sheep alone, scolded him, and took away the flute. Then he tried to see whether the boy had told the truth. As soon as he put it to his mouth the flute started playing the same tune as when the boy had tried to play it. The father said nothing, and wondering at the meaning of the words he hid the flute away in a cupboard.

When the king's wedding day drew near, all the musicians of the kingdom were invited to come and play at the banquet. Some of them passed the old man's house, and hearing from them that they were going to play at the king's banquet, he remembered the marvelous flute, and asked whether he could not go also, as he could play the flute so wonderfully well. His son—the young boy—had meanwhile gone into the garden in the hope of getting another flute, as the willow had three branches. So he cut one of the branches and made a flute of it. Now this flute did not play at all.

When the old man came to the palace, there was much rejoicing and singing. At last his turn came to play. As soon as he put the flute to his lips, the flute sang, "O man, do not blow so hard, for my heart aches for my little babe left in the cradle to be suckled by a black Gypsy."

The Gypsy, who was the king's bride and sat at the head of the table, at once understood the saying of the flute, although she did not know what the flute had to do with the queen whom she had killed.

The king, who marveled greatly at the flute and at the tune which it was singing, took a gold piece and gave it to the man for the flute, and when he started blowing it, the flute began to sing, "O my dear husband, do not blow so hard, for my heart aches for our little babe whom I left in the cradle to be suckled by the black Gypsy. Quickly, quickly, do away with this cruel Gypsy, as otherwise you will lose your wife."

The guests who were present marveled at the song, and no one understood its meaning. The Gypsy, however, who understood full well what it meant, turning to the king, said, "Illustrious king, do not blow this flute and make yourself ridiculous before your guests. Throw it into the fire."

But the king, who felt offended by the words of the Gypsy, made her take up the flute and blow. With great difficulty she submitted to the order of the king, and she was quite justified in refusing to play it, for no sooner had she put the flute to her lips when it sang, "You enemy of mine, do not blow hard, for my heart aches for my little babe left in the cradle to be suckled by you, you evil-minded Gypsy. You have thrown me into the well, and there put an end to my life, but God had pity on me, and he has preserved me to be again the true wife of this illustrious king."

Furious at these words, the Gypsy threw the flute away with so much force that she thought it would break into thousands of splinters. But it was not to be as she thought, for by this very throw the flute was changed into a beautiful woman, more beautiful, indeed, than any had ever seen before. She was the very queen whom the Gypsy had thrown into the well.

When the king saw her, he embraced her and kissed her, and asked her where she had been such a long time. She told him that she had slept at the bottom of the well, into which she had been thrown by the Gypsy, who had hoped to become the queen, and this would have come to pass had it not been for the boy cutting a flute out of the stem of the willow tree. "And now, punish the Gypsy as she deserves, otherwise your wife must leave you."

When the king heard these words, he called the boy and asked him whether he had cut himself a flute from the stem of the willow tree which had grown out of the well in the garden. "It is so, O illustrious king," said the boy, "and may I be forgiven for the audacity of going into the king's garden. I went and cut for myself a flute from the stem of the willow tree, and when I began to blow it, it played, 'Do not blow so hard,' O boy, for my heart is aching within me, for my little babe which I left behind in the cradle, and to suckle at the black breast of a Gypsy."

Then he told him he had gone back to his father, who instead of praising him for the marvelous flute, gave him a good shaking. He had then gone a second time into the garden, and had cut off one of the branches to make a flute, but this did not play like the first one. The king gave the boy a very rich gift, and he ordered the Gypsy to be killed.

Some time afterwards, the queen came to the king and asked leave to go to her mother to tell her all that had happened to her, and to say good-bye forever now, as she henceforth would live among human beings. The king reluctantly gave way. She then made three somersaults, and again became a swan, as she had been when the king found her for the first time on the waters of the lake.

Spreading her wings she flew far away until she reached the house of her mother, who was quite alone. Her two sisters were not there. They had left her some time ago and no one knew whither they had gone. The young queen did not go into the house. She was probably afraid lest her mother would not let her go back again, so she settled on the roof, and there she sang, "Remain in health, good mother mine, as the joy is no longer granted you to have me with you in your house, for you will only see me again when I lose my kingdom, dear mother mine, not before, and not till then."

And without waiting for the answer of her mother she returned back again to her husband. Sitting on the window sill, she sang again, "Rise up, O husband, open the doors, wake up the servants and let them be a witness of my faithfulness to you, for since I have married you I have left my mother, and my sisters have gone away from me, and from a swan I have become a true wife to live in happiness with you. Henceforth I shall no longer be a swan, but you must take care of me that I do not go hence from you. I do not know whether my fate will be a better one by being a queen in this world. O sweet water, how I long to bathe in you! And my white feathers, they will belong to my sisters. Since I am to leave them forever, and my mother with them, O Lord, what have I done? Shall I be able to live upon the earth, and shall I keep the kingdom? Thou, O

Lord, O merciful, hearken unto me and grant that this kingdom may not be in vain.”

And turning again head over heels, she became a woman as before, and entering the palace she lived there with her husband—the king—and if they have not died since, they are still alive.

## THE TWELVE-HEADED GRIFFIN

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Mawr, Mrs. E. B. *Roumanian Fairy Tales and Legends*. London: H. K. Lewis, 1881, 48–57.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Romania

**National Origin:** Romania

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The classic folktale plot labeled as “The Dragon Slayer” (AT 300) provides the core for “The Twelve-Headed Griffin.” The monster defeated by Theodor is called a griffin, a mythical beast with head and wings of an eagle and the body of a lion, only in the title. In the narrative itself, reference is made only to a monster. The bull is not a common animal helper in other **variants** of this **tale type**, but the “evil gypsy” is a cliché in the Eastern European folktale corpus.

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Once upon a time there lived a King and Queen whose greatest blessing from God was an only child of fifteen, named Theodor.

This boy from his childhood had learnt to ride, and to shoot with the bow, and had become a great proficient in both arts.

One day while practicing archery, one of his arrows shot out of sight. The boy having marked the direction which it took, went to his father to request his swiftest horse, and money to go in search of his arrow.

His father gave him money, and permission to take the best horse in his stables.

With joy the boy mounted swiftly, and set off at a gallop.

After riding long and far, so far that the sun was disappearing from the horizon, he found himself in a vast prairie full of flowers. Stopping his horse, standing up in his stirrups, and shading his eyes with his hand, he perceived his arrow sticking in the ground. Dismounting he went quickly to the spot, seized the arrow with both hands, and with difficulty drew it out, leaving a great hole in the earth where it had penetrated. On looking down this hole, he saw at the bottom of it, a fine bull, and on the bull’s back, a sword and a letter.

In great surprise at all these strange surroundings, he opened the letter and read, "Whomsoever will take this bull and will give it three pecks of wheat and a gallon of wine, and continue to do so daily, the bull will have power to bring back to life the man who does this, no matter how many times he may die. This sword will turn into stone any living or inanimate object."

Leading the bull, and strapping on the sword, the boy went on his way.

Towards night he reached a city and asked food and shelter of an old woman whom he met with. For himself a draught of water, for the bull a gallon of wine. The old woman fed him and his animals, and gave the requisite wine to the bull. *Water* she said she had none, for in the whole city there was but one fountain, and that at the outskirts of the town; and that this fountain was guarded by a twelve-headed monster. Whomsoever needed water must sacrifice a young maiden to his appetite.

She told him that the next day it was the King's turn to give his daughter, and that this said King had made a proclamation to the effect, that whosoever would kill this monster and save his daughter, immense riches, and the hand of his daughter in marriage would be the reward.

The youth hearing all this, requested the old woman to awake him very early next morning, and to give him her water-jars, saying he would fill them without giving anything to the monster. She promised this, and he soon fell into a sound sleep.

According to promise the next morning she aroused him, and taking his sword, his bow and arrows, and the water-jars, set off for the well. Arrived there, he found the King's daughter weeping, and waiting to be eaten by the monster. Said the youth to her, "I have come to deliver you from the fangs of the monster, on one condition, that is, that you let me sit down by your side, lay my head on your lap, and if I should fall asleep, not to awake me until the monster shews himself."

The young girl acquiesced with joy, and sitting down beside her, the youth laid his head on her lap, and soon fell asleep. When the monster made his appearance, the girl was so overwhelmed with terror that she could not awake the youth, but cried so plentifully that the scalding tears fell on his face. Jumping up, he saw the Monster before him. Charging his bow, he placed himself in front of the maiden; the monster seeing this, exclaimed, "Stand aside, and let me take my right," but the youth refused, at the same time drew the string of his bow and sent an arrow into the head which was stretched forth for his destruction.

The monster writhed with pain, and projected a *second* head, and then began a terrible strife. The youth's only defense was his courage and his bow, but the monster had his twelve heads, and his poisoned breath.

All that long summer's day they fought until evening; as night fell the boy could hardly stand from fatigue, had broken his bow, and had but one arrow in his quiver. But, on the other hand, the monster remained with only one head left out of the twelve.

At length, the youth took from the maiden's head, a long mesh of her rich hair—she, more dead than alive from terror, and with it bound his broken bow together, and the fight recommenced. Eventually the youth was victorious, but fell down faint from loss of blood.

While both these young creatures lay fainting by the well side, there came up a Tzigan [Rom, gypsy], in the service of the King, to fetch water. Seeing the monster annihilated, he sought the young Princess, and finding that she was not dead, but only in a swoon, he threw water over her, and she quickly returned to her senses. The Tzigan enquired of her who had killed the monster, and the maiden pointed to the apparently dead Theodor. Quick as thought the Tzigan seized the youth's sword, and cut his body into hundreds of pieces.

Then, collecting the twelve heads and tongues of the monster, and charging the maiden not to tell to the King who had performed this mighty deed, he accompanied her to her father's palace.

Without the knowledge of the Tzigan, the maid let fall a ring, and a handkerchief, beside the remains of the slaughtered youth.

When the King saw his daughter approach, he was overwhelmed with joy, and demanded the name of her deliverer. "I, mighty King," replied the Tzigan, with pride.

"Can this be true?" enquired the King.

"It is true," said his daughter, tremulously.

Though the King was sorely grieved that the deliverer of his child was a gypsy, and a slave, yet he felt bound to fulfill the promise that she should be given him to wife.

## II

While Theodor was lying hewed in morsels, by the side of the well, the old woman, his hostess, went to her stable to feed and give drink to the Bull. On seeing her, he refused all nourishment, telling her that "he was thirsting after water, and not after wine, and that she must lead him to the public well; as now that the monster existed no longer, all the world could drink water in peace." He bade her take with them a lump of salt, and soon they arrived at the well.

When the woman saw the morsels of what had once been the brave youth, she began to cry aloud; but the bull said to her, "Don't distress yourself in that way, but do as I tell you: take up piece by piece, limb by limb, and place them together, as they were in life." Obeying him, she put the different members once more together again. The bull licked well the lump of salt, then breathed over, and licked the youth. Wherever his tongue passed over, the marks of the sword disappeared, and when he once more breathed into his face, Theodor opened his eyes and exclaimed, "Have I slept long?"

"You would have slept longer," said the woman, "if your bull had not brought you to life."

All was as a dream to him, and it was only after the bull had explained all that had occurred, that he understood why the maiden was no longer by his side.

On looking around him he saw the ring and the handkerchief which she had dropped; he took possession of them, and they returned to the old woman's dwelling.

The following day the King caused a proclamation to be issued to the effect that the nuptials of his beloved daughter, with Burcea, the Tzigan, would take place in eight days. Burcea her deliverer, inviting the neighboring Kings and Nobles to come and do honor to the ceremony.

He sent for the court tailor, and commanded for his future son-in-law, clothing befitting his new rank. He ordered his treasurer to pay to Burcea, any sum of money which he might demand.

On the appointed day, the guests were assembled in the Imperial Palace; but all were melancholy, and angry, that an ugly, uneducated gipsy, should have gained such a high-born, lovely bride.

Amongst them all, the King was the most grieved, with the exception, perhaps, of his daughter, who reproached herself for not having told the truth to the King, her father.

Burcea, the Tzigan, alone, was joyful.

In those days, it was the custom at the marriage of a King's daughter, for each subject to offer a present, according to his means; so Theodor begged the old woman to make him a cake, which she should take to the palace as his offering. She willingly agreed, and began to make the cake. When it was ready for the oven, the youth slipped the ring into the middle of the cake, and covered the paste over it.

The cake was baked, and wrapped in a clean napkin, and taken by the old woman to the gate of the palace. Her dress was so old and so patched, that the servants forbade her to enter; but the Princess looking from the window, gave orders that she should be admitted, and brought into her presence.

This was quickly done, and the cake was offered with humble wishes for her future happiness. The Princess took the cake and broke it; imagine her surprise when she found her ring in the middle of it! "Where is the person who put this ring here?" asked she of the old woman.

"It must be the handsome boy that is at my cottage," said she, "he who was hewn to pieces by your slave, and was restored to life and health by his friendly bull."

"Take this purse of money for yourself," said the Princess, "and return quickly to your home, tell my deliverer to come here, for I am awaiting him."

The woman sped swiftly on her errand. Full of joy, the youth seized his sword, and taking the handkerchief, set off for the Imperial palace.

On reaching the reception ball, he saw a crowd of Nobles, and in their center, Burcea the Tzigan, swelling with pride, and thinking himself as powerful as a Grand Vizier.

The youth passed speedily on, until he reached an apartment where the Princess was reclining. Seeing him, she sprang up, and flung herself into his arms, crying out, "this is my deliverer, this is my deliverer."

A crowd quickly surrounded them, and Theodor, in a clear voice, said, "It is true that I am the deliverer of this maiden, who would have been eaten by the monster of the well. I killed him, and she was free; but faint from fatigue and loss of blood, when a slave of the King's, coming to the well, and seeing me in this state, hewed me to pieces with my own sword, and threatened the maiden with death, if she avowed the truth. At the same time he possessed himself with the proofs of the monster's destruction. Had it not been for a bull, endowed with a miraculous power of bringing the dead to life, I should now be ready for my grave. Seeing that many wise men are here, and knowing that there is wisdom in numbers, I entreat all present to judge and condemn the one who is guilty."

"To death! to death!" cried the crowd.

The Emperor, calling his servants, ordered them to bring two horses from his stables, one bred in the mountains, the other bred in the plains, and to tie the limbs of Burcea, the Tzigan, to these two animals; his order was obeyed, the horses were let loose, and setting off in a gallop in different directions, the body of the slave was torn limb from limb.

And now, indeed, there was a real rejoicing; but the marriage, and the court festivities were all postponed, until the arrival of the parents of Theodor, who embraced him, and wept for joy and pride, that he had so nobly distinguished himself.

They built for him, and his young bride, a magnificent palace; at the entrance to the courtyard, there was also a well of purest water, apparently guarded and watched over by a gigantic bull in marble.



# RUSSIA

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## THE ROGUIISH PEASANT

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Hodgetts, Edith M. S. *Tales and Legends from the Land of the Tzar: A Collection of Russian Stories*. New York: Charles E. Merrill and Company, 1892, 256–261.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Russia

**National Origin:** Russia

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Spanning Eurasia from Poland in the west to the Bering Sea in the east and from Nordic Finland and Norway to East Asian China and Mongolia, Russia is the largest country in the world. In addition, the prevailing social structure through the Tsarist period of Russian history led to a cultural context that was congenial to the preservation and performance of folklore in the village context. These two factors encouraged the development of a diverse repertoire that persisted into the twentieth century.

Hodgetts, who was born and raised in Russia, does not give a specific source for this tale. In her introduction she states, with reference to her sources, “Some of these tales were dictated in the original Russian at school, others were related to me by my nurse and other servants of my father’s household, while some are translations which I have made from various collections of Russian stories current among the people” (vii). The following narrative is an example of the well-known **trickster** tale “The Student from Paradise” (AT 1540) and also the Egyptian tale “Gifts for My Son Mohammed” (Volume 1, page 3). The final episode in which the trickster asks his victim to guard an alleged bird under a hat is a **variant** of “Holding Down the Hat” (AT 1528).

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Once upon a time there lived in a Russian village an old peasant woman who had two sons. One, however, died; and the other was from home, but was soon expected to return to his native village.

One evening, as the peasant woman was working in her little hut, a soldier walked in at the open door. "Good day, little mother!" he said. "Can I stay here the night?"

"Yes, certainly, with pleasure, little father. But whence come you, and who are you?"

"I am nobody in particular, little mother. I am an emigrant for the next world."

"Ah! My precious soul! One of my sons died a little while ago. Did you happen to come across him?"

"Why, yes, of course! We lived in the same sphere."

"No, really! You don't mean it?"

"He feeds and looks after the young cranes in the next world."

"Oh, my precious soul! But where did he get them?"

"Where did he get them! Why, the young cranes roam about among the sweet-briar!"

"How did he look? What clothes had he on?"

"Clothes! He was all in tatters, and a pair of wings."

"Poor fellow! Well, I have got about forty yards of gray cloth and a ten-ruble note. Take them, good man, and give them to my son."

"With pleasure, little mother."

Next morning the old woman gave the soldier the cloth and the money, and wished him a safe journey back. And she also begged him to come again soon and tell her how her son was getting on.

She waited and waited for many a week, but the soldier did not return. At last the day arrived when her other son was expected home.

"How are you, mother mine?" he exclaimed, coming into the hut and embracing his mother. "Have you any news?"

"Yes, my boy. Not very long ago an emigrant from the other world came to stay the night here, and he brought some news of your brother, for they both lived in the same sphere. But he said that the poor fellow had nothing but a pair of wings, so I gave him forty yards of cloth and ten rubles."

"Good gracious, mother, you have given away everything we had. And for what? Just because that man was artful enough to tell you a lot of lies. It really is most astonishing how confiding some people are! I think I will go into the wide world and tell a lot of lies, and see whether, after cheating everybody, I become a very rich man or not. If I succeed, I shall come home again, and then we can live happily together, and have food and money in plenty ever after."

Next day the son went off to try his luck. He went on and on until he came to an estate belonging to a rich Russian *barin* or gentleman. He walked up to the lordly mansion and saw, in a garden near the house, a large pig with a

number of little ones walking about. A thought struck him, and he went down on his knees before the pigs, and began making most polite bows to them.

Now the mistress of the house, who was looking out of one of the windows, saw the performance, and was greatly amused. "Go," she said to one of her maids, "and ask the mujik [peasant] what he is bowing for."

The maid went up to the peasant, saying, "Little mujik, tell me why you are on your knees before the pigs, and why you are bowing to them? My lady has sent me to ask."

"Tell your mistress, my little dear, that yonder pig is my wife's sister, and my son is going to be married tomorrow, so I am asking her and her young ones to come to the wedding. That is all. And she has consented, on condition that your lady allows them. So go and ask your mistress whether she will let them come with me."

The girl burst out laughing, and went straight to her mistress, who also began laughing heartily when she heard all the peasant had said. "What a donkey!" she cried. "Fancy asking the pigs to his son's wedding! Well, never mind. Let all his friends have a good laugh at him. Yes, he may take the pigs. But first dress them up in my *shuba* (fur coat), and let the coachman get my own little carriage and team ready, so that the pigs need not go to the wedding on foot."

When the carriage was ready, they dressed the pig up in the lady's fur coat, and placed it in the carriage with the young ones, and gave the reins to the peasant, who at once rode away homewards.

Now the master of the house, who was away shooting at the time, returned home a few minutes after the peasant had left. His wife ran out to meet him, laughing.

"I am so glad you have returned, my dear!" she said, "as I am longing to have someone to laugh with. Such a funny thing happened while you were away. A peasant came here and began kneeling and bowing before our pigs. He declared that one of them was his wife's sister, and he was asking her and the little ones to come to his son's wedding!"

"Yes," the husband replied. "and did you let her go?"

"Of course I did. I even had the pig dressed in my best *shuba*, and had her put in my own little carriage and team, and let the peasant drive it himself. I think it was nothing but right for me to do so. The peasant was so very polite to the pigs. What do you think, my dear?"

"What did I think? Well this: that the peasant was an ass, and you were another!"

And the good man, like the rest of his sex, thought it was a splendid opportunity for flying into a rage. He told his wife that she had been cheated, and then rushing out of the house, he flung himself upon his horse and galloped off after the peasant, who, when he heard that he was being pursued, conveyed the carriage and team into a dark forest hard by, and then going back, took off his

cap, seated himself near the entrance of the forest, put the cap beside him on the ground, and waited until the horseman came up to him.

“Hark you, little father!” cried the *barin*, “have you seen a peasant drive this way with a carriage and team and a number of pigs in it?”

“See him? I should rather think I did! He rode past a long time ago.”

“In which direction did he drive? How had I better go? Do you think I am likely to overtake him?”

“Yes, you could overtake him, I daresay. But the way he went by has many a turning, and you are sure to lose yourself. Is the road quite unknown to you?”

“Yes, little brother. I think, if you don’t mind, it would be better for you to go in search of him and bring him back to me, for you seem to know the way so well!”

“No, brother, I could not possibly, for I have a falcon under my cap here and must watch it.”

“I can do that for you.”

“No, you are sure to let him out, and the bird is very valuable. Besides, if I lost it my master would never forgive me.”

“But how much is it worth?”

“Three hundred rubles, I should think.”

“Very well then, if I lose the bird I will pay the money.”

“No, brother, if you really want me to go after the peasant, you had better give me the money now, for heaven knows what might happen afterwards. You might lose the bird, and then take your departure too, and I should never see either the falcon or the money!”

“Oh, you incredulous man! Here, take the three hundred rubles anyhow!”

The peasant took the money, and at the *barin*’s wish mounted his horse and rode off into the forest, leaving the *barin* to watch over the empty cap.

He waited and waited, but the peasant did not return, which he thought looked rather queer. The sun began to set. Still no peasant.

“Stop!” thought the *barin*. “Let me look and see whether there really is a falcon under that cap. If there is, then the peasant may possibly return. If not, well, then it is of no use waiting here and wasting my time.” He peeped under the cap, but no falcon was to be seen.

“Ah, the wretch!” he laughed. “I do believe that he was the very same man who cheated my wife out of her carriage and team, her *shuba*, and the pigs.”

He spat on the ground three times with vexation, and returned home to his wife penitent. Meanwhile our friend the peasant had long since got safely back to his mother with all his treasures. “Well, mother mine!” he cried, “this world of ours can certainly boast of some very good-natured fools. Just look, without any reason whatever, they gave me three horses, a carriage, three hundred rubles, and a pig with her little ones. Now we can live happily for some time at least, thanks to the stupidity of these people. It really is wonderful.

## THE SILVER PLATE AND THE TRANSPARENT APPLE

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Hodgetts, Edith M. S. *Tales and Legends from the Land of the Tzar: A Collection of Russian Stories*. New York: Charles E. Merrill and Company, 1892, 14–20.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Russia

**National Origin:** Russia

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In this unusual version of “The Singing Bone” (AT 780), a younger sibling suffers the usual fate of mistreatment and misjudgment. “Simpleton” is revealed as far from simple, though perhaps too forgiving by normal standards.

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There lived once a peasant with his wife and three daughters. Two of these girls were not particularly beautiful, while the third was sweetly pretty. However, as she happened to be a very good girl, as well as simple in her tastes, she was nicknamed Simpleton, and all who knew her called her by that name, though she was in reality far from being one.

Her sisters thought of nothing but dress and jewelry. The consequence was that they did not agree with their younger sister. They teased her, mimicked her, and made her do all the hard work. Yet Simpleton never said a word of complaint, but was ready to do anything. She fed the cows and the poultry. If anyone asked her to bring anything, she brought it in a moment. In fact, she was a most obliging young person.

One day the peasant had to go to a big fair to sell hay, so he asked his two eldest daughters what he should bring them.

“Bring me some red fustian to make myself a sarafan [coat without sleeves],” said the eldest.

“Buy me some yards of nankeen to make myself a dress,” said the second.

Simpleton meanwhile sat in a corner looking at her sisters with great eagerness. Though she was a simpleton, her father found it hard to go away without asking her what she would like him to bring her, so he asked her too.

“Bring me, dear father,” said she, “a silver plate and a transparent apple to roll about on it.”

The father was rather astonished, but he said nothing and left.

“Whatever made you ask for such rubbish?” asked her sisters laughing.

“You will see for yourselves when my father brings them,” said Simpleton, as she left the room.

The peasant, after having sold his hay, bought his daughters the things they had asked for, and drove home. The two elder girls were delighted with their

presents and laughed at Simpleton, waiting to see what she intended doing with the silver plate and transparent apple. Simpleton did not eat the apple, as they at first thought she would, but sat in a corner pronouncing these words, "Roll away, apple, roll away, on this silver plate. Show me different towns, fields, and woods, the seas, the heights of the hills, and the heavens in all their glory." Away rolled the apple, and on the plate became visible, towns, one after another. Ships were seen sailing on the seas. Green fields were seen. The heights of the hills were shown. The beauty of the heavens and the setting of the sun were all displayed most wonderfully.

The sisters looked on in amazement. They longed to have it for themselves and wondered how they could best get it from Simpleton, for she took such great care of it, and would take nothing in exchange.

At last one day the wicked sisters said coaxingly to Simpleton, "Come with us, dear, into the forest and help us pick strawberries."

Simpleton gave the plate and the apple to her father to take care of and joined her sisters. When they arrived at the forest they set to work picking wild strawberries. After some time the two elder sisters suddenly came upon a spade lying on the grass. They seized it, and while Simpleton was not looking they gave her a heavy blow with the spade. She turned ghastly pale, and fell dead on the ground.

They took her up quickly, buried her under a birch tree, and went home late to their parents, saying, "Simpleton has run away from us. We looked for her everywhere but cannot find her. She must have been eaten up by some wild beasts while we were not looking."

The father, who really had a little love for the girl, became very sad, and actually cried. He took the plate and apple and locked them both up carefully in a glass case. The sisters also cried very much and pretended to be very sorry, though the real reason was that they found out that they were not likely to have the transparent apple and plate after all, but would have to do all the hard work themselves.

One day a shepherd, who was minding a flock of sheep, happened to lose one, and went into the forest to look for it, when suddenly he came upon a hillock under a birch tree, round which grew a number of red and blue flowers, and among them a reed.

The young shepherd cut off the reed and made himself a pipe. But what was his astonishment when the moment he put the pipe to his mouth, it began to play by itself, saying, "Play, play, little pipe. Comfort my dear parents, and my sisters, who so cruelly misused me, killed me, and buried me for the sake of my silver plate and transparent apple."

The shepherd ran into the village greatly alarmed, and a crowd of people soon collected round him asking him what had happened. The shepherd again put the pipe to his mouth, and again the pipe began to play of itself.

"Who killed whom, and where, and how?" asked all the people together, crowding round.

“Good people,” answered the shepherd, “I know no more than you do. All I know is that I lost one of my sheep and went in search of it, when I suddenly came upon a hillock under a birch tree with flowers round it, and among them was a reed, which I cut off and made into a pipe, and the moment I put the thing into my mouth it began to play of itself, and pronounce the words which you have just heard.”

It so happened that Simpleton’s father and sisters were among the crowd and heard what the shepherd said.

“Let me try your pipe,” said the father, taking it and putting it into his mouth.

And immediately it began to repeat the words, “Play, play, little pipe. Comfort my dear parents, and my sisters, who misused, killed, and buried me for the sake of the silver plate and transparent apple.”

The peasant made the shepherd take him to the hillock at once. When they got to it they began to dig open the hillock, where they found the dead body of the unfortunate girl. The father fell on his knees before it and tried to bring her back to life, but all in vain.

The people again began asking who it was that killed and buried her, whereupon the pipe replied, “My sisters took me into the forest and slew me for the silver plate and transparent apple. If you want to wake me from this sound slumber, you must bring me the water of life from the royal fountain.”

The two miserable sisters turned pale and wanted to run away, whereupon the people seized them, tied them together, and marched them off to a dark cell, where they locked them up until the king should pronounce judgment on them.

The peasant went to the palace and was brought before the king’s son, and falling upon his knees before the prince, he related the whole story. Whereupon the king’s son told him to take as much of the water of life from the royal fountain as he pleased. “When your daughter is well, bring her to me,” continued the prince, “and also her evil-minded sisters.”

The peasant was delighted. He thanked the young prince and ran to the forest with the water of life. After he had sprinkled the body several times with the water, his daughter woke up and stood before him, prettier than ever. They embraced each other tenderly, while the people rejoiced and congratulated the happy man.

Next morning the peasant went with his three daughters to the palace and was brought before the king’s son.

The young prince, when he beheld Simpleton, was greatly struck with her beauty and asked her at once to show him the silver plate and transparent apple.

“What would your highness like to see?” asked the girl, bringing forward her treasures. “Would you like to know whether your kingdom is in good order, or if your ships are sailing, or whether there is any curious comet in the heavens?”

“Anything you like, sweet maiden.”

Away rolled the apple round about the plate, on which became visible soldiers of different arms, with muskets and flags, drawn up in battle array. The

apple rolled on, and waves rose, and ships were seen sailing about like swans, while flags waved in the air. On rolled the apple, and on the plate the glory of the heavens was displayed. The sun, moon, and stars, and various comets were seen.

The king's son was greatly astonished and offered to buy the plate and apple, but Simpleton fell on her knees before him, exclaiming, "Take my silver plate and my apple. I want no money and no gifts for them, if you will only promise to forgive my sisters."

The young prince was so moved by her pretty face and her tears that he at once forgave the two wicked girls. Simpleton was so overjoyed that she threw her arms round their necks and tenderly embraced them.

The king's son took Simpleton by the hand and said, "Sweet maiden, I am so struck by the great kindness you have shown your sisters after their cruel treatment of you, that I have decided (provided you agree to it) to have you for my wife, and you shall be known henceforth as the Benevolent Queen."

"Your highness does me great honor," said Simpleton, blushing. "But it lies in my parents' hand. If they do not object, I will marry you."

It is needless to say that neither parent objected, but gave their consent and blessing.

"I have one more request to ask your highness," said Simpleton, "and that is to let my parents and sisters live with us in the palace."

The young prince made no objection whatever to this proposal (though most probably he felt sorry for it afterwards; however, the story does not say anything about that). The sisters threw themselves at Simpleton's feet, exclaiming that they did not deserve such kindness after all that they had said and done to her.

Next day the marriage was celebrated, and crowds of people ran about everywhere crying out, "Long live our king and queen!"

From that day Simpleton was no more, but the Benevolent Queen reigned in her stead.

## IVANOUSHKA THE SIMPLETON

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** De Blumentahal, Verra Xenophontovna Kalamatiano. *Folktales from the Russian*. Great Neck, NY: Core Collection Books, Inc., 1903, 77–106.

**Date:** Unavailable

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The following tale exemplifies structural pattern of threes common to the **ordinary folktale** (or **märchen**): three brothers and tasks in multiples of three, for example. Also typical is the fact that the youngest,



least-promising brother triumphs in the end. The plot of the narrative is patterned on “The Princess on the Glass Mountain” (AT 530) and, as a concluding episode, “The Pig with the Golden Bristles” (AT 530A).

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In a kingdom far away from our country, there was a town over which ruled the Tsar Pea with his Tsaritzza Carrot. He had many wise statesmen, wealthy princes, strong, powerful warriors, and also simple soldiers, a hundred thousand, less one man. In that town lived all kinds of people: honest, bearded merchants, keen and open-handed rascals, German tradesmen, lovely maidens, Russian drunkards; and in the suburbs all around, the peasants tilled the soil, sowed the wheat, ground the flour, traded in the markets, and spent the money in drink.

In one of the suburbs there was a poor hut where an old man lived with his three sons, Thomas, Pakhom, and Ivan. The old man was not only clever, he was wise. He had happened once to have a chat with the devil. They talked together while the old man treated him to a tumbler of wine and got out of the devil many great secrets. Soon after this the peasant began to perform such marvelous acts that the neighbors called him a sorcerer, a magician, and even supposed that the devil was his kin.

Yes, it is true that the old man performed great marvels. Were you longing for love, go to him, bow to the old man, and he would give you some strange root, and the sweetheart would be yours. If there is a theft, again to him with the tale. The old man conjures over some water, takes an officer along straight to the thief, and your lost is found; only take care that the officer steals it not.

Indeed the old man was very wise; but his children were not his equals. Two of them were almost as clever. They were married and had children, but Ivan, the youngest, was single. No one cared much for him because he was rather a fool, could not count one, two, three, and only drank, or ate, or slept, or lay around. Why care for such a person? Every one knows life for some is brighter than for others. But Ivan was good-hearted and quiet. Ask of him a belt, he will give a kaftan also; take his mittens, he certainly would want to have you take his cap with them. And that is why all liked Ivan, and usually called him Ivanoushka the Simpleton; though the name means fool, at the same time it carries the idea of a kind heart.

Our old man lived on with his sons until finally his hour came to die. He called his three sons and said to them, “Dear children of mine, my dying hour is at hand and ye must fulfill my will. Every one of you come to my grave and spend one night with me; thou, Tom, the first night; thou, Pakhom, the second night; and thou, Ivanoushka the Simpleton, the third.” Two of the brothers, as clever people, promised their father to do according to his bidding, but the Simpleton did not even promise; he only scratched his head.

The old man died and was buried. During the celebration the family and guests had plenty of pancakes to eat and plenty of whisky to wash them down. Now you remember that on the first night Thomas was to go to the grave; but he was too lazy, or possibly afraid, so he said to the Simpleton, "I must be up very early tomorrow morning; I have to thresh; go thou for me to our father's grave."

"All right," answered Ivanoushka the Simpleton. He took a slice of black rye bread, went to the grave, stretched himself out, and soon began to snore.

The church clock struck midnight; the wind roared, the owl cried in the trees, the grave opened and the old man came out and asked, "Who is there?"

"I," answered Ivanoushka.

"Well, my dear son, I will reward thee for thine obedience," said the father.

Lo! The cocks crowed and the old man dropped into the grave. The Simpleton arrived home and went to the warm stove.

"What happened?" asked the brothers.

"Nothing," he answered. "I slept the whole night and am hungry now."

The second night it was Pakhom's turn to go to his father's grave. He thought it over and said to the Simpleton, "Tomorrow is a busy day with me. Go in my place to our father's grave."

"All right," answered Ivanoushka. He took along with him a piece of fish pie, went to the grave and slept. Midnight approached, the wind roared, crows came flying, the grave opened and the old man came out.

"Who is there?" he asked.

"I," answered his son the Simpleton.

"Well, my beloved son, I will not forget thine obedience," said the old man.

The cocks crowed and the old man dropped into his grave. Ivanoushka the Simpleton came home, went to sleep on the warm stove, and in the morning his brothers asked, "What happened?"

"Nothing," answered Ivanoushka.

On the third night the brothers said to Ivan the Simpleton, "It is thy turn to go to the grave of our father. The father's will should be done."

"All right," answered Ivanoushka. He took some cookies, put on his sheepskin, and arrived at the grave.

At midnight his father came out. "Who is there?" he asked.

"I," answered Ivanoushka. "Well," said the old father, "my obedient son, thou shalt be rewarded"; and the old man shouted with a mighty voice:

"Arise, bay horse—thou wind-swift steed, Appear before me in my need; Stand tip as in the storm the weed!"

And lo!—Ivanoushka the Simpleton beheld a horse running, the earth trembling under his hoofs, his eyes like stars, and out of his mouth and ears smoke coming in a cloud. The horse approached and stood before the old man.

"What is thy wish?" he asked with a man's voice.

The old man crawled into his left ear, washed and adorned himself, and jumped out of his right ear as a young, brave fellow never seen before.

“Now listen attentively,” he said. “To thee, my son, I give this horse. And thou, my faithful horse and friend, serve my son as thou hast served me.”

Hardly had the old man pronounced these words when the first cock crew and the sorcerer dropped into his grave. Our Simpleton went quietly back home, stretched himself under the icons, and his snoring was heard far around.

“What happened?” the brothers again asked.

But the Simpleton did not even answer; he only waved his hand.

The three brothers continued to live their usual life, the two with cleverness and the younger with foolishness. They lived a day in and an equal day out. But one morning there came quite a different day from all others. They learned that big men were going all over the country with trumpets and players; that those men announced everywhere the will of the Tsar, and the Tsar’s will was this: The Tsar Pea and the Tsaritzza Carrot had an only daughter, the Tsarevna [Princess] Baktriana, heiress to the throne. She was such a beautiful maiden that the sun blushed when she looked at it, and the moon, altogether too bashful, covered itself from her eyes. Tsar and Tsaritzza had a hard time to decide to whom they should give their daughter for a wife. It must be a man who could be a proper ruler over the country, a brave warrior on the battlefield, a wise judge in the council, an adviser to the Tsar, and a suitable heir after his death. They also wanted a bridegroom who was young, brave, and handsome, and they wanted him to be in love with their Tsarevna. That would have been easy enough, but the trouble was that the beautiful Tsarevna loved no one. Sometimes the Tsar mentioned to her this or that one. Always the same answer, “I do not love him.” The Tsaritzza tried, too, with no better result; “I do not like him.”

A day came when the Tsar Pea and his Tsaritzza Carrot seriously addressed their daughter on the subject of marriage and said, “Our beloved child, our very beautiful Tsarevna Baktriana, it is time for thee to choose a bridegroom. Envoys of all descriptions, from kings and tzars and princes, have worn our threshold, drunk dry all the cellars, and thou hast not yet found any one according to thy heart’s wish.”

The Tsarevna answered, “Sovereign, and thou, Tsaritzza, my dear mother, I feel sorry for you, and my wish is to obey your desire. So let fate decide who is destined to become my husband. I ask you to build a hall, a high hall with thirty-two circles, and above those circles a window. I will sit at that window and do you order all kinds of people, tsars, kings, tsarovitchi, korolevitchi, brave warriors, and handsome fellows, to come. The one who will jump through the thirty-two circles, reach my window and exchange with me golden rings, he it will be who is destined to become my husband, son and heir to you.”

The Tsar and Tsaritzza listened attentively to the words of their bright Tsarevna, and finally they said, “According to thy wish shall it be done.”

In no time the hall was ready, a very high hall adorned with Venetian velvets, with pearls for tassels, with golden designs, and thirty-two circles on both

sides of the window high above. Envoys went to the different kings and sovereigns, pigeons flew with orders to the subjects to gather the proud and the humble into the town of the Tsar Pea and his Tsaritzza Carrot. It was announced everywhere that the one who could jump through the circles, reach the window and exchange golden rings with the Tsarevna Baktriana, that man would be the lucky one, notwithstanding his rank—tsar or free Cossack, king or warrior, tsarevitch, koro-levitch, or fellow without any kinfolk or country.

The great day arrived. Crowds pressed to the field where stood the newly built hall, brilliant as a star. Up high at the window the tsarevna was sitting, adorned with precious stones, clad in velvet and pearls. The people below were roaring like an ocean. The Tzar with his Tzaritzza was sitting upon a throne. Around them were boyars, warriors, and counselors. The suitors on horseback, proud, handsome, and brave, whistle and ride round about, but looking at the high window their hearts drop. There were already several fellows who had tried. Each would take a long start, balance himself, spring, and fall back like a stone, a laughing stock for the witnesses.

The brothers of Ivanoushka the Simpleton were preparing themselves to go to the field also.

The Simpleton said to them, "Take me along with you."

"Thou fool," laughed the brothers; "stay at home and watch the chickens."

"All right," he answered, went to the chicken yard and lay down. But as soon as the brothers were away, our Ivanoushka the Simpleton walked to the wide fields and shouted with a mighty voice, "Arise, bay horse—they wind-swift steed, Appear before me in my need; Stand up as in the storm the weed!"

The glorious horse came running. Flames shone out of his eyes; out of his nostrils smoke came in clouds, and the horse asked with a man's voice, "What is thy wish?"

Ivanoushka the Simpleton crawled into the horse's left ear, transformed himself and reappeared at the right ear, such a handsome fellow that in no book is there written any description of him; no one has ever seen such a fellow. He jumped onto the horse and touched his iron sides with a silk whip. The horse became impatient, lifted himself above the ground, higher and higher above the dark woods below the traveling clouds. He swam over the large rivers, jumped over the small ones, as well as over hills and mountains. Ivanoushka the Simpleton arrived at the hall of the Tsarevna Baktriana, flew up like a hawk, passed through thirty circles, could not reach the last two, and went away like a whirlwind.

The people were shouting, "Take hold of him! Take hold of him!" The Tsar jumped to his feet, the Tsaritzza screamed. Every one was roaring in amazement.

The brothers of Ivanoushka came home and there was but one subject of conversation—what a splendid fellow they had seen! What a wonderful start to pass through the thirty circles! "Brothers, that fellow was I," said Ivanoushka the Simpleton, who had long since arrived.

“Keep still and do not fool us,” answered the brothers.

The next day the two brothers were going again to the tsarski show and Ivanoushka the Simpleton said again, “Take me along with you.”

“For thee, fool, this is thy place. Be quiet at home and scare sparrows from the pea field instead of the scarecrow.”

“All right,” answered the Simpleton, and he went to the field and began to scare the sparrows. But as soon as the brothers left home, Ivanoushka started to the wide field and shouted out loud with a mighty voice, “Arise, bay horse—thou wind-swift steed, Appear before me in my need; Stand up as in the storm the weed!”

And here came the horse, the earth trembling under his hoofs, the sparks flying around, his eyes like flames, and out of his nostrils smoke curling up. “For what dost thou wish me?” Ivanoushka the Simpleton crawled into the left ear of the horse, and when he appeared out of the right ear, oh, my! what a fellow he was! Even in fairy tales there are never such handsome fellows, to say nothing of everyday life.

Ivanoushka lifted himself on the iron back of his horse and touched him with a strong whip. The noble horse grew angry, made a jump, and went higher than the dark woods, a little below the traveling clouds. One jump, one mile is behind; a second jump, a river is behind; and a third jump and they were at the hall. Then the horse, with Ivanoushka on his back, flew like an eagle, high up into the air, passed the thirty-first circle, failed to reach the last one, and swept away like the wind.

The people shouted, “Take hold of him! Take hold of him!” The Tsar jumped to his feet, the Tsaritzta screamed, the princes and boyars opened their mouths.

The brothers of Ivanoushka the Simpleton came home. They were wondering at the fellow. Yes, an amazing fellow indeed! One circle only was unreached.

“Brothers, that fellow over there was I,” said Ivanoushka to them.

“Keep still in thy own place, thou fool,” was their sneering answer.

The third day the brothers were going again to the strange entertainment of the Tsar, and again Ivanoushka the Simpleton said to them, “Take me along with you.”

“Fool,” they laughed, “there is food to be given to the hogs; better go to them.”

“All right,” the younger brother answered, and quietly went to the back yard and gave food to the hogs. But as soon as his brothers had left home our Ivanoushka the Simpleton hurried to the wide field and shouted out loud, “Arise, bay horse—thou wind-swift steed, Appear before me in my need; Stand up as in the storm the weed!”

At once the horse came running, the earth trembled; where he stepped there appeared ponds, where his hoofs touched there were lakes, out of his eyes shone flames, out of his ears smoke came like a cloud.

“For what dost thou wish me?” the horse asked with a man’s voice.

Ivanoushka the Simpleton crawled into his right ear and jumped out of his left one, and a handsome fellow he was. A young girl could not even imagine such a one. Ivanoushka struck his horse, pulled the bridle tight, and lo! he flew high up in the air. The wind was left behind and even the swallow, the sweet, winged passenger, must not aspire to do the same. Our hero flew like a cloud high up into the sky, his silver-chained mail rattling, his fair curls floating in the wind. He arrived at the Tsarevna’s high hall, struck his horse once more, and oh! how the wild horse did jump!

Look there! The fellow reaches all the circles; he is near the window; he presses the beautiful Tsarevna with his strong arms, kisses her on the sugar lips, exchanges golden rings, and like a storm sweeps through the fields. There, there, he is crushing every one on his way! And the Tsarevna? Well, she did not object. She even adorned his forehead with a diamond star.

The people roared, “Take hold of him!” But the fellow had already disappeared and no traces were left behind.

The Tsar Pea lost his royal dignity. The Tsaritzza Carrot screamed louder than ever and the wise counselors only shook their wise heads and remained silent.

The brothers came home talking and discussing the wonderful matter.

“Indeed,” they shook their heads; “only think of it! The fellow succeeded and our Tsarevna has a bridegroom. But who is he? Where is he?”

“Brothers, the fellow is I,” said Ivanoushka the Simpleton, smiling.

“Keep still, I and I—,” and the brothers almost slapped him.

The matter proved to be quite serious this time, and the Tsar and Tsaritzza issued an order to surround the town with armed men whose duty it was to let every one enter, but not a soul go out. Every one had to appear at the royal palace and show his forehead. From early in the morning the crowds were gathering around the palace. Each forehead was inspected, but there was no star on any. Dinner time was approaching and in the palace they even forgot to cover the oak tables with white spreads. The brothers of Ivanoushka had also to show their foreheads and the Simpleton said to them, “Take me along with you.”

“Thy place is right here,” they answered, jokingly. “But say, what is the matter with thy head that thou hast covered it with cloths? Did somebody strike thee?”

“No, nobody struck me. I, myself, struck the door with my forehead. The door remained all right, but on my forehead there is a knob.”

The brothers laughed and went. Soon after them Ivanoushka left home and went straight to the window of the Tsarevna, where she sat leaning on the window sill and looking for her betrothed.

“There is our man,” shouted the guards, when the Simpleton appeared among them.

“Show thy forehead. Hast thou the star?” and they laughed.

Ivanoushka the Simpleton gave no heed to their bidding, but refused. The guards were shouting at him and the Tsarevna heard the noise and ordered the fellow to her presence. There was nothing to be done but to take off the cloths.

Behold! the star was shining in the middle of his forehead. The Tsarevna took Ivanoushka by the hand, brought him before Tsar Pea, and said, "He it is, my Tsar and father, who is destined to become my groom, thy son-in-law and heir."

It was too late to object. The Tsar ordered preparations for the bridal festivities, and our Ivanoushka the Simpleton was wedded to the Tsarevna Baktriana. The Tsar, the Tsaritzza, the young bride and groom, and their guests, feasted three days. There was fine eating and generous drinking. There were all kinds of amusements also. The brothers of Ivanoushka were created governors and each one received a village and a house.

The story is told in no time, but to live a life requires time and patience. The brothers of Ivanoushka the Simpleton were clever men, we know, and as soon as they became rich every one understood it at once, and they themselves became quite sure about it and began to pride themselves, to boast, and to brag. The humble ones did not dare look toward their homes, and even the boyars had to take off their fur caps on their porches.

Once several boyars [nobles] came to Tsar Pea and said, "Great Tsar, the brothers of thy son-in-law are bragging around that they know the place where grows an apple tree with silver leaves and golden apples, and they want to bring this apple tree to thee."

The Tsar immediately called the brothers before him and bade them bring at once the wonderful tree, the apple tree with silver leaves and golden apples. The brothers had ever so many excuses, but the Tsar would have his way. They were given fine horses out of the royal stables and went on their errand. Our friend, Ivanoushka the Simpleton, found somewhere a lame old horse, jumped on his back facing the tail, and also went. He went to the wide field, grasped the lame horse by the tail, threw him off roughly, and shouted, "You crows and magpies, come, come! There is lunch prepared for you."

This done he ordered his horse, his spirited courser, to appear, and as usual he crawled into one ear, jumped out the other ear and they went—where? Toward the east where grew the wonderful apple tree with silver leaves and golden apples. It grew near silver waters upon golden sand. When Ivanoushka reached the place he uprooted the tree and turned toward home. His ride was long and he felt tired. Before he arrived at his town Ivanoushka pitched his tent and lay down for a rest. Along the same road came his brothers. The two were proud no more, but rather depressed, not knowing what answer to give the Tsar. They perceived the tent with silver top and near by the wonderful apple tree. They came nearer and—"There is our Simpleton!" exclaimed the brothers. Then they awakened Ivanoushka and wanted to buy the apple tree. They were rich and offered three carts filled with silver.

“Well, brothers, this tree, this wonderful apple tree, is not for sale,” answered Ivanoushka, “but if you wish to obtain it you may. The price will not be too high, a toe from each right foot.”

The brothers thought the matter over and finally decided to give the desired price. Ivanoushka cut the toes off, gave them the apple tree, and the happy brothers brought it to the Tsar and there was no end to their bragging.

“Here, all-powerful Tsar,” they said. “We went far, and had many a trouble on our way, but thy wish is fulfilled.”

The Tsar Pea seemed pleased, ordered a feast, commanded tunes to be played and drums beaten, rewarded the two brothers of Ivanoushka the Simpleton, each one with a town, and praised them.

The boyars and warriors became furious.

“Why,” they said to the Tsar, “there is nothing wonderful in such an apple tree with golden apples and silver leaves. The brothers of thy son-in-law are bragging around that they will get thee a pig with golden bristles and silver tusks, and not alone the pig, but also her twelve little ones!”

The Tsar called the brothers before him and ordered them to bring the very pig with her golden bristles and silver tusks and her twelve little ones. The brothers’ excuses were not listened to and so they went. Once more the brothers were traveling on a difficult errand, looking for a golden-bristled pig with silver tusks and twelve little pigs.

At that time Ivanoushka the Simpleton made up his mind to take a trip somewhere. He put a saddle on a cow, jumped up on her back facing the tail, and left the town. He came to a field, grasped the cow by the horns, threw her far on the prairie and shouted, “Come, come, you gray wolves and red foxes! There is a dinner for you!”

Then he ordered his faithful horse, crawled into one ear, and jumped out of the other. Master and courser went on an errand, this time toward the south. One, two, three, and they were in dark woods. In these woods the wished-for pig was walking around, a golden-bristled pig with silver tusks. She was eating roots, and after her followed twelve little pigs.

Ivanoushka the Simpleton threw over the pig a silk rope with a running noose, gathered the little pigs into a basket and went home, but before he reached the town of the Tsar Pea he pitched a tent with a golden top and lay down for a rest. On the same road the brothers came along with gloomy faces, not knowing what to say to the Tsar. They saw the tent, and near by the very pig they were searching for, with golden bristles and silver tusks, was fastened with a silk rope; and in a basket were the twelve little pigs. The brothers looked into the tent. Ivanoushka again! They awakened him and wanted to trade for the pig; they were ready to give in exchange three carts loaded with precious stones.

“Brothers, my pig is not for trade,” said Ivanoushka, “but if you want her so much, well, one finger from each right hand will pay for her.”



The brothers thought over the case for a long while; they reasoned thus, “People live happily without brains, why not without fingers?”

So they allowed Ivanoushka to cut off their fingers, then took the pig to the Tsar, and their bragging had no end.

“Tsar Sovereign,” they said, “we went everywhere, beyond the blue sea, beyond the dark woods; we passed through deep sands, we suffered hunger and thirst; but thy wish is accomplished.”

The Tsar was glad to have such faithful servants. He gave a feast great among feasts, rewarded the brothers of Ivanoushka the Simpleton, created them big boyars and praised them.

The other boyars and different court people said to the Tsar, “There is nothing wonderful in such a pig. Golden bristles, silver tusks, yes, it is fine. But a pig remains a pig forever. The brothers of thy son-in-law are bragging now that they will steal for thee out of the stables of the fiery dragon a mare with golden mane and diamond hoofs.”

The Tsar at once called the brothers of Ivanoushka the Simpleton, and ordered the golden-maned mare with the diamond hoofs. The brothers swore that they never said such words, but the Tsar did not listen to their protests.

“Take as much gold as you want, take warriors as many as you wish, but bring me the beautiful mare with golden mane and diamond hoofs. If you do it my reward will be great; if not, your fate is to become peasants as before.”

The brothers went, two sad heroes. Their march was slow; where to go they did not know. Ivanoushka also jumped upon a stick and went leaping toward the field. Once in the wide, open field, he ordered his horse, crawled into one ear, came out of the other, and both started for a far-away country, for an island, a big island. On that island in an iron stable the fiery dragon was watchfully guarding his glory—the golden-maned mare with diamond hoofs, which was locked under seven locks behind seven heavy doors.

Our Ivanoushka journeyed and journeyed, how long we do not know, until at last he arrived at that island, struggled three days with the dragon and killed him on the fourth day. Then he began to tear down the locks. That took three days more. When he had done this he brought out the wonderful mare by the golden mane and turned homeward.

The road was long, and before he reached his town Ivanoushka, according to his habit, pitched his tent with a diamond top, and laid him down for rest. The brothers came along—gloomy they were, fearing the Tsar’s anger. Lo! they heard neighing; the earth trembled—it was the golden-maned mare! Though in the dusk of evening the brothers saw her golden mane shining like fire. They stopped, awakened Ivanoushka the Simpleton, and wanted to trade for the wonderful mare. They were willing to give him a bushel of precious stones each and promised even more.

Ivanoushka said, “Though my mare is not for trade, yet if you want her I’ll give her to you. And you, do you each give me your right ears.”

The brothers did not even argue, but let Ivanoushka cut off their ears, took hold of the bridle and went directly to the Tsar. They presented to him the golden-maned mare with diamond hoofs, and there was no end of bragging.

“We went beyond seas, beyond mountains,” the brothers said to the Tsar; “we fought the fiery dragon who bit off our ears and fingers; we had no fear, but one desire to serve thee faithfully; we shed our blood and lost our wealth.”

The Tsar Pea poured gold over them, created them the very highest men after himself, and planned such a feast that the royal cooks were tired out with cooking to feed all the people, and the cellars were fairly emptied.

The Tsar Pea was sitting on his throne, one brother on his right hand, the other brother on his left hand. The feast was going on; all seemed jolly, all were drinking, all were noisy as bees in a beehive. In the midst of it a young, brave fellow, Ivanoushka the Simpleton, entered the hall—the very fellow who had passed the thirty-two circles and reached the window of the beautiful Tsarevna Baktriana.

When the brothers noticed him, one almost choked himself with wine, the other was suffocating over a piece of swan. They looked at him, opened wide their eyes, and remained silent.

Ivanoushka the Simpleton bowed to his father-in-law and told the story as the story was. He told about the apple tree, the wonderful apple tree with silver leaves and golden apples; he told about the pig, the golden-bristled pig with silver tusks and her twelve little ones; and finally he told about the marvelous mare with a golden mane and diamond hoofs. He finished and laid out ears, fingers, and toes.

“It is the exchange I got,” said Ivanoushka.

Tsar Pea became furious, stamped his feet, ordered the two brothers to be driven away with brooms. One was sent to feed the pigs, another to watch the turkeys. The Tsar seated Ivanoushka beside himself, creating him the highest among the very high.

The feast lasted a very long time until all were tired of feasting.

Ivanoushka took control of the tsarstvo, ruling wisely and severely. After his father-in-law’s death he occupied his place. His subjects liked him; he had many children, and his beautiful Tsaritzka Baktriana remained beautiful forever.

## **TSAREVNA FROG**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** De Blumentahal, Verra Xenophontovna Kalamatiano. *Folktales from the Russian*. Great Neck, NY: Core Collection Books, Inc., 1903, 13–26.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Russia

**National Origin:** Russia

The following narrative combines the familiar theme of the bride trapped in a nonhuman form with the abducted princess and the external life token. Certain elements, such as a shape-shifter donning the skin of an animal to achieve transformation, are cross-culturally distributed. Others, however, such as the hut on chickens' feet as the habitation for Russian witches, are unique to the traditions of this region.

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In an old, old Russian tsarstvo [the domain of a tsar], I do not know when, there lived a sovereign prince with the princess his wife. They had three sons, all of them young, and such brave fellows that no pen could describe them. The youngest had the name of Ivan Tsarevitch [Prince Ivan]. One day their father said to his sons, "My dear boys, take each of you an arrow, draw your strong bow and let your arrow fly; in whatever court it falls, in that court there will be a wife for you."

The arrow of the oldest Tsarevitch fell on a boyar-house [house of a noble] just in front of the terem where women live; the arrow of the second Tsarevitch flew to the red porch of a rich merchant, and on the porch there stood a sweet girl, the merchant's daughter. The youngest, the brave Tsarevitch Ivan, had the ill luck to send his arrow into the midst of a swamp, where it was caught by a croaking frog.

Ivan Tsarevitch came to his father, "How can I marry the frog?" complained the son. "Is she my equal? Certainly she is not."

"Never mind," replied his father, "you have to marry the frog, for such is evidently your destiny."

Thus the brothers were married: the oldest to a young boyarishnia, a nobleman's child; the second to the merchant's beautiful daughter, and the youngest, Tsarevitch Ivan, to a croaking frog.

After a while the sovereign prince called his three sons and said to them, "Have each of your wives bake a loaf of bread by tomorrow morning."

Ivan returned home. There was no smile on his face, and his brow was clouded.

"C-R-O-A-K! C-R-O-A-K! Dear husband of mine, Tsarevitch Ivan, why so sad?" gently asked the frog. "Was there anything disagreeable in the palace?"

"Disagreeable indeed," answered Ivan Tsarevitch; "the Tsar, my father, wants you to bake a loaf of white bread by tomorrow."

"Do not worry, Tsarevitch. Go to bed; the morning hour is a better adviser than the dark evening."

The Tsarevitch, taking his wife's advice, went to sleep. Then the frog threw off her frogskin and turned into a beautiful, sweet girl, Vassilissa by name. She now stepped out on the porch and called aloud, "Nurses and waitresses, come to me at once and prepare a loaf of white bread for tomorrow morning, a loaf exactly like those I used to eat in my royal father's palace."

In the morning Tsarevitch Ivan awoke with the crowing cocks, and you know the cocks and chickens are never late. Yet the loaf was already made, and so fine it was that nobody could even describe it, for only in fairyland one finds such marvelous loaves. It was adorned all about with pretty figures, with towns and fortresses on each side, and within it was white as snow and light as a feather.

The Tsar father was pleased and the Tsarevitch received his special thanks.

“Now there is another task,” said the Tsar smilingly. “Have each of your wives weave a rug by tomorrow.”

Tsarevitch Ivan came back to his home. There was no smile on his face and his brow was clouded.

“C-R-O-A-K! C-R-O-A-K! Dear Tsarevitch Ivan, my husband and master, why so troubled again? Was not father pleased?”

“How can I be otherwise? The Tsar, my father, has ordered a rug by tomorrow.”

“Do not worry, Tsarevitch. Go to bed; go to sleep. The morning hour will bring help.” Again the frog turned into Vassilissa, the wise maiden, and again she called aloud. “Dear nurses and faithful waitresses, come to me for new work. Weave a silk rug like the one I used to sit upon in the palace of the king, my father.”

Once said, quickly done. When the cocks began their early “cock-a-doodle-doo,” Tsarevitch Ivan awoke, and lo! there lay the most beautiful silk rug before him, a rug that no one could begin to describe. Threads of silver and gold were interwoven among bright-colored silken ones, and the rug was too beautiful for anything but to admire.

The Tsar father was pleased, thanked his son Ivan, and issued a new order. He now wished to see the three wives of his handsome sons, and they were to present their brides on the next day.

The Tsarevitch Ivan returned home. Cloudy was his brow, more cloudy than before.

“C-R-O-A-K! C-R-O-A-K! Tsarevitch, my dear husband and master, why so sad? Hast thou heard anything unpleasant at the palace?”

“Unpleasant enough, indeed! My father, the Tsar, ordered all of us to present our wives to him. Now tell me, how could I dare go with thee?”

“It is not so bad after all, and might be much worse,” answered the frog, gently croaking. “Thou shalt go alone and I will follow thee. When thou hearest a noise, a great noise, do not be afraid; simply say, ‘There is my miserable froggy coming in her miserable box.’”

The two elder brothers arrived first with their wives, beautiful, bright, and cheerful, and dressed in rich garments. Both the happy bridegrooms made fun of the Tsarevitch Ivan.

“Why alone, brother?” they laughingly said to him. “Why didst thou not bring thy wife along with thee? Was there no rag to cover her? Where couldst thou have gotten such a beauty? We are ready to wager that in all the swamps

in the dominion of our father it would be hard to find another one like her.” And they laughed and laughed.

Lo! What a noise! The palace trembled, the guests were all frightened.

Tsarevitch Ivan alone remained quiet and said, “No danger; it is my froggy coming in her box.”

To the red porch came flying a golden carriage drawn by six splendid white horses, and Vassilissa, beautiful beyond all description, gently reached her hand to her husband. He led her with him to the heavy oak tables, which were covered with snow-white linen and loaded with many wonderful dishes such as are known and eaten only in the land of fairies and never anywhere else. The guests were eating and chatting gaily.

Vassilissa drank some wine, and what was left in the tumbler she poured into her left sleeve. She ate some of the fried swan, and the bones she threw into her right sleeve. The wives of the two elder brothers watched her and did exactly the same.

When the long, hearty dinner was over, the guests began dancing and singing. The beautiful Vassilissa came forward, as bright as a star, bowed to her sovereign, bowed to the honorable guests and danced with her husband, the happy Tsarevitch Ivan.

While dancing, Vassilissa waved her left sleeve and a pretty lake appeared in the midst of the hall and cooled the air. She waved her right sleeve and white swans swam on the water. The Tsar, the guests, the servants, even the gray cat sitting in the corner, all were amazed and wondered at the beautiful Vassilissa. Her two sisters-in-law alone envied her. When their turn came to dance, they also waved their left sleeves as Vassilissa had done, and, oh, wonder! they sprinkled wine all around. They waved their right sleeves, and instead of swans the bones flew in the face of the Tsar father. The Tsar grew very angry and bade them leave the palace. In the meantime Ivan Tsarevitch watched a moment to slip away unseen. He ran home, found the frogskin, and burned it in the fire.

Vassilissa, when she came back, searched for the skin, and when she could not find it her beautiful face grew sad and her bright eyes filled with tears.

She said to Tsarevitch Ivan, her husband, “Oh, dear Tsarevitch, what hast thou done? There was but a short time left for me to wear the ugly frogskin. The moment was near when we could have been happy together forever. Now I must bid thee good-bye. Look for me in a far-away country to which no one knows the roads, at the palace of Kostshei the Deathless”; and Vassilissa turned into a white swan and flew away through the window.

Tsarevitch Ivan wept bitterly. Then he prayed to the almighty God, and making the sign of the cross northward, southward, eastward, and westward, he went on a mysterious journey. No one knows how long his journey was, but one day he met an old, old man. He bowed to the old man, who said, “Good-day, brave fellow. What art thou searching for, and whither art thou going?”

Tsarevitch Ivan answered sincerely, telling all about his misfortune without hiding anything.

“And why didst thou burn the frogskin? It was wrong to do so. Listen now to me. Vassilissa was born wiser than her own father, and as he envied his daughter’s wisdom he condemned her to be a frog for three long years. But I pity thee and want to help thee. Here is a magic ball. In whatever direction this ball rolls, follow without fear.”

Ivan Tsarevitch thanked the good old man, and followed his new guide, the ball. Long, very long, was his road. One day in a wide, flowery field he met a bear, a big Russian bear. Ivan Tsarevitch took his bow and was ready to shoot the bear.

“Do not kill me, kind Tsarevitch,” said the bear. “Who knows but that I may be useful to thee?” And Ivan did not shoot the bear.

Above in the sunny air there flew a duck, a lovely white duck. Again the Tsarevitch drew his bow to shoot it. But the duck said to him, “Do not kill me, good Tsarevitch. I certainly shall be useful to thee some day.”

And this time he obeyed the command of the duck and passed by. Continuing his way he saw a blinking hare. The Tsarevitch prepared an arrow to shoot it, but the gray, blinking hare said, “Do not kill me, brave Tsarevitch. I shall prove myself grateful to thee in a very short time.”

The Tsarevitch did not shoot the hare, but passed by. He walked farther and farther after the rolling ball, and came to the deep blue sea. On the sand there lay a fish. I do not remember the name of the fish, but it was a big fish, almost dying on the dry sand.

“O Tsarevitch Ivan!” prayed the fish, “have mercy upon me and push me back into the cool sea.”

The Tsarevitch did so, and walked along the shore. The ball, rolling all the time, brought Ivan to a hut, a queer, tiny hut standing on tiny hen’s feet.

“Izboushka! Izboushka!”—for so in Russia do they name small huts—“Izboushka, I want thee to turn thy front to me,” cried Ivan, and lo! the tiny hut turned its front at once. Ivan stepped in and saw a witch, one of the ugliest witches he could imagine.

“Ho! Ivan Tsarevitch! What brings thee here?” was his greeting from the witch. “O, thou old mischief!” shouted Ivan with anger. “Is it the way in holy Russia to ask questions before the tired guest gets something to eat, something to drink, and some hot water to wash the dust off?”

Baba Yaga, the witch, gave the Tsarevitch plenty to eat and drink, besides hot water to wash the dust off. Tsarevitch Ivan felt refreshed. Soon he became talkative, and related the wonderful story of his marriage. He told how he had lost his dear wife, and that his only desire was to find her.

“I know all about it,” answered the witch. “She is now at the palace of Kotshei the Deathless, and thou must understand that Kotshei is terrible. He watches her day and night and no one can ever conquer him. His death depends on a magic needle. That needle is within a hare; that hare is within a large trunk; that trunk is hidden in the branches of an old oak tree; and that oak tree is watched by Kotshei as closely as Vassilissa herself, which means closer than any treasure he has.”

Then the witch told Ivan Tsarevitch how and where to find the oak tree. Ivan hastily went to the place. But when he perceived the oak tree he was much discouraged, not knowing what to do or how to begin the work. Lo and behold! that old acquaintance of his, the Russian bear, came running along, approached the tree, uprooted it, and the trunk fell and broke. A hare jumped out of the trunk and began to run fast; but another hare, Ivan's friend, came running after, caught it and tore it to pieces. Out of the hare there flew a duck, a gray one which flew very high and was almost invisible, but the beautiful white duck followed the bird and struck its gray enemy, which lost an egg. That egg fell into the deep sea. Ivan meanwhile was anxiously watching his faithful friends helping him. But when the egg disappeared in the blue waters he could not help weeping. All of a sudden a big fish came swimming up, the same fish he had saved, and brought the egg in his mouth. How happy Ivan was when he took it! He broke it and found the needle inside, the magic needle upon which everything depended.

At the same moment Kostshei lost his strength and power forever. Ivan Tsarevitch entered his vast dominions, killed him with the magic needle, and in one of the palaces found his own dear wife, his beautiful Vassilissa. He took her home and they were very happy ever after.

## **THE WITCH AND HER SERVANTS**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Lang, Andrew. *The Yellow Fairy Book*. London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1894, 161–177.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Russia

**National Origin:** Russia

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The following tale combines the success of the younger of three brothers—success by means of magic objects, disguised strangers, and grateful animals—with the abduction of maidens and tasks imposed by a witch. As a result, “The Witch and Her Servants” serves as a virtual encyclopedia of traditional **motifs**. Also relevant to the tale are Russian folk beliefs regarding the power of dreams and contagious magic (control by possessing something once belonging to an individual—in this case a lock of hair).

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**A** long time ago there lived a King who had three sons; the eldest was called Szabo, the second Warza, and the youngest Iwanich. One beautiful spring morning the King was walking through his gardens with these three sons, gazing with admiration at the various fruit trees,

some of which were a mass of blossom, whilst others were bowed to the ground laden with rich fruit. During their wanderings they came unperceived on a piece of waste land where three splendid trees grew. The King looked on them for a moment, and then, shaking his head sadly, he passed on in silence.

The sons, who could not understand why he did this, asked him the reason of his dejection, and the King told them as follows. "These three trees, which I cannot see without sorrow, were planted by me on this spot when I was a youth of twenty. A celebrated magician, who had given the seed to my father, promised him that they would grow into the three finest trees the world had ever seen. My father did not live to see his words come true; but on his death-bed he bade me transplant them here, and to look after them with the greatest care, which I accordingly did. At last, after the lapse of five long years, I noticed some blossoms on the branches, and a few days later the most exquisite fruit my eyes had ever seen.

"I gave my head-gardener the strictest orders to watch the trees carefully, for the magician had warned my father that if one unripe fruit were plucked from the tree, all the rest would become rotten at once. When it was quite ripe the fruit would become a golden yellow.

Every day I gazed on the lovely fruit, which became gradually more and more tempting-looking, and it was all I could do not to break the magician's commands.

"One night I dreamt that the fruit was perfectly ripe; I ate some of it, and it was more delicious than anything I had ever tasted in real life. As soon as I awoke I sent for the gardener and asked him if the fruit on the three trees had not ripened in the night to perfection.

"But instead of replying, the gardener threw himself at my feet and swore that he was innocent. He said that he had watched by the trees all night, but in spite of it, and as if by magic, the beautiful trees had been robbed of all their fruit.

"Grieved as I was over the theft, I did not punish the gardener, of whose fidelity I was well assured, but I determined to pluck off all the fruit in the following year before it was ripe, as I had not much belief in the magician's warning.

"I carried out my intention, and had all the fruit picked off the tree, but when I tasted one of the apples it was bitter and unpleasant, and the next morning the rest of the fruit had all rotted away.

"After this I had the beautiful fruit of these trees carefully guarded by my most faithful servants; but every year, on this very night, the fruit was plucked and stolen by an invisible hand, and next morning not a single apple remained on the trees. For some time past I have given up even having the trees watched."

When the King had finished his story, Szabo, his eldest son, said to him, "Forgive me, father, if I say I think you are mistaken. I am sure there are many men in your kingdom who could protect these trees from the cunning arts of a thieving magician; I myself, who as your eldest son claim the first right to do so, will mount guard over the fruit this very night."



The King consented, and as soon as evening drew on Szabo climbed up on to one of the trees, determined to protect the fruit even if it cost him his life. So he kept watch half the night; but a little after midnight he was overcome by an irresistible drowsiness, and fell fast asleep. He did not awake till it was bright daylight, and all the fruit on the trees had vanished.

The following year Warza, the second brother, tried his luck, but with the same result. Then it came to the turn of the third and youngest son.

Iwanich was not the least discouraged by the failure of his elder brothers, though they were both much older and stronger than he was, and when night came climbed up the tree as they had done, The moon had risen, and with her soft light lit up the whole neighborhood, so that the observant Prince could distinguish the smallest object distinctly.

At midnight a gentle west wind shook the tree, and at the same moment a snow-white swan-like bird sank down gently on his breast. The Prince hastily seized the bird's wings in his hands, when, lo! to his astonishment he found he was holding in his arms not a bird but the most beautiful girl he had ever seen.

"You need not fear Militza," said the beautiful girl, looking at the Prince with friendly eyes. "An evil magician has not robbed you of your fruit, but he stole the seed from my mother, and thereby caused her death. When she was dying she bade me take the fruit, which you have no right to possess, from the trees every year as soon as it was ripe. This I would have done tonight too, if you had not seized me with such force, and so broken the spell I was under."

Iwanich, who had been prepared to meet a terrible magician and not a lovely girl, fell desperately in love with her. They spent the rest of the night in pleasant conversation, and when Militza wished to go away he begged her not to leave him.

"I would gladly stay with you longer," said Militza, "but a wicked witch once cut off a lock of my hair when I was asleep, which has put me in her power, and if morning were still to find me here she would do me some harm, and you, too, perhaps."

Having said these words, she drew a sparkling diamond ring from her finger, which she handed to the Prince, saying, "Keep this ring in memory of Militza, and think of her sometimes if you never see her again. But if your love is really true, come and find me in my own kingdom. I may not show you the way there, but this ring will guide you.

"If you have love and courage enough to undertake this journey, whenever you come to a crossroad always look at this diamond before you settle which way you are going to take. If it sparkles as brightly as ever go straight on, but if its luster is dimmed choose another path."

Then Militza bent over the Prince and kissed him on his forehead, and before he had time to say a word she vanished through the branches of the tree in a little white cloud.

Morning broke, and the Prince, still full of the wonderful apparition, left his perch and returned to the palace like one in a dream, without even knowing if the fruit had been taken or not; for his whole mind was absorbed by thoughts of Militza and how he was to find her. As soon as the head-gardener saw the Prince going towards the palace he ran to the trees, and when he saw them laden with ripe fruit he hastened to tell the King the joyful news. The King was beside himself for joy, and hurried at once to the garden and made the gardener pick him some of the fruit. He tasted it, and found the apple quite as luscious as it had been in his dream. He went at once to his son Iwanich, and after embracing him tenderly and heaping praises on him, he asked him how he had succeeded in protecting the costly fruit from the power of the magician.

This question placed Iwanich in a dilemma. But as he did not want the real story to be known, he said that about midnight a huge wasp had flown through the branches, and buzzed incessantly round him. He had warded it off with his sword, and at dawn, when he was becoming quite worn out, the wasp had vanished as suddenly as it had appeared.

The King, who never doubted the truth of this tale, bade his son go to rest at once and recover from the fatigues of the night; but he himself went and ordered many feasts to be held in honor of the preservation of the wonderful fruit.

The whole capital was in a stir, and everyone shared in the King's joy; the Prince alone took no part in the festivities.

While the King was at a banquet, Iwanich took some purses of gold, and mounting the quickest horse in the royal stable, he sped off like the wind without a single soul being any the wiser.

It was only on the next day that they missed him; the King was very distressed at his disappearance, and sent search-parties all over the kingdom to look for him, but in vain; and after six months they gave him up as dead, and in another six months they had forgotten all about him. But in the meantime the Prince, with the help of his ring, had had a most successful journey, and no evil had befallen him.

At the end of three months he came to the entrance of a huge forest, which looked as if it had never been trodden by human foot before, and which seemed to stretch out indefinitely. The Prince was about to enter the wood by a little path he had discovered, when he heard a voice shouting to him, "Hold, youth! Whither are you going?"

Iwanich turned round, and saw a tall, gaunt-looking man, clad in miserable rags, leaning on a crooked staff and seated at the foot of an oak tree, which was so much the same color as himself that it was little wonder the Prince had ridden past the tree without noticing him.

"Where else should I be going," he said, "than through the wood?"

"Through the wood?" said the old man in amazement. "It's easily seen that you have heard nothing of this forest, that you rush so blindly to meet your doom. Well, listen to me before you ride any further; let me tell you that this

wood hides in its depths a countless number of the fiercest tigers, hyenas, wolves, bears, and snakes, and all sorts of other monsters. If I were to cut you and your horse up into tiny morsels and throw them to the beasts, there wouldn't be one bit for each hundred of them. Take my advice, therefore, and if you wish to save your life follow some other path."

The Prince was rather taken aback by the old man's words, and considered for a minute what he should do; then looking at his ring, and perceiving that it sparkled as brightly as ever, he called out, "If this wood held even more terrible things than it does, I cannot help myself, for I must go through it."

Here he spurred his horse and rode on; but the old beggar screamed so loudly after him that the Prince turned round and rode back to the oak tree.

"I am really sorry for you," said the beggar, "but if you are quite determined to brave the dangers of the forest, let me at least give you a piece of advice which will help you against these monsters.

"Take this bagful of bread-crumbs and this live hare. I will make you a present of them both, as I am anxious to save your life; but you must leave your horse behind you, for it would stumble over the fallen trees or get entangled in the briars and thorns. When you have gone about a hundred yards into the wood the wild beasts will surround you. Then you must instantly seize your bag, and scatter the bread-crumbs among them. They will rush to eat them up greedily, and when you have scattered the last crumb you must lose no time in throwing the hare to them; as soon as the hare feels itself on the ground it will run away as quickly as possible, and the wild beasts will turn to pursue it. In this way you will be able to get through the wood unhurt."

Iwanich thanked the old man for his counsel, dismounted from his horse, and, taking the bag and the hare in his arms, he entered the forest. He had hardly lost sight of his gaunt grey friend when he heard growls and snarls in the thicket close to him, and before he had time to think he found himself surrounded by the most dreadful-looking creatures. On one side he saw the glittering eye of a cruel tiger, on the other the gleaming teeth of a great she-wolf; here a huge bear growled fiercely, and there a horrible snake coiled itself in the grass at his feet.

But Iwanich did not forget the old man's advice, and quickly put his hand into the bag and took out as many bread-crumbs as he could hold in his hand at a time. He threw them to the beasts, but soon the bag grew lighter and lighter, and the Prince began to feel a little frightened. And now the last crumb was gone, and the hungry beasts thronged round him, greedy for fresh prey. Then he seized the hare and threw it to them.

No sooner did the little creature feel itself on the ground than it lay back its ears and flew through the wood like an arrow from a bow, closely pursued by the wild beasts, and the Prince was left alone. He looked at his ring, and when he saw that it sparkled as brightly as ever he went straight on through the forest.

He hadn't gone very far when he saw a most extraordinary looking man coming towards him. He was not more than three feet high, his legs were quite

crooked, and all his body was covered with prickles like a hedgehog. Two lions walked with him, fastened to his side by the two ends of his long beard.

He stopped the Prince and asked him in a harsh voice, "Are you the man who has just fed my body-guard?"

Iwanich was so startled that he could hardly reply, but the little man continued, "I am most grateful to you for your kindness; what can I give you as a reward?"

"All I ask," replied Iwanich, "is, that I should be allowed to go through this wood in safety."

"Most certainly," answered the little man; "and for greater security I will give you one of my lions as a protector. But when you leave this wood and come near a palace which does not belong to my domain, let the lion go, in order that he may not fall into the hands of an enemy and be killed."

With these words he loosened the lion from his beard and bade the beast guard the youth carefully.

With this new protector Iwanich wandered on through the forest, and though he came upon a great many more wolves, hyenas, leopards, and other wild beasts, they always kept at a respectful distance when they saw what sort of an escort the Prince had with him.

Iwanich hurried through the wood as quickly as his legs would carry him, but, nevertheless, hour after hour went by and not a trace of a green field or a human habitation met his eyes. At length, towards evening, the mass of trees grew more transparent, and through the interlaced branches a wide plain was visible.

At the exit of the wood the lion stood still, and the Prince took leave of him, having first thanked him warmly for his kind protection. It had become quite dark, and Iwanich was forced to wait for daylight before continuing his journey.

He made himself a bed of grass and leaves, lit a fire of dry branches, and slept soundly till the next morning.

Then he got up and walked towards a beautiful white palace which he saw gleaming in the distance. In about an hour he reached the building, and opening the door he walked in. After wandering through many marble halls, he came to a huge staircase made of porphyry, leading down to a lovely garden.

The Prince burst into a shout of joy when he suddenly perceived Militza in the center of a group of girls who were weaving wreaths of flowers with which to deck their mistress.

As soon as Militza saw the Prince she ran up to him and embraced him tenderly; and after he had told her all his adventures, they went into the palace, where a sumptuous meal awaited them. Then the Princess called her court together, and introduced Iwanich to them as her future husband.

Preparations were at once made for the wedding, which was held soon after with great pomp and magnificence.

Three months of great happiness followed, when Militza received one day an invitation to visit her mother's sister.

Although the Princess was very unhappy at leaving her husband, she did not like to refuse the invitation, and, promising to return in seven days at the latest, she took a tender farewell of the Prince, and said, "Before I go I will hand you over all the keys of the castle. Go everywhere and do anything you like; only one thing I beg and beseech you, do not open the little iron door in the north tower, which is closed with seven locks and seven bolts; for if you do, we shall both suffer for it."

Iwanich promised what she asked, and Militza departed, repeating her promise to return in seven days.

When the Prince found himself alone he began to be tormented by pangs of curiosity as to what the room in the tower contained. For two days he resisted the temptation to go and look, but on the third he could stand it no longer, and taking a torch in his hand he hurried to the tower, and unfastened one lock after the other of the little iron door until it burst open.

What an unexpected sight met his gaze! The Prince perceived a small room black with smoke, lit up feebly by a fire from which issued long blue flames. Over the fire hung a huge cauldron full of boiling pitch, and fastened into the cauldron by iron chains stood a wretched man screaming with agony.

Iwanich was much horrified at the sight before him, and asked the man what terrible crime he had committed to be punished in this dreadful fashion.

"I will tell you everything," said the man in the cauldron; "but first relieve my torments a little, I implore you."

"And how can I do that?" asked the Prince.

"With a little water," replied the man; "only sprinkle a few drops over me and I shall feel better."

The Prince, moved by pity, without thinking what he was doing, ran to the courtyard of the castle, and filled a jug with water, which he poured over the man in the cauldron.

In a moment a most fearful crash was heard, as if all the pillars of the palace were giving way, and the palace itself, with towers and doors, windows and the cauldron, whirled round the bewildered Prince's head. This continued for a few minutes, and then everything vanished into thin air, and Iwanich found himself suddenly alone upon a desolate heath covered with rocks and stones.

The Prince, who now realized what his heedlessness had done, cursed too late his spirit of curiosity. In his despair he wandered on over the heath, never looking where he put his feet, and full of sorrowful thoughts. At last he saw a light in the distance, which came from a miserable-looking little hut.

The owner of it was none other than the kind-hearted gaunt grey beggar who had given the Prince the bag of bread-crumbs and the hare. Without recognizing Iwanich, he opened the door when he knocked and gave him shelter for the night.

On the following morning the Prince asked his host if he could get him any work to do, as he was quite unknown in the neighborhood, and had not enough money to take him home. "My son," replied the old man, "all this country round here is uninhabited; I myself have to wander to distant villages for my living, and even then I do not very often find enough to satisfy my hunger. But if you would like to take service with the old witch Corva, go straight up the little stream which flows below my hut for about three hours, and you will come to a sand-hill on the left-hand side; that is where she lives."

Iwanich thanked the gaunt grey beggar for his information, and went on his way.

After walking for about three hours the Prince came upon a dreary-looking grey stone wall; this was the back of the building and did not attract him; but when he came upon the front of the house he found it even less inviting, for the old witch had surrounded her dwelling with a fence of spikes, on every one of which a man's skull was stuck. In this horrible enclosure stood a small black house, which had only two grated windows, all covered with cobwebs, and a battered iron door.

The Prince knocked, and a rasping woman's voice told him to enter.

Iwanich opened the door, and found himself in a smoke-begrimed kitchen, in the presence of a hideous old woman who was warming her skinny hands at a fire. The Prince offered to become her servant, and the old hag told him she was badly in want of one, and he seemed to be just the person to suit her.

When Iwanich asked what his work, and how much his wages would be, the witch bade him follow her, and led the way through a narrow damp passage into a vault, which served as a stable. Here he perceived two pitch-black horses in a stall.

"You see before you," said the old woman, "a mare and her foal; you have nothing to do but to lead them out to the fields every day, and to see that neither of them runs away from you. If you look after them both for a whole year I will give you anything you like to ask; but if, on the other hand, you let either of the animals escape you, your last hour is come, and your head shall be stuck on the last spike of my fence. The other spikes, as you see, are already adorned, and the skulls are all those of different servants I have had who have failed to do what I demanded."

Iwanich, who thought he could not be much worse off than he was already, agreed to the witch's proposal.

At daybreak next morning he drove his horses to the field, and brought them back in the evening without their ever having attempted to break away from him. The witch stood at her door and received him kindly, and set a good meal before him.

So it continued for some time, and all went well with the Prince.

Early every morning he led the horses out to the fields, and brought them home safe and sound in the evening.

One day, while he was watching the horses, he came to the banks of a river, and saw a big fish, which through some mischance had been cast on the land, struggling hard to get back into the water.

Iwanich, who felt sorry for the poor creature, seized it in his arms and flung it into the stream. But no sooner did the fish find itself in the water again, than, to the Prince's amazement, it swam up to the bank and said, "My kind benefactor, how can I reward you for your goodness?"

"I desire nothing," answered the Prince. "I am quite content to have been able to be of some service to you."

"You must do me the favor," replied the fish, "to take a scale from my body, and keep it carefully. If you should ever need my help, throw it into the river, and I will come to your aid at once."

Iwanich bowed, loosened a scale from the body of the grateful beast, put it carefully away, and returned home.

A short time after this, when he was going early one morning to the usual grazing place with his horses, he noticed a flock of birds assembled together making a great noise and flying wildly backwards and forwards.

Full of curiosity, Iwanich hurried up to the spot, and saw that a large number of ravens had attacked an eagle, and although the eagle was big and powerful and was making a brave fight, it was overpowered at last by numbers, and had to give in.

But the Prince, who was sorry for the poor bird, seized the branch of a tree and hit out at the ravens with it; terrified at this unexpected onslaught they flew away, leaving many of their number dead or wounded on the battlefield.

As soon as the eagle saw itself free from its tormentors it plucked a feather from its wing, and, handing it to the Prince, said, "Here, my kind benefactor, take this feather as a proof of my gratitude; should you ever be in need of my help blow this feather into the air, and I will help you as much as is in my power."

Iwanich thanked the bird, and placing the feather beside the scale he drove the horses home.

Another day he had wandered farther than usual, and came close to a farmyard; the place pleased the Prince, and as there was plenty of good grass for the horses he determined to spend the day there. Just as he was sitting down under a tree he heard a cry close to him, and saw a fox which had been caught in a trap placed there by the farmer.

In vain did the poor beast try to free itself; then the good-natured Prince came once more to the rescue, and let the fox out of the trap.

The fox thanked him heartily, tore two hairs out of his bushy tail, and said, "Should you ever stand in need of my help throw these two hairs into the fire, and in a moment I shall be at your side ready to obey you."

Iwanich put the fox's hairs with the scale and the feather, and as it was getting dark he hastened home with his horses.

In the meantime his service was drawing near to an end, and in three more days the year was up, and he would be able to get his reward and leave the witch.

On the first evening of these last three days, when he came home and was eating his supper, he noticed the old woman stealing into the stables.

The Prince followed her secretly to see what she was going to do. He crouched down in the doorway and heard the wicked witch telling the horses to wait next morning till Iwanich was asleep, and then to go and hide themselves in the river, and to stay there till she told them to return; and if they didn't do as she told them the old woman threatened to beat them till they bled.

When Iwanich heard all this he went back to his room, determined that nothing should induce him to fall asleep next day. On the following morning he led the mare and foal to the fields as usual, but bound a cord round them both which he kept in his hand.

But after a few hours, by the magic arts of the old witch, he was overpowered by sleep, and the mare and foal escaped and did as they had been told to do. The Prince did not awake till late in the evening; and when he did, he found, to his horror, that the horses had disappeared. Filled with despair, he cursed the moment when he had entered the service of the cruel witch, and already he saw his head sticking up on the sharp spike beside the others.

Then he suddenly remembered the fish's scale, which, with the eagle's feather and the fox's hairs, he always carried about with him. He drew the scale from his pocket, and hurrying to the river he threw it in. In a minute the grateful fish swam towards the bank on which Iwanich was standing, and said, "What do you command, my friend and benefactor?"

The Prince replied, "I had to look after a mare and foal, and they have run away from me and have hidden themselves in the river; if you wish to save my life drive them back to the land."

"Wait a moment," answered the fish, "and I and my friends will soon drive them out of the water." With these words the creature disappeared into the depths of the stream.

Almost immediately a rushing hissing sound was heard in the waters, the waves dashed against the banks, the foam was tossed into the air, and the two horses leapt suddenly on to the dry land, trembling and shaking with fear. Iwanich sprang at once on to the mare's back, seized the foal by its bridle, and hastened home in the highest spirits.

When the witch saw the Prince bringing the horses home she could hardly conceal her wrath, and as soon as she had placed Iwanich's supper before him she stole away again to the stables. The Prince followed her, and heard her scolding the beasts harshly for not having hidden themselves better. She bade them wait next morning till Iwanich was asleep and then to hide themselves in the clouds, and to remain there till she called. If they did not do as she told them she would beat them till they bled.



The next morning, after Iwanich had led his horses to the fields, he fell once more into a magic sleep. The horses at once ran away and hid themselves in the clouds, which hung down from the mountains in soft billowy masses.

When the Prince awoke and found that both the mare and the foal had disappeared, he bethought him at once of the eagle, and taking the feather out of his pocket he blew it into the air.

In a moment the bird swooped down beside him and asked, "What do you wish me to do?"

"My mare and foal," replied the Prince, "have run away from me, and have hidden themselves in the clouds; if you wish to save my life, restore both animals to me."

"Wait a minute," answered the eagle; "with the help of my friends I will soon drive them back to you."

With these words the bird flew up into the air and disappeared among the clouds.

Almost directly Iwanich saw his two horses being driven towards him by a host of eagles of all sizes. He caught the mare and foal, and having thanked the eagle he drove them cheerfully home again.

The old witch was more disgusted than ever when she saw him appearing, and having set his supper before him she stole into the stables, and Iwanich heard her abusing the horses for not having hidden themselves better in the clouds. Then she bade them hide themselves next morning, as soon as Iwanich was asleep, in the King's hen-house, which stood on a lonely part of the heath, and to remain there till she called. If they failed to do as she told them she would certainly beat them this time till they bled.

On the following morning the Prince drove his horses as usual to the fields. After he had been overpowered by sleep, as on the former days, the mare and foal ran away and hid themselves in the royal hen house.

When the Prince awoke and found the horses gone he determined to appeal to the fox; so, lighting a fire, he threw the two hairs into it, and in a few moments the fox stood beside him and asked, "In what way can I serve you?"

"I wish to know," replied Iwanich, "where the King's hen-house is."

"Hardly an hour's walk from here," answered the fox, and offered to show the Prince the way to it.

While they were walking along the fox asked him what he wanted to do at the royal hen-house. The Prince told him of the misfortune that had befallen him, and of the necessity of recovering the mare and foal.

"That is no easy matter," replied the fox. "But wait a moment. I have an idea. Stand at the door of the hen-house, and wait there for your horses. In the meantime I will slip in among the hens through a hole in the wall and give them a good chase, so that the noise they make will arouse the royal hen-wives, and they will come to see what is the matter. When they see the horses

they will at once imagine them to be the cause of the disturbance, and will drive them out. Then you must lay hands on the mare and foal and catch them.”

All turned out exactly as the sly fox had foreseen. The Prince swung himself on the mare, seized the foal by its bridle, and hurried home.

While he was riding over the heath in the highest of spirits the mare suddenly said to her rider, “You are the first person who has ever succeeded in outwitting the old witch Corva, and now you may ask what reward you like for your service. If you promise never to betray me I will give you a piece of advice which you will do well to follow.”

The Prince promised never to betray her confidence, and the mare continued. “Ask nothing else as a reward than my foal, for it has not its like in the world, and is not to be bought for love or money; for it can go from one end of the earth to another in a few minutes. Of course the cunning Corva will do her best to dissuade you from taking the foal, and will tell you that it is both idle and sickly; but do not believe her, and stick to your point.”

Iwanich longed to possess such an animal, and promised the mare to follow her advice. This time Corva received him in the most friendly manner, and set a sumptuous repast before him. As soon as he had finished she asked him what reward he demanded for his year’s service.

“Nothing more nor less,” replied the Prince, “than the foal of your mare.”

The witch pretended to be much astonished at his request, and said that he deserved something much better than the foal, for the beast was lazy and nervous, blind in one eye, and, in short, was quite worthless.

But the Prince knew what he wanted, and when the old witch saw that he had made up his mind to have the foal, she said, “I am obliged to keep my promise and to hand you over the foal; and as I know who you are and what you want, I will tell you in what way the animal will be useful to you. The man in the cauldron of boiling pitch, whom you set free, is a mighty magician; through your curiosity and thoughtlessness Militza came into his power, and he has transported her and her castle and belongings into a distant country.

“You are the only person who can kill him; and in consequence he fears you to such an extent that he has set spies to watch you, and they report your movements to him daily.

“When you have reached him, beware of speaking a single word to him, or you will fall into the power of his friends. Seize him at once by the beard and dash him to the ground.”

Iwanich thanked the old witch, mounted his foal, put spurs to its sides, and they flew like lightning through the air.

Already it was growing dark, when Iwanich perceived some figures in the distance; they soon came up to them, and then the Prince saw that it was the magician and his friends who were driving through the air in a carriage drawn by owls.

When the magician found himself face to face with Iwanich, without hope of escape, he turned to him with false friendliness and said, "Thrice my kind benefactor!"

But the Prince, without saying a word, seized him at once by his beard and dashed him to the ground. At the same moment the foal sprang on the top of the magician and kicked and stamped on him with his hoofs till he died.

Then Iwanich found himself once more in the palace of his bride, and Mil-itza herself flew into his arms.

From this time forward they lived in undisturbed peace and happiness till the end of their lives.

# ***The Mediterranean***



# GREECE

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## HOW THESEUS SLEW THE DEVOURERS OF MEN

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Kingsley, Charles. *The Heroes: Or, Greek Fairy Tales for My Children*. New York: R. H. Russell, Publisher, 1901, 146–175.

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Located on the southern end of the Balkan Peninsula, Greece is a crossroads between Europe, Asia, and Africa. Historically, Greece has been heir to Classical Greek, Byzantine, and Ottoman civilizations. There has been mutual influence extending from and into the Middle East, North Africa, and Western Europe. According to Classical Greek **myth**, Theseus was the son of the mortal woman Aethra, wife of Aegeus, and Poseidon, god of the sea. When his wife became pregnant, Aegeus left her in her native city of Troezen and returned to Athens. Aegeus left his sandals and sword under a huge rock along with the challenge for his son to prove himself worthy by retrieving these tokens. In later life Theseus, became King of Athens, but in the following narrative, he has just learned the identity of his mortal father and has undertaken the journey to meet Aegeus. Rather than taking the safe sea route to Athens, Theseus goes by a dangerous land route that leads him to confront a series of monstrous outlaws. By defeating them, he cleanses the environment in the fashion of Heracles (or Hercules) the other **culture hero** to whom he compares himself. Following his reunion, he goes on to defeat the Minotaur, perhaps the best-known of his conquests.

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So Theseus stood there alone, with his mind full of many hopes. And first, he thought of going down to the harbor and hiring a swift ship, and sailing across the bay to Athens; but even that seemed too slow for him, and he longed for wings to fly across the sea, and find his father. But after a while his heart began to fail him; and he sighed, and said within himself—"What if my father have other sons about him, whom he loves? What if he will not receive me? And what have I done that he should receive me? He has forgotten me ever since I was born: why should he welcome me now?"

Then he thought a long while sadly; and at the last he cried aloud, "Yes! I will make him love me; for I will prove myself worthy of his love. I will win honor and renown, and do such deeds that Ægeus shall be proud of me, though he had fifty other sons! Did not Heracles win himself honor, though he was oppressed, and the slave of Eurystheus? Did he not kill all robbers and evil beasts, and drain great lakes and marshes, breaking the hills through with his club? Therefore it was that all men honored him, because he rid them of their miseries, and made life pleasant to them and their children after them. Where can I go, to do as Heracles has done? Where can I find strange adventures, robbers, and monsters, and the children of hell, the enemies of men? I will go by land, and into the mountains, and round by the way of the Isthmus. Perhaps there I may hear of brave adventures, and do something which shall win my father's love."

So he went by land, and away into the mountains, with his father's sword upon his thigh, till he came to the Spider mountains, which hang over Epidaurus and the sea, where the glens run downward from one peak in the midst, as the rays spread in the spider's web. And he went up into the gloomy glens, between the furrowed marble walls, till the lowland grew blue beneath his feet, and the clouds drove damp about his head.

But he went up and up forever, through the spider's web of glens, till he could see the narrow gulfs spread below him, north and south, and east and west; black cracks half-choked with mists, and above all a dreary down. But over that down he must go, for there was no road right or left; so he toiled on through bog and brake, till he came to a pile of stones.

And on the stones a man was sitting, wrapt in a bear-skin cloak. The head of the bear served him for a cap, and its teeth grinned white around his brows; and the feet were tied about his throat, and their claws shone white upon his chest. And when he saw Theseus he rose, and laughed till the glens rattled.

"And who art thou, fair fly, who hast walked into the spider's web?" But Theseus walked on steadily, and made no answer: but he thought, "Is this some robber? and has an adventure come already to me?" But the strange man laughed louder than ever, and said—"Bold fly, know you not that these glens are the web from which no fly ever finds his way out again, and this down the spider's house, and I the spider who sucks the flies? Come hither, and let me feast upon you; for it is of no use to run away, so cunning a web has my father

Hephaistos [blacksmith and “artificer” for the Greek gods] spread for me, when he made these clefts in the mountains, through which no man finds his way home.”

But Theseus came on steadily, and asked, “And what is your name among men, bold spider? and where are your spider’s fangs?”

Then the strange man laughed again, “My name is Periphetes, the son of Hephaistos and Anticleia the mountain nymph. But men call me Corynetes the club-bearer; and here is my spider’s fang.”

And he lifted from off the stones at his side a mighty club of bronze.

“This my father gave me, and forged it himself in the roots of the mountain; and with it I pound all proud flies till they give out their fatness and their sweetness. So give me up that gay sword of yours, and your mantle, and your golden sandals, lest I pound you, and by ill luck you die.”

But Theseus wrapt his mantle round his left arm quickly, in hard folds, from his shoulder to his hand, and drew his sword, and rushed upon the club-bearer, and the club-bearer rushed on him.

Thrice he struck at Theseus, and made him bend under the blows like a sapling; but Theseus guarded his head with his left arm, and the mantle which was wrapped around it. And thrice Theseus sprang upright after the blow, like a sapling when the storm is past; and he stabbed at the club-bearer with his sword, but the loose folds of the bear-skin saved him. Then Theseus grew mad, and closed with him, and caught him by the throat, and they fell and rolled over together; but when Theseus rose up from the ground the club-bearer lay still at his feet.

Then Theseus took his club and his bear-skin, and left him to the kites and crows, and went upon his journey down the glens on the farther slope, till he came to a broad green valley, and saw flocks and herds sleeping beneath the trees.

And by the side of a pleasant fountain, under the shade of rocks and trees, were nymphs and shepherds dancing; but no one piped to them while they danced.

And when they saw Theseus they shrieked; and the shepherds ran off, and drove away their flocks; while the nymphs dived into the fountain like coots, and vanished.

Theseus wondered and laughed, “What strange fancies have folks here who run away from strangers, and have no music when they dance!” But he was tired, and dusty, and thirsty; so he thought no more of them, but drank and bathed in the clear pool, and then lay down in the shade under a plane-tree, while the water sang him to sleep, as it tinkled down from stone to stone.

And when he woke he heard a whispering, and saw the nymphs peeping at him across the fountain from the dark mouth of a cave, where they sat on green cushions of moss. And one said, “Surely he is not Periphetes”; and another, “He looks like no robber, but a fair and gentle youth.”

Then Theseus smiled, and called them, “Fair nymphs, I am not Periphetes. He sleeps among the kites and crows: but I have brought away his bear-skin and his club.”



Then they leapt across the pool, and came to him, and called the shepherds back. And he told them how he had slain the club-bearer: and the shepherds kissed his feet and sang, "Now we shall feed our flocks in peace, and not be afraid to have music when we dance; for the cruel club-bearer has met his match, and he will listen for our pipes no more."

Then they brought him kid's flesh and wine, and the nymphs brought him honey from the rocks; and he ate, and drank, and slept again, while the nymphs and shepherds danced and sang. And when he woke, they begged him to stay; but he would not. "I have a great work to do," he said; "I must be away toward the Isthmus, that I may go to Athens."

But the shepherds said, "Will you go alone toward Athens? None travel that way now, except in armed troops."

"As for arms, I have enough, as you see. And as for troops, an honest man is good enough company for himself. Why should I not go alone toward Athens?"

"If you do, you must look warily about you on the Isthmus, lest you meet Sinis the robber, whom men call Pituocampes the pine-bender; for he bends down two pine trees, and binds all travelers hand and foot between them; and when he lets the trees go again their bodies are torn in sunder."

"And after that," said another, "you must go inland, and not dare to pass over the cliffs of Sciron; for on the left hand are the mountains, and on the right the sea, so that you have no escape, but must needs meet Sciron the robber, who will make you wash his feet; and while you are washing them he will kick you over the cliff, to the tortoise who lives below, and feeds upon the bodies of the dead."

And before Theseus could answer, another cried, "And after that is a worse danger still, unless you go inland always, and leave Eleusis far on your right. For in Eleusis rules Kerkuon the cruel king, the terror of all mortals, who killed his own daughter Alope in prison. But she was changed into a fair fountain; and her child he cast out upon the mountains; but the wild mares gave it milk. And now he challenges all comers to wrestle with him; for he is the best wrestler in all Attica, and overthrows all who come; and those whom he overthrows he murders miserably, and his palace-court is full of their bones."

Then Theseus frowned, and said, "This seems indeed an ill-ruled land, and adventures enough in it to be tried. But if I am the heir of it, I will rule it and right it, and here is my royal scepter." And he shook his club of bronze, while the nymphs and shepherds clung round him, and entreated him not to go.

But on he went, nevertheless, till he could see both the seas and the citadel of Corinth towering high above all the land. And he past swiftly along the Isthmus, for his heart burned to meet that cruel Sinis; and in a pine-wood at last he met him, where the Isthmus was narrowest and the road ran between high rocks. There he sat upon a stone by the wayside, with a young fir tree for a club across his knees, and a cord laid ready by his side; and over his head, upon the fir-tops, hung the bones of murdered men.

Then Theseus shouted to him, "Holla, thou valiant pine-bender, hast thou two fir trees left for me?"

And Sinis leapt to his feet, and answered, pointing to the bones above his head, "My larder has grown empty lately, so I have two fir trees ready for thee." And he rushed on Theseus, lifting his club, and Theseus rushed upon him.

Then they hammered together till the greenwoods rang: but the metal was tougher than the pine, and Sinis' club broke right across, as the bronze came down upon it. Then Theseus heaved up another mighty stroke, and smote Sinis down upon his face; and knelt upon his back, and bound him with his own cord, and said, "As thou hast done to others, so shall it be done to thee." Then he bent down two young fir trees, and bound Sinis between them, for all his struggling and his prayers; and let them go, and ended Sinis, and went on, leaving him to the hawks and crows.

Then he went over the hills toward Megara, keeping close along the Saronic Sea, till he came to the cliffs of Sciron, and the narrow path between the mountain and the sea.

And there he saw Sciron sitting by a fountain, at the edge of the cliff. On his knees was a mighty club; and he had barred the path with stones, so that every one must stop who came up. Then Theseus shouted to him, and said, "Holla, thou tortoise-feeder, do thy feet need washing today?"

And Sciron leapt to his feet, and answered, "My tortoise is empty and hungry, and my feet need washing today." And he stood before his barrier, and lifted up his club in both hands. Then Theseus rushed upon him; and sore was the battle upon the cliff; for when Sciron felt the weight of the bronze club, he dropt his own, and closed with Theseus, and tried to hurl him by main force over the cliff. But Theseus was a wary wrestler, and dropt his own club, and caught him by the throat and by the knee, and forced him back against the wall of stones, and crushed him up against them, till his breath was almost gone. And Sciron cried panting, "Loose me, and I will let thee pass." But Theseus answered, "I must not pass till I have made the rough way smooth"; and he forced him back against the wall till it fell, and Sciron rolled head over heels.

Then Theseus lifted him up all bruised, and said, "Come hither and wash my feet." And he drew his sword, and sat down by the well, and said, "Wash my feet, or I cut you piecemeal." And Sciron washed his feet trembling; and when it was done, Theseus rose, and cried, "As thou hast done to others, so shall it be done to thee. Go feed thy tortoise thyself"; and he kicked him over the cliff into the sea.

And whether the tortoise ate him, I know not; for some say that earth and sea both disdained to take his body, so foul it was with sin. So the sea cast it out upon the shore, and the shore cast it back into the sea, and at last the waves hurled it high into the air in anger; and it hung there long without a grave, till it was changed into a desolate rock, which stands there in the surge until this day.

This at least is true, which Pausanias tells, that in the royal porch at Athens he saw the figure of Theseus modeled in clay, and by him Sciron the robber,

falling headlong into the sea. Then he went a long day's journey, past Megara, into the Attic land, and high before him rose the snow-peaks of Cithæron, all cold above the black pine-woods, where haunt the Furies, and the raving Bacchæ, and the nymphs who drive men wild, far aloft upon the dreary mountains, where the storms howl all day long. And on his right hand was the sea always, and Salamis, with its island cliffs, and the sacred strait of the sea-fight, where afterwards the Persians fled before the Greeks. So he went all day until the evening, till he saw the Thriasian plain, and the sacred city of Eleusis, where the Earth-mother's temple stands. For there she met Triptolemus, when all the land lay waste, Demeter the kind Earth-mother, and in her hands a sheaf of corn. And she taught him to plough the fallows, and to yoke the lazy kine; and she taught him to sow the seed-fields, and to reap the golden grain; and sent him forth to teach all nations, and give corn to laboring men. So at Eleusis all men honor her, whosoever tills the land; her and Triptolemus her beloved, who gave corn to laboring men.

And he went along the plain into Eleusis, and stood in the market-place, and cried, "Where is Kerkuon, the king of the city? I must wrestle a fall with him today."

Then all the people crowded round him, and cried, "Fair youth, why will you die? Hasten out of the city, before the cruel king hears that a stranger is here."

But Theseus went up through the town, while the people wept and prayed, and through the gates of the palace yard, and through the piles of bones and skulls, till he came to the door of Kerkuon's hall, the terror of all mortal men.

And there he saw Kerkuon sitting at the table in the hall alone; and before him was a whole sheep roasted, and beside him a whole jar of wine. And Theseus stood and called him, "Holla, thou valiant wrestler, wilt thou wrestle a fall today?"

And Kerkuon looked up and laughed, and answered, "I will wrestle a fall today; but come in, for I am lonely and thou weary, and eat and drink before thou die."

Then Theseus went up boldly, and sat down before Kerkuon at the board; and he ate his fill of the sheep's flesh, and drank his fill of the wine; and Theseus ate enough for three men, but Kerkuon ate enough for seven.

But neither spoke a word to the other, though they looked across the table by stealth; and each said in his heart, "He has broad shoulders; but I trust mine are as broad as his."

At last, when the sheep was eaten and the jar of wine drained dry, King Kerkuon rose, and cried, "Let us wrestle a fall before we sleep."

So they tossed off all their garments, and went forth in the palace-yard; and Kerkuon bade strew fresh sand in an open space between the bones. And there the heroes stood face to face, while their eyes glared like wild bulls'; and all the people crowded at the gates to see what would befall.

And there they stood and wrestled, till the stars shone out above their heads; up and down and round, till the sand was stamped hard beneath their

feet. And their eyes flashed like stars in the darkness, and their breath went up like smoke in the night air; but neither took nor gave a footstep, and the people watched silent at the gates.

But at last Kerkuon grew angry, and caught Theseus round the neck, and shook him as a mastiff shakes a rat; but he could not shake him off his feet.

But Theseus was quick and wary, and clasped Kerkuon round the waist, and slipped his loin quickly underneath him, while he caught him by the wrist; and then he hove a mighty heave, a heave which would have stirred an oak, and lifted Kerkuon, and pitched him, right over his shoulder on the ground.

Then he leapt on him, and called, "Yield, or I kill thee!" but Kerkuon said no word; for his heart was burst within him, with the fall, and the meat, and the wine.

Then Theseus opened the gates, and called in all the people; and they cried, "You have slain our evil king; be you now our king, and rule us well."

"I will be your king in Eleusis, and I will rule you right and well; for this cause I have slain all evil-doers—Sinis, and Sciron, and this man last of all."

Then an aged man stepped forth, and said, "Young hero, hast thou slain Sinis? Beware then of Ægeus, king of Athens, to whom thou goest, for he is near of kin to Sinis."

"Then I have slain my own kinsman," said Theseus, "though well he deserved to die. Who will purge me from his death, for rightfully I slew him, unrighteous and accursed as he was?"

And the old man answered, "That will the heroes do, the sons of Phytalus, who dwell beneath the elm tree in Aphidnai, by the bank of silver Cephisus; for they know the mysteries of the Gods. Thither you shall go and be purified, and after you shall be our king."

So he took an oath of the people of Eleusis, that they would serve him as their king, and went away next morning across the Thriasian plain, and over the hills toward Aphidnai, that he might find the sons of Phytalus.

And as he was skirting the Vale of Cephisus, along the foot of lofty Parnes, a very tall and strong man came down to meet him, dressed in rich garments. On his arms were golden bracelets, and round his neck a collar of jewels; and he came forward, bowing courteously, and held out both his hands, and spoke, "Welcome, fair youth, to these mountains; happy am I to have met you! For what greater pleasure to a good man, than to entertain strangers? But I see that you are weary. Come up to my castle, and rest yourself awhile."

"I give you thanks," said Theseus; "but I am in haste to go up the valley, and to reach Aphidnai in the Vale of Cephisus."

"Alas! you have wandered far from the right way, and you cannot reach Aphidnai tonight, for there are many miles of mountain between you and it, and steep passes, and cliffs dangerous after nightfall. It is well for you that I met you; for my whole joy is to find strangers, and to feast them at my castle, and hear tales from them of foreign lands. Come up with me, and eat the best of

venison, and drink the rich red wine; and sleep upon my famous bed, of which all travelers say that they never saw the like. For whatsoever the stature of my guest, however tall or short, that bed fits him to a hair, and he sleeps on it as he never slept before." And he laid hold on Theseus' hands, and would not let him go.

Theseus wished to go forwards: but he was ashamed to seem churlish to so hospitable a man; and he was curious to see that wondrous bed; and beside, he was hungry and weary: yet he shrank from the man, he knew not why: for, though his voice was gentle and fawning, it was dry and husky like a toad's; and though his eyes were gentle, they were dull and cold like stones. But he consented, and went with the man up a glen which led from the road toward the peaks of Parnes, under the dark shadow of the cliffs.

And as they went up, the glen grew narrower, and the cliffs higher and darker, and beneath them a torrent roared, half seen between bare limestone crags. And around there was neither tree nor bush, while from the white peaks of Parnes the snow-blasts swept down the glen, cutting and chilling, till a horror fell on Theseus, as he looked round at that doleful place. And he asked at last, "Your castle stands, it seems, in a dreary region."

"Yes, but once within it, hospitality makes all things cheerful. But who are these?" and he looked back, and Theseus also; and far below, along the road which they had left, came a string of laden asses, and merchants walking by them, watching their ware.

"Ah, poor souls!" said the stranger. "Well for them that I looked back and saw them! And well for me too, for I shall have the more guests at my feast. Wait awhile till I go down and call them, and we will eat and drink together the livelong night. Happy am I, to whom Heaven sends so many guests at once!"

And he ran back down the hill, waving his hand and shouting to the merchants, while Theseus went slowly up the steep pass.

But as he went up he met an aged man, who had been gathering driftwood in the torrent-bed. He had laid down his faggot in the road, and was trying to lift it again to his shoulder. And when he saw Theseus, he called to him, and said, "O fair youth, help me up with my burden; for my limbs are stiff and weak with years."

Then Theseus lifted the burden on his back. And the old man blest him, and then looked earnestly upon him, and said, "Who are you, fair youth, and wherefore travel you this doleful road?"

"Who I am my parents know: but I travel this doleful road because I have been invited by a hospitable man, who promises to feast me, and to make me sleep upon I know not what wondrous bed."

Then the old man clapped his hands together and cried, "O house of Hades, man-devouring; will thy maw never be full? Know, fair youth, that you are going to torment and to death; for he who met you (I will requite your kindness by another) is a robber and a murderer of men. Whatsoever stranger he meets he

entices him hither to death; and as for this bed of which he speaks, truly it fits all comers, yet none ever rose alive off it save me.”

“Why?” asked Theseus, astonished.

“Because, if a man be too tall for it, he lops his limbs till they be short enough, and if he be too short, he stretches his limbs till they be long enough: but me only he spared, seven weary years ago; for I alone of all fitted his bed exactly, so he spared me, and made me his slave. And once I was a wealthy merchant, and dwelt in brazen-gated Thebes; but now I hew wood and draw water for him, the torment of all mortal men.”

Then Theseus said nothing; but he ground his teeth together.

“Escape, then,” said the old man, “for he will have no pity on thy youth. But yesterday he brought up hither a young man and a maiden, and fitted them upon his bed: and the young man’s hands and feet he cut off; but the maiden’s limbs he stretched until she died, and so both perished miserably—but I am tired of weeping over the slain. And therefore he is called Procrustes the stretcher, though his father called him Damastes. Flee from him: yet whither will you flee? The cliffs are steep, and who can climb them? And there is no other road.”

But Theseus laid his hand upon the old man’s mouth, and said, “There is no need to flee”; and he turned to go down the pass.

“Do not tell him that I have warned you, or he will kill me by some evil death”; and the old man screamed after him down the glen; but Theseus strode on in his wrath.

And he said to himself, “This is an ill-ruled land; when shall I have done ridding it of monsters?” And as he spoke, Procrustes came up the hill, and all the merchants with him, smiling and talking gaily. And when he saw Theseus, he cried, “Ah, fair young guest, have I kept you too long waiting?”

But Theseus answered, “The man who stretches his guests upon a bed and hews off their hands and feet, what shall be done to him, when right is done throughout the land?”

Then Procrustes’ countenance changed, and his cheeks grew as green as a lizard, and he felt for his sword in haste; but Theseus leapt on him, and cried, “Is this true, my host, or is it false?” and he clasped Procrustes’ round waist and elbow, so that he could not draw his sword.

“Is this true, my host, or is it false?” But Procrustes answered never a word.

Then Theseus flung him from him, and lifted up his dreadful club; and before Procrustes could strike him he had struck, and felled him to the ground.

And once again he struck him; and his evil soul fled forth, and went down to Hades squeaking, like a bat into the darkness of a cave.

Then Theseus stript him of his gold ornaments, and went up to his house, and found there great wealth and treasure, which he had stolen from the passers by. And he called the people of the country, whom Procrustes had spoiled a long time, and parted the spoil among them, and went down the mountains, and away.

And he went down the glens of Parnes, through mist, and cloud, and rain, down the slopes of oak, and lentisk, and arbutus, and fragrant bay, till he came to the Vale of Cephissus, and the pleasant town of Aphidnai, and the home of the Phytalid heroes, where they dwelt beneath a mighty elm.

And there they built an altar, and bade him bathe in Cephissus, and offer a yearling ram, and purified him from the blood of Sinis, and sent him away in peace.

And he went down the valley by Acharnai, and by the silver-swirling stream, while all the people blessed him, for the fame of his prowess had spread wide, till he saw the plain of Athens, and the hill where Athené dwells.

So Theseus went up through Athens, and all the people ran out to see him; for his fame had gone before him and every one knew of his mighty deeds. And all cried, "Here comes the hero who slew Sinis, and Phaia the wild sow of Crommyon, and conquered Kerkuon in wrestling, and slew Procrustes the pitiless." But Theseus went on sadly and steadfastly; for his heart yearned after his father; and he said, "How shall I deliver him from these leeches who suck his blood?"

So he went up the holy stairs, and into the Acropolis, where Ægeus' palace stood; and he went straight into Ægeus' hall, and stood upon the threshold, and looked round.

And there he saw his cousins sitting about the table, at the wine; many a son of Pallas, but no Ægeus among them. There they sat and feasted, and laughed, and passed the wine-cup round; while harpers harped, and slave girls sang, and the tumblers showed their tricks.

Loud laughed the sons of Pallas, and fast went the wine-cup round; but Theseus frowned, and said under his breath, "No wonder that the land is full of robbers, while such as these bear rule."

Then the Pallantids saw him, and called to him, half-drunk with wine, "Holla, tall stranger at the door, what is your will today?"

"I come hither to ask for hospitality."

"Then take it, and welcome. You look like a hero and a bold warrior; and we like such to drink with us."

"I ask no hospitality of you; I ask it of Ægeus the king, the master of this house."

At that some growled, and some laughed, and shouted, "Heyday! We are all masters here."

"Then I am master as much as the rest of you," said Theseus, and he strode past the table up the hall, and looked around for Ægeus; but he was nowhere to be seen.

The Pallantids looked at him, and then at each other, and each whispered to the man next him, "This is a forward fellow; he ought to be thrust out at the door." But each man's neighbor whispered in return, "His shoulders are broad; will you rise and put him out?" So they all sat still where they were.

Then Theseus called to the servants, and said, "Go tell King Ægeus, your master, that Theseus of Trœzene is here, and asks to be his guest awhile."

A servant ran and told Ægeus, where he sat in his chamber within, by Medeia the dark witch-woman, watching her eye and hand. And when Ægeus heard of Trœzene he turned pale and red again; and rose from his seat trembling, while Medeia watched him like a snake.

“What is Trœzene to you?” she asked.

But he said hastily, “Do you not know who this Theseus is? The hero who has cleared the country from all monsters; but that he came from Trœzene, I never heard before. I must go out and welcome him.”

So Ægeus came out into the hall; and when Theseus saw him, his heart leapt into his mouth, and he longed to fall on his neck and welcome him; but he controlled himself, and said, “My father may not wish for me, after all. I will try him before I discover myself”; and he bowed low before Ægeus, and said, “I have delivered the king’s realm from many monsters; therefore I am come to ask a reward of the king.”

And old Ægeus looked on him, and loved him, as what fond heart would not have done? But he only sighed, and said, “It is little that I can give you, noble lad, and nothing that is worthy of you; for surely you are no mortal man, or at least no mortal’s son.”

“All I ask,” said Theseus, “is to eat and drink at your table.”

“That I can give you,” said Ægeus, “if at least I am master in my own hall.”

Then he bade them put a seat for Theseus, and set before him the best of the feast; and Theseus sat and ate so much, that all the company wondered at him: but always he kept his club by his side.

But Medeia the dark witch-woman had been watching him all the while. She saw how Ægeus turned red and pale, when the lad said that he came from Trœzene. She saw, too, how his heart was opened toward Theseus; and how Theseus bore himself before all the sons of Pallas, like a lion among a pack of curs. And she said to herself, “This youth will be master here; perhaps he is nearer to Ægeus already than mere fancy. At least the Pallantids will have no chance by the side of such as he.”

Then she went back into her chamber modestly, while Theseus ate and drank; and all the servants whispered, “This, then, is the man who killed the monsters! How noble are his looks, and how huge his size! Ah, would that he were our master’s son!”

But presently Medeia came forth, decked in all her jewels, and her rich Eastern robes, and looking more beautiful than the day; so that all the guests could look at nothing else. And in her right hand she held a golden cup, and in her left a flask of gold; and she came up to Theseus, and spoke in a sweet, soft, winning voice, “Hail to the hero, the conqueror, the unconquered, the destroyer of all evil things! Drink, hero, of my charmed cup, which gives rest after every toil, which heals all wounds, and pours new life into the veins. Drink of my cup, for in it sparkles the wine of the East, and Nepenthe, the comfort of the Immortals.”



And as she spoke, she poured the flask into the cup; and the fragrance of the wine spread through the hall, like the scent of thyme and roses.

And Theseus looked up in her fair face, and into her deep dark eyes. And as he looked, he shrank and shuddered; for they were dry like the eyes of a snake. And he rose, and said, "The wine is rich and fragrant, and the wine-bearer as fair as the Immortals; but let her pledge me first herself in the cup, that the wine may be the sweeter from her lips."

Then Medeia turned pale, and stammered, "Forgive me, fair hero; but I am ill, and dare drink no wine."

And Theseus looked again into her eyes, and cried, "Thou shalt pledge me in that cup, or die." And he lifted up his brazen club, while all the guests looked on aghast.

Medeia shrieked a fearful shriek, and dashed the cup to the ground, and fled; and where the wine flowed over the marble pavement, the stone bubbled, and crumbled, and hissed, under the fierce venom of the draught.

But Medeia called her dragon chariot, and sprang into it and fled aloft, away over land and sea, and no man saw her more.

And Ægeus cried, "What hast thou done?"

But Theseus pointed to the stone. "I have rid the land of an enchantment: now I will rid it of one more."

And he came close to Ægeus, and drew from his bosom the sword and the sandals, and said the words which his mother bade him.

And Ægeus stepped back a pace, and looked at the lad till his eyes grew dim; and then he cast himself on his neck and wept, and Theseus wept on his neck, till they had no strength left to weep more.

Then Ægeus turned to all the people, and cried, "Behold my son, children of Cecrops, a better man than his father was before him."

Who, then, were mad but the Pallantids, though they had been mad enough before? And one shouted, "Shall we make room for an upstart, a pretender, who comes from we know not where?" And another, "If he be one, we are more than one; and the stronger can hold his own." And one shouted one thing, and one another; for they were hot and wild with wine: but all caught swords and lances off the wall, where the weapons hung around, and sprang forward to Theseus, and Theseus sprang forward to them.

And he cried, "Go in peace, if you will, my cousins; but if not, your blood be on your own heads." But they rushed at him; and then stopped short and railed him, as curs stop and bark when they rouse a lion from his lair.

But one hurled a lance from the rear rank, which passed close by Theseus' head; and at that Theseus rushed forward, and the fight began indeed. Twenty against one they fought, and yet Theseus beat them all; and those who were left fled down into the town, where the people set on them, and drove them out, till Theseus was left alone in the palace, with Ægeus his new-found father. But before nightfall all the town came up, with victims, and dances, and songs; and

they offered sacrifices to Athené, and rejoiced all the night long, because their king had found a noble son, and an heir to his royal house.

So Theseus stayed with his father all the winter; and when the spring equinox drew near, all the Athenians grew sad and silent, and Theseus saw it, and asked the reason; but no one would answer him a word.

Then he went to his father, and asked him: but Ægeus turned away his face and wept. “Do not ask, my son, beforehand, about evils which must happen: it is enough to have to face them when they come.”

And when the spring equinox came, a herald came to Athens, and stood in the market, and cried, “O people and King of Athens, where is your yearly tribute?” Then a great lamentation arose throughout the city. But Theseus stood up to the herald, and cried, “And who are you, dog-faced, who dare demand tribute here? If I did not reverence your herald’s staff, I would brain you with this club.”

And the herald answered proudly, for he was a grave and ancient man, “Fair youth, I am not dog-faced or shameless; but I do my master’s bidding, Minos, the King of hundred-cities Crete, the wisest of all kings on earth. And you must be surely a stranger here, or you would know why I come, and that I come by right.”

“I am a stranger here. Tell me, then, why you come?”

“To fetch the tribute which King Ægeus promised to Minos, and confirmed his promise with an oath. For Minos conquered all this land, and Megara which lies to the east, when he came hither with a great fleet of ships, enraged about the murder of his son. For his son Androgeos came hither to the Panathenaic games, and overcame all the Greeks in the sports, so that the people honored him as a hero. But when Ægeus saw his valor, he envied him, and feared lest he should join the sons of Pallas, and take away the scepter from him. So he plotted against his life, and slew him basely, no man knows how or where. Some say that he waylaid him by Oinoe, on the road which goes to Thebes; and some that he sent him against the bull of Marathon, that the beast might kill him. But Ægeus says that the young men killed him from envy, because he had conquered them in the games. So Minos came hither and avenged him, and would not depart till this land had promised him tribute—seven youths and seven maidens every year, who go with me in a black-sailed ship, till they come to hundred-cities Crete.”

And Theseus ground his teeth together, and said, “Wert thou not a herald I would kill thee, for saying such things of my father: but I will go to him, and know the truth.” So he went to his father, and asked him; but he turned away his head and wept, and said, “Blood was shed in the land unjustly, and by blood it is avenged. Break not my heart by questions; it is enough to endure in silence.”

Then Theseus groaned inwardly, and said, “I will go myself with these youths and maidens, and kill Minos upon his royal throne.”

And Ægeus shrieked, and cried, “You shall not go, my son, the light of my old age, to whom alone I look to rule this people after I am dead and gone.

You shall not go, to die horribly, as those youths and maidens die; for Minos thrusts them into a labyrinth, which Daidalos made for him among the rocks,

Daidalos the renegade, the accursed, the pest of this his native land. From that labyrinth no one can escape, entangled in its winding ways, before they meet the Minotaur, the monster who feeds upon the flesh of men. There he devours them horribly, and they never see this land again.”

Then Theseus grew red, and his ears tingled, and his heart beat loud in his bosom. And he stood awhile like a tall stone pillar, on the cliffs above some hero’s grave; and at last he spoke, “Therefore all the more I will go with them, and slay the accursed beast. Have I not slain all evil-doers and monsters, that I might free this land? Where are Periphetes, and Sinis, and Kerkuon, and Phaia the wild sow? Where are the fifty sons of Pallas? And this Minotaur shall go the road which they have gone, and Minos himself, if he dare stay me.”

“But how will you slay him, my son? For you must leave your club and your armor behind, and be cast to the monster, defenseless and naked like the rest.”

And Theseus said, “Are there no stones in that labyrinth; and have I not fists and teeth? Did I need my club to kill Kerkuon, the terror of all mortal men?”

Then Ægeus clung to his knees; but he would not hear; and at last he let him go, weeping bitterly, and said only this one word, “Promise me but this, if you return in peace, though that may hardly be: take down the black sail of the ship, (for I shall watch for it all day upon the cliffs,) and hoist instead a white sail, that I may know afar off that you are safe.”

And Theseus promised, and went out, and to the market-place where the herald stood, while they drew lots for the youths and maidens, who were to sail in that doleful crew. And the people stood wailing and weeping, as the lot fell on this one and on that: but Theseus strode into the midst, and cried, “Here is a youth who needs no lot. I myself will be one of the seven.”

And the herald asked in wonder, “Fair youth, know you whither you are going?”

And Theseus said, “I know. Let us go down to the black-sailed ship.”

So they went down to the black-sailed ship, seven maidens, and seven youths, and Theseus before them all, and the people following them lamenting. But Theseus whispered to his companions, “Have hope, for the monster is not immortal. Where are Periphetes, and Sinis, and Sciron, and all whom I have slain?” Then their hearts were comforted a little: but they wept as they went on board, and the cliffs of Sunium rang, and all the isles of the Ægean Sea, with the voice of their lamentation, as they sailed on toward their deaths in Crete.

## ALCESTIS

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Menzies, Louisa. *Lives of the Greek Heroines*. London: George Bell and Sons, 1880, 14–31.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Greece

**National Origin:** Greece

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This Greek **myth** provided the prototype for “Alcestis” (AT 899). The narrative also inspired a play by the Greek dramatist Euripides (480 B.C.E.–406 B.C.E.).

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**I**n ancient days, when the life of men upon earth was simple, and when war and the chase were the occupation of the young, and the words of the aged were hearkened to like the oracles of the gods, there reigned in Iolchos a haughty king—Pelias, the son of Kretheus and Tyro—whose court became famous among the neighbor princes for his four fair daughters, Peisidike, Pelopeia, Hippothoe, and Alcestis. Of all the four by far the loveliest was Alcestis, for she was not only beautiful in form and face like her sisters, but so sweet a soul dwelt in her that her natural beauty was made ten times greater by the light that streamed forth from within. The king, Pelias, loved all his daughters, but to Alcestis, the youngest, his heart clung with the tenderest affection, for she was the crown and comfort of his age, abundant in love and tender care for him; so that Pelias, unable to bear the thought of parting with her, declared that he would give her in marriage to no one who did not come to claim her in a chariot drawn by boars and lions.

Lovely as Alcestis was, this haughty mandate had the effect of keeping many a gallant chief away, for who was so wise or so strong as to tame the lion and make him run obedient to the rein as a yoke fellow to the tusked boar? But there was one who had gazed upon Alcestis until the thought of her was present to him night and day, and to want her seemed as bad as to want the light and air of heaven, Admetus, the son of Pheres, King of Pherae, who had stood by Meleager when he smote the Kalydonian boar, and had sailed with Jason into the Black Euxine in search of the golden fleece; but now he cared no longer for the chase or travel, all he wished for was to rest in his father’s house and rule his people, if only he could win Alcestis to be his wife. Day and night the thought of her troubled him, so that his sleep departed from him, and all the business and pleasure of his life seemed unprofitable and dull.

“O thou Far-darter,” he prayed, stretching out his hands to the sun-god [Apollo], when his first beams smote the earth, “thou who hast thyself sorrowed for thy lost Daphne, thou who sendest hope and joy to men, be thou my helper, and teach me how to obey the mandate of the haughty king, or thyself take away this life which is bitter to me!”

Thus he prayed in his chamber when there was none but Phoebus [an epithet of Apollo meaning “radiant one”] to hearken; thus he prayed at midday aloud in the temple, amid the savor of burnt sacrifices, and the son of Latina

heard him as he sat in the groves of his beloved Cynthus—heard him and pitied him. And he taught him how to win the noble nature of the lion to accept the guidance of his hand, and gave him a subtle charm to tame the fierce anger of the boar, so that the two princes of the forest submitted to be yoked to the polished chariot, and bore the son of Pheres on his happy journey through the flowery Thessalian land, obedient to his word and hand as well trained horses.

King Pelias was much amazed to be informed that a suitor had come to seek the princess Alcestis, driving in his chariot a lion and a boar; but when he came forth and beheld the brave Admetus, a neighbor prince and an honored friend, he was well content, and, dearly as he loved Alcestis, he gave her with a good grace to the wooer, who had proved his courage and his skill, and, what was better yet in the eyes of a loving father, whom the gods who live forever honored with their counsel and help.

The nuptials were celebrated with joy and feasting, and Pelias bade adieu to his beloved child whom he was never to behold again; for before a year was over the happiness of Admetus and Alcestis was broken by the terrible news that Medeia, the dark-browed wife whom Jason had brought home from Kolchis, having by her magic restored youth to Aeson, the father of Jason, had been entreated by the daughters of Pelias to bestow the same boon upon their father; but the cruel woman, having made the credulous girls slay their father, with a view to raising him again in all his youthful vigor, forsook them, and, mocking their agony, left them to weep in vain over the mangled corpse.

This bitter sorrow was for many years the only trouble that darkened the life of Alcestis; in all else she was blessed beyond the common lot of women. Admetus loved her as a husband, and he trusted her as a friend. Two happy, healthy children were the crown of their wedded lives, and in house and field all went well with them.

Now there came to Pherae a stranger, noble in face and bearing, but clad like a poor countryman, who begged of Admetus to give him shelter and employment among his flocks and herds for a season, during which a stern fate compelled him to live an exile from his home. Admetus was too noble to ask him any question, he knew that some calamity was the cause—some homicide, perhaps for in those stormy days, when weapons were forever in the hands of men, it was no strange thing for the life of a hero to be darkened by the slaughter of a friend or kinsman in sudden anger or even by mischance, and he would fain have made much of the stranger, and kept him in his own palace and at his own table; but he chose rather to dwell in the fields among the quiet cattle, and to hide the sorrow that was darkening his life from the eyes of men. Then all things prospered more than ever at Pherae, and such a splendid race of horses grew up in the royal pastures that men began to wonder at the strange shepherd, and to whisper to each other that never man nor hero had such creative power as to make out of common horses creatures so divine that, but for the lack of wings, they might have matched with Pegasus himself, and that the strains of

music that came from the fields where the shepherd dwelt were sweeter and purer than any music which mortal bard could make.

The strange shepherd was in good sooth no other than the mighty Phoebus himself, banished from Olympus for seven long years because he had slain the Cyclops who had forged the thunderbolt with which Jove had slain his dear son, Aesculapius; but although he went in and out among men in the guise of a servant, he had not ceased to commune with the heavenly beings. His brother, Hermes, especially—perhaps not without the will of Jove—came to him often as he sat among the sheep in the Thessalian valleys, and through him it came to the knowledge of Phoebus that a calamity overhung the house of Admetus, which even he could not turn aside. The Moirae [Fates] in their dark counsels had decreed the death of the King himself, the day, the very hour was appointed, and he must quit wife and house and lands for the sunless regions of the dead.

Then was Phoebus very sorrowful—as sorrowful as the immortals who know the present, the past, and the future can be—and he sought the Moirae in their sanctuary at Thebes, and there, with all his divine eloquence, he plied them that he might wrest from them deliverance for Admetus—at least, as long as he himself should sojourn upon earth. But the Moirae were stern; what had once passed their lips could not be recalled. Only this much did the power of the sun-god wring from them: that if another head from the house of Admetus—a head as royal as his—were yielded to Thanatos [Death] instead of his, the span of his life might be lengthened. With this favor Phoebus was fain at length to return, nor did the condition seem very hard to him, for in the house of Admetus still dwelt Pheres and Periklymene, father and mother of the king, old folk worn with age and weakness, who often seemed wearying for the Lethe stream, and who would surely vie with each other as to which should pass into the house of Hades for the sake of their son. But Phoebus, wise and all-seeing though he was, knew not yet how dull and timorous old age is, and the proposal, though made with all the god's wisdom, sounded harsh and cruel to the old folk. "I have yielded to my son the scepter of my fathers, ever imperishable," said Pheres, impatiently tapping the earth with his staff; "I have endowed him in my lifetime with cities and treasures is it not enough? Does he grudge me the few days I have to live?"

"I risked my life for him once," cried Periklymene, weeping; "nor did I grudge, as mothers often do who wear a queenly crown, to nourish him, a helpless infant, at my breast. Have I not loved him enough? How can he ask me, weak and ill as I am, to bear more pain for him? I must have a little peace before I die. Alas! Who knows what he shall meet in the dusky house of Hades?"

And the old people, in their displeasure, failed not to murmur to the queen Alcestis at the strange shepherd and at his unreasonable talk. They wist not that it was Phoebus, the mighty sun-god, who was dwelling with them in a lowly disguise. When Alcestis at length understood, amid their complaints, that great

and sudden evil was said to threaten her husband, her heart was consumed with anxiety. She hastened to seek the shepherd, and she found him under a laurel shade, crooning softly to himself a hymn to one beloved and dead. It was, indeed, to the spirit of his dear son, the hero Aesculapius, but this the queen knew not; only as she drew near, the tender grief of the singer, and the sweet, soft strains of the lyre caused her to stop and, full of trouble as she was, to hearken and to shed tears for a grief that was not her own. And so she stood silent and awe-struck, what was divine in her soul causing her to recognize the divinity in the poorly clad shepherd, until Phoebus saw her, and, ceasing from his song, he rose up and stood humbly before her, as it becomes a shepherd to stand before an honored queen.

“O wondrous stranger!” said Alcestis; “for I dare not call thee shepherd, though now thou dwellest for a while in the pastures of Admetus—what are these strange tidings that have troubled the minds of Pheres and Periklymene? Is it indeed divine truth that the life of the noble Admetus is in danger, and that he, young and gracious as he is, is threatened with destruction? Speak, friend, for I know that the days of thy prince are precious in thine eyes, and that thou wilt tell no idle tale to fright us.”

“Alas! madam, it is true.”

“And is there no escape, no possibility of delay?”

“None, for neither father nor mother will die for him.”

“If Pheres or Periklymene would have entered the house of Hades in his stead, might Admetus have lived?”

“Ay, madam; so much did Phoebus, who cares for Admetus, obtain from the Moirae.”

“Blessed be he of the silver bow!” exclaimed the queen. “Never shall his shrine want for garlands, or his altar for burnt sacrifice! But if the Moirae would have taken the life of the aged Pheres or the feeble Periklymene for that of the blameless Admetus, the evil cannot be past cure. I will die for him, and it cannot be but that Thanatos will receive my life instead of that of the poor old folk who are ready to drop like ripe grain into his hands.”

At these words of the queen a divine beauty shone like a halo from the face of the disguised god, but he controlled himself.

“Hast thou well considered what it is that thou proposest to thyself?” he said. “Thou art still young and fair, a mother of dear children; how wilt thou endure to pass from the warmth of life and love into the sunless tracts of those below?”

“This house would be cold and sunless to me if Admetus were away; besides, it is the bounden duty of the wife to suffer all things for her husband.”

“But to leave thy dear children to the will of an unjust stepmother?”

A sadness passed across the brow of Alcestis at these words of the god tempting her; but it was like the shadow of a summer cloud thrown on a great corn-field, which passes swiftly, leaving the golden grain brighter than before.

“Admetus will care for the children,” she said, “and if he give them a step-mother, the gods will put it into her heart to be gentle to them for the sake of my act; but be that as it may, but for Admetus, the children would never have lain in my bosom. It would be hard, indeed, if they should be a hindrance to his safety.”

“Noble art thou among women!” exclaimed the approving god. “Do what is in thine heart, and be a blessed name among the nations, even to the islands of the furthest west.”

When Admetus learnt, as he did from Phoebus himself, how his wife had chosen to give her life for his, he would gladly have borne the fate appointed for him by the Moirae, and have died at the due time; but the will of the goddesses and the love of Alcestis overbore all opposition, and with tortured heart he awaited the fatal day.

At length it dawned, and Phoebus himself shrunk away into the glades of Pelion at the presence of the dusky Thanatos, who came duly to claim his prize. A mortal weakness seized the failing queen; her spirit, obedient to the summons, followed the irresistible king, and her sweet body lay silent and cold in the arms of her weeping women.

Hardly was the parting agony over, while the funeral rites were preparing, lo! there came to the palace gates a traveler in sore need of food and rest, and according to the pious custom of those ancient days the need of the wayfarer was attended to before all else. Had he come at another time, how welcome would this traveler have been; for it was no other than the mighty Herakles on his way to Thrace, whither he had been sent by his tyrant Eurystheus to fetch the fire-breathing horses of Diomedes. Even as it was, in such honor did Admetus hold the hero, that he bade his attendants suspend their lamentations, and conduct the preparations for the funeral in a part of the palace where no sounds of woe would reach the great hall where the feast for the guest would be spread, and himself, with feigned cheerfulness, went to greet his friend. The kindly hero, however, was at once struck by the fact that Admetus had his hair clipped short in the fashion of a mourner, and he asked the reason.

Admetus replied that there was a funeral that day, which he would be obliged to attend. “The gods forbid,” cried Herakles, anxiously, “that any evil may have befallen either of thy children?”

“My children,” returned Admetus, “both live and are well.”

“If thou mournest for thy father,” questioned Herakles again, “he must be now well on in years.”

“My father and my mother are both alive, Herakles.”

“It cannot be Alcestis, thy wife?” exclaimed the hero in dismay.

Then Admetus put great force upon himself; for he knew how Herakles honored the noble Alcestis, and that if he knew what the sorrow was that brooded over his house, he would, weary as he was, trudge onward, with spent strength and sorrowing heart, rather than give any trouble in the house,



bereaved of its mistress. So he said that the dead was indeed a woman—a foreign woman—one who had dwelt long under his roof, and very dear to them all. Then Herakles would have gone onward to seek hospitality elsewhere, but this Admetus would not hear of. He conducted him into the great hall, and charging his steward and his principal attendants to supply him with all he could desire, himself withdrew for awhile to direct the funeral rites and give way to his natural sorrow.

Herakles had fasted long and traveled far, and sweet was the rest, and the bowl of warm water for his feet, and the tender hands of the careful old woman who chafed and dried them; but most sweet the steaming flesh of sheep and oxen, and the fine white bread, and the honey-sweet wine which crowned his bowl. Royally the lusty hero ate and drank, but there was one hindrance to his comfort, which pressed upon him more as his hunger and thirst began to be appeased.

Though Admetus had charged his people on no account to let Herakles see that they were in trouble, they were not able to control altogether their grief, and, indeed, were not a little concerned at what seemed to them want of proper respect to their dear mistress, whose gracious kindness had made their lives pleasant to them, and many a time and oft had turned aside their master's wrath. Now Herakles feared not man nor beast. He could slay a hydra or face a fire-breathing horse, but he could not endure a clouded countenance or a dull, unsympathetic manner, and considering the steward's grief out of bounds for an event so common as death—the death of a slave, however faithful and however honored—he bade him quaff a goblet of wine to rouse his dull spirits, and to crown his head with a chaplet of fresh leaves. "For," added he, cheerily, "wist thou not that we are all to die? Is it not common sense, then, to accept death with a good courage? If a man indulges in gloom and melancholy, life is not life, but a calamity."

"I know that right well," replied the steward, the tears standing in his eyes; "but it is not in the power of all the laughter and jollity in the world to drown the memory of the grief which now compasseth us about."

"A woman of a strange land is dead—so much the worse for her; but when your king and his house are well"

"Our king and his house!" exclaimed the steward, "Alas! Sir, you know not the grief under which we groan."

"Can it be that your lord has deceived me?" cried Herakles, in alarm.

"Admetus holds the rites of hospitality in such honor that he would sacrifice everything to them. It is, indeed, a woman of a strange country who dead, but no slave, alas!"

"Could it be," said Herakles, "that Admetus was really in bitter grief himself, yet hid it from me?"

"Yes, for he would not sadden thee. But seest thou not how our heads are shaven, and what black robes we wear? No common grief, no servile mourning this."

"Who, then, is dead?" impatiently exclaimed the hero.

“The wife of Admetus, guest-friend!” cried the steward; and he hid his face in his mantle, unable longer to control his tears.

“And yet ye received me and made me a feast?”

“Yes, for it was his will; he honors Zeus Zenius too much to thrust thee away.” “Poor prince! What a wife to lose!”

“Ay, sir, we are all undone; she was the light and comfort of the house.”

“I saw,” said Herakles, “that as he spoke to me his eyes were full of tears—I saw his mourning garments and his shaven head; but I believed what he told me of a foreign woman who was to be buried—a foreign woman indeed was the matchless Alcestis, but who so near and dear? A voice within me warned me that I should turn aside from the house, but I would not hearken to it. To think that I should have drunk and feasted in the house of a man so overwhelmed with sorrow! Tell me, man, tell me where he has buried her, that I too may mourn over her.”

Then the steward’s tongue was loosened and he told to Herakles the whole story of the fate that had threatened Admetus, and how the Moirae had been won to accept another life, as noble, instead of his, and how Alcestis, gaining knowledge of this, had given her own life for his, “as noble a life,” said the weeping steward, “as ever was lived upon this earth.” Herakles listened without a word to all the story, moved to the bottom of his great soul at the virtue of Alcestis, and stung with shame at his own dullness in not searching more deeply into the source of the sorrow in the house, and there entered into his heart a wonderful resolution, even to enter once more realms of Hades, whence he had already dragged three-headed Cerberus for Eurystheus to see, and wrest the newly flown spirit from the grasp of Thanatos. Such seemed to him the only fit compensation he could make to her or to Admetus for breaking upon them in their sorrow. So without more delay hastened to the tomb—now richly spread with honey cakes, and silent—and lay in wait until, as he expected Thanatos came to regale himself on the offerings; then he rushed out upon him, and grasping him in his arms would by no means let him go until he promised bring back the queen alive to the earth.

Admetus meanwhile was so overwhelmed with sorrow that he could not gather courage to return to his widowed home: the tender memories of his wedded life came back to him, and in his loneliness he envied her who was dead, thinking that he would gladly have leapt into the pit where her body was laid, and been covered up with her out of the sight of men.

While he still lingered outside the palace, he was surprised to behold the guest, whom he believed to be resting safely in his guest-chamber, approach him leading by the hand a veiled woman. Herakles at once and frankly reproached him for leaving him in ignorance of so momentous a truth as the death of his wife, since between friends all speech should be free and open; but he said that though he had just cause complaint against him, he would not add to his sorrow but would show him the trust he still placed in his friendship by giving into his

charge a lady, the captive of his spear, whom he had much reason to honor dearly. "Do thou, Admetus," he said, "take her under thy roof, while I go to this fierce Thracian, whose horses I must needs have; and well I wot that he will not give them to me without a struggle, in which either he or I must fall. Should he be the conqueror—which the gods avert!—I make thee a present of this fair prize, won not without strain of nerve and sinew! Let her well in thine house for my sake."

"Noble Herakles," replied Admetus, "forgive me that I hid my grief from thee. How could I let thee, wayworn and weary as thou wert, toil onward in search of food and rest, and so lose to my poor house the honor of sheltering once more the first of heroes? But as to this lady, I beg thee seek entertainment for her elsewhere; there are many in Pherae who would gladly pay her all honor, to be accounted thy guest-friend. As for me, the sight of a lady about the house would move me to endless weeping, my trouble is new and heavy upon me. Your prize is young and fair—one can see that even under her veil—she would need some kindly woman to care for and to guide her. Alas! Even now she reminds me of her who is dead. For the sake of all the gods, noble Herakles, take her from my sight. When I look at her my heart leaps and the fountains of my tears are broken up; for even so did Alcestis stand, so did she move!"

"Would that Jove would give thee back thy wife, poor friend!" said Herakles.

"A vain wish, noble son of Alkmene, seeing that the dead return not to dwell in their earthly homes."

Then Herakles strove to cheer him, telling him that the time would come when the thought of second nuptials would not be painful to him; at mention of which the soul of Admetus flamed out in anger. Then Herakles again pressed him to take the strange lady into his house, and Admetus was at length persuaded to take her by the hand to conduct her into the palace, that she might abide there until he should return to reclaim her. "But," said the son of Alkmene, "before thou dost lead her in, draw aside her veil, and behold if this stranger resemble not thine own wife in feature and in complexion, as well as in height and gait, and if great and abundant joy be not prepared for thee instead of overwhelming grief."

Scarce comprehending the words of Herakles, Admetus with a trembling hand drew aside the veil that hid the countenance of the stranger, and beheld, O miracle! the true face of his beloved wife, pale indeed, but smiling on him with incomparable love. Who can tell the joy of that hour when the dear wife and mother was given back in a manner so unlooked for, and the house of mourning was turned into a house of joy?

For three days—such test the infernal gods required—Alcestis uttered no sound; but when the rites to Proserpina were duly paid and the lustral sacrifices offered, she was again the tender wife and mother, the gracious queen and mistress, full of thought and care for all, from the royal Admetus to the poor slave,

who swept the chambers. Honor first to Him of the silver bow, the ever-present honor and protection of the house, honor and love to the much-enduring Herakles, and safe end to his hard labors!

Alcestis beheld her children, Eumelus and Perimele, grow up under her kindly care to be a noble man and woman; and when at length she passed away, full of years, her passage to the realms of Hades was swift and easy as the sleep of the wayfarer weary with long travel.

## THE SEVEN-HEADED SERPENT

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Lang, Andrew. *The Yellow Fairy Book*. London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1894, 60–63.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Greece

**National Origin:** Greece

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“The Seven-Headed Serpent” modifies the basic structure of the familiar “Dragon-Slayer” (AT 300) **tale type**. As in “The Dragon Slayer,” the hero is assisted by a horse with whom he was born and kills the serpent by use of a magic sword. The motivation for the hero’s quest is provided by an episode based on “King of the Snakes” (AT 300B), and as in “The Three Stolen Princesses” (AT 301), the hero is engendered by his mother’s eating a piece of fruit (*Motif* F611.1.10). It is possible that the **motif** of the ship with black sails is inspired by the **myth** of Theseus (see “How Theseus Slew the Devourers of Men,” page 231). This tale is unusual in that the helpful agents are a convent of nuns and their abbess rather than the usual non-Christian supernatural figures of European folklore. The apple of conception and the serpent are tinged with Christian symbolism, also. Conspicuously absent from the tale is the common concluding episode of the hero’s marriage with a princess or female helper.

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Once upon a time there was a king who determined to take a long voyage. He assembled his fleet and all the seamen, and set out. They went straight on night and day, until they came to an island which was covered with large trees, and under every tree lay a lion. As soon as the King had landed his men, the lions all rose up together and tried to devour them. After a long battle they managed to overcome the wild beasts, but the greater number of the men were killed. Those who remained alive now went on through the forest and found on the other side of it a beautiful garden, in which all the plants of the world flourished together.

There were also in the garden three springs: the first flowed with silver, the second with gold, and the third with pearls. The men unbuckled their knapsacks and filled them with those precious things. In the middle of the garden they found a large lake, and when they reached the edge of it the Lake began to speak, and said to them, "What men are you, and what brings you here? Are you come to visit our king?" But they were too much frightened to answer.

Then the Lake said, "You do well to be afraid, for it is at your peril that you are come hither. Our king, who has seven heads, is now asleep, but in a few minutes he will wake up and come to me to take his bath! Woe to anyone who meets him in the garden, for it is impossible to escape from him. This is what you must do if you wish to save your lives. Take off your clothes and spread them on the path which leads from here to the castle. The King will then glide over something soft, which he likes very much, and he will be so pleased with that that he will not devour you. He will give you some punishment, but then he will let you go."

The men did as the Lake advised them, and waited for a time. At noon the earth began to quake, and opened in many places, and out of the openings appeared lions, tigers, and other wild beasts, which surrounded the castle, and thousands and thousands of beasts came out of the castle following their king, the Seven-headed Serpent. The Serpent glided over the clothes which were spread for him, came to the Lake, and asked it who had strewed those soft things on the path? The Lake answered that it had been done by people who had come to do him homage. The King commanded that the men should be brought before him. They came humbly on their knees, and in a few words told him their story. Then he spoke to them with a mighty and terrible voice, and said, "Because you have dared to come here, I lay upon you the punishment. Every year you must bring me from among your people twelve youths and twelve maidens, that I may devour them. If you do not do this, I will destroy your whole nation."

Then he desired one of his beasts to show the men the way out of the garden, and dismissed them. They then left the island and went back to their own country, where they related what had happened to them. Soon the time came round when the king of the beasts would expect the youths and maidens to be brought to him. The King therefore issued a proclamation inviting twelve youths and twelve maidens to offer themselves up to save their country; and immediately many young people, far more than enough, hastened to do so. A new ship was built, and set with black sails, and in it the youths and maidens who were appointed for the king of the beasts embarked and set out for his country. When they arrived there they went at once to the Lake, and this time the lions did not stir, nor did the springs flow, and neither did the Lake speak. So they waited then, and it was not long before the earth quaked even more terribly than the first time. The Seven-headed Serpent came without his train of beasts, saw his prey waiting for him, and devoured it at one mouthful. Then the ship's crew returned home, and the same thing happened yearly until many years had passed.

Now the King of this unhappy country was growing old, and so was the Queen, and they had no children. One day the Queen was sitting at the window weeping bitterly because she was childless, and knew that the crown would therefore pass to strangers after the King's death. Suddenly a little old woman appeared before her, holding an apple in her hand, and said, "Why do you weep, my Queen, and what makes you so unhappy?"

"Alas, good mother," answered the Queen, "I am unhappy because I have no children."

"Is that what vexes you?" said the old woman. "Listen to me. I am a nun from the Spinning Convent, and my mother when she died left me this apple. Whoever eats this apple shall have a child."

The Queen gave money to the old woman, and bought the apple from her. Then she peeled it, ate it, and threw the rind out of the window, and it so happened that a mare that was running loose in the court below ate up the rind. After a time the Queen had a little boy, and the mare also had a male foal. The boy and the foal grew up together and loved each other like brothers. In course of time the King died, and so did the Queen, and their son, who was now nineteen years old, was left alone. One day, when he and his horse were talking together, the Horse said to him, "Listen to me, for I love you and wish for your good and that of the country. If you go on every year sending twelve youths and twelve maidens to the King of the Beasts, your country will very soon be ruined. Mount upon my back: I will take you to a woman who can direct you how to kill the Seven-headed Serpent."

Then the youth mounted his horse, who carried him far away to a mountain which was hollow, for in its side was a great underground cavern. In the cavern sat an old woman spinning. This was the cloister of the nuns, and the old woman was the Abbess. They all spent their time in spinning, and that is why the convent has this name. All round the walls of the cavern there were beds cut out of the solid rock, upon which the nuns slept, and in the middle a light was burning. It was the duty of the nuns to watch the light in turns, that it might never go out, and if anyone of them let it go out the others put her to death.

As soon as the King's son saw the old Abbess spinning he threw himself at her feet and entreated her to tell him how he could kill the Seven-headed Serpent.

She made the youth rise, embraced him, and said, "Know, my son, that it is I who sent the nun to your mother and caused you to be born, and with you the horse, with whose help you will be able to free the world from the monster. I will tell you what you have to do. Load your horse with cotton, and go by a secret passage which I will show you, which is hidden from the wild beasts, to the Serpent's palace. You will find the King asleep upon his bed, which is all hung round with bells, and over his bed you will see a sword hanging. With this sword only it is possible to kill the Serpent, because even if its blade breaks a new one will grow again for every head the monster has. Thus you will be able to cut off

all his seven heads. And this you must also do in order to deceive the King: you must slip into his bed-chamber very softly, and stop up all the bells which are round his bed with cotton. Then take down the sword gently, and quickly give the monster a blow on his tail with it. This will make him waken up, and if he catches sight of you he will seize you. But you must quickly cut off his first head, and then wait till the next one comes up. Then strike it off also, and so go on till you have cut off all his seven heads.”

The old Abbess then gave the Prince her blessing, and he set out upon his enterprise, arrived at the Serpent’s castle by following the secret passage which she had shown him, and by carefully attending to all her directions he happily succeeded in killing the monster. As soon as the wild beasts heard of their king’s death, they all hastened to the castle, but the youth had long since mounted his horse and was already far out of their reach. They pursued him as fast as they could, but they found it impossible to overtake him, and he reached home in safety. Thus he freed his country from this terrible oppression.

## **THE GOLDEN CRAB**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Lang, Andrew. *The Yellow Fairy Book*. London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1894, 26–31.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Schmidt, Bernard. “Prinz Krebs.” In *Griechische Märchen*.

**National Origin:** Greece

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Unlike the previous Greek **ordinary folktale**, “The Seven-Headed Serpent” (page 253), “The Golden Crab” does not adopt Christianity as a vehicle for the miraculous deeds that transpire. Instead the core of this tale is a more straightforward **variant** of the **tale type** “The Search for the Lost Husband” (AT 425).

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Once upon a time there was a fisherman who had a wife and three children. Every morning he used to go out fishing, and whatever fish he caught he sold to the King. One day, among the other fishes, he caught a golden crab. When he came home he put all the fishes together into a great dish, but he kept the Crab separate because it shone so beautifully, and placed it upon a high shelf in the cupboard. Now while the old woman, his wife, was cleaning the fish, and had tucked up her gown so that her feet were visible, she suddenly heard a voice, which said, “Let down, let down thy petticoat, That lets thy feet be seen.”

She turned round in surprise, and then she saw the little creature, the Golden Crab. "What! You can speak, can you, you ridiculous crab?" she said, for she was not quite pleased at the Crab's remarks. Then she took him up and placed him on a dish.

When her husband came home and they sat down to dinner, they presently heard the Crab's little voice saying, "Give me some too." They were all very much surprised, but they gave him something to eat. When the old man came to take away the plate which had contained the Crab's dinner, he found it full of gold, and as the same thing happened every day he soon became very fond of the Crab.

One day the Crab said to the fisherman's wife, "Go to the King and tell him I wish to marry his younger daughter."

The old woman went accordingly, and laid the matter before the King, who laughed a little at the notion of his daughter marrying a crab, but did not decline the proposal altogether, because he was a prudent monarch, and knew that the Crab was likely to be a prince in disguise. He said, therefore, to the fisherman's wife, "Go, old woman, and tell the Crab I will give him my daughter if by tomorrow morning he can build a wall in front of my castle much higher than my tower, upon which all the flowers of the world must grow and bloom."

The fisherman's wife went home and gave this message.

Then the Crab gave her a golden rod, and said, "Go and strike with this rod three times upon the ground on the place which the King showed you, and tomorrow morning the wall will be there."

The old woman did so and went away again.

The next morning, when the King awoke, what do you think he saw? The wall stood there before his eyes, exactly as he had bespoken it!

Then the old woman went back to the King and said to him, "Your Majesty's orders have been fulfilled."

"That is all very well," said the King, "but I cannot give away my daughter until there stands in front of my palace a garden in which there are three fountains, of which the first must play gold, the second diamonds, and the third brilliants."

So the old woman had to strike again three times upon the ground with the rod, and the next morning the garden was there. The King now gave his consent, and the wedding was fixed for the very next day.

Then the Crab said to the old fisherman, "Now take this rod; go and knock with it on a certain mountain; then a black man (a Moor) will come out and ask you what you wish for. Answer him thus, 'Your master, the King, has sent me to tell you that you must send him his golden garment that is like the sun.' Make him give you, besides, the queenly robes of gold and precious stones which are like the flowery meadows, and bring them both to me. And bring me also the golden cushion."

The old man went and did his errand. When he had brought the precious robes, the Crab put on the golden garment and then crept upon the golden



cushion, and in this way the fisherman carried him to the castle, where the Crab presented the other garment to his bride. Now the ceremony took place, and when the married pair were alone together the Crab made himself known to his young wife, and told her how he was the son of the greatest king in the world, and how he was enchanted, so that he became a crab by day and was a man only at night; and he could also change himself into an eagle as often as he wished. No sooner had he said this than he shook himself, and immediately became a handsome youth, but the next morning he was forced to creep back again into his crab-shell. And the same thing happened every day. But the Princess's affection for the Crab, and the polite attention with which she behaved to him, surprised the royal family very much. They suspected some secret, but though they spied and spied, they could not discover it. Thus a year passed away, and the Princess had a son, whom she called Benjamin. But her mother still thought the whole matter very strange. At last she said to the King that he ought to ask his daughter whether she would not like to have another husband instead of the Crab? But when the daughter was questioned she only answered, "I am married to the Crab, and him only will I have."

Then the King said to her, "I will appoint a tournament in your honor, and I will invite all the princes in the world to it, and if any one of them pleases you, you shall marry him."

In the evening the Princess told this to the Crab, who said to her, "Take this rod, go to the garden gate and knock with it, then a black man will come out and say to you, 'Why have you called me, and what do you require of me?' Answer him thus, 'Your master the King has sent me hither to tell you to send him his golden armor and his steed and the silver apple.' And bring them to me."

The Princess did so, and brought him what he desired.

The following evening the Prince dressed himself for the tournament. Before he went he said to his wife, "Now mind you do not say when you see me that I am the Crab. For if you do this evil will come of it. Place yourself at the window with your sisters; I will ride by and throw you the silver apple. Take it in your hand, but if they ask you who I am, say that you do not know." So saying, he kissed her, repeated his warning once more, and went away.

The Princess went with her sisters to the window and looked on at the tournament. Presently her husband rode by and threw the apple up to her. She caught it in her hand and went with it to her room, and by-and-by her husband came back to her. But her father was much surprised that she did not seem to care about any of the Princes; he therefore appointed a second tournament.

The Crab then gave his wife the same directions as before, only this time the apple which she received from the black man was of gold. But before the Prince went to the tournament he said to his wife, "Now I know you will betray me today."

But she swore to him that she would not tell who he was. He then repeated his warning and went away.

In the evening, while the Princess, with her mother and sisters, was standing at the window, the Prince suddenly galloped past on his steed and threw her the golden apple.

Then her mother flew into a passion, gave her a box on the ear, and cried out, "Does not even that prince please you, you fool?"

The Princess in her fright exclaimed, "That is the Crab himself!"

Her mother was still more angry because she had not been told sooner, ran into her daughter's room where the crab-shell was still lying, took it up and threw it into the fire. Then the poor Princess cried bitterly, but it was of no use; her husband did not come back.

Now we must leave the Princess and turn to the other persons in the story. One day an old man went to a stream to dip in a crust of bread which he was going to eat, when a dog came out of the water, snatched the bread from his hand, and ran away. The old man ran after him, but the dog reached a door, pushed it open, and ran in, the old man following him. He did not overtake the dog, but found himself above a staircase, which he descended. Then he saw before him a stately palace, and, entering, he found in a large hall a table set for twelve persons. He hid himself in the hall behind a great picture, that he might see what would happen. At noon he heard a great noise, so that he trembled with fear. When he took courage to look out from behind the picture, he saw twelve eagles flying in. At this sight his fear became still greater. The eagles flew to the basin of a fountain that was there and bathed themselves, when suddenly they were changed into twelve handsome youths. Now they seated themselves at the table, and one of them took up a goblet filled with wine, and said, "A health to my father!" And another said, "A health to my mother!" and so the healths went round.

Then one of them said, "A health to my dearest lady, Long may she live and well! But a curse on the cruel mother, That burnt my golden shell!"

And so saying he wept bitterly. Then the youths rose from the table, went back to the great stone fountain, turned themselves into eagles again, and flew away.

Then the old man went away too, returned to the light of day, and went home. Soon after he heard that the Princess was ill, and that the only thing that did her good was having stories told to her. He therefore went to the royal castle, obtained an audience of the Princess, and told her about the strange things he had seen in the underground palace. No sooner had he finished than the Princess asked him whether he could find the way to that palace.

"Yes," he answered, "certainly."

And now she desired him to guide her thither at once. The old man did so, and when they came to the palace he hid her behind the great picture and advised her to keep quite still, and he placed himself behind the picture also. Presently the eagles came flying in, and changed themselves into young men, and in a moment the Princess recognized her husband amongst them all, and

tried to come out of her hiding-place; but the old man held her back. The youths seated themselves at the table; and now the Prince said again, while he took up the cup of wine, "A health to my dearest lady, Long may she live and well! But a curse on the cruel mother That burnt my golden shell!"

Then the Princess could restrain herself no longer, but ran forward and threw her arms round her husband. And immediately he knew her again, and said, "Do you remember how I told you that day that you would betray me? Now you see that I spoke the truth. But all that bad time is past. Now listen to me: I must still remain enchanted for three months. Will you stay here with me till that time is over?"

So the Princess stayed with him, and said to the old man, "Go back to the castle and tell my parents that I am staying here."

Her parents were very much vexed when the old man came back and told them this, but as soon as the three months of the Prince's enchantment were over, he ceased to be an eagle and became once more a man, and they returned home together. And then they lived happily, and we who hear the story are happier still

# ITALY

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## THE CRYSTAL CASKET

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Crane, Thomas Frederick. *Italian Popular Tales*. New York: Houghton, Mifflin and Co., 1885, 326–331.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Italy

**National Origin:** Italy

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Italy includes not only the southern European Italian peninsula, but also the two large islands of Sardinia and Sicily located in the Mediterranean Sea between continental Africa and the European mainland. As a consequence, Italy exhibits considerable cultural diversity throughout its history. The following folktales, however, are drawn from **variants** of European tales collected from the Renaissance (late thirteenth century) to the nineteenth century. In the following variant of “Snow White” (AT 709), the heroine, Ermellina, is portrayed as bringing on many of her own difficulties. In addition, her animal benefactor, after rescuing her and transporting her to the castle of fairies, sets in motion the stepmother’s schemes for revenge. The tale differs profoundly from those versions of the tale popularized in contemporary media.

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**T**here was once a widower who had a daughter. This daughter was between ten and twelve years old. Her father sent her to school, and as she was all alone in the world commended her always to her teacher. Now, the teacher, seeing that the child had no mother, fell in love with the father, and kept saying to the girl, “Ask your father if he would like me for a wife.”

This she said to her every day, and at last the girl said, "Papa, the school-mistress is always asking me if you will marry her."

The father said, "Eh! My daughter, if I take another wife, you will have great troubles." But the girl persisted, and finally the father was persuaded to go one evening to the school-mistress' house. When she saw him she was well pleased, and they settled the marriage in a few days. Poor child! How bitterly she had to repent having found a stepmother so ungrateful and cruel to her! She sent her every day out on a terrace to water a pot of basil, and it was so dangerous that if she fell she would go into a large river.

One day there came by a large eagle, and said to her, "What are you doing her?" She was weeping because she saw how great the danger was of falling into the stream. The eagle said to her, "Get on my back, and I will carry you away, and you will be happier than with your new mamma."

After a long journey they reached a great plain, where they found a beautiful palace all of crystal; the eagle knocked at the door and said, "Open, my ladies, open! For I have brought you a pretty girl." When the people in the palace opened the door, and saw that lovely girl, they were amazed, and kissed and caressed her. Meanwhile the door was closed, and they remained peaceful and contended.

Let us return to the eagle, who thought she was doing a spite to the stepmother. One day the eagle flew away to the terrace where the stepmother was watering the basil. "Where is your daughter?" asked the eagle.

"Eh!" she replied, "perhaps she fell from this terrace and went into the river; I have not heard from her in ten days."

The eagle answered, "What a fool you are! I carried her away; seeing that you treated her so harshly I carried her away to my fairies, and she is very well." Then the eagle flew away.

The stepmother, filled with rage and jealousy, called a witch from the city, and said to her, "You see my daughter is alive, and is in the house of some fairies of an eagle which often comes upon my terrace; now you must do me the favor to find some way to kill this stepdaughter of mine, for I am afraid that some day or other she will return, and my husband, discovering this matter, will certainly kill me."

The witch answered, "Oh, you need not be afraid of that; leave it to me."

What did the witch do? She had made a little basketful of sweetmeats, in which she put a charm; then she wrote a letter, pretending that it was her father, who, having learned where she was, wished to make her this present, and the letter pretended that her father was so glad to hear that she was with the fairies.

Let us leave the witch who is arranging all this deception, and return to Ermellina (for so the young girl was named). The fairies had said to her, "See, Ermellina, we are going away, and shall be absent four days; now in this time take good care not to open the door to anyone, for some treachery is being prepared for you by your stepmother."

She promised to open the door to no one, “Do not be anxious, I am well off, and my stepmother has nothing to do with me.”

But it was not so. The fairies went away, and the next day when Ermellina was alone, she heard a knocking at the door, and said to herself, “Knock away! I don’t open to anyone.”

But meanwhile the blows redoubled, and curiosity forced her to look out of the window. What did she see? She saw one of the servant girls of her own home (for the witch had disguised herself as one of her father’s servants). “O my dear Ermellina,” she said, “your father is shedding tears of sorrow for you, because he really believed you were dead, but the eagle which carried you off came and told him the good news that you were here with the fairies. Meanwhile your father, not knowing what civility to show you, for he understands very well that you are in need of nothing, has thought to send you this little basket of sweetmeats.”

Ermellina had not yet opened the door; the servant begged her to come down and take the basket and the letter, but she said, “No, I wish nothing!” but finally, since women, and especially young girls, are fond of sweetmeats, she descended and opened the door.

When the witch had given her the basket, she said, “Eat this,” and broke off for her a piece of the sweetmeats which she had poisoned. When Ermellina took the first mouthful the old woman disappeared. Ermellina had scarcely time to close the door, when she fell down on the stairs.

When the fairies returned they knocked at the door, but no one opened it for them; then they perceived that there had been some treachery, and began to weep. Then the chief of the fairies said, “We must break open the door,” and so they did, and saw Ermellina dead on the stairs.

Her other friends who loved her so dearly begged the chief of the fairies to bring her to life, but she would not, “for,” she said, “she has disobeyed me.” But one and the other asked her until she consented; she opened Ermellina’s mouth, took out a piece of the sweetmeat which she had not yet swallowed, raised her up, and Ermellina came to life again.

We can imagine what a pleasure it was for her fiends; but the chief of the fairies reproved her for her disobedience, and she promised not to do so again.

Once more the fairies were obliged to depart. Their chief said, “Remember, Ermellina: The first time I cured you, but the second I will have nothing to do with you.”

Ermellina said they need not worry, that she would not open to anyone. But it was not so; for the eagle, thinking to increase her stepmother’s anger, told her again that Ermellina was alive. The stepmother denied it all to the eagle, but she summoned anew the witch, and told her that her stepdaughter was still alive, saying, “Either you will really kill her, or I will be avenged on you.”

The old woman, finding herself caught, told her to buy a very handsome dress, one of the handsomest she could find, and transformed herself into a

tailoress belonging to the family, took the dress, departed, went to poor Ermellina, knocked at the door and said, "Open, open, for I am your tailoress."

Ermellina looked out of the window and saw her tailoress; and was, in truth, a little confused (indeed, anyone would have been so).

The tailoress said, "Come down, I must fit a dress on you."

She replied, "No, no; for I have been deceived once."

"But I am not the old woman," replied the tailoress, "you know me, for I have always made your dresses."

Poor Ermellina was persuaded, and descended the stairs; the tailoress took to flight while Ermellina was yet buttoning up the dress, and disappeared. Ermellina closed the door, and was mounting the stairs; but it was not permitted her to go up, for she fell down dead.

Let us return to the fairies, who came home and knocked at the door; but what good did it do to knock! There was no longer anyone there. They began to weep. The chief of the fairies said, "I told you that she would betray me again; but now I will have nothing more to do with her."

So they broke open the door, and saw the poor girl with the beautiful dress on; but she was dead. They all wept, because they really loved her. But there was nothing to do; the chief struck her enchanted wand, and commanded a beautiful rich casket all covered with diamonds and other precious stones to appear; then the others made a beautiful garland of flowers and gold, put it on the young girl, and then laid her in the casket, which was so rich and beautiful that it was marvelous to behold. Then the old fairy struck her wand as usual and commanded a handsome horse, the like of which not even the king possessed. Then they took the casket, put it on the horse's back, and led him into the public square of the city, and the chief of the fairies said, "Go, and do not stop until you find someone who says to you, 'Stop, for pity's sake, for I have lost my horse for you.'"

Now let us leave the afflicted fairies, and turn our attention to the horse, which ran away at full speed. Who happened to pass at that moment? The son of a king (the name of this king is not known); and saw this horse with that wonder on its back. Then the king began to spur his horse, and rode him so hard that he killed him, and had to leave him dead in the road; but the king kept running after the other horse. The poor king could endure it no longer; he saw himself lost, and exclaimed, "Stop, for pity's sake, for I have lost my horse for you!"

Then the horse stopped (for those were the words). When the king saw that beautiful girl dead in the casket, he thought no more about his own horse, but took the other to the city. The king's mother knew that her son had gone hunting; when she saw him returning with this loaded horse, she did not know what to think. The son had no father, wherefore he was all powerful. He reached the palace, had the horse unloaded, and the casket carried to his chamber; then he called his mother and said, "Mother, I went hunting, but I have found a wife."

"But what is it? A doll? A dead woman?"

“Mother,” replied her son, “don’t trouble yourself about what it is, it is my wife.”

His mother began to laugh, and withdrew to her own room (what could she do, poor mother?).

Now this poor king no longer went hunting, took no diversion, did not even go to the table, but ate in his own room. By a fatality it happened that war was declared against him, and he was obliged to depart. He called his mother, and said, “Mother, I wish two careful chambermaids, whose business it shall be to guard this casket; for if on my return I find that anything has happened to my casket, I shall have the chambermaids killed.”

His mother, who loved him, said, “Go, my son, fear nothing, for I myself will watch over your casket.”

He wept several days at being obliged to abandon this treasure of his, but there was no help for it, he had to go. After his departure he did nothing but commend his wife (so he called her) to his mother in his letters.

Let us return to the mother, who no longer thought about the matter, not even to have the casket dusted; but all at once there came a letter which informed her that the king had been victorious, and should return to his palace in a few days. The mother called the chambermaids, and said to them, “Girls, we are ruined.”

They replied, “Why, Highness?”

“Because my son will be back in a few days, and how have we taken care of the doll?”

They answered, “True, true; now let us go and wash the doll’s face.”

They went to the king’s room and saw that the doll’s face and hands were covered with dust and fly specks, so they took a sponge and washed her face, but some drops of water fell on her dress and spotted it. The poor chambermaids began to weep, and went to the queen for advice.

The queen said, “Do you know what to do! Call a tailoress, and have a dress precisely like this bought, and take off this one before my son comes.”

They did so, and the chambermaids went to the room and began to unbutton the dress. The moment that they took off the first sleeve, Ermellina opened her eyes. The poor chambermaids sprang up in terror, but one of the most courageous said, “I am a woman, and so is this one; she will not eat me.”

To cut the matter short, she took off the dress, and when it was removed Ermellina began to get out of the casket to walk about and see where she was. The chambermaids fell on their knees before her and begged her to tell them who she was. She, poor girl, told them the whole story. Then she said, “I wish to know where I am.”

Then the chambermaids called the king’s mother to explain it to her. The mother did not fail to tell her everything, and she, poor girl, did nothing but weep penitently, thinking of what the fairies had done for her.

The king was on the point of arriving, and his mother said to the doll, “Come here; put on one of my best dresses.” In short, she arrayed her like a



queen. Then came her son. They shut the doll up in a small room, so that she could not be seen. The king came with great joy, with trumpets blowing, and banners flying for the victory. But he took no interest in all this, and ran at once to his room to see the doll; the chambermaids fell on their knees before him saying that the doll smelled so badly that they could not stay in the palace, and were obliged to bury her.

The king would not listen to this excuse, but at once called two of the palace servants to erect the gallows. His mother comforted him in vain, "My son, it was a dead woman."

"No, no, I will not listen to any reasons; dead or alive, you should have left it for me."

Finally, when his mother saw that he was in earnest about the gallows, she rang a little bell, and there came forth no longer the doll, but a very beautiful girl, whose like was never seen.

The king was amazed, and said, "What is this!"

Then his mother, the chambermaids, and Ermellina were obliged to tell him all that had happened.

He said, "Mother, since I adored her when dead, and called her my wife, now I mean her to be my wife in truth."

"Yes, my son," replied his mother, "do so, for I am willing."

They arranged the wedding, and in a few days were man and wife.

## THE CRUMB IN THE BEARD

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Crane, Thomas Frederick. *Italian Popular Tales*. New York: Houghton, Mifflin and Co., 1885, 110–114.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Italy

**National Origin:** Italy

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A **variant** of the tale included in Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm's folktale corpus as "King Thrushbeard" (AT 900, Grimm 52), "A Crumb in the Beard" focuses on the elaborate scheme devised by a handsome suitor to avenge a slight by an overly critical princess. In the process, she is both educated and wed.

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**T**here was once a king who had a daughter whose name was Stella. She was indescribably beautiful, but was so whimsical and hard to please that she drove her father to despair.

There had been princes and kings who had sought her in marriage, but she had found defects in them all and would have none of them. She kept advancing in years, and her father began to despair of knowing to whom he should leave his crown. So he summoned his council, and discussed the matter, and was advised to give a great banquet, to which he should invite all the princes and kings of the surrounding countries, for, as they said, there cannot fail to be among so many, someone who should please the princess, who was to hide behind a door, so that she could examine them all as she pleased.

When the king heard this advice, he gave the order necessary for the banquet, and then called his daughter, and said, "Listen, my little Stella, I have thought to do so and so, to see if I can find anyone to please you. Behold, my daughter, my hair is white, and I must have someone to leave my crown to."

Stella bowed her head, saying that she would take care to please him.

Princes and kings then began to arrive at the court, and when it was time for the banquet, they all seated themselves at the table. You can imagine what sort of a banquet that was, and how the hall was adorned: Gold and silver shone from all their necks. In the four corners of the room were four fountains, which continually sent forth wine and the most exquisite perfumes.

While the gentlemen were eating, Stella was behind a door, as has been said, and one of her maids, who was nearby, pointed out to her now this one, now that one. "See, your majesty, what a handsome youth that is there."

"Yes, but he has too large a nose."

"And the one near your father?"

"He has eyes that look like saucers."

"And that other at the head of the table?"

"He has too large a mouth. He looks as if he liked to eat."

In short, she found fault with all but one, who, she said, pleased her, but that he must be a very dirty fellow, for he had a crumb on his beard after eating. The youth heard her say this, and swore vengeance. You must know that he was the son of the King of the Green Hill, and the handsomest youth that could be seen.

When the banquet was finished and the guests had departed, the king called Stella and asked, "What news have you, my child?"

She replied, that the only one who pleased her was the one with the crumb in his beard, but that she believed him to be a dirty fellow and did not want him.

"Take care, my daughter, you will repent it," answered her father, and turned away.

You must know that Stella's chamber looked into a courtyard into which opened the shop of a baker. One night, while she was preparing to retire, she heard, in the room where they sifted the meal, someone singing so well and with so much grace that it went to her heart. She ran to the window and listened until he finished. Then she began to ask her maid who the person with the beautiful voice could be, saying she would like to know.

“Leave it to me, your majesty,” said the maid. “I will inform you tomorrow.”

Stella could not wait for the next day; and, indeed, early the next day she learned that the one who sang was the sifter. That evening she heard him sing again, and stood by the window until everything became quiet. But that voice had so touched her heart that she told her maid that the next day she would try and see who had that fine voice. In the morning she placed herself by the window, and soon saw the youth come forth. She was enchanted by his beauty as soon as she saw him, and fell desperately in love with him.

Now you must know that this was none other than the prince who was at the banquet, and whom Stella had called “dirty.” So he had disguised himself in such a way that she could not recognize him, and was meanwhile preparing his revenge. After he had seen her once or twice he began to take off his hat and salute her. She smiled at him, and appeared at the window every moment. Then they began to exchange words, and in the evening he sang under her window. In short, they began to make love in good earnest, and when he learned that she was free, he began to talk about marrying her. She consented at once, but asked him what he had to live on.

“I haven’t a penny,” said he. “The little I earn is hardly enough to feed me.”

Stella encouraged him, saying she would give him all the money and things he wanted.

To punish Stella for her pride, her father and the prince’s father had an understanding, and pretended not to know about this love affair, and let her carry away from the palace all she owned. During the day Stella did nothing but make a great bundle of clothes, of silver, and of money, and at night the disguised prince came under the balcony, and she threw it down to him. Things went on in this manner some time, and finally one evening he said to her, “Listen. The time has come to elope.”

Stella could not wait for the hour, and the next night she quietly tied a cord about her and let herself down from the window. The prince aided her to the ground, and then took her arm and hastened away. He led her a long way to another city, where he turned down a street and opened the first door he met. They went down a long passage. Finally they reached a little door, which he opened, and they found themselves in a hole of a place which had only one window, high up. The furniture consisted of a straw bed, a bench, and a dirty table. You can imagine that when Stella saw herself in this place she thought she should die.

When the prince saw her so amazed, he said, “What is the matter? Does the house not please you? Do you not know that I am a poor man? Have you been deceived?”

“What have you done with all the things I gave you?”

“Oh, I had many debts, and I have paid them, and then I have done with the rest what seemed good to me. You must make up your mind to work and

gain your bread as I have done. You must know that I am a porter of the king of this city, and I often go and work at the palace. Tomorrow, they have told me, the washing is to be done, so you must rise early and go with me there. I will set you to work with the other women, and when it is time for them to go home to dinner, you will say that you are not hungry, and while you are alone, steal two shirts, conceal them under your skirt, and carry them home to me.”

Poor Stella wept bitterly, saying it was impossible for her to do that.

But her husband replied, “Do what I say, or I shall beat you.”

The next morning her husband rose with the dawn, and made her get up, too. He had bought her a striped skirt and a pair of coarse shoes, which he made her put on, and then took her to the palace with him, conducted her to the laundry and left her, after he had introduced her as his wife, saying that she should remember what awaited her at home.

Meanwhile poor Stella did as her husband had commanded, and stole the shirts.

As she was leaving the palace, she met the king, who said, “Pretty girl, you are the porter’s wife, are you not?” Then he asked her what she had under her skirt, and shook her until the shirts dropped out, and the king cried, “See there! The porter’s wife is a thief. She has stolen some shirts.”

Poor Stella ran home in tears, and her husband followed her when he had put on his disguise again. When he reached home Stella told him all that had happened and begged him not to send her to the palace again. But he told her that the next day they were to bake, and she must go into the kitchen and help, and steal a piece of dough. Everything happened as on the previous day. Stella’s theft was discovered, and when her husband returned he found her crying like a condemned soul, and swearing that she had rather be killed than go the palace again. He told her, however, that the king’s son was to be married the next day, and that there was to be a great banquet, and she must go into the kitchen and wash the dishes. He added that when she had the chance she must steal a pot of broth and hide it about her so that no one should see it.

She had to do as she was told, and had scarcely concealed the pot when the king’s son came into the kitchen and told his wife she must come to the ball that had followed the banquet. She did not wish to go, but he took her by the arm and led her into the midst of the festival. Imagine how the poor woman felt at the ball, dressed as she was, and with the pot of broth! The king began to poke his sword at her in jest, until he hit the pot, and all the broth ran on the floor. Then all began to jeer her and laugh, until poor Stella fainted away from shame, and they had to go and get some vinegar to revive her.

At last the king’s mother came forward and said, “Enough. You have revenged yourself sufficiently.” Then turning to Stella, “Know that this is your mother, and that he has done this to correct your pride and to be avenged on you for calling him dirty.”

Then she took her by the arm and led her to another room, where her maids dressed her as a queen. Her father and mother then appeared and kissed

and embraced her. Her husband begged her pardon for what he had done, and they made peace and always lived in harmony. From that day on she was never haughty, and had learned to her cost that pride is the greatest fault.

## CINDERELLA

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Crane, Thomas Frederick. *Italian Popular Tales*. New York: Houghton, Mifflin and Co., 1885, 42–47.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Italy

**National Origin:** Italy

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This **variant** of the “Cinderella” tale (AT 510A) lacks the typical feature of the persecuting stepmother and stepsisters. Supernatural assistance is provided by a pet bird in a more benign version of the classic narrative.

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Once upon a time there was a man who had three daughters. He was once ordered to go away to work, and said to them, “Since I am about making a journey, what do you want me to bring you when I return?”

One asked for a handsome dress; the other, a fine hat and a beautiful shawl. He said to the youngest, “And you, Cinderella, what do you want?” They called her Cinderella because she always sat in the chimney corner.

“You must buy me a little bird Verdeliò.”

“The simpleton! She does not know what to do with the bird! Instead of ordering a handsome dress, a fine shawl, she takes a bird. Who knows what she will do with it!”

“Silence!” she says. “It pleases me.”

The father went, and on his return brought the dress, hat, and shawl for the two sisters, and the little bird for Cinderella.

The father was employed at the court, and one day the king said to him, “I am going to give three balls; if you want to bring your daughters, do so; they will amuse themselves a little.”

“As you wish,” he replies, “thanks!” and accepts.

He went home and said, “What do you think, girls? His majesty wishes you to attend his ball.”

“There, you see, Cinderella, if you had only asked for a handsome dress! This evening we are going to the ball.”

She replied, “It matters nothing to me! You go; I am not coming.”

In the evening, when the time came, they adorned themselves, saying to Cinderella, "Come along, there will be room for you, too."

"I don't want to go; you go; I don't want to."

"But," said their father, "let us go, let us go! Dress and come along; let her stay."

When they had gone, she went to the bird and said, "O Bird Verdeliò, make me more beautiful than I am!"

She became clothed in a sea green dress, with so many diamonds that it blinded you to behold her. The bird made ready two purses of money, and said to her, "Take these two purses, enter your carriage, and away!"

She set out for the ball, and left the bird Verdeliò at home. She entered the ballroom. Scarcely had the gentlemen seen this beautiful lady (she dazzled them on all sides), when the king, just think of it, began to dance with her the whole evening. After he had danced with her all the evening, his majesty stopped, and she stood by her sisters. While she was at her sisters' side, she drew out her handkerchief, and a bracelet fell out.

"Oh, Signora," said the eldest sister, "you have dropped this."

"Keep it for yourself," she said.

"Oh, if Cinderella were only here, who knows what might not have happened to her?"

The king had given orders that when this lady went away they should find out where she lived. After she had remained a little she left the ball. You can imagine whether the servants were on the lookout! She entered her carriage and away! She perceives that she is followed, takes the money and begins to throw it out of the window of the carriage. The greedy servants, I tell you, seeing all that money, thought no more of her, but stopped to pick up the money. She returned home and went upstairs.

"O Bird Verdeliò, make me homelier than I am!" You ought to see how ugly, how horrid, she became, all ashes.

When the sisters returned, they cried, "Cin-der-ella!"

"Oh, leave her alone," said her father. "She is asleep now, leave her alone!"

But they went up and showed her the large and beautiful bracelet. "Do you see, you simpleton? You might have had it."

"It matters nothing to me."

Their father said, "Let us go to supper, you little geese."

Let us return to the king, who was awaiting his servants, who had not the courage to appear, but kept away. He calls them, "How did the matter go?"

They fall at his feet. "Thus and thus! She threw out so much money!"

"Wretches, you are nothing else," he said. "Were you afraid of not being rewarded? Well! tomorrow evening, attention, under pain of death."

The next evening the usual ball. The sisters say, "Will you come this evening, Cinderella?"

"Oh," she says, "don't bother me! I don't want to go."

Their father cries out to them, "How troublesome you are! Let her alone!"

So they began to adorn themselves more handsomely than the former evening, and departed. "Good-bye, Cinderella!"

When they had gone, Cinderella went to the bird and said, "Little Bird Verdeliò, make me more beautiful than I am!" Then she became clothed in sea green, embroidered with all the fish of the sea, mingled with diamonds more than you could believe.

The bird said, "Take these two bags of sand, and when you are followed, throw it out, and so they will be blinded."

She entered her carriage and set out for the ball. As soon as his majesty saw her he began to dance with her and danced as long as he could. After he had danced as long as he could (she did not grow weary, but he did), she placed herself near her sisters, drew out her handkerchief, and there fell out a beautiful necklace all made of coal.

The second sister said, "Signora, you have dropped this."

She replied, "Keep it for yourself."

"If Cinderella were here, who knows what might not happen to her! Tomorrow she must come!"

After a while she leaves the ball. The servants (just think, under pain of death!) were all on the alert, and followed her. She began to throw out all the sand, and they were blinded. She went home, dismounted, and went upstairs.

"Little Bird Verdeliò, make me homelier than I am!" She became frightfully homely.

When her sisters returned they began from below, "Cin-der-ella! if you only knew what that lady gave us!"

"It matters nothing to me!"

"Yes, yes! You would have had it!"

The father says, "Let us go to supper and let her alone; you are really silly!"

Let us return to his majesty, who was waiting for his servants to learn where she lived. Instead of that they were all brought back blinded, and had to be accompanied. "Rogue!" he exclaimed, "either this lady is some fairy or she must have some fairy who protects her."

The next day the sisters began, "Cinderella, you must go this evening! Listen; it is the last evening; you must come."

The father, "Oh let her alone! You are always teasing her!"

Then they went away and began to prepare for the ball. When they were all prepared, they went to the ball with their father.

When they had departed, Cinderella went to the bird, "Little Bird Verdeliò, make me more beautiful than I am!" Then she was dressed in all the colors of the heavens; all the comets, the stars, and moon on her dress, and the sun on her brow. She enters the ballroom. Who could look at her! For the sun alone they lower their eyes, and are all blinded. His majesty began to dance, but he could not look at her, because she dazzled him. He had already given orders to

his servants to be on the lookout, under pain of death, not to go on foot, but to mount their horses that evening.

After she had danced longer than on the previous evenings she placed herself by her father's side, drew out her handkerchief, and there fell out a snuffbox of gold, full of money.

"Signora, you have dropped this snuffbox."

"Keep it for yourself!"

Imagine that man. He opens it and sees it full of money. What a joy!

After she had remained a time she went home as usual. The servants followed her on horseback, quickly, at a distance from the carriage; but on horseback that was not much trouble.

She perceived that she had not prepared anything to throw that evening.

"Oh!" she cried. "What shall I do?" She left the carriage quickly, and in her haste lost one of her slippers. The servants picked it up, took the number of the house, and went away.

Cinderella went upstairs and said, "Little Bird Verdeliò, make me more homely than I am!"

The bird does not answer. After she had repeated it three or four times, it answered, "Rogue! I ought not to make you more homely, but ..." and she became homely and the bird continued, "What are you going to do now? You are discovered."

She began to weep in earnest. When her sisters returned they cried, "Cinder-ella!" You can imagine that she did not answer them this evening. "See what a beautiful snuffbox. If you had gone you might have had it."

"I do not care! Go away!"

Then their father called them to supper.

Let us now turn to the servants who went back with the slipper and the number of the house.

"Tomorrow," said his majesty, "as soon as it is day, go to that house, take a carriage, and bring that lady to the palace."

The servants took the slipper and went away. The next morning they knocked at the door.

Cinderella's father looked out and exclaimed, "Oh heavens! It is his majesty's carriage. What does it mean?" They open the door and the servants ascend. "What do you want of me?" asked the father.

"How many daughters have you?"

"Two."

"Well, show them to us."

The father made them come in there.

"Sit down," they said to one of them. They tried the slipper on her; it was ten times too large for her. The other one sat down; it was too small for her. "But tell me, good man, have you no other daughters? Take care to tell the truth! because majesty wishes it, under pain of death!"



“Gentlemen, there is another one, but I do not mention it. She is all in the ashes, the coals. If you should see her! I do not call her my daughter from shame.”

“We have not come for beauty, or for finery; we want to see the girl!”

Her sisters began to call her, “Cin-der-ella!” but she did not answer.

After a time she said, “What is the matter?”

“You must come down! There are some gentlemen who wish to see you.”

“I don’t want to come.”

“But you must come, you see!”

“Very well; tell them I will come in a moment.” She went to the little bird, “Ah little Bird Verdeliò, make me more beautiful than I am!” Then she was dressed as she had been the last evening, with the sun, and moon, and stars, and in addition, great chains all of gold everywhere about her.

The bird said, “Take me away with you! Put me in your bosom!” She puts the bird in her bosom and begins to descend the stairs.

“Do you hear her?” said the father. “Do you hear her? She is dragging with her the chains from the chimney corner. You can imagine how frightful she will look!”

When she reached the last step, and they saw her, “Ah!” they exclaimed, and recognized the lady of the ball. You can imagine how her father and sisters were vexed. They made her sit down, and tried on the slipper, and it fitted her. Then they made her enter the carriage, and took her to his majesty, who recognized the lady of the other evenings. And you can imagine that, all in love as her was, he said to her, “Will you really be my wife?”

You may believe she consents. She sends for her father and sisters, and makes them all come to the palace. They celebrate the marriage. Imagine what fine festivals were given at this wedding! The servants who had discovered where Cinderella lived were promoted to the highest positions in the palace as a reward.

## **KING PIG**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Sources:** Straparola, Giovanni Francesco. *The Facetious Nights*, trans. W. G. Waters.

**London:** Privately printed for members of the Society of Bibliophiles, 1901, Volume I, 133–150; Ashliman, D. L. “King Pig.” *Folktexts: A Library of Folktales, Folklore, Fairy Tales and Mythology*. <http://www.pitt.edu/~dash/hog.html#straparola> (July 21, 2007).

**Date:** ca. 1550

**Original Source:** Italy

**National Origin:** Italy

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Giovanni Francesco Straparola (1480–1557) based the work in which “King Pig” is included, *The Facetious Nights*, on Giovanni Boccaccio’s

(1313–1375) *Decameron*. Both were works in which a **frame** tale served to organize a series of individual narratives. Straparola made extensive use of folktales in the *Nights*. Therefore, his work may be compared to the Arabian classic *One Thousand and One Nights* (see “The Fisherman and the Jinn,” Volume 1, page 220 for a discussion of that work and an example of the tales included therein); *Twenty-Two Goblins* (see “The Prince’s Elopement,” Volume 2, page 184, and “The Father and Son Who Married Mother and Daughter,” Volume 2, page 191); and *Vikram and the Vampire* (see “A Man Deceives a Woman,” Volume 2, page 203, “Many Wise Fools,” Volume 2, page 221, and “The Vampire Puzzles Raja Vikram,” Volume 2, page 233). The following tale is a **variant** of “Hans my Hedgehog” (AT 441). Also see “Jack My Hedge Hog” for Andrew Lang’s version of this tale (page 85).

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**F**air ladies, if man were to spend a thousand years in rendering thanks to his creator for having made him in the form of a human and not of a brute beast, he could not speak gratitude enough. This reflection calls to mind the story of one who was born as a pig, but afterwards became a comely youth. Nevertheless, to his dying day he was known to the people over whom he ruled as King Pig.

You must know, dear ladies, that Galeotto, King of Anglia, was a man highly blest in worldly riches, and in his wife Ersilia, the daughter of Matthias, King of Hungary, a princess who, in virtue and beauty, outshone all the other ladies of the time. And Galeotto was a wise king, ruling his land so that no man could hear complaint against him. Though they had been several years married they had no child, wherefore they both of them were much aggrieved. While Ersilia was walking one day in her garden she felt suddenly weary, and remarking hard by a spot covered with fresh green turf, she went up to it and sat down thereon, and, overcome with weariness and soothed by the sweet singing of the birds in the green foliage, she fell asleep. And it chanced that while she slept there passed by three fairies who held mankind somewhat in scorn, and these, when they beheld the sleeping queen, halted, and gazing upon her beauty, took counsel together how they might protect her and throw a spell upon her.

When they were agreed, the first cried out, “I will that no man shall be able to harm her, and that, the next time she lie with her husband, she may be with child and bear a son who shall not have his equal in all the world for beauty.”

Then said the second, “I will that no one shall ever have power to offend her, and that the prince who shall be born of her shall be gifted with every virtue under the sun.”

And the third said, “And I will that she shall be the wisest among women, but that the son whom she shall conceive shall be born in the skin of a pig, with a pig’s ways and manners, and in this state he shall be constrained to abide till he shall have three times taken a woman to wife.”

As soon as the three fairies had flown away Ersilia awoke, and straightway arose and went back to the palace, taking with her the flowers she had plucked. Not many days had passed before she knew herself to be with child, and when the time of her delivery was come, she gave birth to a son with members like those of a pig and not of a human being.

When tidings of this prodigy came to the ears of the king and queen they lamented sore treatment, and the king, bearing in mind how good and wise his queen was, often felt moved to put this offspring of hers to death and cast it into the sea, in order that she might be spared the shame of having given birth to him. But when he debated in his mind and considered that this son, let him be what he might, was of his own begetting, he put aside the cruel purpose which he had been harboring, and, seized with pity and grief, he made up his mind that the son should be brought up and nurtured like a rational being and not as a brute beast.

The child, therefore, being nursed with the greatest care, would often be brought to the queen and put his little snout and his little paws in his mother's lap, and she, moved by natural affection, would caress him by stroking his bristly back with her hand, and embracing and kissing him as if he had been of human form. Then he would wag his tail and give other signs to show that he was conscious of his mother's affection.

The pigling, when he grew older, began to talk like a human being, and to wander abroad in the city, but whenever he came near to any mud or dirt he would always wallow therein, after the manner of pigs, and return all covered with filth. Then, when he approached the king and queen, he would rub his sides against their fair garments, defiling them with all manner of dirt, but because he was indeed their own son they bore it all.

One day he came home covered with mud and filth, as was his wont, and lay down on his mother's rich robe, and said in a grunting tone, "Mother, I wish to get married."

When the queen heard this, she replied, "Do not talk so foolishly. What maid would ever take you for a husband, and think you that any noble or knight would give his daughter to one so dirty and ill-savored as you?"

But he kept on grunting that he must have a wife of one sort or another. The queen, not knowing how to manage him in this matter, asked the king what they should do in their trouble, "Our son wishes to marry, but where shall we find anyone who will take him as a husband?"

Every day the pig would come back to his mother with the same demand, "I must have a wife, and I will never leave you in peace until you procure for me a certain maiden I have seen today, who pleases me greatly."

It happened that this maiden was a daughter of a poor woman who had three daughters. When the queen heard this, she had brought before her the poor woman and her eldest daughter, and said, "Good mother, you are poor and burdened with children. If you will agree to what I shall say to you, you will be

rich. I have this son who is, as you see, in form a pig, and I would fain marry him to your eldest daughter. Do not consider him, but think of the king and of me, and remember that your daughter will inherit this whole kingdom when the king and I shall be dead." When the young girl listened to the words of the queen she was greatly disturbed in her mind and blushed red for shame, and then said that on no account would she listen to the queen's proposition; but the poor mother besought her so pressingly that at last she yielded.

When the pig came home one day, all covered with dirt as usual, his mother said to him, "My son, we have found for you the wife you desire." And then she caused to be brought in the bride, who by this time had been robed in sumptuous regal attire, and presented her to the pig prince. When he saw how lovely and desirable she was he was filled with joy, and, all foul and dirty as he was, jumped round about her, endeavoring by his pawing and nuzzling to show some sign of his affection.

But she, when she found he was soiling her beautiful dress, thrust him aside; whereupon the pig said to her, "Why do you push me thus? Have I not had these garments made for you myself?"

Then she answered disdainfully, "No, neither you nor any other of the whole kingdom of hogs has done this thing."

And when the time for going to bed was come the young girl said to herself, "What am I to do with this foul beast? This very night, while he lies in his first sleep, I will kill him."

The pig prince, who was not far off, heard these words, but said nothing, and when the two retired to their chamber he got into the bed, stinking and dirty as he was, and defiled the sumptuous bed with his filthy paws and snout. He lay down by his spouse, who was not long in falling to sleep, and then he struck her with his sharp hoofs and drove them into her breast so that he killed her.

The next morning the queen went to visit her daughter-in-law, and to her great grief found that the pig had killed her; and when he came back from wandering about the city he said, in reply to the queen's bitter reproaches, that he had only wrought with his wife as she was minded to deal with him, and then withdrew in an ill humor.

Not many days had passed before the pig prince again began to beseech the queen to allow him to marry one of the other sisters, and because the queen at first would not listen to his petition he persisted in his purpose, and threatened to ruin everything in the place if he could not have her to wife. The queen, when she heard this, went to the king and told him everything, and he made answer that perhaps it would be wiser to kill their ill-fated offspring before he might work some fatal mischief in the city.

But the queen felt all the tenderness of a mother toward him, and loved him very dearly in spite of his brutal person, and could not endure the thought of being parted from him; so she summoned once more to the palace the poor

woman, together with her second daughter, and held a long discourse with her, begging her the while to give her daughter in marriage.

At last the girl assented to take the pig prince for a husband; but her fate was no happier than her sister's, for the bridegroom killed her, as he had killed his other bride, and then fled headlong from the palace.

When he came back dirty as usual and smelling so foully that no one could approach him, the king and queen censured him gravely for the outrage he had wrought; but again he cried out boldly that if he had not killed her she would have killed him.

As it had happened before, the pig in a very short time began to importune his mother again to let him have to wife the youngest sister, who was much more beautiful than either of the others; and when this request of his was refused steadily, he became more insistent than ever, and in the end began to threaten the queen's life in violent and bloodthirsty words, unless he should have given to him the young girl for his wife.

The queen, when she heard this shameful and unnatural speech, was well-nigh broken hearted and like to go out of her mind; but, putting all other considerations aside, she called for the poor woman and her third daughter, who was named Meldina, and thus addressed her, "Meldina, my child, I should be greatly pleased if you would take the pig prince for a husband; pay no regard to him, but to his father and to me; then, if you will be prudent and bear patiently with him, you may be the happiest woman in the world."

To this speech Meldina answered, with a grateful smile upon her face, that she was quite content to do as the queen bade her, and thanked her humbly for deigning to choose her as a daughter-in-law; for, seeing that she herself had nothing in the world, it was indeed great good fortune that she, a poor girl, should become the daughter-in-law of a potent sovereign. The queen, when she heard this modest and amiable reply, could not keep back her tears for the happiness she felt; but she feared all the time that the same fate might be in store for Meldina as her sisters.

When the new bride had been clothed in rich attire and decked with jewels, and was awaiting the bridegroom, the pig prince came in, filthier and more muddy than ever; but she spread out her rich gown and besought him to lie down by her side. Whereupon the queen bade her to thrust him away, but to this she would not consent, and spoke thus to the queen, "There are three wise sayings, gracious lady, which I remember to have heard. The first is that it is folly to waste time in searching for that which cannot be found. The second is that we should believe nothing we may hear, except those things which bear the marks of sense and reason. The third is that, when once you have got possession of some rare and precious treasure, prize it well and keep a firm hold upon it."

When the maiden had finished speaking, the pig prince, who had been wide awake and had heard all that she had said, got up, kissed her on the face and

neck and bosom and shoulders with his tongue, and she was not backward in returning his caresses; so that he was fired with a warm love for her.

As soon as the time for retiring for the night had come, the bride went to bed and awaited her unseemly spouse, and, as soon as he came, she raised the coverlet and bade him lie near to her and put his head upon the pillow, covering him carefully with the bedclothes and drawing the curtains so that he might feel no cold.

When morning had come the pig got up and ranged abroad to pasture, as was his wont, and very soon after the queen went to the bride's chamber, expecting to find that she had met with the same fate as her sisters; but when she saw her lying in the bed, all defiled with mud as it was, and looking pleased and contented, she thanked God for this favor, that her son had at last found a spouse according to his liking.

One day, soon after this, when the pig prince was conversing pleasantly with his wife, he said to her, "Meldina, my beloved wife, if I could be fully sure that you could keep a secret, I would now tell you one of mine; something I have kept hidden for many years. I know you to be very prudent and wise, and that you love me truly; so I wish to make you the sharer of my secret."

"You may safely tell it to me, if you will," said Meldina, "for I promise never to reveal it to anyone without your consent."

Whereupon, being now sure of his wife's discretion and fidelity, her straight-way shook off from his body the foul and dirty skin of the pig, and stood revealed as a handsome and well shaped young man, and all that night rested closely folded in the arms of his beloved wife. But he charged her solemnly to keep silence about this wonder she had seen, for the time had not yet come for his complete delivery from this misery. So when he left the bed he donned the dirty pig's hid once more. I leave you to imagine for yourselves how great was the great joy of Meldina when she discovered that, instead of a pig, she had gained a handsome and gallant young prince for a husband.

Not long after this she proved to with child, and when the time her delivery came she gave birth to a fair and shapely boy. The joy of the king and queen was unbounded, especially when they found that the newborn child had the form of a human being and not that of a beast. But the burden of the strange and weighty secret which her husband had confided to her pressed heavily upon Meldina, and one day she went to her mother-in-law and said, "Gracious queen, when first I married your son I believed I was married to a beast, but not I find that you have given me the comeliest, the worthiest, and the most gallant young man ever born into the world to be my husband. For know that when he comes into my chamber to lie by my side, he casts off his dirty hide and leaves it on the ground, and is changed into a graceful handsome youth. No one could believe this marvel save they saw it with their own eyes."

When the queen heard these words she deemed that her daughter-in-law must be jesting with her, but Meldina still persisted that what she said was true.

And when the queen demanded to know how she might witness with her own eyes the truth of this thing, Meldina replied, “Come to my chamber tonight, when we shall be in our first sleep; the door will be open, and you will find that what I tell you is the truth.”

That same night, when the looked-for time had come, and all were gone to rest, the queen let some torches be kindled and went, accompanied by the king, to the chamber of her son, and when she had entered she saw the pig’s skin lying on the floor in the corner of the room, and having gone to the bedside, found therein a handsome young man in whose arms Meldina was lying. And when they saw this, the delight of the king and queen was very great, and the king gave order that before anyone should leave the chamber the pig’s hide should be torn to shreds. So great was their joy over the recovery of their son that they well-nigh died thereof.

And King Galeotto, when he saw that he had so fine a son, and a grandchild likewise, laid aside his diadem and his royal robes, and advanced to his place his son, whom he let be crowned with the greatest pomp, and who was ever afterwards known as King Pig. Thus, to the great contentment of all the people, the young king began his reign, and he lived long and happily with Meldina his beloved wife.

## HOW THE DEVIL MARRIED THREE SISTERS

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Crane, Thomas Frederick. *Italian Popular Tales*. New York: Houghton, Mifflin and Co., 1885, 78–81.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Italy

**National Origin:** Italy

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As is the case in many tales of marriage to a demonic spouse, this **variant** of “Rescue by the Sister” (AT 311) describes punishment for too little curiosity regarding a potential mate’s background and too much curiosity regarding a forbidden room. The **motif** of rescue by a younger sibling is retained in the Italian tale, as well.

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Once upon a time the devil was seized with a desire to marry. He therefore left Hell, took the form of a handsome young man, and built a fine large house. When it was completed and furnished in the most fashionable style he introduced himself to a family where there were three pretty daughters, and paid his addresses to the eldest of them. The handsome man

pleased the maiden, her parents were glad to see a daughter so well provided for, and it was not long before the wedding was celebrated.

When he had taken his bride home, he presented her with a very tastefully arranged bouquet, led her through all the rooms of the house, and finally to a closed door. "The whole house is at your disposal," said he, "only I must request one thing of you; that is, that you do not on any account open this door."

Of course the young wife promised faithfully; but equally, of course, she could scarcely wait for the moment to come when she might break her promise. When the devil had left the house the next morning, under pretence of going hunting, she ran hastily to the forbidden door, opened it, and saw a terrible abyss full of fire that shot up towards her, and singed the flowers on her bosom. When her husband came home and asked her whether she had kept her promise, she unhesitatingly said, "Yes." But he saw by the flowers that she was telling a lie, and said, "Now I will not put your curiosity to the test any longer. Come with me. I will show you myself what is behind the door." Thereupon he led her to the door, opened it, gave her such a push that she fell down into Hell, and shut the door again.

A few months after he wooed the next sister for his wife, and won her; but with her everything that had happened with the first wife was exactly repeated.

Finally he courted the third sister. She was a prudent maiden, and said to herself, "He has certainly murdered my two sisters; but then it is a splendid match for me, so I will try and see whether I cannot be more fortunate than they." And accordingly she consented. After the wedding the bridegroom gave her a beautiful bouquet, but forbade her, also, to open the door which he pointed out.

Not a whit less curious than her sisters, she, too, opened the forbidden door when the devil had gone hunting, but she had previously put her flowers in water. Then she saw behind the door the fatal abyss and her sisters therein. "Ah!" she exclaimed, "poor creature that I am; I thought I had married an ordinary man, and instead of that he is the devil! How can I get away from him?" She carefully pulled her two sisters out of Hell and hid them. When the devil came home he immediately looked at the bouquet, which she again wore on her bosom, and when he found the flowers so fresh he asked no questions; but reassured as to his secret, he now, for the first time, really loved her.

After a few days she asked him if he would carry three chests for her to her parents' house, without putting them down or resting on the way. "But," she added, "you must keep your word, for I shall be watching you."

The devil promised to do exactly as she wished. So the next morning she put one of her sisters in a chest, and laid it on her husband's shoulders. The devil, who is very strong, but also very lazy and unaccustomed to work, soon got tired of carrying the heavy chest, and wanted to rest before he was out of the street on which he lived; but his wife called out to him, "Don't put it down; I see you!"



The devil went reluctantly on with the chest until he had turned the corner, and then said to himself, "She cannot see me here; I will rest a little."

But scarcely had he begun to put the chest down when the sister inside cried out, "Don't put it down; I see you still!" Cursing, he dragged the chest on into another street, and was going to lay it down on a doorstep, but he again heard the voice, "Don't lay it down, you rascal; I see you still!"

"What kind of eyes must my wife have," he thought, "to see around corners as well as straight ahead, and through walls as if they were made of glass!" and thus thinking he arrived, all in a perspiration and quite tired out, at the house of his mother-in-law, to whom he hastily delivered the chest, and then hurried home to strengthen himself with a good breakfast.

The same thing was repeated the next day with the second chest. On the third day she herself was to be taken home in the chest. She therefore prepared a figure which she dressed in her own clothes, and placed on the balcony, under the pretext of being able to watch him better; slipped quickly into the chest, and had the maid put it on the devil's back. "The deuce!" said he; "this chest is a great deal heavier than the others; and today, when she is sitting on the balcony, I shall have so much the less chance to rest." So by dint of the greatest exertions he carried it, without stopping, to his mother-in-law, and then hastened home to breakfast, scolding, and with his back almost broken.

But quite contrary to custom, his wife did not come out to meet him, and there was no breakfast ready. "Margerita, where are you?" he cried, but received no answer. As he was running through the corridors, he at length looked out of a window and saw the figure on the balcony. "Margerita, have you gone to sleep? Come down. I am as tired as a dog, and as hungry as a wolf." But there was no reply. "If you do not come down instantly I will go up and bring you down," he cried, angrily; but Margerita did not stir. Enraged, he hastened up to the balcony, and gave her such a box on the ear that her head flew off, and he saw that the head was nothing but a milliner's form, and the body, a bundle of rags. Raging, he rushed down and rummaged through the whole house, but in vain; he found only his wife's empty jewel box. "Ha!" he cried; "she has been stolen from me and her jewels, too!" and he immediately ran to inform her parents of the misfortune.

But when he came near the house, to his great surprise he saw on the balcony above the door all three sisters, his wives, who were looking down on him with scornful laughter. Three wives at once terrified the devil so much that he took his flight with all possible speed. Since that time he has lost his taste for marrying.

# ***The Nordic Countries***



# DENMARK

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## PETER OX

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Grundtvig, Sven. *Danish Fairy Tales*, trans. J. Grant Cramer. Boston: Four Seas Company, 1919, 9–14.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Denmark

**National Origin:** Denmark

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Located north of Germany, Denmark is the southernmost country of the Nordic region. Before modernization in the nineteenth century, Denmark's economy was based on farming and maritime occupations. The rural setting of "Peter Ox" (AT 1675) reflects the traditional lifeways of the Danes. The following tale is classified, according to the classic Aarne-Thompson **genres**, as an **anecdote**. It builds its plot on the benevolent naiveté of a farm couple and the avarice of the local church sexton. In its initial stages the tale is reminiscent of "The Jackal as Schoolmaster" (AT 56C). Also see the San "The Lion and the Jackal," Volume 1, page 144, for an example of the latter **tale type**. The innocence and goodness of the farmer allows him to prosper by the conclusion of the tale, however.

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**T**here were once upon a time a peasant and his wife who lived in Jutland [a region of Denmark that is located on continental Europe], but they had no children. They often lamented that fact and were also sad to think that they had no relatives to whom to leave their farm and other possessions. So the years went by and they became richer and richer, but there was no one to inherit their wealth.

One year the farmer bought a fine calf which he called Peter, and it was really the finest animal that he had ever seen, and so clever that it seemed to understand nearly everything that one said to it. It was also very amusing and affectionate, so that the man and his wife soon became as fond of it as if it were their own child.

One day the farmer said to his wife, "Perhaps the sexton of our church could teach Peter to talk then we could not do better than to adopt him as our child, and he could then inherit all our property."

"Who can tell?" said the wife, "Our sexton is a learned man and perhaps he might be able to teach Peter to talk, for Peter is really very clever. Suppose you ask the sexton."

So the farmer went over to the sexton and asked him whether he did not believe that he could teach his calf to talk, because he wanted to make the animal his heir. The crafty sexton looked around to see that no one was near, and then said that he thought he could do so. "Only you must not tell anybody," he said, "for it must be a great secret, and the minister in particular must not know anything about it, or I might get into serious trouble as such things are strictly forbidden. Moreover it will cost a pretty penny as we shall need rare and expensive books." The farmer said that he did not mind, and handing the sexton a hundred dollars to buy books with, promised not to say a word about the arrangement to anyone.

That evening the man brought his calf to the sexton who promised to do his best. In about a week the farmer returned to see how his calf was getting on, but the sexton said that he did not dare let him see the animal, else Peter might become homesick and forget all that he had already learned. Otherwise he was making good progress, but the farmer must pay another hundred dollars, as Peter needed more books. The peasant happened to have the money with him, so he gave it to the sexton and went home filled with hope and pleasant anticipations.

At the end of another week the man again went to make inquiry about Peter, and was told by the sexton that he was doing fairly well. "Can he say anything?" asked the farmer.

"Yes, he can say 'ma'," answered the sexton.

"The poor animal is surely ill," said the peasant, "and he probably wants mead. I will go straight home and bring him a jug of it." So he fetched a jug of good, old mead and gave it to the sexton for Peter. The sexton, however, kept the mead and gave the calf some milk instead.

A week later the farmer came again to find out what Peter could say now. "He still refuses to say anything but 'ma'," said the sexton.

"Oh! he is a cunning rogue"; said the peasant, "so he wants more mead, does he? Well, I'll get him some more, as he likes it so much. But what progress has he made?"

"He is doing so well," answered the sexton, "that he needs another hundred dollars' worth of books, for he cannot learn anything more from those that he has now."

“Well then, if he needs them he shall have them.” So that same day the farmer brought another hundred dollars and a jug of good, old mead for Peter.

Now the peasant allowed a few weeks to elapse without calling on Peter, for he began to be afraid that each visit would cost him a hundred dollars. In the meantime the calf had become as fat as he would ever be, so the sexton killed him and sold the meat carefully at a distance from the village. Having done that he put on his black clothes and went to call on the farmer and his wife. As soon as he had bid them good day he asked them whether Peter had reached home safe and sound.

“Why no,” said the farmer, “he has not run away, has he?”

“I hope,” said the sexton, “that after all the trouble I have taken he has not been so tricky as to run away and to abuse my confidence so shamefully. For I have spent at least a hundred dollars of my own money to pay for books for him. Now Peter could say whatever he wanted, and he was telling me only yesterday that he was longing to see his dear parents. As I wanted to give him that pleasure, but feared that he would not be able to find his way home alone, I dressed myself and started out with him. We were hardly in the street when I suddenly remembered that I had left my stick at home, so I ran back to get it. When I came out of the house again, I found that Peter had run on alone. I thought, of course, that he had gone back to your house. If he is not there, I certainly do not know where he can be.”

Then the people began to weep and lament that Peter was lost, now especially when they might have had such pleasure with him, and after paying out so much money for his education. And the worst of it was that they were again without an heir. The sexton tried to comfort them and was also very sorry that Peter had deceived them so. But perhaps he had only lost his way, and the sexton promised that he would ask publicly in church next Sunday whether somebody had not seen the calf. Then he bade the farmer and his wife good-bye and went home and had some good roast veal for dinner.

One day the sexton read in the paper that a new merchant, named Peter Ox, had settled in the neighboring town. He put the paper into his pocket and went straight to the farmer and read this item of news to him. “One might almost believe,” he said, “that this is your calf.”

“Why yes,” said the farmer, “who else should it be?” Then his wife added, “Yes father, go at once to see him, for I feel sure that it can be no other than our dear Peter. But take along plenty of money for he probably needs it now that he has become a merchant.”

On the following morning the farmer put a bag of money on his shoulder, took with him some provisions, and started to walk to the town where the merchant lived. Early next morning he arrived there and went straight to the merchant’s house. The servants told the man that the merchant had not gotten up yet. “That does not make any difference for I am his father; just take me up to his room.”

So they took the peasant up to the bedroom where the merchant lay sound asleep. And as soon as the farmer saw him, he recognized Peter. There were the same thick neck and broad forehead and the same red hair, but otherwise he looked just like a human being. Then the man went to him and bade him good morning and said, "Well, Peter, you caused your mother and me great sorrow when you ran away as soon as you had learned something. But get up now and let me have a look at you and talk with you."

The merchant, of course, believed that he had a crazy man to deal with, so he thought it best to be careful. "Yes I will get up," he said, and jumped out of bed into his clothes as quickly as possible.

"Ah!" said the peasant, "now I see what a wise man our sexton was; he has brought it to pass that you are like any other man. If I were not absolutely certain of it, I should never dream that you were the calf of our red cow. Will you come home with me?" The merchant said that he could not as he had to attend to his business. "But you could take over my farm and I would retire. Nevertheless if you prefer to stay in business, I am willing. Do you need any money?"

"Well," said the merchant, "a man can always find use for money in his business."

"I thought so," said the farmer, "and besides you had nothing to start with, so I have brought you some money." And with that he poured out on the table the bright dollars that covered it entirely.

When the merchant saw what kind of a man his new found acquaintance was, he chatted with him in a very friendly manner and begged him to remain with him for a few days.

"Yes indeed," said the farmer, "but you must be sure to call me father from now on."

"But I have neither father nor mother living," answered Peter Ox.

"That I know perfectly well," the peasant replied, "for I sold your real father in Copenhagen last Michaelmas, and your mother died while calving. But my wife and I have adopted you as our child and you will be our heir, so you must call me father."

The merchant gladly agreed to that and kept the bag of money; and before leaving town the farmer made his will and bequeathed all his possessions to Peter after his death. Then the man went home and told his wife the whole story, and she was delighted to learn that the merchant Peter Ox was really their own calf.

"Now you must go straight over to the sexton and tell him what has happened"; she said, "and be sure to refund to him the hundred dollars that he paid out of his own pocket for Peter, for he has earned all that we have paid him, because of the joy that he has caused us in giving us such a son and heir."

Her husband was of the same opinion and went to call on the sexton, whom he thanked many times for his kindness and to whom he also gave two hundred dollars.

Then the farmer sold his farm, and he and his wife moved into the town where the merchant was, and lived with him happily until their death.

## THE SUITOR

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Bay, J. Christian. *Danish Folk Tales*. New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1899, 23–27.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Denmark

**National Origin:** Denmark

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The following tale draws on plots categorized in the Aarne-Thompson system as “Looking for a Wife.” Specifically, the suitor’s (Tom) first venture into courtship is unsatisfactory because of the potential brides’ speech impediments (AT 1457). His second prospect fails her bride test due to her laziness (AT 1453). His final attempt at finding a bride finds both the girl and her parents fretting over details of a wedding dress before the proposal has taken place (AT 1450).

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There was once a handsome young fellow by the name of Tom. From an old, wealthy uncle he had inherited a fine farm, and being well established in life, he determined to seek a wife. As he was quite wealthy, he considered himself able to afford a little more than ordinary people in this direction, for the wives of wealthy men must always be prettier and wiser than those of the poor, as we all know.

So Tom wanted a wife who was handsome and industrious, wise and good, and of course it would not be out of the way if she possessed some property.

One day he rode over to a rich farmer who lived in the neighborhood and who had three daughters, all of whom were ready to be married at once. He had seen, although he had never talked with, them, and thought well of all three.

Now these girls, who were otherwise pretty and good, had one great fault: namely, that they could not talk distinctly. When Tom came riding into the yard the farmer received him kindly and conducted him into the room where the three girls sat spinning diligently.

They nodded kindly to him and smiled, but did not utter a sound, as their mother had strictly forbidden them to do so. The farmer led the talking, while his wife waited on them with good food and drinks. The girls spun, and looked at the young man at the table, and glanced at each other and at the ceiling and out of the windows, but none of them spoke.

At length the one happened to break her yarn. “My ‘arn bote!” exclaimed she.

“Tie it adain,” advised her sister.



“Mamma told us we say no’tin’, and now we t’ant teep ‘till!” broke in the third one. When Tom heard these grown girls talk like babies he hurried away, utterly shocked. A wife who could not speak distinctly he had no use for at all.

He proceeded to another farm, where they had a daughter who was said to be a very fine girl in all respects. Tom went into the house and saw her. If the first three ones had been too silent, this one talked, however, more fluently and volubly than any girl whom he had ever met. She talked like a house on fire, while her spinning wheel went more rapidly than any engine. “How long does it take you to use up such a head of flax?” asked the young man, pointing to the rock [distaff].

“Oh,” she said, “I use up a couple of them every day.”

While she left the room a few minutes to look after the servants, Tom seized a key from a drawer of a bureau in the room and stuffed it into the head of flax. When she returned they finished their conversation; whereupon he bid her parents and herself good-bye, promising to call again in a week.

On the appointed day Tom returned. The girl and her parents expected him to talk this time of his errand. When he came into the room the girl was busy with her rock, as before. She bid him welcome, and invited him to sit down.

“How unfortunate!” began she. “We have been missing the key of that bureau ever since you were here. We are unable to find it, and I cannot reach any of my things. It never happened before.”

On hearing this, Tom went over and pulled the key out of the head of flax. It was the same key, and, still worse, the very same head of flax that he had seen a week before. Thus he knew her word could not be depended upon; and bidding her good-bye he left at once, richer in experience than before.

Some time afterwards he heard of a girl who was very pretty and good, but especially wise and thoughtful in all practical matters. Her parents were said to be the same. Tom saddled his horse and rode over to see her.

The whole family was at home and received the young man very kindly. While the men drifted into a talk about the weather and crops, the women placed before them the best that the house could afford.

“Go into the cellar and fetch a bottle of wine,” said the woman to her daughter. The girl went into the cellar, but was so busy thinking what pattern she might choose for a wedding dress that she sat down on the floor, lost in reflection upon this important subject, and the wine was entirely forgotten. After she had left the room, the parents told Tom of their daughter’s many good qualities; how industrious she was, how thoughtful, and so on. The young man thought that she would be exactly such a wife as he wished. But as the girl did not appear with the wine, her mother went to see what had become of her.

When she came into the cellar and found her daughter sitting on the floor, she asked, “Why do you sit there, instead of bringing the wine?”

“Well,” was the answer, “I am thinking that if I marry Tom I must make a careful choice of the pattern for my wedding gown. The question is, what pattern would do best?”

“Yes, indeed,” answered her mother, “which pattern will be the most suitable?” She sat down by her daughter, pondering over this important question.

“I wonder what has become of them both!” at length exclaimed the man, referring to his wife and daughter. “I must look after them.”

He went into the cellar, and when he saw both women sitting on the floor he cried, “Why are you both sitting here? You have kept us waiting for over an hour!”

“We are thinking,” replied his wife, “of the pattern for the wedding gown. If she is to marry Tom, the gown must, of course, be a pretty one, and the choice of the right pattern is, indeed, an important matter.”

“To be sure!” answered her husband, seating himself on the floor beside them to consider the same subject.

As at length Tom grew tired of waiting, he went himself into the cellar to see if anything unusual had happened. He found the whole family sitting on the floor and looking extremely thoughtful.

“Why do you all sit here?” he asked. At length the farmer, aroused from his reverie, proceeded to relate the difficult question which had caught their attention.

“Yes, indeed,” answered Tom. “Which will be the most suitable pattern? You may think of that until I return, and in the meantime I will do the same. Good-bye to you!”

Mounting his horse, he rode home as rapidly as the steed would carry him, and if he has not found another and less thoughtful girl, he is yet a bachelor.

But the three people may yet be sitting on the cellar floor, thinking of the pattern for the bridal gown, for all that I know!

# ICELAND

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## THE PROSE EDDA

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Sturluson, Snorri. *The Prose Edda*, trans. Arthur Gilchrist Brodeur. New York: The American Scandinavian Foundation, 1916, 3–12, 70–73.

**Date:** ca. 1200

**Original Source:** Iceland

**National Origin:** Iceland

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Iceland, a country of northwestern Europe, consists of the island of Iceland and adjacent islets in the North Atlantic Ocean. In the late ninth century, Norwegian immigrants permanently settled on the island. Until the twentieth century, farming and maritime occupations provided the livelihood for the population. The following narrative is drawn from *The Prose Edda* written by Snorri Sturluson (1178–1241), an Icelandic historian, poet, and politician. The *Prose Edda* consists of a “Prologue” (given in its entirety below) that is Snorri’s attempt to explain the origins of Norse mythology by recourse to historical events. The second section, the “Gylfaginning” (“Tricking of Gylfi”) recounts the **myths** of Norse tradition (“The Death of Baldr” from the “Gylfaginning,” is given below). Section Three consists of the “Skáldskaparmál,” a dialogue between Ægir (Norse god of the sea) and Bragi (Norse god of poetry) that interweaves myth and poetic theory. The last section, the “Háttatal,” illustrates the verse forms of Old Norse poetry. Although Snorri was a Christian and his work was written two centuries after the introduction of Christianity to Iceland, he provides a classic source for Norse mythology in *The Prose Edda*.

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## In the Beginning

In the beginning God created heaven and earth and all those things which are in them; and last of all, two of human kind, Adam and Eve, from whom the races are descended. And their offspring multiplied among themselves and were scattered throughout the earth. But as time passed, the races of men became unlike in nature: some were good and believed on the right; but many more turned after the lusts of the world and slighted God's command. Wherefore, God drowned the world in a swelling of the sea, and all living things, save them alone that were in the ark with Noah. After Noah's flood eight of mankind remained alive, who peopled the earth; and the races descended from them. And it was even as before: when the earth was full of folk and inhabited of many, then all the multitude of mankind began to love greed, wealth, and worldly honor, but neglected the worship of God. Now accordingly it came to so evil a pass that they would not name God; and who then could tell their sons of God's mighty wonders? Thus it happened that they lost the name of God; and throughout the wide-ness of the world the man was not found who could distinguish in aught the trace of his Creator. But not the less did God bestow upon them the gifts of the earth: wealth and happiness, for their enjoyment in the world; He increased also their wisdom, so that they knew all earthly matters, and every phase of whatsoever they might see in the air and on the earth.

One thing they wondered and pondered over: what it might mean, that the earth and the beasts and the birds had one nature in some ways, and yet were unlike in manner of life. In this was their nature one: that the earth was cleft into lofty mountain-peaks, wherein water spurted up, and it was not needful to dig longer for water there than in the deep valleys; so it is also with beasts and birds: it is equally far to the blood in the head and the feet. Another quality of the earth is, that in each year grass and flowers grow upon the earth, and in the same year all that growth falls away and withers; it is even so with beasts and birds: hair and feathers grow and fall away each year. This is the third nature of the earth, that when it is opened and dug up, the grass grows straightway on the soil which is uppermost on the earth. Boulders and stones they likened to the teeth and bones of living beings. Thus they recognized that the earth was quick, and had life with some manner of nature of its own; and they understood that she was wondrous old in years and mighty in kind: she nourished all that lived, and she took to herself all that died.

Therefore they gave her a name, and traced the number of their generations from her. The same thing, moreover, they learned from their aged kinsmen: that many hundreds of years have been numbered since the same earth yet was, and the same sun and stars of the heavens; but the courses of these were unequal, some having a longer course, and some a shorter.

From things like these the thought stirred within them that there might be some governor of the stars of heaven: one who might order their courses after

his will; and that he must be very strong and full of might. This also they held to be true: that if he swayed the chief things of creation, he must have been before the stars of heaven; and they saw that if he ruled the courses of the heavenly bodies, he must also govern the shining of the sun, and the dews of the air, and the fruits of the earth, whatsoever grows upon it; and in like manner the winds of the air and the storms of the sea. They knew not yet where his kingdom was; but this they believed: that he ruled all things on earth and in the sky, the great stars also of the heaven, and the winds of the sea. Wherefore, not only to tell of this fittingly, but also that they might fasten it in memory, they gave names out of their own minds to all things. This belief of theirs has changed in many ways, according as the peoples drifted asunder and their tongues became severed one from another. But all things they discerned with the wisdom of the earth, for the understanding of the spirit was not given to them; this they perceived, that all things were fashioned of some essence.

## II

The world was divided into three parts: from the south, extending into the west and bordering on the Mediterranean Sea, all this part was called Africa, the southern quarter of which is hot, so that it is parched with the sun. The second part, from west to north and bordering on the ocean, is called Európa or Eneá; its northern part is so cold that no grass grows upon it, and no man dwells there. From the north and all down over the eastern part, even to the south, is called Asia. In that region of the world is all fairness and pride, and the fruits of the earth's increase, gold and jewels. There also is the center of the earth; and even as the land there is lovelier and better in every way than in other places, so also were the sons of men there most favored with all goodly gifts: wisdom, and strength of the body, beauty, and all manner of knowledge.

## III

Near the earth's center was made that goodliest of homes and haunts that ever have been, which is called Troy, even that which we call Turkland. This abode was much more gloriously made than others, and fashioned with more skill of craftsmanship in manifold wise, both in luxury and in the wealth which was there in abundance. There were twelve kingdoms and one High King, and many sovereignties belonged to each kingdom; in the stronghold were twelve chieftains.

These chieftains were in every manly part greatly above other men that have ever been in the world. One king among them was called Múnón or Mennón; and he was wedded to the daughter of the High King Priam, her who was called Tróán; they had a child named Trór, whom we call Thor. He was fostered in Thrace by a certain war-duke called Lórikus; but when he was ten winters old he took unto him the weapons of his father. He was as goodly to look upon, when he came among other men, as the ivory that is inlaid in oak; his

hair was fairer than gold. When he was twelve winters old he had his full measure of strength; then he lifted clear of the earth ten bear-skins all at one time; and then he slew Duke Lórikus, his foster-father, and with him his wife Lórá, or Glórá, and took into his own hands the realm of Thrace, which we call Thrúdheim. Then he went forth far and wide over the lands, and sought out every quarter of the earth, overcoming alone all berserks and giants, and one dragon, greatest of all dragons, and many beasts.

In the northern half of his kingdom he found the prophetess that is called Síbil, whom we call Sif, and wedded her. The lineage of Sif I cannot tell; she was fairest of all women, and her hair was like gold. Their son was Lóridi, who resembled his father; his son was Einridi, his son Vingethor, his son Vingener, his son Móda, his son Magi, his son Seskef, his son Bedvig, his son Athra (whom we call Annarr), his son Ítermann, his son Heremód, his son Skjaldun (whom we call Skjöld), his son Bjáf (whom we call Bjárr), his son Ját, his son Gudólfr, his son Finn, his son Fríallaf (whom we call Fridleifr); his son was he who is named Vóden, whom we call Odin: he was a man far-famed for wisdom and every accomplishment. His wife was Frígídá, whom we call Frigg.

## IV

Odin had second sight, and his wife also; and from their foreknowledge he found that his name should be exalted in the northern part of the world and glorified above the fame of all other kings. Therefore, he made ready to journey out of Turkland, and was accompanied by a great multitude of people, young folk and old, men and women; and they had with them much goods of great price. And wherever they went over the lands of the earth, many glorious things were spoken of them, so that they were held more like gods than men. They made no end to their journeying till they were come north into the land that is now called Saxland; there Odin tarried for a long space, and took the land into his own hand, far and wide.

In that land Odin set up three of his sons for land-wardens. One was named Vegdeg: he was a mighty king and ruled over East Saxland; his son was Vitgils; his sons were Vitta, Heingistr's father, and Sigarr, father of Svebdeg, whom we call Svipdagr. The second son of Beldeg, whom we call Baldr: he had the land which is now called Westphalia. His son was Brandr, his son Frjódigar (whom we call Fródi), his son Freóvin, his son Uvigg, his son Gevis (whom we call Gave). Odin's third son is named Sigi, his son Rerir. These the forefathers ruled over what is now called Frankland; and thence is descended the house known as Völsungs. From all these are sprung many and great houses.

Then Odin began his way northward, and came into the land which they called Reidgothland; and in that land he took possession of all that pleased him. He set up over the land that son of his called Skjöldr, whose son was Fridleifr; and thence descends the house of the Skjöldungs: these are the kings of the

Danes. And what was then called Reidgothland is now called Jutland [an area of modern Denmark].

## V

After that he went northward, where the land is called Sweden; the king there was named Gylfi. When the king learned of the coming of those men of Asia, who were called Æsir, he went to meet them, and made offer to them that Odin should have such power in his realm as he himself wielded. And such well-being followed ever upon their footsteps, that in whatsoever lands they dwelt were good seasons and peace; and all believed that they caused these things, for the lords of the land perceived that they were unlike other men whom they had seen, both in fairness and also in wisdom.

The fields and the choice lands in that place seemed fair to Odin, and he chose for himself the site of a city which is now called Sigtún. There he established chieftains in the fashion which had prevailed in Troy; he set up also twelve head-men to be doomsmen over the people and to judge the laws of the land; and he ordained also all laws as, there had been before, in Troy, and according to the customs of the Turks. After that he went into the north, until he was stopped by the sea, which men thought lay around all the lands of the earth; and there he set his son over this kingdom, which is now called Norway. This king was Sæmingr; the kings of Norway trace their lineage from him, and so do also the jarls [Scandinavian medieval nobleman] and the other mighty men, as is said in the *Háleygjatal*. Odin had with him one of his sons called Yngvi, who was king in Sweden after him; and those houses come from him that are named Ynglings. The Æsir took wives of the land for themselves, and some also for their sons; and these kindreds became many in number, so that throughout Saxland, and thence all over the region of the north, they spread out until their tongue, even the speech of the men of Asia, was the native tongue over all these lands. Therefore men think that they can perceive, from their forefathers' names which are written down, that those names belonged to this tongue, and that the Æsir brought the tongue hither into the northern region, into Norway and into Sweden, into Denmark and into Saxland. But in England there are ancient lists of land-names and place-names which may show that these names came from another tongue than this.

## Death of Baldr

Hárr made answer, "The beginning of the story is this, that Baldr the Good [Norse god of innocence, beauty, joy, purity, and peace] dreamed great and perilous dreams touching his life. When he told these dreams to the Æsir, then they took counsel together: and this was their decision: to ask safety for Baldr from all kinds of dangers. And Frigg [supreme goddess of the Norse pantheon] took oaths to this purport, that fire and water should spare Baldr, likewise iron and metal of all kinds, stones, earth, trees, sicknesses, beasts, birds, venom, serpents.

And when that was done and made known, then it was a diversion of Baldr's and the Æsir, that he should stand up in the Thing [the assembly], and all the others should some shoot at him, some hew at him, some beat him with stones; but whatsoever was done hurt him not at all, and that seemed to them all a very worshipful thing.

“But when Loki Laufeyarson [trickster who was actually a giant but associated with the Æsir, the Norse gods] saw this, it pleased him ill that Baldr took no hurt. He went to Fensalir [Frigg's palace] to Frigg, and made himself into the likeness of a woman. Then Frigg asked if that woman knew what the Æsir did at the Thing. She said that all were shooting at Baldr, and moreover, that he took no hurt. Then said Frigg, ‘Neither weapons nor trees may hurt Baldr: I have taken oaths of them all.’ Then the woman asked, ‘Have all things taken oaths to spare Baldr?’ and Frigg answered, ‘There grows a tree-sprout alone westward of Valhall: it is called Mistletoe; I thought it too young to ask the oath of.’ Then straightway the woman turned away; but Loki took Mistletoe and pulled it up and went to the Thing.

“Hödr [Baldr's brother] stood outside the ring of men, because he was blind. Then spake Loki to him, ‘Why dost thou not shoot at Baldr?’ He answered, ‘Because I see not where Baldr is; and for this also, that I am weaponless.’ Then said Loki, ‘Do thou also after the manner of other men, and show Baldr honor as the other men do. I will direct thee where he stands; shoot at him with this wand.’ Hödr took Mistletoe and shot at Baldr, being guided by Loki: the shaft flew through Baldr, and he fell dead to the earth; and that was the greatest mischance that has ever befallen among gods and men.

“Then, when Baldr was fallen, words failed all the, Æsir, and their hands likewise to lay hold of him; each looked at the other, and all were of one mind as to him who had wrought the work, but none might take vengeance, so great a sanctuary was in that place. But when the Æsir tried to speak, then it befell first that weeping broke out, so that none might speak to the others with words concerning his grief. But Odin [supreme god of the Norse pantheon] bore that misfortune by so much the worst, as he had most perception of how great harm and loss for the Æsir were in the death of Baldr.

“Now when the gods had come to themselves, Frigg spake, and asked who there might be among the Æsir who would fain have for his own all her love and favor: let him ride the road to Hel [Norse goddess of the dead and daughter of Loki; also, Land of the Dead], and seek if he may find Baldr, and offer Hel a ransom if she will let Baldr come home to Ásgard. And he is named Hermódr the Bold, Odin's son, who undertook that embassy. Then Sleipnir was taken, Odin's steed, and led forward; and Hermódr mounted on that horse and galloped off.

“The Æsir took the body of Baldr and brought it to the sea. Hringhorni is the name of Baldr's ship: it was greatest of all ships; the gods would have launched it and made Baldr's pyre thereon, but the ship stirred not forward. Then word was sent to Jötunheim after that giantess who is called Hyrrokkin.



When she had come, riding a wolf and having a viper for bridle, then she leaped off the steed; and Odin called to four berserks [“beserkers,” Norse warriors who fought in an uncontrollable state of frenzy] to tend the steed; but they were not able to hold it until they had felled it. Then Hyrrokkin went to the prow of the boat and thrust it out at the first push, so that fire burst from the rollers, and all lands trembled. Thor became angry and clutched his hammer, and would straightway have broken her head, had not the gods prayed for peace for her.

“Then was the body of Baldr borne out on shipboard; and when his wife, Nanna the daughter of Nep, saw that, straightway her heart burst with grief, and she died; she was borne to the pyre, and fire was kindled. Then Thor stood by and hallowed the pyre with Mjöllnir [Thor’s hammer]; and before his feet ran a certain dwarf which was named Litri; Thor kicked at him with his foot and thrust him into the fire, and he burned. People of many races visited this burning: First is to be told of Odin, how Frigg and the Valkyrs went with him, and his ravens; but Freyr drove in his chariot with the boar called Gold-Mane, or Fearful-Tusk, and Heimdallr rode the horse called Gold-Top, and Freyja drove her cats. Thither came also much people of the Rime-Giants and the Hill-Giants. Odin laid on the pyre that gold ring which is called Draupnir; this quality attended it, that every ninth night there dropped from it eight gold rings of equal weight. Baldr’s horse was led to the bale-fire with all his trappings.”

## **THOR IN PERIL**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Mackenzie, Donald A. *Teutonic Myth and Legend*. London: Gresham Publications, 1912, 126–134.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** *The Poetic Edda* from the Icelandic Codex Regius.

**National Origin:** Iceland

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The following episodes from Norse mythology depict the relationship between Loki (“Loke,” in this translation) the **trickster** and Thor the god of lightning and thunder. Thor’s hammer Mjolner was made for him by a pair of dwarves Brok and Eitri, whose trade was the manufacture of magical objects for the gods. Thor threw his hammer to create lightning as he rode in his chariot pulled by a pair of goats, but the hammer returned to the iron glove he wore on his right hand. Thor’s hammer had served as his weapon in battles against the frost giants. For this reason, Thrym used it to barter with the god and Geirrod wanted him stripped of the weapon before confronting him. Loke uses his cunning and skill at shape-shifting both to aid and undermine Thor, according to

the trickster's self-interest. Ragnarok, alluded to in the second episode of "Thor in Peril," is the end of the universe in Norse mythology. After this apocalypse, a new utopia will rise from the sea. Yggdrasil is a giant ash tree that forms a framework that links the worlds of the Norse mythic cosmos.

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**N**ow there was a king of giants whose name was Thrym, and he desired to have Freyja, the beautiful Asa-goddess, for his bride. A deep plot he laid, nor did the gods become aware of it until a grievous misfortune befell Thor. He was returning with Loke from Jotun-heim, and together they lay down to sleep. In great wrath was the thunder-god [that is, Thor] when he awoke because he could find not his hammer, Mjolner. He grasped his red beard and shook it, and fear crept over him as he searched around and about, because without his hammer he was powerless to contend against the giants.

When the other awoke, Thor spoke to him, saying, "Listen to me, and I shall tell thee what is known not in heaven nor upon earth—Mjolner is stolen!"

Speedily they took flight towards high Asgard, and to the dwelling of Freyja went they. Thor spake abruptly, and said, "Wilt thou lend thy falcon-guise to me, for my hammer hath been stolen, and I would fain find it."

"Gladly shall I give it thee, O Thor," Freyja answered, "even although it were made of silver; yea, if it were of fine gold thou wouldst have it without delay."

To Loke gave Thor the falcon-guise, and he flew speedily from Asgard to the northern coasts of distant Jotun-heim. Nor did he pause or stay until he reached a high mountain on which sat Thrym, king of giants, twisting bands of gold for his dogs, and anon smoothing the gold mane of his horse.

When he beheld Loke in falcon-guise he said, "How fare the gods, and how fare the elves? Why dost thou come alone unto these shores?"

Loke answered, "Ill fares it with gods and ill fares it with the elves. Hast thou hidden the hammer of Thor?"

Thrym answered boldly and with gladness, "I have indeed done so. Nine miles below the ground have I buried Mjolner. Nor shall it ever be recovered or returned unto Thor until I am given the goddess Freyja for my bride."

Having spoken thus he smoothed leisurely the golden mane of his fleet-footed steed, and Loke flew back towards Asgard.

Thor awaited him on the battlements, and when the falcon drew nigh he cried, "Hast thou indeed performed thy mission, O Loke? Tell me what thou knowest ere thou dost descend. What is spoken by one who sits is often of small worth. He who reclines is prone to utter what is untrue."

Loke answered and said, "I have discovered all that needs be known. Thy hammer hath been stolen by Thrym, King of Jotuns, and he hath buried it nine miles down below the mountains. Nor will he deliver it to thee again until Freyja is given him to be his bride."

Then Thor and Loke went unto Freyja and told her what the giant had said. Impatient, indeed, was the thunder-god, for he feared that if it became known to the Frost-giants that his hammer was lost they would fall upon Asgard and overcome the gods.

“Right speedily thou must don thy bridal attire, O Freyja,” Thor exclaimed, “and together shall we hasten unto Jotun-heim.”

Freyja was filled with anger, and as she raged she broke her flashing necklace that gave her great beauty. “A love-sick maid, indeed, I would be,” she exclaimed, “ere I would hasten to King Thrym.”

To the high Thingstead [Assembly] of Asgard went Thor, and the gods assembled there to hold counsel one with another and decide how the hammer should be recovered. To the hall Vingolf went the goddesses, to consult regarding the fate of Freyja.

In the Thingstead, Heimdal, the wise Van, the shining god, spake with foreknowledge and cunning, and thus he advised, “Let Thor be dressed in the bridal robes of Freyja, and let him also don her sparkling necklace, which gives its wearer great beauty. In a woman’s dress let Thor go forth, with keys jingling at his waist. His hair must be pleated, and on his breast must be fixed great brooches.”

But Thor made protest, and declared that the gods would mock him if he were attired in woman’s dress. Ill-pleased was he with Heimdal’s words. “Be silent, Thor,” Loke exclaimed; “thou knowest well that if thy hammer is found not the Frost-giants will come speedily hither and build over Asgard a dome of ice.”

The other gods spake likewise, and Thor consented to be attired as a bride. When this was done, Loke was dressed, at his own desire, as a maid attendant, and together they went forth from Asgard in Thor’s sublime car. The mountains thundered and fire swept from the heavens over Midgard as Thor journeyed to Jotun-heim.

Thrym was sitting on the mountain top, and to the Jotuns about him he spoke, when he beheld Thor in female-guise coming nigh, saying, “Arise, O giants! Let the feast be spread, for Freyja comes hither to be my bride.”

Then were driven before him into his yard his red cows with golden horns, and his great black oxen.

“I have great wealth indeed,” the king exclaimed; “all that I desire is mine. I lack naught save Freyja.”

The feast was made ready, and at the board sat Thor, whom Thrym deemed to be Freyja, and Loke, who was “maid attendant.”

Thor had great hunger, and he ate an ox, eight salmon, and all the sweets which had been made ready for the giantesses. Then he drank three great barrels of ancient mead.

Wondering, Thrym sat and watched him. Then he cried, “Hath anyone ever beheld a bride so hungry? Never have I known a maid who ate as Freyja hath eaten, or a woman who ever drank so great a quantity of mead.”

Loke, the cunning one, fearing that Thor would be discovered, said, "For eight days hath Freyja fasted, so greatly did she long to come unto Jotun-heim."

Thrym was well pleased to hear what Loke said, and he rose and went towards Thor. He lifted the veil he wore and sought to kiss, but he shrank back suddenly. Indeed he retreated to the hall end, where he cried, "Why are the eyes of Freyja so bright and so fierce? They seem to glow like hot embers."

Then spake cunning Loke again, and said, "Alas! O Thrym, for eight nights Freyja hath slept not, for she longed to be here with thee in Jotun-heim. Thus are her eyes a-fire." Thrym's sister then entered, and she went towards Thor humbly and with due respect, and asked to be given golden bridal rings from his fingers.

"Thou shalt gift them to me," she said, "if thou desirest to have my friendship and my love."

But naught did she receive from the angry and impatient god of thunder.

Thrym then desired that the wedding ceremony should be held, but Loke asked that as proof of his friendship, and to complete the bargain the giant had made, Thor's hammer should be laid upon the maiden's lap.

Then did Thrym order that Mjolner be lifted from its hiding place deep in the bowels of the earth.

In Thor's heart there was great laughter when Thrym spoke thus, yet was his mind solemn, and he waited anxiously until Mjolner was laid upon his knees.

A servant came forward with it, and Thor clutched the handle right eagerly. Then he tore off the bridal veil from his face and the woman's dress from about his knees, and sprang upon King Thrym, whom he killed with a single blow. Around the feasting board he went, slaying the guests, nor one would he permit to escape from the hall, so fierce was he with long-restrained wrath.

Thrym's sister, who had begged from Thor the bridal rings, he slew with the others. A blow she received from the hammer instead of golden treasure.

Cunning Loke watched with pleasure the devastation accomplished by the fierce thunder-god as he raged round the hall and through the castle, wreaking his fierce vengeance on the whole clan of Thrym.

Then together hastened they to where the goats were bound at the home of Orvandel, nor did they pause to rest. Across the heavens was speedily driven the black sublime car. Swiftly o'er mountain and sea it went, blotting out the sparkling stars. Mountains thundered and the wide ocean trembled with fear as the car rolled on. The earth was filled with fire.

Thus did Thor return in triumph unto Asgard, because Mjolner was recovered and the King of Mountain Giants was slain.

But although Loke had served Thor well when his hammer was stolen by Thrym, there came a time when he brought the god of thunder nigh to great misfortune. It was in the days ere the winter war was waged between the Asa-gods and the sons of Ivalde, and the cunning artisans were yet friendly with the dwellers in Asgard.

Loke had gone forth in the falcon-guise of Freyja to pry round Jotun-heim, and especially the castle of King Geirrod, whose daughter he desired for a bride. He flew towards a window, and sat in it while he listened to the words that were being spoken, and surveyed the guests who were there. A servant beheld him with curious eyes, and perceived that he was not a real falcon. So, making cautious approach, he seized Loke and brought him before the king. The eyes of the falcon were still the cunning eyes of Loke, and he was recognized by Geirrod, who demanded ransom ere he would release him. In vain did Loke endeavor to escape. He flapped his wings, he pecked with his beak, but the servant held his claws securely.

Silent was he before Geirrod, and no answer would he make when he was addressed. So to punish him the giant locked him in a chest, in which he was kept for three months. Then was Loke taken forth, and ready indeed was he to speak. To Geirrod he confessed who he was, and the giant constrained him to promise, by swearing a binding oath, that he would bring Thor to Jotun-heim and unto that strong castle without his hammer or his belt or his iron gloves. For greatly sought the giant to have the thunder-god in his power.

Loke then flew back to Asgard, and with great cunning he addressed Thor, so that he secured his consent to visit the castle of Geirrod without taking with him his hammer and gloves and his strong belt. For Loke assured Thor that the castle stood on a green and level plain, and that they were invited to attend together a feast of friends.

Thor set forth, and Loke went with him. All day they traveled on their way until they came to the borders of Elivagar in Alf-heim, where dwelt the sons of Ivalde.

There dwelt also in that realm and in the midst of a deep wood a giantess who was friendly towards the gods. Her name was Grid. She was the mother of Odin's son Vidar, the Silent One, whose strength was so mighty that none save Thor was his equal. A great shoe he had; its sole was hard as iron, for it was formed of the cast-off leather scraps of every shoe that was ever made. This son of Grid was born to avenge his father's death. When Odin is slain at Ragnarok, then shall Vidar combat with the wolf Fenrer and tear its jaws asunder. Nor shall Surtur destroy him with his firebrands, for the wood-god perishes never in Nature's deep solitudes.

Now Grid, mother of Vidar, had power to work magic spells, and she possessed a magic rowan wand which was named Gridarvold. When she beheld Thor going unarmed towards Geirrod's castle, she warned him that the giant was as cunning and treacherous as a wolf-dog, and dangerous to meet without weapons. So to Thor she gave her magic staff, her belt of strength, and her iron gloves, and when he set out he took with him the sons of Ivalde. Together they traveled in safety until they came to Vimur, which is the greatest of the rivers Elivagar. The clouds drove heavily above them, and hailstones fell around. Wild and mountainous was the country which Loke had said was green and level. There were swift and treacherous eddies in the swollen waters.

But Thor put on the belt of strength which Grid had given him, and in his hand he took her magic staff. Rapidly did the river rise as he entered it with his men. From the mountains icy torrents poured down with increasing strength, and the sons of Ivalde were soon in great peril. They thrust their spears into the shingle as they tried to ford the river, and the clinking of the steel mingled with the sharp screams of the waters. When they were but halfway across a high wave burst out from a great mountain torrent, and the waters rose to Thor's shoulder. The others were swept down towards him; for, perceiving their peril and desiring to be a protection to them, he had chosen the deepest part through which to wade. Orvandel leapt upon Thor's shoulder, and there stood, bending his bow. Loke and the others clung to the belt of Grid, which was about Thor's body. Towards the bank the thunder-god labored, and when he came nigh to it he beheld, at the torrent's source a daughter of Geirrod, whose name was Gjalp. It was she who, standing high on the hillside, caused the river to increase so that Thor and his followers might be drowned. The angry god seized a boulder and flung it towards her. Sure was his aim, for it struck her heavily, so that her back was broken. Thus was the Hag overcome and the torrent stayed.

Then did Thor seize a rowan-tree branch which overhung the river, and with its aid he pulled himself up the bank. Thus had its origin the ancient proverb, "Thor's salvation, the rowan."

Up the steep mountain did the thunder-god climb with all his men. Against them came the giants who sought to destroy Ygdrasil, "the World-tree." Bravely fought Thor, and the arrows of Orvandel sped fast until the horde of giants were put to flight. Speedily did the heroes follow them. They pressed onward and reached Geirrod's castle amidst the clamor and the howling of the storm-giants and the giants that dwell within the caves of the mountains.

When Thor entered Geirrod's hall the giant king cast at him a red-hot flaming javelin from behind a great pillar of wood. But with Grid's iron gloves Thor caught it, and past Orvandel's head he flung it back, so that it went through the pillar and through Geirrod, who was slain; and it passed through the wall of his castle ere it sank deep into the earth.

Then loudly thundered the din of battle in Geirrod's hall, which was shaken to its foundations. With slings and boulders did the giants contend, but from Thor and his men they received their deathblows.

Thus was Geirrod and his clan overcome in dread conflict.

## FROM "GISLI THE OUTLAW"

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Dasent, George Webb. *Gisli the Outlaw*. Edinburgh: Edmonston and Douglas, 1866, 1-19.

**Date:** ca. 1200 C.E.

**Original Source:** Iceland

**National Origin:** Iceland

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The action of this saga of revenge, the toll blood feuds take on those involved, and the helplessness of individuals in the face of fate, is set in mid-tenth century Iceland and Norway. Harold Fairhair reigned as the first King of Norway from 850–933 C.E. The Bearsarks were warriors who forsook armor to wear bear skins (bear sarks) in battle and fought with furious intensity. The following chapters set the fate of Gisli in motion with the curse laid on his uncle Gisli the Elder for the theft of a sword and the murder of its owner.

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### The Thrall's Curse

At the end of the days of Harold Fairhair there was a mighty lord in Norway whose name was Thorkel Goldhelm, and he dwelt in Surnadale in North Mæren. He had a wedded wife, and three sons by her. The name of the eldest was Ari, the second was called Gisli, and the third Thorbjorn. They were all young men of promise. There was a man too, named Isi, who ruled over the Fjardarfolk. His daughter's name was Ingibjorga, and she was the fairest of women. Ari, Thorkel's son, asked her to wife, and she was wedded to him. He got a great dower with her, and amongst the rest that she brought with her from her home was a man named Kol: he was of high degree, but he had been taken captive in war, and was called a Thrall. So he came with Ingibjorga to Surnadale. Thorkel gave over to his son Ari a rich farm up in the dale, and there he set up his abode, and was looked on as a most rising man.

But now our story goes on to tell of a man named Bjorn, nicknamed Bjorn the Black. He was a Bearsark, and much given to duels. Twelve men went at his heel, and besides he was skilled in the black art, and no steel could touch his skin. No wonder he was unbeloved by the people, for he turned aside as he listed into the houses of men, and took a way their wives and daughters, and kept them with him as long as he liked. All raised an outcry when he came, and all were fain when he went away. Well, as soon as this Bjorn heard that Ari had brought home a fair wife with a rich dower, he thought he would have a finger in that pie. So he turned his steps thither with his crew, and reached the house at eventide. As soon as Ari and Bjorn met, Bjorn told him that he wanted to play the master in that house, and that Ingibjorga, the housewife, should be at his beck and call whenever he chose. As for Ari, he said he might please himself, go away or stay, so he let Bjorn have his will. But Ari said he would not go away, nor would he let him play the master there.

"Very well!" says Bjorn, "thou shalt have another choice. I will challenge thee to fight on the island, if thou darest, three days from this, and then we will

try whose Ingibjorga shall be; and he, too, shall take all the other's goods who wins the day. Now, mind, I will neither ransom myself with money, nor will I suffer any one else to ransom himself. One shall conquer and the other die."

Ari said he was willing enough to fight; so the Bearsarks went their way and busked them to battle. To make a long story short, they met on the island, and the end of their struggle was, that Ari fell; but the Bearsark was not wounded, for no steel would touch him.

Now Bjorn thought he had won wife, and land, and goods, and he gave out that he meant to go at even to Ari's house to claim his own. Then Gisli, Ari's brother, answered and said, "It will soon be all over with me and mine if this disgrace comes to pass, that this ruffian tramples us under foot. But this shall never be, for I will challenge thee at once to battle tomorrow morning. I would far rather fall on the island than bear this shame."

"Well and good," says Bjorn; "thou and thy kith and kin shall all fall one after the other, if ye dare to fight with me."

After that they parted, and Gisli went home to the house that Ari had owned. Now the tidings were told of what had happened on the island, and of Ari's death, and all thought that a great blow to the house. But Gisli goes to Ingibjorga, and tells her of Ari's fall, and how he had challenged Bjorn to the island, and how they were to fight the very next morning.

"That is a bootless undertaking," said Ingibjorga, "and I fear it will not turn out well for thee, unless thou hast other help to lean on."

"Ah!" said Gisli, "then I beg that thou and all else who are likeliest to yield help will do their best that victory may seem more hopeful than it now looks."

"Know this," says Ingibjorga, "that I was not so very fond of Ari that I would not rather have had thee. There is a man," She said, "who, methinks, is likeliest to be able to help in this matter, so that it may be well with thee."

"Who is that?" asks Gisli.

"It is Kol, my foster-father," was the answer; "for I ween he has a sword that is said to be better than most others, though he seems to set little store by it, for he calls it his 'Chopper'; but whoever wields that sword wins the day."

So they sent for Kol, and he came to meet Gisli and Ingibjorga.

"Hast thou ever a good sword?" asked Gisli.

"My sword is no great treasure," answers Kol; "but yet there are many things in the churl's cot which are not in the king grange."

"Wilt thou not lend me the sword for my duel with Bjorn?" said Gisli.

"Ah!" said Kol, "then will happen what ever happens with those things that are treasures—you will never wish to give it up. But for all that, I tell thee now that this sword will bite whatever its blow falls on, be it iron or aught else; nor can its edge be deadened by spells, for it was forged by the Dwarves, and its name is 'Graysteel.' And now make up thy mind that I shall take it very ill if I do not get the sword back. when I claim it."



“It were most unfair,” says Gisli, “that thou shouldst not get back the sword after I have had the use of it in my need.”

Now Gisli takes the sword, and the night glides away, Next morn, ere they went from home to the duel, Thorbjorn called out to Gisli his brother, and said, “Which of us twain now shall fight with the Bearsark today, and which of us shall slaughter the calf?”

“My counsel,” said Gisli, “is, that thou shalt slaughter the calf while I and Bjorn try our strength.” He did not choose the easiest task.

So they set off to the island, and Gisli and Bjorn stood face to face on it. Then Gisli bade Bjorn strike the first blow. “No one has ever made me that offer before,” said Bjorn; “indeed no one has ever challenged me before this day save thou.” So Bjorn made a blow at Gisli, but Gisli threw his shield before him, and the sword hewed off from the shield all that it smote from below the handle. Then Gisli smote at Bjorn in his turn, and the stroke fell on the tail of the shield and shore it right off, and then passed on and struck off his leg below the knee. One other stroke he dealt him and took off his head. Then he and his men turned on Bjorn’s followers, and some are slain and some chased away into the woods.

After that Gisli goes home and got good fame for this feat, and then he took the farm as his heritage after Ari his brother; and he got Ingibjorga also to wife, for he would not let a good woman go out of the family. And time rolls on, but he did not give up the good sword, nor had Kol ever asked for it.

One day they two met out of doors, and Gisli had “Graysteel” in his hand, and Kol had an axe. Kol asked whether he thought the sword had stood him in good stead, and Gisli was full of its praises. “Well now” said Kol, “I should like to have it back if thou thinkest it has done thee good service in thy need.”

“Wilt thou sell it?” says Gisli.

“No,” says Kol.

“I will give thee thy freedom and goods, so that thou mayest fare whither thou wilt with other men.”

“I will not sell it,” says Kol.

“Then I will give thee thy freedom, and lease or give thee land, and besides I will give thee sheep and cattle and goods as much as thou needest.”

“I will not sell it a whit more for that,” says Kol.

“Indeed,” says Gisli, “thou art too willful to cling to it thus. Put thine own price on it—any sum thou chooseth in money—and be sure I will not stand at trifles if thou wilt come to terms in some way. Besides, I will give thee thy freedom and a becoming match if thou hast any liking for any one.”

“There is no use talking about it,” says Kol; “I will not sell it whatsoever thou offerest. But now it just comes to what I feared at first, when I said it was not sure whether thou wouldest be ready to give the sword up if thou knewest what virtue was in it.”

"And I too"; says Gisli, "will say what will happen. Good will befall neither of us, for I have not the heart to give up the sword, and it shall never come into any other man's hand than mine if I may have my will."

Then Kol lifts up his axe, while Gisli brandished "Graysteel" and each smote at the other. Kol's blow fell on Gisli's head, so that it sank into the brain, but the sword fell on Kol's head, and did not bite; but still the blow was so stoutly dealt that the skull was shattered and the sword broke asunder. Then Kol said, "It had been better now that I had got back my sword when I asked for it; and yet this is but the beginning of the ill-luck which it will bring on thy kith and kin." Thus both of them lost their lives.

### Kolbein's Killing

Now after that Ingibjorga longed to get away from Surnadale, and went home to her father with her goods. As for Thorbjorn, he looked about for a wife, and went east across the Keel to Fressey, and wooed a woman named Iserda, and got her. After that he went back home to Surnadale and set up housekeeping with his father. Thorkel Goldhelm lived but a little while afterwards ere he fell sick and died, and Thorbjorn took all the heritage after his father. He was afterwards called Thorbjorn Soursop, and he dwelt at Stock in Surnadale. He and Iserda had children. Their eldest son was Thorkel, the second Gisli, and the third Ari, but he was sent at once to be fostered at Fressey, and he is little heard of in this story. Their daughter's name was Thordisa. She was their eldest child. Thorkel was a tall man and fair of face, of huge strength, and the greatest dandy. Gisli was swarthy of hue, and as tall as the tallest: 'twas hard to tell how strong he was. He was a man who could turn his hand to anything, and was ever at work—mild of temper too. Their sister Thordisa was a fair woman to look on, high-minded, and rather hard of heart. She was a dashing, forward woman.

At that time there were two young men in Surnadale, whose names were Bard and Kolbein. They were both well-to-do, and though they were not akin, they had each a little before lost their father on a cruise to England. Hella was the name of Bard's house, and Granskeid was where Kolbein dwelt. They were much about the same age as Thorbjorn's sons, and they were all full of mirth and frolic. This was just about the time when Hacon Athelstane's foster-child was King of Norway.

Well, we must go on to say that this Kolbein, of whom we have spoken, grew very fond of coming to Thorbjorn's house, and when there thought it best sport of all to talk with Thordisa. Before long other folk began to talk about this; and so much was said about it that it came to her father's ears, and he thought he saw it all as clear as day. Then Thorbjorn spoke to his sons, and bade them find a cure for this. Gisli said it was easy enough to cure things in which there was no harm.

"If we are to speak, don't say things which seem as though you wanted to pick a quarrel."

“I see,” said Thorbjorn, “that this has got wind far too widely, and that it will be out of our power to smother it. Nevertheless, too, it seems much more likely that thou and thy brother are cravens, with little or no feeling of honor.”

Gisli went on to say, “Don’t fret thyself, father, about his coming. I will speak to him to stop his visits hither.”

“Ah!” cried out Thorbjorn, “thou art likelier to go and beg and pray him not to come hither, and be so eager as even to thank him for so doing, and to show thyself a dastard in every way, and after all to do nothing if he does not listen to thy words!”

Now Gisli goes away, and he and his father stayed their talk; but the very next time that Kolbein came thither, Gisli went with him on his way home when he left, and spoke to him, and says he will not suffer him to come thither any longer; “for my father frets himself about thy visits: for folks say that thou beguilest my sister Thordisa, and that is not at all to my father’s mind. As for me, I will do all I can, if thou dost as I wish, to bring mirth and sport into thy house.”

“What’s the good?”; said Kolbein, “of talking of things which thou knowest can never be? I know not whether is more irksome to me, thy father’s fretfulness, or the thought of giving way to his wish. ‘Verily the words of the weak are little worth’.”

“That is not the way to take it,” answers Gisli. “The end of this will be, that at last when it comes to the push I will set most store by my father’s will. Me thought now it was worth trying whether thou wouldest do this for my word’s sake; then thou mightest have asked as much from me another time; but I am afraid that we shall not like it, if thou art bent on being cross-grained.”

To that Kolbein said little, and so they parted. Then Gisli went home, and so things rested for a while, and Kolbein’s visits were somewhat fewer and farther between than they had been. At last he thinks it dull at home, and goes oftener to Thorbjorn’s house. So one day when he had come thither Gisli sat in the hall and smithied, and his father and his brother and sister were there too. Thorkel was the cheeriest towards Kolbein; and these three—Thorkel, and Thordisa, and Kolbein—all sat on the cross-bench. But when the day was far spent, and evening fell, they rose up and went out. Thorbjorn and Gisli were left behind in the hall, and Thorbjorn began to say, “Thy begging and praying has not been worth much; for both thy undertaking was girlish, and indeed I can scarce say whether I am to reckon thee and thy brother as my sons or my daughters. ‘Tis hard to learn, when one is old, that one has sons who have no more manly thoughts than women had in olden times, and ye two are utterly unlike my brothers Gisli and Ari.”

“Thou hast no need,” answered Gisli, “to take it so much to heart; for no one can say how a man will behave till he is tried.”

With this Gisli could not bear to listen longer to his father’s gibes, and went out. Just then Thorkel and Kolbein were going out at the gate, and Thordisa had turned back for the hall. Gisli went out after them, and so they all walked

along together. Again Gisli besought Kolbein to cease his visits, but Kolbein said he weened that no good would come of that. Then Gisli said, "So you set small store by my words, and now we shall lay down our companionship in a worse way than I thought."

"I don't see how I can help that," said Kolbein.

"Why," said Gisli, "one of two things must happen: either that thou settest some store by my words, or if thou dost not, then I will forsake all the friendship that has been between us."

"Thou must settle that as thou pleasest," says Kolbein; "but for all that I cannot find it in my heart to break off my visits."

At that Gisli drew his sword and smote at him, and that one stroke was more than enough for Kolbein.

Thorkel was very vexed at the deed, but Gisli bade his brother be soothed. "Let us change swords," he said; "and take thou that with the keenest edge." This he said, mocking; but Thorkel was soothed, and sate down by Kolbein.

Then Gisli went home to his father's hall, and Thorbjorn asked, "Well, how has thy begging and praying sped?"

"Well," says Gisli, "I think I may say that it has well sped; because we settled ere we parted just now that Kolbein should cease his visits, that they might not anger thee."

"That can only be," said Thorbjorn, "if he be dead."

"Then be all the better pleased," says Gisli, "that thy will hath been done in this matter."

"Good luck to thy hand," said Thorbjorn. "Maybe after all that I have not daughters alone to my children."

## The Burning of the Old House

As for Thorkel, who had been Kolbein's greatest friend, he could not bear to be at home, nor would he change swords with Gisli, but went his way to a man called Dueling Skeggi, in the isle of Saxa. He was near akin to Kolbein, and in his house Thorkel stayed. In a little while Thorkel egged Skeggi on to avenge his kinsman, and at the same time to woo his sister Thordisa. So they went to Stock—for that was the name of Thorbjorn's farm—twenty of them together; and when they came to the house, Skeggi began to talk of King Thorbjorn's son-in-law, and of having Thordisa to wife. But Thorbjorn would not hear of the match. The story went that Bard, Kolbein's friend, had settled it all with Thordisa; and, at any rate, Skeggi made up his mind that Bard was to blame for the loss of the match. So he set off to find Bard, and challenged him to fight on the isle of Saxa. Bard said he would be sure to come; he was not worthy to have Thordisa if he did not dare to fight for her with Skeggi. So Thorkel and Skeggi set out for Saxa with twenty-one men in all, and waited for the day fixed for the duel. But when three nights had come and gone, Gisli went to find Bard, and

asks whether he were ready for the combat. Bard says, Yes; and asked whether, if he fought, he should have the match.

“Twill be time to talk of that afterwards,” says Gisli.

“Well,” says Bard, “methinks I had better not fight with Skeggi.”

“Out on thee for a dastard!” says Gisli; “but though thou broughtest us all to shame, still for all that I will go myself.”

Now Gisli goes to the isle with eleven men. Meantime Skeggi had come to the isle and staked out the lists for Bard, and laid down the law of the combat, and after all saw neither him nor any one to fight on the isle in his stead. There was a man named Fox, who was Skeggi’s Smith; and Skeggi bade Fox to carve likenesses of Gisli and Bard, “And see,” he said, “that one stands just behind the back of the other, and this laughingstock shall stand for aye to put them to shame.”

These words Gisli heard in the wood, and called out, “Thy house-carles shall have other handier work to do. Here behold a man who dares to do battle with thee!”

Then they stepped on the isle and fought, and each bore his own shield before him. Skeggi had a sword called “Warflame,” and with it he smote at Gisli till the blade sang again, and Skeggi chanted:

Warflame fierce flickered,  
Flaring on Saxa.

But Gisli smote back at him with his battle-axe, and took off the tail of his shield, and Skeggi’s leg along with it; and as he smote he chanted:

Grimly grinned Ogremaw,  
Gaping at Skeggi.

As for Skeggi, he ransomed himself from the island, and went ever after on a wooden leg. But Thorkel went home with his brother Gisli, and now their friendship was pretty good, and Gisli was thought to have grown a great man by these dealings.

That same winter Einar and Sigurd, the sons of Skeggi, set off from their house at Flydroness, with nigh forty men, and marched till they came in the night to Surnadale. They went first to Bard’s house at Hella, and seized all the doors. Two choices were given him: the first, that he should lose his life; the other, that he should go with them against Thorbjorn and his sons. Bard said there were no ties between him and Thorbjorn and his sons. “I set most store on my life,” he says; “as for the other choice, I think nothing of doing it.”

So he set out with them, and ten men followed him. They were then in all fifty men. They come unawares on Thorbjorn’s house at Stock. His men were so arranged that some of them were in the hall and some in the store-room. This

store-room Gisli had built some years before, and made it in such wise that every plank had been cut asunder, and a loose panel left in the middle, and on the outside they were all fitted together, while within they were held by iron bolts and bars, and yet on the outside the planks looked as if they were all one piece. The weather that night was in this wise: the air was thick, and the wind sharp; and the blast stood right on to the store-room. Einar and Sigurd heaped a pile of wood both before the hall and the store-room, and set fire to them. But when those in the store-room were ware of this, they threw open the outer door. By the entry stood two large pails or casks of whey, and they took the whey in goat-skins and threw it on the fire, and quenched it thrice. But the foe made the pile up again a little way from the door on either side, and then the fire soon began to catch the beams of the house.

The heads of the household were all in that store-room—Thorbjorn, and Thorkel, and Gisli, and Isgerda, and Thordisa. Then Gisli stole away from the doorway to the gable-end, and pushed back the bolts, and thrust out a plank. After that he passed out there, and all the others after him. No men were on the watch there, for they were all guarding the door to see that none came out; but no man was ware of what was happening. Gisli and his kindred followed the smoke away from the house, and so got to the woods, and when they got so far they, turned and looked back, and saw that the hall and the whole homestead were ablaze. Then Gisli chaunted—

Flames flare fierce o'er roof and rafter,  
 High the hubbub, loud the laughter;  
 Hist with croak, and bark with howl,  
 Ravens flit and gray wolves prowl:  
 Father mine, for lesser matter  
 Erst I fleshed my maiden steel  
 Hear me swear amid this clatter,  
 Soon our foes my sword shall feel.

Now these are there in the waste, but their house burns to cold ashes. Those brothers, Einar and Sigurd, never left the spot till they made up their minds that Thorbjorn and his sons, and all his household, had been burnt inside. They were thirty souls who were burnt inside the hall. So wherever those brothers went they told this story, that Thorbjorn was dead and all his household. But Gisli and his kindred never showed themselves till the others were well away.

Then they got force together by stealth, and afterwards they fare by night to Bard's house, and set fire to the homestead, and burnt it up, and the men who were inside it. When they had done that deed, they went back and set about rebuilding their house. All at once Gisli took himself off, and no man knew what had become of him; but when spring came he came with it.

Then they set to work and sold their lands secretly, but their goods and chattels they carried off. Now it was plain that Thorbjorn and his sons meant to change their abode and leave Norway; and that was why Gisli had gone away, that he might be busy building their ship. And all this was done so silently that few knew they had broken up their household before they had gone on ship-board, thirty men told, besides women. After that they hold on their course for the sea, and lay to in a haven under the lee of an island, and meant to wait there for a fair wind.

One day when the weather was good Gisli and his brother got into their boats. Ten men stayed behind with their ship, and ten got into each of the boats; but Thorbjorn stayed by the ship. Gisli and his brother row north along the land, and steer for Flydroness; for Gisli says he wishes to look those brothers up ere he leaves Norway for good and all. But when they got to Flydroness they hear that Einar and Sigurd had gone from home to gather King Hacon's dues. So Gisli and his men turned after them, and lay in wait for them in the path which they knew they must take. Those brothers were fifteen in all, and so they met, and there was a hard light. The end of it was that Einar and Sigurd fell, and all their followers. Gisli slew five men and Thorkel three. When the fight was over, Gisli says he has got an errand to do up at the farm. And Gisli went up to the farm, and into the hall, and sees where Skeggi lies, and comes on him, and hews off his head. They sacked the house, and behaved as much like enemies as they could, and took all they could carry with them. After that they row to their ships, and landed on the island, and made a great sacrifice, and vowed vows for a fair wind, and the wind comes. So they put to sea, and have Iceland in their mind's eye.

# SAMI

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## HOW SOME WILD ANIMALS BECAME TAME ONES

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Lang, Andrew. *The Brown Fairy Book*. London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1904, 197–201.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Poestion, J. C. *Lappländische Märchen*.

**National Origin:** Sami

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The Sami are the indigenous cultures of the Nordic region of Finland, Norway, Russia, and Sweden. Historically, the Sami subsisted by fishing, trapping, hunting, and herding. They have been particularly associated with reindeer herding. Shamanism continues to play a role in the Sami belief system, and references to shamans (usually labeled “wise men” or “wise women”) abound in their oral tradition. Sami lifestyle and belief shares common traits with other circumpolar culture areas such as Siberia and native North America. Although the following **animal tale** describes the transition from feral to domestic of animal species that are central to Sami culture, the narrative functions more as a **fable** that warns against ignoring good advice rather than as a **myth** of origin.

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Once upon a time there lived a miller who was so rich that, when he was going to be married, he asked to the feast not only his own friends but also the wild animals who dwelt in the hills and woods round about. The chief of the bears, the wolves, the foxes, the horses, the cows, the goats, the sheep, and the reindeer, all received invitations; and as they were not accustomed to weddings they were greatly pleased and flattered, and sent back messages in the politest language that they would certainly be there.



The first to start on the morning of the wedding-day was the bear, who always liked to be punctual; and, besides, he had a long way to go, and his hair, being so thick and rough, needed a good brushing before it was fit to be seen at a party. However, he took care to awaken very early, and set off down the road with a light heart. Before he had walked very far he met a boy who came whistling along, hitting at the tops of the flowers with a stick.

“Where are you going?” said he, looking at the bear in surprise, for he was an old acquaintance, and not generally so smart.

“Oh, just to the miller’s marriage,” answered the bear carelessly. “Of course, I would much rather stay at home, but the miller was so anxious I should be there that I really could not refuse.”

“Don’t go, don’t go!” cried the boy. “If you do you will never come back! You have got the most beautiful skin in the world—just the kind that everyone is wanting, and they will be sure to kill you and strip you of it.”

“I had not thought of that,” said the bear, whose face turned white, only nobody could see it. “If you are certain that they would be so wicked—but perhaps you are jealous because nobody has invited you?”

“Oh, nonsense!” replied the boy angrily, “do as you see. It is your skin, and not mine; I don’t care what becomes of it!” And he walked quickly on with his head in the air.

The bear waited until he was out of sight, and then followed him slowly, for he felt in his heart that the boy’s advice was good, though he was too proud to say so.

The boy soon grew tired of walking along the road, and turned off into the woods, where there were bushes he could jump and streams he could wade; but he had not gone far before he met the wolf.

“Where are you going?” asked he, for it was not the first time he had seen him.

“Oh, just to the miller’s marriage,” answered the wolf, as the bear had done before him. “It is rather tiresome, of course—weddings are always so stupid; but still one must be good-natured!”

“Don’t go!” said the boy again. “Your skin is so thick and warm, and winter is not far off now. They will kill you, and strip it from you.”

The wolf’s jaw dropped in astonishment and terror. “Do you really think that would happen?” he gasped.

“Yes, to be sure, I do,” answered the boy. “But it is your affair, not mine. So good-morning,” and on he went. The wolf stood still for a few minutes, for he was trembling all over, and then crept quietly back to his cave.

Next the boy met the fox, whose lovely coat of silvery grey was shining in the sun.

“You look very fine!” said the boy, stopping to admire him, “are you going to the miller’s wedding too?”

“Yes,” answered the fox; “it is a long journey to take for such a thing as that, but you know what the miller’s friends are like—so dull and heavy! It is only kind to go and amuse them a little.”

“You poor fellow,” said the boy pityingly. “Take my advice and stay at home. If you once enter the miller’s gate his dogs will tear you in pieces.”

“Ah, well, such things have occurred, I know,” replied the fox gravely. And without saying any more he trotted off the way he had come.

His tail had scarcely disappeared, when a great noise of crashing branches was heard, and up bounded the horse, his black skin glistening like satin.

“Good-morning,” he called to the boy as he galloped past, “I can’t wait to talk to you now. I have promised the miller to be present at his wedding-feast, and they won’t sit down till I come.”

“Stop! stop!” cried the boy after him, and there was something in his voice that made the horse pull up. “What is the matter?” asked he.

“You don’t know what you are doing,” said the boy. “If once you go there you will never gallop through these woods any more. You are stronger than many men, but they will catch you and put ropes round you, and you will have to work and to serve them all the days of your life.”

The horse threw back his head at these words, and laughed scornfully.

“Yes, I am stronger than many men,” answered he, “and all the ropes in the world would not hold me. Let them bind me as fast as they will, I can always break loose, and return to the forest and freedom.”

And with this proud speech he gave a whisk of his long tail, and galloped away faster than before.

But when he reached the miller’s house everything happened as the boy had said. While he was looking at the guests and thinking how much handsomer and stronger he was than any of them, a rope was suddenly flung over his head, and he was thrown down and a bit thrust between his teeth. Then, in spite of his struggles, he was dragged to a stable, and shut up for several days without any food, till his spirit was broken and his coat had lost its gloss. After that he was harnessed to a plough, and had plenty of time to remember all he had lost through not listening to the counsel of the boy.

When the horse had turned a deaf ear to his words the boy wandered idly along, sometimes gathering wild strawberries from a bank, and sometimes plucking wild cherries from a tree, till he reached a clearing in the middle of the forest. Crossing this open space was a beautiful milk-white cow with a wreath of flowers round her neck.

“Good-morning,” she said pleasantly, as she came up to the place where the boy was standing.

“Good-morning,” he returned. “Where are you going in such a hurry?”

“To the miller’s wedding; I am rather late already, for the wreath took such a long time to make, so I can’t stop.”

“Don’t go,” said the boy earnestly; “when once they have tasted your milk they will never let you leave them, and you will have to serve them all the days of your life.”

“Oh, nonsense; what do you know about it?” answered the cow, who always thought she was wiser than other people. “Why, I can run twice as fast as any of them! I should like to see anybody try to keep me against my will.” And, without even a polite bow, she went on her way, feeling very much offended.

But everything turned out just as the boy had said. The company had all heard of the fame of the cow’s milk, and persuaded her to give them some, and then her doom was sealed. A crowd gathered round her, and held her horns so that she could not use them, and, like the horse, she was shut in the stable, and only let out in the mornings, when a long rope was tied round her head, and she was fastened to a stake in a grassy meadow.

And so it happened to the goat and to the sheep.

Last of all came the reindeer, looking as he always did, as if some serious business was on hand.

“Where are you going?” asked the boy, who by this time was tired of wild cherries, and was thinking of his dinner.

“I am invited to the wedding,” answered the reindeer, “and the miller has begged me on no account to fail him.”

“O fool!” cried the boy, “have you no sense at all? Don’t you know that when you get there they will hold you fast, for neither beast nor bird is as strong or as swift as you?”

“That is exactly why I am quite safe,” replied the reindeer. “I am so strong that no one can bind me, and so swift that not even an arrow can catch me. So, good-bye for the present, you will soon see me back.”

But none of the animals that went to the miller’s wedding ever came back. And because they were self-willed and conceited, and would not listen to good advice, they and their children have been the servants of men to this very day.

## HOW THE STALOS WERE TRICKED

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Lang, Andrew. *The Orange Fairy Book*. London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1904, 319–328.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Poestion, J. C. *Lappländische Märchen*.

**National Origin:** Sami

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The Stalo (or Staaloo) is a massive anthropomorphic being who always carries with it a bag of silver and a knife. The Staaloo is accompanied by a dog. Tales often depict the Staaloo challenging humans to a duel, but losing because of its stupidity. In most tales involving this antagonist, human **tricksters** repeatedly take advantage of the Staaloo’s dull wits. In

some tales, the Stalo takes a human wife. The cannibalism mentioned in the following tale is not a necessary attribute of the ogre, however.

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“Mother, I have seen such a wonderful man,” said a little boy one day, as he entered a hut in Lapland, bearing in his arms the bundle of sticks he had been sent out to gather.

“Have you, my son; and what was he like?” asked the mother, as she took off the child’s sheepskin coat and shook it on the doorstep.

“Well, I was tired of stooping for the sticks, and was leaning against a tree to rest, when I heard a noise of ‘sh-’sh, among the dead leaves. I thought perhaps it was a wolf, so I stood very still. But soon there came past a tall man—oh! twice as tall as father—with a long red beard and a red tunic fastened with a silver girdle, from which hung a silver-handled knife. Behind him followed a great dog, which looked stronger than any wolf, or even a bear. But why are you so pale, mother?”

“It was the Stalo,” replied she, her voice trembling; “Stalo the man-eater! You did well to hide, or you might never had come back. But, remember that, though he is so tall and strong, he is very stupid, and many a Lapp has escaped from his clutches by playing him some clever trick.”

Not long after the mother and son had held this talk, it began to be whispered in the forest that the children of an old man called Patto had vanished one by one, no one knew whither. The unhappy father searched the country for miles round without being able to find as much as a shoe or a handkerchief, to show him where they had passed, but at length a little boy came with news that he had seen the Stalo hiding behind a well, near which the children used to play. The boy had waited behind a clump of bushes to see what would happen, and by-and-by he noticed that the Stalo had laid a cunning trap in the path to the well, and that anybody who fell over it would roll into the water and drown there.

And, as he watched, Patto’s youngest daughter ran gaily down the path, till her foot caught in the strings that were stretched across the steepest place. She slipped and fell, and in another instant had rolled into the water within reach of the Stalo.

As soon as Patto heard this tale his heart was filled with rage, and he vowed to have his revenge. So he straightway took an old fur coat from the hook where it hung, and putting it on went out into the forest. When he reached the path that led to the well he looked hastily round to be sure that no one was watching him, then laid himself down as if he had been caught in the snare and had rolled into the well, though he took care to keep his head out of the water. Very soon he heard a ‘sh-’sh of the leaves, and there was the Stalo pushing his way through the undergrowth to see what chance he had of a dinner. At the first glimpse of Patto’s head in the well he laughed loudly, crying, “Ha! ha! This time

it is the old ass! I wonder how he will taste?" And drawing Patto out of the well, he flung him across his shoulders and carried him home. Then he tied a cord round him and hung him over the fire to roast, while he finished a box that he was making before the door of the hut, which he meant to hold Patto's flesh when it was cooked. In a very short time the box was so nearly done that it only wanted a little more chipping out with an axe; but this part of the work was easier accomplished indoors, and he called to one of his sons who were lounging inside to bring him the tool.

The young man looked everywhere, but he could not find the axe, for the very good reason that Patto had managed to pick it up and hide it in his clothes.

"Stupid fellow! What is the use of you?" grumbled his father angrily; and he bade first one and then another of his sons to fetch him the tool, but they had no better success than their brother.

"I must come myself, I suppose!" said Stalo, putting aside the box. But, meanwhile, Patto had slipped from the hook and concealed himself behind the door, so that, as Stalo stepped in, his prisoner raised the axe, and with one blow the ogre's head was rolling on the ground. His sons were so frightened at the sight that they all ran away.

And in this manner Patto avenged his dead children.

But though Stalo was dead, his three sons were still living, and not very far off either. They had gone to their mother, who was tending some reindeer on the pastures, and told her that by some magic, they knew not what, their father's head had rolled from his body, and they had been so afraid that something dreadful would happen to them that they had come to take refuge with her. The ogress said nothing. Long ago she had found out how stupid her sons were, so she just sent them out to milk the reindeer, while she returned to the other house to bury her husband's body.

Now, three days' journey from the hut on the pastures two brothers Sodno dwelt in a small cottage with their sister Lyma, who tended a large herd of reindeer while they were out hunting. Of late it had been whispered from one to another that the three young Stalos were to be seen on the pastures, but the Sodno brothers did not disturb themselves, the danger seemed too far away.

Unluckily, however, one day, when Lyma was left by herself in the hut, the three Stalos came down and carried her and the reindeer off to their own cottage. The country was very lonely, and perhaps no one would have known in which direction she had gone had not the girl managed to tie a ball of thread to the handle of a door at the back of the cottage and let it trail behind her. Of course the ball was not long enough to go all the way, but it lay on the edge of a snowy track which led straight to the Stalos' house.

When the brothers returned from their hunting they found both the hut and the sheds empty. Loudly they cried, "Lyma! Lyma!" But no voice answered them; and they fell to searching all about, lest perchance their sister might have

dropped some clue to guide them. At length their eyes dropped on the thread which lay on the snow, and they set out to follow it.

On and on they went, and when at length the thread stopped the brothers knew that another day's journey would bring them to the Stalos' dwelling. Of course they did not dare to approach it openly, for the Stalos had the strength of giants, and besides, there were three of them; so the two Sodnos climbed into a big bushy tree which overhung a well.

"Perhaps our sister may be sent to draw water here," they said to each other.

But it was not till the moon had risen that the sister came, and as she let down her bucket into the well, the leaves seemed to whisper, "Lyma! Lyma!"

The girl started and looked up, but could see nothing, and in a moment the voice came again.

"Be careful—take no notice, fill your buckets, but listen carefully all the while, and we will tell you what to do so that you may escape yourself and set free the reindeer also." So Lyma bent over the well lower than before, and seemed busier than ever.

"You know," said her brother, "that when a Stalo finds that anything has been dropped into his food he will not eat a morsel, but throws it to his dogs. Now, after the pot has been hanging some time over the fire, and the broth is nearly cooked, just rake up the log of wood so that some of the ashes fly into the pot. The Stalo will soon notice this, and will call you to give all the food to the dogs; but, instead, you must bring it straight to us, as it is three days since we have eaten or drunk. That is all you need do for the present."

Then Lyma took up her buckets and carried them into the house, and did as her brothers had told her. They were so hungry that they ate the food up greedily without speaking, but when there was nothing left in the pot, the eldest one said, "Listen carefully to what I have to tell you. After the eldest Stalo has cooked and eaten a fresh supper, he will go to bed and sleep so soundly that not even a witch could wake him. You can hear him snoring a mile off, and then you must go into his room and pull off the iron mantle that covers him, and put it on the fire till it is almost red hot. When that is done, come to us and we will give you further directions."

"I will obey you in everything, dear brothers," answered Lyma; and so she did. It had happened that on this very evening the Stalos had driven in some of the reindeer from the pasture, and had tied them up to the wall of the house so that they might be handy to kill for next day's dinner. The two Sodnos had seen what they were doing, and where the beasts were secured; so, at midnight, when all was still, they crept down from their tree and seized the reindeer by the horns which were locked together. The animals were frightened, and began to neigh and kick, as if they were fighting together, and the noise became so great that even the eldest Stalo was awakened by it, and that was a thing which had never occurred before. Raising himself in his bed, he called to his youngest brother to go out and separate the reindeer or they would certainly kill themselves.

The young Stalo did as he was bid, and left the house; but no sooner was he out of the door than he was stabbed to the heart by one of the Sodnos, and fell without a groan. Then they went back to worry the reindeer, and the noise became as great as ever, and a second time the Stalo awoke.

“The boy does not seem to be able to part the beasts,” he cried to his second brother; “go and help him, or I shall never get to sleep.” So the brother went, and in an instant was struck dead as he left the house by the sword of the eldest Sodno. The Stalo waited in bed a little longer for things to get quiet, but as the clatter of the reindeer’s horns was as bad as ever, he rose angrily from his bed muttering to himself, “It is extraordinary that they cannot unlock themselves; but as no one else seems able to help them I suppose I must go and do it.”

Rubbing his eyes, he stood up on the floor and stretched his great arms and gave a yawn which shook the walls. The Sodnos heard it below, and posted themselves, one at the big door and one at the little door at the back, for they did not know what their enemy would come out at. The Stalo put out his hand to take his iron mantle from the bed, where it always lay, but the mantle was not there. He wondered where it could be, and who could have moved it, and after searching through all the rooms, he found it hanging over the kitchen fire. But the first touch burnt him so badly that he let it alone, and went with nothing, except a stick in his hand, through the back door.

The young Sodno was standing ready for him, and as the Stalo passed the threshold struck him such a blow on the head that he rolled over with a crash and never stirred again. The two Sodnos did not trouble about him, but quickly stripped the younger Stalos of their clothes, in which they dressed themselves. Then they sat still till the dawn should break and they could find out from the Stalos’ mother where the treasure was hidden.

With the first rays of the sun the young Sodno went upstairs and entered the old woman’s room. She was already up and dressed, and sitting by the window knitting, and the young man crept in softly and crouched down on the floor, laying his head on her lap. For a while he kept silence, then he whispered gently:

“Tell me, dear mother, where did my eldest brother conceal his riches?”

“What a strange question! Surely you must know,” answered she.

“No, I have forgotten; my memory is so bad.”

“He dug a hole under the doorstep and placed it there,” said she. And there was another pause.

By-and-by the Sodno asked again, “And where may my second brother’s money be?”

“Don’t you know that either?” cried the mother in surprise.

“Oh, yes; I did once. But since I fell upon my head I can remember nothing.”

“It is behind the oven,” answered she. And again was silence.

“Mother, dear mother,” said the young man at last, “I am almost afraid to ask you; but I really have grown so stupid of late. Where did I hide my own money?”

But at this question the old woman flew into a passion, and vowed that if she could find a rod she would bring his memory back to him. Luckily, no rod was within her reach, and the Sodno managed, after a little, to coax her back into good humor, and at length she told him that the youngest Stalo had buried his treasure under the very place where she was sitting.

“Dear mother,” said Lyma, who had come in unseen, and was kneeling in front of the fire. “Dear mother, do you know who it is you have been talking with?”

The old woman started, but answered quietly, “It is a Sodno, I suppose?”

“You have guessed right,” replied Lyma.

The mother of the Stalos looked round for her iron cane, which she always used to kill her victims, but it was not there, for Lyma had put it in the fire.

“Where is my iron cane?” asked the old woman.

“There!” answered Lyma, pointing to the flames.

The old woman sprang forwards and seized it, but her clothes caught fire, and in a few minutes she was burned to ashes.

So the Sodno brothers found the treasure, and they carried it, and their sister and the reindeer, to their own home, and were the richest men in all Lapland.

## ANDRAS BAIVE

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Lang, Andrew. *The Orange Fairy Book*. London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1904, 329–334.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Poestion, J. C. *Lappländische Märchen*.

**National Origin:** Sami

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Vadso, the setting of this narrative, is a city in northeast Norway. Among the Nordic peoples, the Sami have long had a reputation for the practice of magic. That ability comes to the fore in this tale. The bailiff's ability to change his appearance first into a Staalo, then river wreckage, and then a range of other phenomena reveals that he was a “wiseman” (the title commonly bestowed on shamans by the Sami). Andras, in turn, battles him with his own magic. “How the Stalos Were Tricked” (page 316) provides additional information on these supernatural beings.

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Once upon a time there lived in Lapland a man, a bailiff, who was so very strong and swift of foot that nobody in his native town of Vadso could come near him if they were running races in the summer



evenings. The people of Vadso were very proud of their champion, and thought that there was no one like him in the world, till, by-and-by, it came to their ears that there dwelt among the mountains a Lapp, Andras Baive by name, who was said by his friends to be even stronger and swifter than the bailiff. Of course not a creature in Vadso believed that, and declared that if it made the mountaineers happier to talk such nonsense, why, let them!

The winter was long and cold, and the thoughts of the villagers were much busier with wolves than with Andras Baive, when suddenly, on a frosty day, he made his appearance in the little town of Vadso. The bailiff was delighted at this chance of trying his strength, and at once went out to seek Andras and to coax him into giving proof of his vigor. As he walked along his eyes fell upon a big eight-oared boat that lay upon the shore, and his face shone with pleasure.

"That is the very thing," laughed he, "I will make him jump over that boat." Andras was quite ready to accept the challenge, and they soon settled the terms of the wager. He who could jump over the boat without so much as touching it with his heel was to be the winner, and would get a large sum of money as the prize. So, followed by many of the villagers, the two men walked down to the sea.

An old fisherman was chosen to stand near the boat to watch fair play, and to hold the stakes, and Andras, as the stranger was told to jump first. Going back to the flag which had been stuck into the sand to mark the starting place, he ran forward, with his head well thrown back, and cleared the boat with a mighty bound. The lookers-on cheered him, and indeed he well deserve it; but they waited anxiously all the same to see what the bailiff would do. On he came, taller than Andras by several inches, but heavier of build. He too sprang high and well, but as he came down his heel just grazed the edge of the boat. Dead silence reigned amidst the townsfolk, but Andras only laughed and said carelessly, "Just a little too short, bailiff; next time you must do better than that."

The bailiff turned red with anger at his rival's scornful words, and answered quickly, "Next time you will have something harder to do." And turning his back on his friends, he went sulkily home. Andras, putting the money he had earned in his pocket, went home also.

The following spring Andras happened to be driving his reindeer along a great fiord to the west of Vadso. A boy who had met him hastened to tell the bailiff that his enemy was only a few miles off; and the bailiff, disguising himself as a Stalo, or ogre, called his son and his dog and rowed away across the fiord to the place where the boy had met Andras.

Now the mountaineer was lazily walking along the sands, thinking of the new hut that he was building with the money that he had won on the day of his lucky jump. He wandered on, his eyes fixed on the sands, so that he did not see the bailiff drive his boat behind a rock, while he changed himself into a heap of wreckage which floated in on the waves. A stumble over a stone recalled Andras to himself, and looking up he beheld the mass of wreckage. "Dear me! I may

find some use for that," he said; and hastened down to the sea, waiting till he could lay hold of some stray rope which might float towards him. Suddenly—he could not have told why—a nameless fear seized upon him, and he fled away from the shore as if for his life. As he ran he heard the sound of a pipe, such as only ogres of the Stalo kind were wont to use; and there flashed into his mind what the bailiff had said when they jumped the boat, "Next time you will have something harder to do." So it was no wreckage after all that he had seen, but the bailiff himself.

It happened that in the long summer nights up in the mountain, where the sun never set, and it was very difficult to get to sleep, Andras had spent many hours in the study of magic, and this stood him in good stead now. The instant he heard the Stalo music he wished himself to become the feet of a reindeer, and in this guise he galloped like the wind for several miles. Then he stopped to take breath and find out what his enemy was doing. Nothing he could see, but to his ears the notes of a pipe floated over the plain, and ever, as he listened, it drew nearer.

A cold shiver shook Andras, and this time he wished himself the feet of a reindeer calf. For when a reindeer calf has reached the age at which he begins first to lose his hair he is so swift that neither beast nor bird can come near him. A reindeer calf is the swiftest of all things living. Yes; but not so swift as a Stalo, as Andras found out when he stopped to rest, and heard the pipe playing!

For a moment his heart sank, and he gave himself up for dead, till he remembered that, not far off, were two little lakes joined together by a short though very broad river. In the middle of the river lay a stone that was always covered by water, except in dry seasons, and as the winter rains had been very heavy, he felt quite sure that not even the top of it could be seen. The next minute, if anyone had been looking that way, he would have beheld a small reindeer calf speeding northwards, and by-and-by giving a great spring, which landed him in the midst of the stream. But, instead of sinking to the bottom, he paused a second to steady himself, then gave a second spring which landed him on the further shore. He next ran on to a little hill where he saw down and began to neigh loudly, so that the Stalo might know exactly where he was.

"Ah! There you are," cried the Stalo, appearing on the opposite bank; "for a moment I really thought I had lost you."

"No such luck," answered Andras, shaking his head sorrowfully. By this time he had taken his own shape again.

"Well, but I don't see how I am to get to you!" said the Stalo, looking up and down.

"Jump over, as I did," answered Andras; "it is quite easy."

"But I could not jump this river; and I don't know how you did," replied the Stalo.

"I should be ashamed to say such things," exclaimed Andras. "Do you mean to tell me that a jump, which the weakest Lapp boy would make nothing of, is beyond your strength?"

The Stalo grew red and angry when he heard these words, just as Andras meant him to do. He bounded into the air and fell straight into the river. Not that that would have mattered, for he was a good swimmer; but Andras drew out the bow and arrows which every Lapp carries, and took aim at him. His aim was good, but the Stalo sprang so high into the air that the arrow flew between his feet. A second shot, directed at his forehead, fared no better, for this time the Stalo jumped so high to the other side that the arrow passed between his finger and thumb. Then Andras aimed his third arrow a little over the Stalo's head, and when he sprang up, just an instant too soon, it hit him between the ribs.

Mortally wounded as he was, the Stalo was not yet dead, and managed to swim to the shore. Stretching himself on the sand, he said slowly to Andras, "Promise that you will give me an honorable burial, and when my body is laid in the grave go in my boat across the fiord, and take whatever you find in my house which belongs to me. My dog you must kill, but spare my son, Andras."

Then he died; and Andras sailed in his boat away across the fiord and found the dog and boy. The dog, a fierce, wicked-looking creature, he slew with one blow from his fist, for it is well known that if a Stalo's dog licks the blood that flows from his dead master's wounds the Stalo comes to life again. That is why no REAL Stalo is ever seen without his dog; but the bailiff, being only half a Stalo, had forgotten him, when he went to the little lakes in search of Andras. Next, Andras put all the gold and jewels which he found in the boat into his pockets, and bidding the boy get in, pushed it off from the shore, leaving the little craft to drift as it would, while he himself ran home.

With the treasure he possessed he was able to buy a great herd of reindeer; and he soon married a rich wife, whose parents would not have him as a son-in-law when he was poor, and the two lived happy forever after.

## **SISTER OF THE SUN**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Lang, Andrew. *The Brown Fairy Book*. London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1904, 215–232.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Poestion, J. C. *Lappländische Märchen*.

**National Origin:** Sami

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In contrast to tales such as "How the Stalos Were Tricked" (page 316) or "Andras Baive" (page 321) that are highly contextualized in the Sami culture and physical environment, the following **ordinary folktale** cannot be characterized as unique to the group from which it was collected. Instead, there are familiar structural elements, such as the recurrence of similar episodes three times, and cross-culturally occurring **tale types**,

such as “The Judge Appropriates the Object of Dispute” (AT 926D). While the fox does serve as a **trickster** in other Sami narratives (see, for example, “The Fox and the Lapp,” page 334), the fox or its relatives (for example, coyote) acts in a similar capacity in many traditions.

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**A** long time ago there lived a young prince whose favorite playfellow was the son of the gardener who lived in the grounds of the palace. The king would have preferred his choosing a friend from the pages who were brought up at court; but the prince would have nothing to say to them, and as he was a spoilt child, and allowed his way in all things, and the gardener’s boy was quiet and well-behaved, he was suffered to be in the palace, morning, noon, and night.

The game the children loved the best was a match at archery, for the king had given them two bows exactly alike, and they would spend whole days in trying to see which could shoot the highest. This is always very dangerous, and it was a great wonder they did not put their eyes out; but somehow or other they managed to escape.

One morning, when the prince had done his lessons, he ran out to call his friend, and they both hurried off to the lawn which was their usual playground. They took their bows out of the little hut where their toys were kept, and began to see which could shoot the highest. At last they happened to let fly their arrows both together, and when they fell to earth again the tail feather of a golden hen was found sticking in one. Now the question began to arise whose was the lucky arrow, for they were both alike, and look as closely as you would you could see no difference between them. The prince declared that the arrow was his, and the gardener’s boy was quite sure it was HIS—and on this occasion he was perfectly right; but, as they could not decide the matter, they went straight to the king.

When the king had heard the story, he decided that the feather belonged to his son; but the other boy would not listen to this and claimed the feather for himself. At length the king’s patience gave way, and he said angrily, “Very well; if you are so sure that the feather is yours, yours it shall be; only you will have to seek till you find a golden hen with a feather missing from her tail. And if you fail to find her your head will be the forfeit.”

The boy had need of all his courage to listen silently to the king’s words. He had no idea where the golden hen might be, or even, if he discovered that, how he was to get to her. But there was nothing for it but to do the king’s bidding, and he felt that the sooner he left the palace the better. So he went home and put some food into a bag, and then set forth, hoping that some accident might show him which path to take.

After walking for several hours he met a fox, who seemed inclined to be friendly, and the boy was so glad to have anyone to talk to that he sat down and entered into conversation.

“Where are you going?” asked the fox.

“I have got to find a golden hen who has lost a feather out of her tail,” answered the boy; “but I don’t know where she lives or how I shall catch her!”

“Oh, I can show you the way!” said the fox, who was really very good-natured. “Far towards the east, in that direction, lives a beautiful maiden who is called ‘The Sister of the Sun.’ She has three golden hens in her house. Perhaps the feather belongs to one of them.”

The boy was delighted at this news, and they walked on all day together, the fox in front, and the boy behind. When evening came they lay down to sleep, and put the knapsack under their heads for a pillow.

Suddenly, about midnight, the fox gave a low whine, and drew nearer to his bedfellow. “Cousin,” he whispered very low, “there is someone coming who will take the knapsack away from me. Look over there!” And the boy, peeping through the bushes, saw a man.

“Oh, I don’t think he will rob us!” said the boy; and when the man drew near, he told them his story, which so much interested the stranger that he asked leave to travel with them, as he might be of some use. So when the sun rose they set out again, the fox in front as before, the man and boy following.

After some hours they reached the castle of the Sister of the Sun, who kept the golden hens among her treasures. They halted before the gate and took counsel as to which of them should go in and see the lady herself.

“I think it would be best for me to enter and steal the hens,” said the fox; but this did not please the boy at all.

“No, it is my business, so it is right that I should go,” answered he.

“You will find it a very difficult matter to get hold of the hens,” replied the fox.

“Oh, nothing is likely to happen to me,” returned the boy.

“Well, go then,” said the fox, “but be careful not to make any mistake. Steal only the hen which has the feather missing from her tail, and leave the others alone.”

The man listened, but did not interfere, and the boy entered the court of the palace. He soon spied the three hens strutting proudly about, though they were really anxiously wondering if there were not some grains lying on the ground that they might be glad to eat. And as the last one passed by him, he saw she had one feather missing from her tail.

At this sight the youth darted forward and seized the hen by the neck so that she could not struggle. Then, tucking her comfortably under his arm, he made straight for the gate. Unluckily, just as he was about to go through it he looked back and caught a glimpse of wonderful splendors from an open door of the palace. “After all, there is no hurry,” he said to himself; “I may as well see something now I AM here,” and turned back, forgetting all about the hen, which escaped from under his arm, and ran to join her sisters.

He was so much fascinated by the sight of all the beautiful things which peeped through the door that he scarcely noticed that he had lost the prize he

had won; and he did not remember there was such a thing as a hen in the world when he beheld the Sister of the Sun sleeping on a bed before him.

For some time he stood staring; then he came to himself with a start, and feeling that he had no business there, softly stole away, and was fortunate enough to recapture the hen, which he took with him to the gate. On the threshold he stopped again. "Why should I not look at the Sister of the Sun?" he thought to himself; "she is asleep, and will never know." And he turned back for the second time and entered the chamber, while the hen wriggled herself free as before. When he had gazed his fill he went out into the courtyard and picked up his hen who was seeking for corn. As he drew near the gate he paused. "Why did I not give her a kiss?" he said to himself; "I shall never kiss any woman so beautiful." And he wrung his hands with regret, so that the hen fell to the ground and ran away.

"But I can do it still!" he cried with delight, and he rushed back to the chamber and kissed the sleeping maiden on the forehead. But, alas! When he came out again he found that the hen had grown so shy that she would not let him come near her. And, worse than that, her sisters began to cluck so loud that the Sister of the Sun was awakened by the noise. She jumped up in haste from her bed, and going to the door she said to the boy, "You shall never, never, have my hen till you bring me back my sister who was carried off by a giant to his castle, which is a long way off."

Slowly and sadly the youth left the palace and told his story to his friends, who were waiting outside the gate, how he had actually held the hen three times in his arms and had lost her.

"I knew that we should not get off so easily," said the fox, shaking his head; "but there is no more time to waste. Let us set off at once in search of the sister. Luckily, I know the way." They walked on for many days, till at length the fox, who, as usual, was going first, stopped suddenly.

"The giant's castle is not far now," he said, "but when we reach it you two must remain outside while I go and fetch the princess. Directly I bring her out you must both catch hold of her tight, and get away as fast as you can; while I return to the castle and talk to the giants—for there are many of them—so that they may not notice the escape of the princess."

A few minutes later they arrived at the castle, and the fox, who had often been there before, slipped in without difficulty. There were several giants, both young and old, in the hall, and they were all dancing round the princess. As soon as they saw the fox they cried out, "Come and dance too, old fox; it is a long time since we have seen you."

So the fox stood up, and did his steps with the best of them; but after a while he stopped and said, "I know a charming new dance that I should like to show you; but it can only be done by two people. If the princess will honor me for a few minutes, you will soon see how it is done."

“Ah, that is delightful; we want something new,” answered they, and placed the princess between the outstretched arms of the fox. In one instant he had knocked over the great stand of lights that lighted the hall, and in the darkness had borne the princess to the gate. His comrades seized hold of her, as they had been bidden, and the fox was back again in the hall before anyone had missed him. He found the giants busy trying to kindle a fire and get some light; but after a bit someone cried out, “Where is the princess?”

“Here, in my arms,” replied the fox. “Don’t be afraid; she is quite safe.” And he waited until he thought that his comrades had gained a good start, and put at least five or six mountains between themselves and the giants. Then he sprang through the door, calling, as he went, “The maiden is here; take her if you can!”

At these words the giants understood that their prize had escaped, and they ran after the fox as fast as their great legs could carry them, thinking that they should soon come up with the fox, who they supposed had the princess on his back. The fox, on his side, was far too clever to choose the same path that his friends had taken, but would in and out of the forest, till at last even HE was tired out, and fell fast asleep under a tree. Indeed, he was so exhausted with his day’s work that he never heard the approach of the giants, and their hands were already stretched out to seize his tail when his eyes opened, and with a tremendous bound he was once more beyond their reach. All the rest of the night the fox ran and ran; but when bright red spread over the east, he stopped and waited till the giants were close upon him. Then he turned, and said quietly, “Look, there is the Sister of the Sun!”

The giants raised their eyes all at once, and were instantly turned into pillars of stone. The fox then made each pillar a low bow, and set off to join his friends.

He knew a great many short cuts across the hills, so it was not long before he came up with them, and all four traveled night and day till they reached the castle of the Sister of the Sun. What joy and feasting there was throughout the palace at the sight of the princess whom they had mourned as dead! And they could not make enough of the boy who had gone through such dangers in order to rescue her. The golden hen was given to him at once, and, more than that, the Sister of the Sun told him that, in a little time, when he was a few years older, she would herself pay a visit to his home and become his wife. The boy could hardly believe his ears when he heard what was in store for him, for his was the most beautiful princess in all the world; and however thick the darkness might be, it fled away at once from the light of a star on her forehead.

So the boy set forth on his journey home, with his friends for company; his heart full of gladness when he thought of the promise of the princess. But, one by one, his comrades dropped off at the places where they had first met him, and he was quite alone when he reached his native town and the gates of the palace. With the golden hen under his arm he presented himself before the

king, and told his adventures, and how he was going to have for a wife a princess so wonderful and unlike all other princesses, that the star on her forehead could turn night into day. The king listened silently, and when the boy had done, he said quietly, "If I find that your story is not true I will have you thrown into a cask of pitch."

"It is true—every word of it," answered the boy; and went on to tell that the day and even the hour were fixed when his bride was to come and seek him.

But as the time drew near, and nothing was heard of the princess, the youth became anxious and uneasy, especially when it came to his ears that the great cask was being filled with pitch, and that sticks were laid underneath to make a fire to boil it with. All day long the boy stood at the window, looking over the sea by which the princess must travel; but there were no signs of her, not even the tiniest white sail. And, as he stood, soldiers came and laid hands on him, and led him up to the cask, where a big fire was blazing, and the horrid black pitch boiling and bubbling over the sides. He looked and shuddered, but there was no escape; so he shut his eyes to avoid seeing.

The word was given for him to mount the steps which led to the top of the cask, when, suddenly, some men were seen running with all their might, crying as they went that a large ship with its sails spread was making straight for the city. No one knew what the ship was, or whence it came; but the king declared that he would not have the boy burned before its arrival, there would always be time enough for that.

At length the vessel was safe in port, and a whisper went through the watching crowd that on board was the Sister of the Sun, who had come to marry the young peasant as she had promised. In a few moments more she had landed, and desired to be shown the way to the cottage which her bridegroom had so often described to her; and whither he had been led back by the king's order at the first sign of the ship.

"Don't you know me?" asked the Sister of the Sun, bending over him where he lay, almost driven out of his senses with terror.

"No, no; I don't know you," answered the youth, without raising his eyes.

"Kiss me," said the Sister of the Sun; and the youth obeyed her, but still without looking up.

"Don't you know me NOW?" asked she.

"No, I don't know you—I don't know you," he replied, with the manner of a man whom fear had driven mad.

At this the Sister of the Sun grew rather frightened, and beginning at the beginning, she told him the story of his meeting with her, and how she had come a long way in order to marry him. And just as she had finished in walked the king, to see if what the boy had said was really true. But hardly had he opened the door of the cottage when he was almost blinded by the light that filled it; and he remembered what he had been told about the star on the forehead of the princess. He staggered back as if he had been struck, then a curious



feeling took hold of him, which he had never felt before, and falling on his knees before the Sister of the Sun, he implored her to give up all thought of the peasant boy, and to share his throne. But she laughed, and said she had a finer throne of her own, if she wanted to sit on it, and that she was free to please herself, and would have no husband but the boy whom she would never have seen except for the king himself.

“I shall marry him tomorrow,” ended she; and ordered the preparations to be set on foot at once.

When the next day came, however, the bridegroom’s father informed the princess that, by the law of the land, the marriage must take place in the presence of the king; but he hoped his majesty would not long delay his arrival. An hour or two passed, and everyone was waiting and watching, when at last the sound of trumpets was heard and a grand procession was seen marching up the street. A chair covered with velvet had been made ready for the king, and he took his seat upon it, and, looking round upon the assembled company, he said, “I have no wish to forbid this marriage; but, before I can allow it to be celebrated, the bridegroom must prove himself worthy of such a bride by fulfilling three tasks. And the first is that in a single day he must cut down every tree in an entire forest.”

The youth stood aghast as the king’s words. He had never cut down a tree in his life, and had not the least idea how to begin. And as for a whole forest! But the princess saw what was passing in his mind, and whispered to him, “Don’t be afraid. In my ship you will find an axe, which you must carry off to the forest. When you have cut down one tree with it just say, ‘So let the forest fall,’ and in an instant all the trees will be on the ground. But pick up three chips of the tree you felled, and put them in your pocket.”

And the young man did exactly as he was bid, and soon returned with the three chips safe in his coat.

The following morning the princess declared that she had been thinking about the matter, and that, as she was not a subject of the king, she saw no reason why she should be bound by his laws; and she meant to be married that very day. But the bridegroom’s father told her that it was all very well for her to talk like that, but it was quite different for his son, who would pay with his head for any disobedience to the king’s commands. However, in consideration of what the youth had done the day before, he hoped his majesty’s heart might be softened, especially as he had sent a message that they might expect him at once. With this the bridal pair had to be content, and be as patient as they could till the king’s arrival.

He did not keep them long, but they saw by his face that nothing good awaited them. “The marriage cannot take place,” he said shortly, “till the youth has joined to their roots all the trees he cut down yesterday.”

This sounded much more difficult than what he had done before, and he turned in despair to the Sister of the Sun.

“It is all right,” she whispered encouragingly. “Take this water and sprinkle it on one of the fallen trees, and say to it, ‘So let all the trees of the forest stand upright,’ and in a moment they will be erect again.”

And the young man did what he was told, and left the forest looking exactly as it had done before.

Now, surely, thought the princess, there was no longer any need to put off the wedding; and she gave orders that all should be ready for the following day. But again the old man interfered, and declared that without the king’s permission no marriage could take place. For the third time his majesty was sent for, and for the third time he proclaimed that he could not give his consent until the bridegroom should have slain a serpent which dwelt in a broad river that flowed at the back of the castle. Everyone knew stories of this terrible serpent, though no one had actually seen it; but from time to time a child strayed from home and never came back, and then mothers would forbid the other children to go near the river, which had juicy fruits and lovely flowers growing along its banks.

So no wonder the youth trembled and turned pale when he heard what lay before him. “You will succeed in this also,” whispered the Sister of the Sun, pressing his hand, “for in my ship is a magic sword which will cut through everything. Go down to the river and unfasten a boat which lies moored there, and throw the chips into the water. When the serpent rears up its body you will cut off its three heads with one blow of your sword. Then take the tip of each tongue and go with it tomorrow morning into the king’s kitchen. If the king himself should enter, just say to him, ‘Here are three gifts I offer you in return for the services you demanded of me!’ and throw the tips of the serpent’s tongues at him, and hasten to the ship as fast as your legs will carry you. But be sure you take great care never to look behind you.”

The young man did exactly what the princess had told him. The three chips which he flung into the river became a boat, and, as he steered across the stream, the serpent put up its head and hissed loudly. The youth had his sword ready, and in another second the three heads were bobbing on the water. Guiding his boat till he was beside them, he stooped down and snipped off the ends of the tongues, and then rowed back to the other bank. Next morning he carried them into the royal kitchen, and when the king entered, as was his custom, to see what he was going to have for dinner, the bridegroom flung them in his face, saying, “Here is a gift for you in return for the services you asked of me.” And, opening the kitchen door, he fled to the ship. Unluckily he missed the way, and in his excitement ran backwards and forwards, without knowing whither he was going. At last, in despair, he looked round, and saw to his amazement that both the city and palace had vanished completely. Then he turned his eyes in the other direction, and, far, far away, he caught sight of the ship with her sails spread, and a fair wind behind her.

This dreadful spectacle seemed to take away his senses, and all day long he wandered about, without knowing where he was going, till, in the evening, he

noticed some smoke from a little hut of turf near by. He went straight up to it and cried, "O mother, let me come in for pity's sake!" The old woman who lived in the hut beckoned to him to enter, and hardly was he inside when he cried again, "O mother, can you tell me anything of the Sister of the Sun?"

But the woman only shook her head. "No, I know nothing of her," said she.

The young man turned to leave the hut, but the old woman stopped him, and, giving him a letter, begged him to carry it to her next eldest sister, saying, "If you should get tired on the way, take out the letter and rustle the paper."

This advice surprised the young man a good deal, as he did not see how it could help him; but he did not answer, and went down the road without knowing where he was going. At length he grew so tired he could walk no more; then he remembered what the old woman had said. After he had rustled the leaves only once all fatigue disappeared, and he strode over the grass till he came to another little turf hut.

"Let me in, I pray you, dear mother," cried he. And the door opened in front of him. "Your sister has sent you this letter," he said, and added quickly, "O mother! can you tell me anything of the Sister of the Sun?"

"No, I know nothing of her," answered she. But as he turned hopelessly away, she stopped him.

"If you happen to pass my eldest sister's house, will you give her this letter?" said she. "And if you should get tired on the road, just take it out of your pocket and rustle the paper." So the young man put the letter in his pocket, and walked all day over the hills till he reached a little turf hut, exactly like the other two.

"Let me in, I pray you, dear mother," cried he. And as he entered he added, "Here is a letter from your sister and—can you tell me anything of the Sister of the Sun?"

"Yes, I can," answered the old woman. "She lives in the castle on the Banka. Her father lost a battle only a few days ago because you had stolen his sword from him, and the Sister of the Sun herself is almost dead of grief. But, when you see her, stick a pin into the palm of her hand, and suck the drops of blood that flow. Then she will grow calmer, and will know you again. Only, beware; for before you reach the castle on the Banka fearful things will happen."

He thanked the old woman with tears of gladness for the good news she had given him, and continued his journey. But he had not gone very far when, at a turn of the road, he met with two brothers, who were quarreling over a piece of cloth.

"My good men, what are you fighting about?" said he. "That cloth does not look worth much!"

"Oh, it is ragged enough," answered they, "but it was left us by our father, and if any man wraps it round him no one can see him; and we each want it for our own."

"Let me put it round me for a moment," said the youth, "and then I will tell you whose it ought to be!"

The brothers were pleased with this idea, and gave him the stuff; but the moment he had thrown it over his shoulder he disappeared as completely as if he had never been there at all.

Meanwhile the young man walked briskly along, till he came up with two other men, who were disputing over a table-cloth.

“What is the matter?” asked he, stopping in front of them.

“If this cloth is spread on a table,” answered they, “the table is instantly covered with the most delicious food; and we each want to have it.”

“Let me try the table-cloth,” said the youth, “and I will tell you whose it ought to be.”

The two men were quite pleased with this idea, and handed him the cloth. He then hastily threw the first piece of stuff round his shoulders and vanished from sight, leaving the two men grieving over their own folly.

The young man had not walked far before he saw two more men standing by the road-side, both grasping the same stout staff, and sometimes one seemed on the point of getting it, and sometimes the other.

“What are you quarreling about? You could cut a dozen sticks from the wood each just as good as that!” said the young man. And as he spoke the fighters both stopped and looked at him.

“Ah! you may think so,” said one, “but a blow from one end of this stick will kill a man, while a touch from the other end will bring him back to life. You won’t easily find another stick like that!”

“No; that is true,” answered the young man. “Let me just look at it, and I will tell you whose it ought to be.”

The men were pleased with the idea, and handed him the staff.

“It is very curious, certainly,” said he; “but which end is it that restores people to life? After all, anyone can be killed by a blow from a stick if it is only hard enough!” But when he was shown the end he threw the stuff over his shoulders and vanished.

At last he saw another set of men, who were struggling for the possession of a pair of shoes.

“Why can’t you leave that pair of old shoes alone?” said he. “Why, you could not walk a yard in them!”

“Yes, they are old enough,” answered they; “but whoever puts them on and wishes himself at a particular place, gets there without going.”

“That sounds very clever,” said the youth. “Let me try them, and then I shall be able to tell you whose they ought to be.”

The idea pleased the men, and they handed him the shoes; but the moment they were on his feet he cried, “I wish to be in the castle on the Banka!” And before he knew it, he was there, and found the Sister of the Sun dying of grief. He knelt down by her side, and pulling a pin he stuck it into the palm of her hand, so that a drop of blood gushed out. This he sucked, as he had been told to do by the old woman, and immediately the princess came to herself, and flung

her arms round his neck. Then she told him all her story, and what had happened since the ship had sailed away without him. “But the worst misfortune of all,” she added, “was a battle which my father lost because you had vanished with his magic sword; and out of his whole army hardly one man was left.”

“Show me the battle-field,” said he. And she took him to a wild heath, where the dead were lying as they fell, waiting for burial. One by one he touched them with the end of his staff, till at length they all stood before him. Throughout the kingdom there was nothing but joy; and THIS time the wedding was REALLY celebrated. And the bridal pair lived happily in the castle on the Banka till they died.

## THE FOX AND THE LAPP

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Lang, Andrew. *The Brown Fairy Book*. London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1904, 245–246.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Poestion, J. C. *Lappländische Märchen*.

**National Origin:** Sami

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The curious, cunning nature of fox in Sami folk narrative is revealed in the first sentence of this **animal tale**. In the following **variant** of “The Theft of Fish” (AT 1), similar portraits of the opportunistic **trickster** find not only fox but, among others, rabbit, hare, and coyote in other cultural settings employing similar strategies to exploit their fellows.

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Once upon a time a fox lay peeping out of his hole, watching the road that ran by at a little distance, and hoping to see something that might amuse him, for he was feeling very dull and rather cross. For a long while he watched in vain; everything seemed asleep, and not even a bird stirred overhead. The fox grew crosser than ever, and he was just turning away in disgust from his place when he heard the sound of feet coming over the snow.

He crouched eagerly down at the edge of the road and said to himself, “I wonder what would happen if I were to pretend to be dead! This is a man driving a reindeer sledge; I know the tinkling of the harness. And at any rate I shall have an adventure, and that is always something!” So he stretched himself out by the side of the road, carefully choosing a spot where the driver could not help seeing him, yet where the reindeer would not tread on him; and all fell out just as he had expected. The sledge driver pulled up sharply, as his eyes lighted on the beautiful animal lying stiffly beside him, and jumping out he threw the fox

into the bottom of the sledge, where the goods he was carrying were bound tightly together by ropes. The fox did not move a muscle though his bones were sore from the fall, and the driver got back to his seat again and drove on merrily.

But before they had gone very far, the fox, who was near the edge, contrived to slip over, and when the Laplander saw him stretched out on the snow he pulled up his reindeer and put the fox into one of the other sledges that was fastened behind, for it was market day at the nearest town, and the man had much to sell.

They drove on a little further, when some noise in the forest made the man turn his head, just in time to see the fox fall with a heavy thump onto the frozen snow.

“That beast is bewitched!” he said to himself, and then he threw the fox into the last sledge of all, which had a cargo of fishes. This was exactly what the cunning creature wanted, and he wriggled gently to the front and bit the cord which tied the sledge to the one before it so that it remained standing in the middle of the road.

Now there were so many sledges that the Lapp did not notice for a long while that one was missing. Indeed, he would have entered the town without knowing if snow had not suddenly begun to fall. Then he got down to secure more firmly the cloths that kept his goods dry, and going to the end of the long row, discovered that the sledge containing the fish and the fox was missing. He quickly unharnessed one of his reindeer and rode back along the way he had come, to find the sledge standing safe in the middle of the road; but as the fox had bitten off the cord close to the noose there was no means of moving it away.

The fox meanwhile was enjoying himself mightily. As soon as he had loosened the sledge, he had taken his favorite fish from among the piles neatly arranged for sale, and had trotted off to the forest with it in his mouth.



# ***Western Europe***





# BASQUE

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## ROLDAN'S BUGLE HORN

**Tradition Bearer:** Mariana Monteiro

**Source:** Monteiro, Mariana. *Legends and Popular Tales of the Basque People*. London: Fisher Unwin, 1887, 125–149.

**Date:** 1829

**Original Source:** Basque

**National Origin:** Basque

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The Basques are indigenous to the western Pyrenees Mountains on the northeastern border of Spain and southwestern border of France. The Basques have maintained a strong sense of identity that is reflected in the **legend** of their resistance to the forces of Charlemagne, “Roldan’s Bugle Horn.” The legend that forms the core of the **personal experience narrative** recounted below is the Basque account of the Battle of Roncevaux Pass (given the Spanish spelling of Roncesvalles in the following narrative) in 778 C.E., in which the rearguard of Charlemagne’s forces was ambushed by Basque guerillas and wiped out entirely. Among Charlemagne’s Frankish forces was Hruodland, or Roland (Roldan in the Basque oral tradition). The event was romanticized through oral retellings and eventually entered print as “The Song of Roland.” By this point, the force opposing Charlemagne’s army had been transformed from Basque Christians to Saracen Muslims. The concept of the unquiet and vengeful dead is central to the folk beliefs inspired by the legend of Roldan.

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**W**hen I heard this legend for the first time I was a youth. The circumstances which preceded and followed its narrative deserve to be mentioned, although they have no relation to the legend itself, but they

were of such a nature that they will never be effaced from my mind, and I think will impart a greater interest to the tale.

The winter of 1829 was one of the most severe seasons known in this century. In Spain, snow fell all over the country, and even in the southern provinces, where a fall of snow, is quite a phenomenon, seen perhaps once in a century, the ground was covered by deep beds of snow, to the great amazement of their happy dwellers. But naturally where the rigor of the winter was felt more keenly was in the Basque Provinces. The roads from town to town and from valley to valley were impassable, and many houses were buried beneath the snow for days. The few travelers who were compelled to traverse the mountains encountered fearful dangers—of being lost in the drifts, or of falling into chasms, or, in truth, of being attacked by packs of famished wolves which, forsaking their usual haunts in the woods, prowled around the habitations.

On this occasion I was in Goizueta, a town of the mountains of Navarre, enjoying the delicious hams of the country which supplied the table of my uncle, the cura of that place, who was an indefatigable huntsman. The great snowstorm, which fell without intermission, did not permit us to leave the bounds of the dwelling-houses, and we eagerly awaited the weather to break up a little to enable us to go to the neighboring mountains to hunt the deer and wild boars which abounded.

At the beginning of January the sky began to clear up, and one evening, as we were consulting together on the practicability of starting on the following morning, a stalwart Basque presented himself as the bearer of a letter from the prior of the monastery of Roncesvalles. This letter was addressed to my uncle, and in it the prior besought him in the name of their long friendship to come and pay a visit to the abbey, and bring a good pack of hounds to hunt an enormous black bear which had appeared in the neighborhood, and which was devouring every living creature it could find.

At daydawn on the following morning we started for the abbey to the number of fourteen huntsmen and twenty dogs, the pick of the bloodhounds and mastiffs of the mountains of Navarre. At nightfall of the subsequent day we reached our destination, after traversing the picturesque valley of Baztein, the bounds of Eugui, and the plain called the *Prado de Roldan* ["Roldan's Meadow"], the water and snow reaching in many parts nearly to our waists.

## II

On reaching the Abbey of Roncesvalles we were received by the prior and his monks, excellent men whose lives were passed in tranquil magnificence.

When I descried the lofty towers of that monastery, and beheld the strong walls which surrounded it—on seeing the houses of the inhabitants of that small town grouped around the immense extent of the monastic dwelling, it seemed to me that I was transported to other ages; and to my imagination, carried back seven centuries, the whole rose up before me as the work of a still more remote age—in one word, I found myself in the Middle Ages.

And in truth this idea was reasonable enough when I looked at our pack of hounds, on the robes in which we were dressed, on the two monks who had come forth to receive us, and on beholding the group of country people who attentively examined us, and saluted respectfully the venerable prior who was bestowing his blessing upon them with a benevolent fatherly smile, and whom the people loved as a true father. In truth, their affection for him was well merited, as they never had recourse to him in their troubles or difficulties without being relieved and comforted.

The massive doors of the monastery closed upon us, and we traversed the immense cloisters, preceded by servants bearing torches of pitched tow to light the way to the roomy, comfortable cell of the prior, where we could rest our wearied limbs and dry our soaked garments.

All this was a new scene to me, and I derived an immense pleasure in giving full play to my imagination, and allowing full scope to the ideas which continually presented themselves.

“That one is the noble lord of this fortress,” I thought to myself, as I looked at the prior, who was seated close to the hearth upon which burned huge blocks of wood; “further on are his principal men; we ourselves are. The retinue of the other feudal baron, coming to form some alliance with his neighbor. I, the shield-bearer, he who removes the hood from the favorite falcon, the one who holds the bridle of the horse of the lady of the castle, he who carries the shield and the standard of its lord on the day of battle. This one—his ranger, he who arranges the hunt, who sounds the *Alhali* when the noble deer dashes out of its cover; this other—”

My soliloquy was interrupted by the ringing of the bell which announced that supper was ready. We all rose up on hearing the welcome sound, and departed to the private refectory of the prior. Another surprise awaited me in harmony with the thoughts which had been suggested to me by the scenes before me. A table of colossal dimensions groaned beneath huge haunches of venison and quarters of wild boar smoking in great dishes of pewter. Further on were dozens of trout in bright copper casseroles. Large flagons of yellow sweet Peralta, of red Tudela wine and cider, flanked this enormous supper. It was truly one of those Homeric suppers the memory of which has reached even down to our days. Yet, in spite of the abundance of food, the haunches and quarters and dozens of fish were fast disappearing, and the dishes remained empty as though by enchantment; wines and liqueurs also were consumed with incredible rapidity, and I must confess that I was one of those who most contributed to their prodigious disappearance.

During supper the whole conversation turned on the object of our journey, and the prior informed us that the bear we had come from such a distance to hunt was so formidable an animal that no one dared to venture far from the dwellings through fear of being devoured.

“We shall bring you that bear tomorrow,” said my uncle, who awaited the coming hunt with all the impatience of an enthusiastic huntsman.

“Be careful what you do, my friends,” replied the prior; “I am told that it is an enormous animal, very agile and exceedingly ferocious.”

“Believe me, you need have no fear; and I promise you that his skin shall keep your feet warm this winter,” rejoined my uncle.

“Would to God you did destroy him! For I assure you that there will be many to thank you, since the poor carriers and muleteers are quite cowed with the beast who persists in following them.”

“Towards what part is the animal more frequently seen?”

“On the road which leads to the gate of France.”

“What! On the path of Roldan?”

“Yes; it is about that district that he has been seen.”

“Tis well; now, gentlemen, let us retire to rest, as it will be necessary to rise early tomorrow.”

The prior recited the *Benedicite*, and the servants appeared with lights, and each guest betook himself to the room assigned to him. It was eleven o'clock, for the supper had lasted long.

My cousin Francisco and myself occupied a small apartment which had two long, narrow windows, from which could be descried a portion of the neighboring forest.

I could not resist gazing on the weird scene before me: the moon was illuminating with her cold white beams the landscape covered with snow, and not the smallest cloud could be perceived on the horizon to obscure her pure light. I opened a window and stood contemplating the spectacle before me. If on reaching the monastery I had formed to myself the illusion that I was visiting one of the feudal castles of the Middle Ages, full of pages, ladies, and knights, that illusion began to assume a greater reality the moment I found myself at the Gothic window. In front of me lay a vast field mantled by hard snow, which beneath the moonbeams appeared like a spotless white carpet, the congealed icicles glistening in the moonlight as though the ground were studded with brilliants, topazes, and emeralds. Further on, half hidden by a slight mist, could be seen the houses of the town of Burgete. To the right rose up the lofty peaks of the Iru and other mountains which form that severe cordillera, until they were lost in the deep blue of the atmosphere. To the left the scene was still more surprising. Immense aged oaks, pines of many years' growth, stripped of leaves, could be seen moving their snow-laden tops at the weak breath of the icy breeze. Their black trunks stood out in relief against the white background of the snowy plains, while their gigantic branches appeared like the unearthly arms of some colossal phantom.

In the midst of the sepulchral silence of night, broken only by the distant noise of the running streams, my ears perceived some unfamiliar sounds, which, though weak and far distant at first, began to swell; and that singular sound which had so struck me continued to increase—was it an illusion? Perchance it was. My heated imagination conjured up before me that heroic combat of the

armies of Charlemagne against the dwellers of the mountains of Navarre. I heard the clashing of lances, the neighing of the horses, the pelting noise of stones as they struck the steel armor of the horsemen, the whizzing of the arrows as they flew across the air, the cries of the conquerors, the sighs of the wounded, the groaning of the dying; the cause of this unwonted noise was duly explained!

I was about to close the window and retire to rest when I heard truly a clear ringing cry, penetrative—a cry which was echoed by the adjoining rocks and chasms, this cry being repeated and prolonged and echoed over and over again.

“Francisco!” I cried, “Tell me what this means?”

My cousin woke up, and at that moment the weird sound was repeated.

“Oh!” replied, rising up and approaching the window, “I know what it is. It is Roldan, who is blowing his horn, asking for help.”

“And who is this Roldan?” I asked.

“Do you not know? Well, he is one of the twelve, peers of France who died at the boundary,” he replied, going back to bed.

I could not help bursting out laughing, but Francisco grew very wrathful at my incredulity, as he was a firm believer in ghosts, phantoms, and apparitions.

“You unbelieving Jew!” he cried, in anger; “is that all they teach you at the universities? Are there no witches? Do you not believe that the spirits appear of those who have died and were left unburied? Go to ‘Aquelarre’ on some Saturday night, and on the next morning you will tell me what you have seen; go now, this very moment, to take a walk in that wood which lies before us, and I promise you that ere you have walked fifty paces you will meet with *Bassa Jauna*.”

“Come, cousin, do not take it so to heart,” I replied, as I am in total ignorance of all that passes here.”

Five minutes later I was in bed and fast asleep.

### III

When the first rays of the dawn were touching the tops of the mountains which surrounded the monastery, the pack of hounds were gathered in the wide courtyard, their barking awaking the huntsmen. The yelping of the impatient dogs, the blowing of the hunting horns, the voices of those who had risen early, produced such a din, that I was forced to rise against my will and descend to join them. My uncle the cura, with his merry, happy face, breathing health, through every pore, was awaiting us surrounded by huntsmen and followed by the prior, who did not cease to enjoin us to be careful, and to take ever precaution against being suddenly assailed by the fierce beast we were going to encounter.

We joined the group, and bade the prior farewell, his parting words being, “Now, boys, keep together, and above all aim right; may you have a good day’s sport; and now I shall go and celebrate mass.”

Within a quarter of an hour after leaving the monastery we had lost sight of its walls, and had interned ourselves in the forest. We divided the party into

couples, the better to scour the forest. We formed a wide semicircle as in guerilla warfare, and placed the dogs between the distances. In this way we proceeded to search high and low, leaving no defile unexplored, nor rock or mountain unscoured—but all in vain. The bear did not show an appearance, nor could we find the smallest trace which could afford us any clue to its haunts. In this bootless search we continued until three o'clock in the day, when it was judged prudent to return to the monastery before the night, should overtake us, wandering about those solitary places covered by snow and frost.

I was exceedingly tired from ascending and descending the rocks and mountain parts, as I was little accustomed to this kind of exercise, and my hands were raw from grasping the thorny bushes and briars when scaling the rocks and climbing up the hillsides. I threw myself down, resting against a rock; Francisco sat down by my side, and Tigre, our good dog, lay at our feet licking my hands. The other huntsmen were preparing for their return home.

“Come,” I said, “let us drink a draught of wine, and then tell me something about Roldan’s bugle-horn.”

“Ah,” my cousin replied, in a grave tone, “if you had passed whole weeks as I have, in the forests and woods, with no other companion but a dog and a gun, you would then know a great many things which you know nothing of. Get up and follow me, since you still wish me to tell you something concerning this French knight, and I will tell you what I have heard, but it must be related on the very spot where that brave fell and died.”

I rose up, and we both proceeded to the eminence pointed out by Francisco. Nothing more grand could be imagined than the view commanded from this eminence; the virgin luxuriance of the Basque mountains, with their trees of immense height, their huge broken chasms and rocks contemporary with the creation, their tops covered with the snows of centuries, and the torrents below of turbid waters which have been flowing on from the beginning of the world. The heights on which we stood was a broken point, and on the opposite side to this division there was a huge gap, and this opening is the boundary or gate which divides it from France.

We reached the spot where Roldan died, and from whence, it is said, he still blows his horn. It is related that whenever the blast of his horn is heard the rocks fall to pieces, the mountains catch fire, and homesteads disappear by fierce storms.

“Tell me, pray tell me all about this.”

“Well, then, listen.”

“There was in France an emperor or king who went on from conquest to conquest, working his way towards the North. In his incursions he was accompanied by some barons of his realm, who were exceedingly brave and daring, among the number being Roldan, and he was distinguished above them all, like the tops of a beech tree rising above the other trees of the forests. Wearied of always proceeding towards the North, where he only found snow and ice, he

returned to his own kingdom, and, after making some preparations, he sallied out to conquer the South. Do you see that mountain yonder, so high that its top is nearly lost in the clouds? From that mountain up to Elizondo nothing was seen but soldiers; the ground shook beneath the weight of that concourse of men covered with steel, at the head of which went Roldan. No resistance could we offer them because we were totally unprepared. They went on and reached Pamplona and conquered it; they spread themselves along the shores and they became the masters. Inebriated with such signal success, they returned to France, leaving their strongholds garrisoned. Nevertheless in that retreat there awaited them the punishment to their ambition. The whole army passed along that road covered with snow, towards where you are looking. The multitude of soldiers resembled a long serpent, whose head, led by the emperor, was concealed in Oleron, and the tail, at which stood Roldan, reached to the walls of the holy monastery of Roncesvalles. All the cliffs and chasms repeated the echoes a thousand times over, the noise of the songs, and the clamping of the horses' hoofs. Roldan had already reached to the summit of the pine plantation, which from hence looks as small as the lime tree; he was conversing cheerfully with his soldiers, when a horrible stampede was heard on the winds. They looked up in terror and saw huge masses bounding down the slopes in fearful leaps and awe-inspiring roar, and falling like hail on the troops, crushing them to the ground like so many reptiles."

"And what was that which was flying in space?" I asked, deeply interested with this picturesque narrative.

"Pieces of rock of the size of these we are sitting upon," he replied. "A fearful cry was heard in that defile. The troops mustered together, and with their shields endeavored to offer an opposition to that shower of broken rocks, but the resistance was too weak to be able to repulse projectiles of this description. Their arms were broken, their bodies trampled, and men, guns, vehicles, and horses were crushed down, and, before many minutes had elapsed, all that road was covered over with dead bodies, broken corselets, and shields. Roldan was the only one who had been untouched by the missiles; he blew his horn asking for help, and the fierce, terrible *irrinzi*, or war-whoop, of the Basques was the response he received.

"All those mountain tops and heights were crowned, with Basques, who were hurling down broken rocks flying arrows, and even throwing huge balls of hard snow. They were commanded by Count Lobo. The count witnessed all this terrible slaughter, seated on the very spot which you are occupying. Roldan made strenuous efforts to reunite his men, and, by scaling the mountain sides, to cast the enemy from the heights. Several times did he reach as far as that break which lies two yards from your feet; but the trunk of a tree which rolled down the cliff, and other projectiles, arrested his venture.

"At length, wearied by so much wrestling, he formed a rampart with the bodies of his soldiers, and in this manner, behind this defense, he blew his horn



and cursed his cousin the emperor. The sounds from his trumpet grew weaker and weaker, and as a last effort of his death agony he took his sword by the blade and cast it far from him. The sword struck this very spot, and was buried up to the hilt. The horn was silenced.

“Roldan died pierced by arrows, and surrounded by the dead bodies of his soldiers. His shadow, nevertheless, wanders about these solitary places; armed to the teeth, he is seen on the heights flinging down enormous rocks to obstruct the passage, the silent proof of his rout. At times, when some catastrophe threatens the land, the sound of his horn is distinctly heard, announcing by those blasts the misfortune which is threatened. And when the anticipated calamity takes place, there are seen about these localities during the night long lines of armed men dancing to the measure of the strange music which their chieftain executes. Hapless indeed is the Basque muleteer who happens to pass at that moment.”

“What happens then?” I asked.

“He will die broken to pieces against the rocks.”

“So that, should these ill-omened fellows appear at this moment—”

“We should be instantly killed,” replied Francisco.

“Hum, hum! I am not afraid of the dead,” I replied, smiling. “I am more impressed by the presence of two living men than by all the dead bodies of Roldan and his soldiers.”

“Afraid of the living?” he replied, with a contemptuous sneer. “When I have my gun loaded I fear none who may stand before me!”

I was about to reply, and perhaps start a discussion, when we heard close to us the same strange noise and ringing cry which had reached us on the previous night.

“That is your Roldan, who no doubt is coming to tear us to pieces,” I said, laughing, little thinking what was the actual cause of that cry.

But I was astonished to witness the terror and ashy pallor of the countenance of my cousin, who with finger on his lips was indicating to me to keep silence. Tigre had pricked up his ears, and was uttering sinister growls.

Suddenly Francisco cried, “I have lost my bugle-horn.”

“What is the matter?”

“Why, look to the right; do you not hear?”

I could certainly hear the crackling sound of dry branches as they broke under the heavy muffled tread of some one slowly advancing, but I did not apprehend what it was.

“Is it, perhaps, Roldan who is approaching?” I asked, half convinced that this supposition might be a true one.

“Who knows? Silence! Quiet, Tigre!” he whispered, menacing the dog which at once lay down at my feet.

The night was fast closing in, and the mists were descending from the mountains over the valleys. All at once throughout space resounded a ringing

cry far more piercing than any we had yet heard, and on turning round in the direction from whence it proceeded, we beheld in astonishment a formidable black bear about thirty paces from us, and which stood still to look at us. When I saw him, I felt the blood freezing in my veins, and almost mechanically I raised my gun to aim but Francisco cried out, as he grasped my gun, to lower it. "Do not fire, else we are lost!"

The animal was slowly advancing, growling with pleasure on seeing his coveted prey so near to him, and which he felt sure of obtaining. The beast was a huge one, and his paws, with their sharp curved claws, were truly monstrous.

"Let us prepare for a hand-to-hand fight," said Francisco, on perceiving that the animal was beginning to agitate himself. "Were I alone," he added, drawing out his long woodman's knife—

"What would you do?" I asked.

"I would lodge a shot in his body, and then pierce him through with this knife."

"Shoot him then, and if you do not succeed in killing him I will fire also."

"It is impossible," he replied, "because, should I not kill him, he would attack us and although, were I alone, I could easily defend myself, yet I could not do so with you."

"Let us run for it, then," I said.

"Run from him?" he replied, looking at me from head to foot. "You are tired out, and before we should have departed twenty paces you would feel his claws clutching at your neck. No, let us do something else."

"Let us fight him to death," I rejoined.

The bear uttered a deep growl and dashed at us. Quick as thought my cousin leaped to the front and placed his body between me and the beast. The eyes of Francisco were gleaming with a strange light, his right hand grasped the long knife, and a feverish tremor betrayed his extraordinary resolve. That wrestling would have proved an unequal one, had not another combatant appeared on the field, when the bear was at a short distance from us. The dog Tigre, which had been hitherto only yelping and watching, now leaped on to the beast with the strength and agility of dogs of his breed, and, catching him by the neck, turned him over and both rolled to the ground. The rage of the bear was something terrible: he growled savagely, and set at the dog; but the latter, being agile and trained, parried the attacks of the beast with surprising skill.

"We are saved!" cried Francisco.

"Let us fire at him!" I said, preparing my gun.

"Keep quiet, for heaven's sake!" he exclaimed. "Don't you see that, should we not kill him, he would turn his attacks from the dog and direct his fury towards us? Let us reserve our shot for the end."

Meantime the bear was vainly trying to catch the dog, but every time that he renewed the attack the dog would fly at him, and dig its teeth into the bear, forcing him to roar furiously.

My cousin then began to call at the top of his voice to summon the other huntsmen, if he could make himself heard by them, and they in their turn were already very anxious because we had not rejoined them. At last, after a quarter of an hour of anxious waiting, we heard the blasting of the hunting horns, the yelping of dogs, and the answering cries of our companions announcing their arrival.

When the bear heard all that noise he began to retire very slowly: we then fired two shots, and he disappeared in the wood. The huntsmen hastened up to us, nearly exhausted with fatigue, and fearful that some misfortune had happened to us.

“Pepe! Pepe! Where is Pepe?” cried my uncle, in terror and out of breath.

“Here we are, uncle,” I replied.

“Are you unhurt?”

“Yes, thank God; but had it not been for Francisco the bear would have torn me to pieces.”

“Mercy upon us!” exclaimed all the huntsmen in one voice. “Have you seen the bear?”

“Yes, as surely as I see you!” I replied.

“Where is Francisco?” they asked.

At that moment we heard the report of a gun in the wood, followed by a fierce growl. We all ran towards the spot whence came the noise, and we found Francisco raising his gun to fire with the greatest coolness.

“I have wounded the beast,” he said, as soon as he saw us coming; “if we follow the track the bear will be ours.”

“But, gentlemen,” said one of the huntsmen, “it is almost night.”

“What does it matter?” replied Francisco, as he shouldered his gun and started in pursuit.

We all followed him, and on the snow we could plainly see the spots of blood from the wounded animal.

“He is certainly wounded,” said my uncle; “therefore let us proceed cautiously. Pepe,” he added, addressing me, “come close to me, do not linger behind nor separate yourself from our party.”

“Come along with me!” cried Francisco, as he grasped my hand in an affectionate manner; “before the bear touches a thread of your coat he will have to tear me to pieces.”

Deeply touched at this proof of his friendship I returned his grasp in silence. The pack of dogs were leashed together, setting Tigre foremost, and we joined ourselves together in a close column, and, preparing our weapons, we followed for a considerable distance the track of the animal. The night quite closed in, but we were able to continue our search, thanks to, the reflection cast up from the whiteness of the untrodden snow. The footprints and occasional spots of blood from the wounded animal served as a guide, but on reaching a plain, encircled by high rocks like gradients in an amphitheatre, the trace of footprints and the drops of blood ceased.

From this we inferred that the bear's den must be in some opening of the rocks standing before us, so we decided to encamp on the snow, taking all necessary precautions to spend the night in security and all possible comfort. With a quantity of dry branches we kindled a fire, fastened the dogs in couples, refreshed ourselves with food and wine, and settled to sleep. Some of the keepers took their turn to watch, and formed a sort of mounted guards. In spite of the piercing cold, somewhat modified by the heat of the fire, we soon fell fast asleep.

## IV

At daydawn we were up and commenced anew our search. We found deeply impressed footprints of the beacon the snow, and followed the track which led us to the further end of this natural amphitheater of rocks. At the base of a high cliff we discovered an opening curtained by overhanging branches and much tangled growth, and none doubted that this opening led to the den of our enemy. We carefully examined the surroundings of this mountain, in order to discover whether there existed any other opening to this cave, but to our great satisfaction we found none. We then held a sort of council of war, to discuss the best means possible to dislodge the animal from his lair, and after some animated discussion the proposal suggested by my cousin was unanimously adopted. This was simply to place the huntsmen on the heights which surrounded the plain for safety, and the keepers with the dogs leashed together to stand at the entrance of the plain. Then to collect some branches, pile them up at the mouth of the cave and set fire to them, and by this means smoke out the beast from his lair. We accordingly perched ourselves all along the heights of the rocks, and my cousin, armed with his long knife, and followed by some of the men carrying wood, gently approached the cavern, covered up the entrance with the branches, and set fire to them. My curiosity was at its highest point, and the eyes of all were fixed on the bonfire, which was beginning to cast vivid flames and dense columns of smoke. Francisco stood on my right, and the dog Tigre on the left. Ten minutes elapsed without anything taking place, and we were beginning to think we had after all missed our mark, when we perceived the ignited branches flying in the air, and scattered about on all sides under the vigorous kicks of the bear. He appeared on the scene uttering fearful growls, and casting fiery glances around at us. When the animal found himself enclosed within that narrow circle, his fury knew no bounds. He made towards the dogs, which were all let loose together, and a terrible fight ensued. The bloodhounds covered the bear with their tawny bodies; the beast lacerating all those he could bite at with his long teeth, and in a short time out of that rolling heap of bodies came forth indescribable cries of pain, and blood flowed. Thirteen dogs fell victims, either killed or wounded, in that fight, and the rest withdrew at the call of their keepers. The bear, now fairly exhausted, sat on his haunches, unable to move, his jaws wide open, and his tongue hanging out like a sheet of red-hot iron.

"Fire altogether!" cried my uncle, and five balls entered the animal's body.

The bear gave a tremendous leap on finding himself wounded; he reared on his hind legs, gazed upon the scene around him, and with desperate bounds, horrible growls, and grinding his teeth in a fearful manner, covered with blood and froth, he dashed in the direction where Francisco and I were standing to attack us. In order to reach to where we stood, it was necessary for the animal to clamber a cliff of about sixteen feet high, upon one of the crevices of which we had taken our position. The other huntsmen did not dare to fire through fear of wounding us; nor were they able to render us any assistance, as it was too late to prevent the attack or divert the beast. Meanwhile the bear was with surprising agility clambering up, and we almost felt the hot breath of his nostrils. The huntsmen were terror-stricken: my poor uncle endeavored to encourage us with cheering words, while a cold perspiration overspread my face. I trembled from head to foot, and I knew not what to do. I turned towards my cousin, who gave me a grasp of the hand, and, turning deadly pale, murmured, "The bugle-horn of Roldan!" The critical moment had arrived. Flight was now impossible. The bear advanced, and had already raised his huge paws to pounce upon us. Francisco leaped forward, made the sign of the cross, raised his gun, took aim, and fired. I closed my eyes. A cry of joy resounded in that enclosed plain on seeing the beast roll over, down the broken cliff, and Tigre with him. Francisco uttered an *irrinzi* of triumph, and, swiftly following the animal, he leaped down and stuck his long knife into the breast of the bear.

Three hours later, we entered the walls of the monastery bringing the dead body of the black bear, the terror of the adjacent mountains. From his body was extracted about twenty pounds of fat, and his handsome skin covered for some years the prioral couch of Roncesvalles.

For a considerable time after this event I used to dream very frequently about Roldan's bugle-horn; and whenever I was troubled with these dreams I would awaken as in a fright and start up nervously, believing myself caught in the clutches of a black bear.

## THE GRATEFUL TARTARO AND THE HEREN-SUGE

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Webster, Wentworth. *Basque Legends: Collected Chiefly in the Labourd*. London: Griffith and Farran, 1879, 20–32.

**Date:** ca. 1879

**Original Source:** Basque

**National Origin:** Basque

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The Tartaro of Basque folklore is commonly described as a giant cyclops. In some cases, the description is so vague that the Tartaro is no more

than an ogre or monstrous animal. Often, the Basque tales cast it in the role of the stupid ogre (for example, AT 1000-1181). In his **variant** of “The Dragon-Slayer” (AT 300), however, the Tartaro returns the hero’s kindness by advice and magical assistance in saving his own life, defeating the seven-headed serpent, and winning a princess. The opening episode is a variant of “The Helpful Horse” (AT 532) with the Tartaro assuming the role played by the horse elsewhere.

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**L**ike many of us who are, have been, and shall be in the world, there was a king, and his wife, and three sons. The king went out hunting one day, and caught a Tartaro. He brings him home, and shuts him up in prison in a stable, and proclaims, by sound of trumpet, that all his court should meet the next day at his house, that he would give them a grand dinner, and afterwards would show them an animal such as they had never seen before.

The next day the two sons of the king were playing at ball against (the wall of) the stable where the Tartaro was confined, and the ball went into the stable. One of the boys goes and asks the Tartaro, “Throw me back my ball, I beg you.”

He says to him, “Yes, if you will deliver me.”

He replies, “Yes, yes,” and he threw him the ball.

A moment after, the ball goes again to the Tartaro. He asks for it again; and the Tartaro says, “If you will deliver me, I will give it you.”

The boy says, “Yes, yes,” takes his ball, and goes off.

The ball goes there for the third time, but the Tartaro will not give it before he is let out.

The boy says that he has not the key. The Tartaro says to him, “Go to your mother, and tell her to look in your right ear, because something hurts you there. Your mother will have the key in her left pocket, and take it out.”

The boy goes, and does as the Tartaro had told him. He takes the key from his mother, and delivers the Tartaro. When he was letting him go, he said to him, “What shall I do with the key now? I am undone.”

The Tartaro says to him, “Go again to your mother, and tell her that your left ear hurts you, and ask her to look, and you will slip the key into her pocket.”

The Tartaro tells him, too, that he will soon have need of him, and that he will only have to call him, and he will be his servant forever.

He puts the key back; and everyone came to the dinner. When they had eaten well, the king said to them that they must go and see this curious thing. He takes them all with him. When they are come to the stable, he finds it empty. Judge of the anger of this king, and of his shame. He said, “I should like to eat the heart, half cooked, and without salt, of him who has let my beast go.”

Some time afterwards the two brothers quarreled in presence of their mother, and one said to the other, “I will tell our father about the affair of the Tartaro.”

When the mother heard that, she was afraid for her son, and said to him, "Take as much money as you wish."

And she gave him the Fleur-de-lis [a mark alleged by the narrator to be tattooed on the chest of royalty]. "By this you will be known everywhere as the son of a king."

Petit Yorge [Little George] goes off, then, far, far, far away. He spends and squanders all his money, and does not know what to do more. He remembers the Tartaro, and calls him directly. He comes, and Petit Yorge tells him all his misfortunes; that he has not a penny left, and that he does not know what will become of him. The Tartaro says to him, "When you have gone a short way from here you will come to a city. A king lives there. You will go to his house, and they will take you as gardener. You will pull up everything that there is in the garden, and the next day everything will come up more beautiful than before. Also, three beautiful flowers will spring up, and you will carry them to the three daughters of the king, and you will give the most beautiful to the youngest daughter."

He goes off, then, as he had told him, and he asks them if they want a gardener. They say, "Yes, indeed, very much." He goes to the garden, and pulls up the fine cabbages, and the beautiful leeks as well. The youngest of the king's daughters sees him, and she tells it to her father, and her father says to her, "Let him alone, we will see what he will do afterwards." And, indeed, the next day he sees cabbages and leeks such as he had never seen before. Petit Yorge takes a flower to each of the young ladies.

The eldest said, "I have a flower that the gardener has brought me, which has not its equal in the world."

And the second says that she has one, too, and that no one has ever seen one so beautiful. And the youngest said that hers was still more beautiful than theirs, and the others confess it, too.

The youngest of the young ladies found the gardener very much to her taste. Every day she used to bring him his dinner. After a certain time she said to him, "You must marry me."

The lad says to her, "That is impossible. The king would not like such a marriage."

The young girl says, too, "Well, indeed, it is hardly worthwhile. In eight days I shall be eaten by the serpent."

For eight days she brought him his dinner again. In the evening she tells him that it is for the last time that she brought it. The young man tells her, "No," that she will bring it again; that somebody will help her.

The next day Petit Yorge goes off at eight o'clock to call the Tartaro. He tells him what has happened. The Tartaro gives him a fine horse, a handsome dress, and a sword, and tells him to go to such a spot, and to open the carriage door with his sword, and that he will cut off two of the serpent's heads. Petit Yorge goes off to the said spot. He finds the young lady in the carriage. He bids

her open the door. The young lady says that she cannot open it—that there are seven doors, and that he had better go away; that it is enough for one person to be eaten.

Petit Yorge opens the doors with his sword, and sat down by the young lady's side. He tells her that he has hurt his ear, and asks her to look at it; and at the same time he cuts off seven pieces of the seven robes which she wore, without the young lady seeing him. At the same instant comes the serpent, and says to him, "Instead of one, I shall have three to eat."

Petit Yorge leaps on his horse, and says to him, "You will not touch one; you shall not have one of us."

And they begin to fight. With his sword he cuts off one head, and the horse with his feet another; and the serpent asks quarter till the next day. Petit Yorge leaves the young lady there. The young lady is full of joy; she wishes to take the young man home with her. He will not go by any means (he says); that he cannot; that he has made a vow to go to Rome; but he tells her that "tomorrow my brother will come, and he will be able to do something, too." The young lady goes home, and Petit Yorge to his garden. At noon she comes to him with the dinner, and Petit Yorge says to her, "You see that it has really happened as I told you—he has not eaten you."

"No, but tomorrow he will eat me. How can it be otherwise?"

"No, no! Tomorrow you will bring me my dinner again. Some help will come to you."

The next day Petit Yorge goes off at eight o'clock to the Tartaro, who gives him a new horse, a different dress, and a fine sword. At ten o'clock he arrives where the young lady is. He bids her open the door. But she says to him that she cannot in any way open fourteen doors; she is there, and that she cannot open them, and he should go away; that it is enough for one to be eaten; that she is grieved to see him there. As soon as he has touched them with his sword, the fourteen doors fly open. He sits down by the side of the young lady, and tells her to look behind his ear, for it hurts him. At the same time he cuts off fourteen bits of the fourteen dresses she was wearing. As soon as he had done that, the serpent comes, saying joyfully, "I shall eat not one, but three."

Petit Yorge says to him, "Not even one of us."

He leaps on his horse, and begins to fight with the serpent. The serpent makes some terrible bounds. After having fought a long time, at last Petit Yorge is the conqueror. He cuts off one head, and the horse another with his foot. The serpent begs quarter till the next day. Petit Yorge grants it, and the serpent goes away.

The young lady wishes to take the young man home, to show him to her father; but he will not go by any means.

He tells her that he must go to Rome, and set off that very day; that he has made a vow, but that tomorrow he will send his cousin, who is very bold, and is afraid of nothing.



The young lady goes to her father's, Petit Yorge to his garden. Her father is delighted, and cannot comprehend it at all. The young lady goes again with the dinner. The gardener says to her, "You see you have come again today, as I told you. Tomorrow you will come again, just the same."

"I should be very glad of it."

On the morrow Petit Yorge went off at eight o'clock to the Tartaro. He said to him that the serpent had still three heads to be cut off, and that he had still need of all his help. The Tartaro said to him, "Keep quiet, keep quiet; you will conquer him."

He gives him a new dress, finer than the others, a more spirited horse, a terrible dog, a sword, and a bottle of good scented water. He said to him, "The serpent will say to you, 'Ah! if I had a spark between my head and my tail, how I would burn you and your lady, and your horse and your dog.' And you, you will say to him then, 'I, if I had the good-scented water to smell, I would cut off a head from thee, the horse another, and the dog another.' You will give this bottle to the young lady, who will place it in her bosom, and, at the very moment you shall say that she must throw some in your face, and on the horse and on the dog as well."

He goes off then without fear, because the Tartaro had given him this assurance. He comes then to the carriage. The young lady says to him, "Where are you going? The serpent will be here directly. It is enough if he eats me."

He says to her, "Open the door."

She tells him that it is impossible; that there are twenty-one doors. This young man touches them with his sword, and they open of themselves. This young man says to her, giving her the bottle, "When the serpent shall say, 'If I had a spark between my head and my tail, I would burn you,' I shall say to him, 'If I had a drop of the good-scented water under my nose'; you will take the bottle, and throw some over me in a moment."

He then makes her look into his ear, and, while she is looking, he cuts off twenty-one pieces from her twenty-one dresses that she was wearing. At the same moment comes the serpent, saying, with joy, "Instead of one, I shall have four to eat."

The young man said to him, "And you shall not touch one of us, at any rate."

He leaps on his spirited horse, and they fight more fiercely than ever. The horse leaped as high as a house, and the serpent, in a rage, says to him, "If I had a spark of fire between my tail and my head, I would burn you and your lady, and this horse and this terrible dog."

The young man says, "I, if I had the good-scented water under my nose, I would cut off one of your heads, and the horse another, and the dog another."

As he said that, the young lady jumps up, opens the bottle, and very cleverly throws the water just where it was wanted. The young man cuts off a head with his sword, his horse another, and the dog another; and thus they make an end of the serpent. This young man takes the seven tongues with him, and throws

away the heads. Judge of the joy of this young lady. She wanted to go straight to her father with her preserver (she says), that her father must thank him too; that he owes his daughter to him. But the young man says to her that it is altogether impossible for him; that he must go and meet his cousin at Rome; that they have made a vow, and that, on their return, all three will come to her father's house.

The young lady is vexed, but she goes off without losing time to tell her father what has happened. The father is very glad that the serpent was utterly destroyed; and he proclaims in all the country that he who has killed the serpent should come forward with the proofs of it.

The young lady goes again with the dinner to the gardener. He says to her, "I told you true, then, that you would not be eaten? Something has, then, killed the serpent?"

She relates to him what had taken place.

But, lo! Some days afterwards there appeared a black charcoal-burner, who said that he had killed the serpent, and was come to claim the reward. When the young lady saw the charcoal-burner, she said immediately, that most certainly it was not he; that it was a fine gentleman, on horseback, and not a pest of a man like him. The charcoal-burner shows the heads of the serpent; and the king says that, in truth, this must be the man. The king had only one word to say, she *must* marry him. The young lady says, she will not at all, and the father began to compel her, (saying) that no other man came forward. But, as the daughter would not consent, to make a delay, the king proclaims in all the country, that he who killed the serpent would be capable of doing something else, too, and that, on such a day, all the young men should assemble, that he would hang a diamond ring from a bell, and that whosoever riding under it should pierce the ring with his sword, should certainly have his daughter.

From all sides arrive the young men. Our Petit Yorge goes off to the Tartaro, and tells him what has happened, and that he has again need of him. The Tartaro gives him a handsome horse, a superb dress, and a splendid sword. Equipped thus, Petit Yorge goes with the others. He gets ready. The young lady recognizes him immediately, and says so to her father. He has the good luck to carry off the ring on his sword; but he does not stop at all, but goes off galloping as hard as his horse can go. The king and his daughter were in a balcony, looking on at all these gentlemen. They saw that he still went on. The young lady says to her father, "Papa, call him!"

The father says to her, in an angry tone, "He is going off, because apparently he has no desire to have you." And he hurls his lance at him. It strikes him on the leg. He still rides on. You can well imagine what chagrin for the young lady.

The next day she goes with the gardener's dinner. She sees him with his leg bandaged. She asks him what it is.

The young lady begins to suspect something, and goes to tell to her father how the gardener had his leg tied up, and that he must go and ask him what is the matter. That he had told her that it was nothing.

The king did not want to go, (and said) that she must get it out of the gardener; but to please his daughter, he says he will go there. He goes then, and asks him, "What is the matter?" He tells him that a blackthorn has run into him. The king gets angry, and says, "that there is not a blackthorn in all his garden, and that he is telling him a lie."

The daughter says to him, "Tell him to show it us."

He shows it to them, and they are astonished to see that the lance is still there. The king did not know what to think of it all. This gardener has deceived him, and he must give him his daughter. But Petit Yorge, uncovering his bosom, shows the "fleur-de-lis" there. The king did not know what to say; but the daughter said to him, "This is my preserver, and I will marry no one else than him."

Petit Yorge asks the king to send for five dressmakers, the best in the town, and five butchers. The king sends for them.

Petit Yorge asks the dressmakers if they have ever made any new dresses which had a piece out; and on the dressmakers saying, "No," he counts out the pieces and gives them to the dressmakers, asking if it was like that that they had given the dresses to the princess. They say, "*Certainly not.*"

He goes, then, to the butchers, and asks them, if they have ever killed animals without tongues? They say, "No!" He tells them, then, to look in the heads of the serpent. They see that the tongues are not there, and then he takes out the tongues he has.

The king, having seen all that, has nothing more to say. He gives him his daughter. Petit Yorge says to him, that he must invite his father to the wedding, but on the part of the young lady's father; and that they must serve him up at dinner a sheep's heart, half cooked, and without salt. They make a great feast, and place this heart before this father. They make him carve it himself, and he is very indignant at that. The son then says to him, "I expected that"; and he adds, "Ah! My poor father, have you forgotten how you said that you wished to eat the heart, half cooked, and without salt, of him who let the Tartaro go? That is not my heart, but a sheep's heart. I have done this to recall to your memory what you said, and to make you, recognize me."

They embrace each other, and tell each other all their news, and what services the Tartaro had done him. The father returned happy to his house, and Petit Yorge lived very happily with his young lady at the king's house; and they wanted nothing, because they had always the Tartaro at their service.

## THE WITCH AND THE NEW BORN INFANT

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Webster, Wentworth. *Basque Legends: Collected Chiefly in the Labourd*. London: Griffith and Farran, 1879, 69–72.

**Date:** ca. 1879

Original Source: Basque

National Origin: Basque

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The following narrative, a supernatural **legend**, although the setting is Basque, embodies folk beliefs that have international circulation. Witches have the power of shape-shifting in Native American, African, and European traditions. Likewise hair clippings, blood, scraps of clothing, and nail pairings are cross-culturally employed for supernatural purposes. Finally, crossroads are widely accepted as points of intersection between the human and the supernatural realms and are especially associated with pacts between human and superhuman entities.

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Like many others in the world, there was a man and woman, laborers, who lived by their toil. They had a mule, and the man lived by his mule carrying wine. Sometimes he was a week away from home. He always went to the same inn, where there was a woman and her daughter. One day the laborer sets off with his loaded mule, and his wife was very near her confinement. She was expecting it hourly; but, as he had orders upon orders, he was obliged to set off. He goes then, and comes to this inn. It was a market-day, and they had not kept a bedroom for him as usual, because there were so many people there, and he is put into a dark room without windows near the kitchen. He had not yet gone to sleep, when he hears the woman say to her daughter,

“You are not aware that the wife of the man who is there is confined? Go and see if he is asleep.”

When the man heard that, he began to snore; and when the young girl heard through a slit in the door that he was snoring, she said to her mother,

“Yes, yes, he is asleep.”

The mother said to her then (you may guess whether he was listening), “I must go and charm this newly born infant.”

She takes up a stone under the hearth, and takes from under it a saucepan, in which there was an ointment. She takes a brush, and well rubs herself over her whole body, saying, “*Under* all the clouds and *over* all the hedges, half an hour on the road, another half-hour there, and another to return.”

As soon as she had said that, off she went. When the man saw that she was gone, he comes out of his room. He had seen what she did. He anoints himself like her, and says,

“*Over* the clouds, and *under* the hedges” (he made a blunder there) “a quarter of an hour to go there, half an hour to stop, and a quarter of an hour for the return.”

He arrives at his house, but torn to pieces by the thorns, and his clothes in strips, but that was all the same to him; he places himself behind the door of his

wife's bedroom with a big stick. There comes a great white cat, "Miau, miau!" When the man heard that, he goes out of the place where he was hiding, and with his stick he almost killed this cat, and set out directly afterwards for the inn, but not easily, under all the hedges. In spite of that, he arrives at the woman's house. He goes to bed quickly. The next day, when he gets up, he sees only the daughter. He asks her where her mother is. "She is ill, and you must pay me."

"No! I prefer to see your mother."

He goes to the mother, and finds her very ill. From this day he goes no more to that inn. When he gets home, he tells his wife what had happened, and how he had saved the child. But all was not ended there. They had misfortune upon misfortune. All their cows died, and all their other animals too. They were sinking into the deepest misery. They did not know what would become of them. This man was brooding sadly in thought, when he met an old woman, who asked him what was the matter with him. He told her all his troubles, how many misfortunes they had had all his cows lost. He had bought others, and they too had died directly. He is charmed by witches.

"If you are like that you have only to put a consecrated taper under the peck measure, in the stable, and you will catch her."

He does as the old woman told him, and hides himself in the manger. At midnight she comes under the form of a cat, and gets astride the ox, saying, "The others before were fine, but this is very much finer."

When our man heard that he comes out from where he was hiding, and with his stick he leaves her quite dead; although when he had done that our man was without any resources; (he had) neither bread, nor maize, nor cows, nor pigs, and his wife and children were starving.

He goes off to see if he can do anything. There meets him a gentleman, who says to him, "What is the matter, man, that you are so sad?"

"It is this misery that I am in that torments me so."

"If you have only that, we will arrange all that if you like. I will give you as much money as you wish, if at the end of the year you can guess, and if you tell me with what the devil makes his chalice; and if you do not guess it then your soul shall be for us."

When our man has got his money, he goes off home without thinking at all of the future. He lived happily for some time with his wife and child; but as the time approached he grew sad, and said nothing to his wife. One day he had gone a long way, wishing and trying to find out his secret, and the night overtakes him.

He stops at crossroads, and hides himself. (You know that the witches come to the crossroads to meet together.) They come then, "hushta" from one side, "fushta" from the other, dancing. When they had well amused themselves like that, they begin to tell each other the news.

One says, "You do not know, then, such a man has sold his head to the devil; certainly he will not guess with what the devil makes his chalice. I do not know myself; tell it me."

“With the parings of the finger-nails which Christians cut on the Sunday.”

Our man with difficulty, with great difficulty, kept from showing himself, through his joy and delight. As soon as the day appeared all the witches went off to their homes, and our man too went off to his. He was no more sad. He waited till the day arrived, and went to the crossroads.

This gentleman was already there, come with a lot of devils, thinking that he would be for hell. He asks him, “You know what the devil makes his chalice of?”

“I do not know, but I will try. With the parings of the finger-nails which Christians cut on Sundays?”

As soon as he heard that, the devil goes off with all the others in fire and flame to the bottom of hell. Our man went off home, and lived a long time with his wife and daughter. If they had lived well, they would have died well too.

# FRANCE

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## BLUEBEARD

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Lang, Andrew. *The Blue Fairy Book*. London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1889, 290–295.

**Date:** 1889

**Original Source:** Perrault, Charles. *Histoires ou contes du temps passé, avec des moralités: Contes de ma mère l'Oye*. Paris, 1697.

**National Origin:** France

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Sharing borders with Belgium, German, Italy, Luxembourg, Monaco, Spain, and Switzerland, and only 21 miles from Great Britain across the English Channel, the various regional cultures of France have had the opportunity to assimilate and adapt a range of European folk traditions in their specific repertoires. Along with those tales that have a unique Basque or Breton essence, France developed literary versions of traditional tales. These narratives, which are now more widely known than their folk models, came to be called **fairy tales**. Charles Perrault (1628–1703) is the French author who is credited with having established this **genre**, as well as creating the literary device of “Mother Goose” (mère l’Oye). Despite Perrault’s literary recasting of the plot, the “Bluebeard” tale (AT 312) is an internationally distributed narrative. See, for example, the African American **variant** “The Bride of the Evil One” (Volume 4, page 193) and the closely related Efik (Nigeria) tale “The Disobedient Daughter Who Married a Skull” (Volume 1, page 85). The motivation for the universal appeal of such narratives is likely to be the apprehension traditionally surrounding the act of marriage. Oral tradition frequently takes such anxieties as the core around which traditional fictions are constructed.

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There was once a man who had fine houses, both in town and country, a deal of silver and gold plate, embroidered furniture, and coaches gilded all over with gold. But this man was so unlucky as to have a blue beard, which made him so frightfully ugly that all the women and girls ran away from him.

One of his neighbors, a lady of quality, had two daughters who were perfect beauties. He desired of her one of them in marriage, leaving to her choice which of the two she would bestow on him. Neither of them would have him, and they sent him backwards and forwards from one to the other, not being able to bear the thoughts of marrying a man who had a blue beard. Adding to their disgust and aversion was the fact that he already had been married to several wives, and nobody knew what had become of them.

Bluebeard, to engage their affection, took them, with their mother and three or four ladies of their acquaintance, with other young people of the neighborhood, to one of his country houses, where they stayed a whole week.

The time was filled with parties, hunting, fishing, dancing, mirth, and feasting. Nobody went to bed, but all passed the night in rallying and joking with each other. In short, everything succeeded so well that the youngest daughter began to think that the man's beard was not so very blue after all, and that he was a mighty civil gentleman.

As soon as they returned home, the marriage was concluded. About a month afterwards, Bluebeard told his wife that he was obliged to take a country journey for six weeks at least, about affairs of very great consequence. He desired her to divert herself in his absence, to send for her friends and acquaintances, to take them into the country, if she pleased, and to make good cheer wherever she was.

"Here," said he, "are the keys to the two great wardrobes, wherein I have my best furniture. These are to my silver and gold plate, which is not everyday in use. These open my strongboxes, which hold my money, both gold and silver; these my caskets of jewels. And this is the master key to all my apartments. But as for this little one here, it is the key to the closet at the end of the great hall on the ground floor. Open them all; go into each and every one of them, except that little closet, which I forbid you, and forbid it in such a manner that, if you happen to open it, you may expect my just anger and resentment."

She promised to observe, very exactly, whatever he had ordered. Then he, after having embraced her, got into his coach and proceeded on his journey.

Her neighbors and good friends did not wait to be sent for by the newly married lady. They were impatient to see all the rich furniture of her house, and had not dared to come while her husband was there, because of his blue beard, which frightened them. They ran through all the rooms, closets, and wardrobes, which were all so fine and rich that they seemed to surpass one another.

After that, they went up into the two great rooms, which contained the best and richest furniture. They could not sufficiently admire the number and beauty



of the tapestry, beds, couches, cabinets, stands, tables, and looking glasses, in which you might see yourself from head to foot; some of them were framed with glass, others with silver, plain and gilded, the finest and most magnificent that they had ever seen.

They ceased not to extol and envy the happiness of their friend, who in the meantime in no way diverted herself in looking upon all these rich things, because of the impatience she had to go and open the closet on the ground floor. She was so much pressed by her curiosity that, without considering that it was very uncivil for her to leave her company, she went down a little back staircase, and with such excessive haste that she nearly fell and broke her neck.

Having come to the closet door, she made a stop for some time, thinking about her husband's orders, and considering what unhappiness might attend her if she was disobedient; but the temptation was so strong that she could not overcome it. She then took the little key, and opened it, trembling. At first she could not see anything plainly, because the windows were shut. After some moments she began to perceive that the floor was all covered over with clotted blood, on which lay the bodies of several dead women, ranged against the walls. (These were all the wives whom Bluebeard had married and murdered, one after another.) She thought she should have died for fear, and the key, which she, pulled out of the lock, fell out of her hand.

After having somewhat recovered her surprise, she picked up the key, locked the door, and went upstairs into her chamber to recover; but she could not, so much was she frightened. Having observed that the key to the closet was stained with blood, she tried two or three times to wipe it off; but the blood would not come out; in vain did she wash it, and even rub it with soap and sand. The blood still remained, for the key was magical and she could never make it quite clean; when the blood was gone off from one side, it came again on the other.

Bluebeard returned from his journey the same evening, saying that he had received letters upon the road, informing him that the affair he went about had concluded to his advantage. His wife did all she could to convince him that she was extremely happy about his speedy return.

The next morning he asked her for the keys, which she gave him, but with such a trembling hand that he easily guessed what had happened.

"What!" said he, "is not the key of my closet among the rest?"

"I must," said she, "have left it upstairs upon the table."

"Fail not," said Bluebeard, "to bring it to me at once."

After several goings backwards and forwards, she was forced to bring him the key. Bluebeard, having very attentively considered it, said to his wife, "Why is there blood on the key?"

"I do not know," cried the poor woman, paler than death.

"You do not know!" replied Bluebeard. "I very well know. You went into the closet, did you not? Very well, madam; you shall go back, and take your place among the ladies you saw there."

Upon this she threw herself at her husband's feet, and begged his pardon with all the signs of a true repentance, vowing that she would never more be disobedient. She would have melted a rock, so beautiful and sorrowful was she; but Bluebeard had a heart harder than any rock!

"You must die, madam," said he, "at once."

"Since I must die," answered she (looking upon him with her eyes all bathed in tears), "give me some little time to say my prayers."

"I give you," replied Bluebeard, "half a quarter of an hour, but not one moment more."

When she was alone she called out to her sister, and said to her, "Sister Anne" (for that was her name), "go up, I beg you, to the top of the tower, and look if my brothers are not coming. They promised me that they would come today, and if you see them, give them a sign to make haste."

Her sister Anne went up to the top of the tower, and the poor afflicted wife cried out from time to time, "Anne, sister Anne, do you see anyone coming?"

And sister Anne said, "I see nothing but a cloud of dust in the sun, and the green grass."

In the meanwhile Bluebeard, holding a great saber in his hand, cried out as loud as he could bawl to his wife, "Come down instantly, or I shall come up to you."

"One moment longer, if you please," said his wife; and then she cried out very softly, "Anne, sister Anne, do you see anybody coming?"

And sister Anne answered, "I see nothing but a cloud of dust in the sun, and the green grass."

"Come down quickly," cried Bluebeard, "or I will come up to you."

"I am coming," answered his wife; and then she cried, "Anne, sister Anne, do you not see anyone coming?"

"I see," replied sister Anne, "a great cloud of dust approaching us."

"Are they my brothers?"

"Alas, no my dear sister, I see a flock of sheep."

"Will you not come down?" cried Bluebeard.

"One moment longer," said his wife, and then she cried out, "Anne, sister Anne, do you see nobody coming?"

"I see," said she, "two horsemen, but they are still a great way off."

"God be praised," replied the poor wife joyfully. "They are my brothers. I will make them a sign, as well as I can for them to make haste."

Then Bluebeard bawled out so loud that he made the whole house tremble. The distressed wife came down, and threw herself at his feet, all in tears, with her hair about her shoulders.

"This means nothing," said Bluebeard. "You must die!" Then, taking hold of her hair with one hand, and lifting up the sword with the other, he prepared to strike off her head. The poor lady, turning about to him, and looking at him with dying eyes, desired him to afford her one little moment to recollect herself.

"No, no," said he, "commend yourself to God," and was just ready to strike.

At this very instant there was such a loud knocking at the gate that Bluebeard made a sudden stop. The gate was opened, and two horsemen entered. Drawing their swords, they ran directly to Bluebeard. He knew them to be his wife's brothers, one a dragoon, the other a musketeer; so that he ran away immediately to save himself; but the two brothers pursued and overtook him before he could get to the steps of the porch. Then they ran their swords through his body and left him dead. The poor wife was almost as dead as her husband, and had not strength enough to rise and welcome her brothers.

Bluebeard had no heirs, and so his wife became mistress of all his estate. She made use of one part of it to marry her sister Anne to a young gentleman who had loved her a long while; another part to buy captains' commissions for her brothers, and the rest to marry herself to a very worthy gentleman, who made her forget the ill time she had passed with Bluebeard.

## **THE STORY OF PRETTY GOLDBLOCKS**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Lang, Andrew. *The Blue Fairy Book*. London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1889, 193–205.

**Date:** 1889

**Original Source:** d'Aulnoy, Madame (Marie-Catherine). *La Belle aux Cheveux d'Or, Les Contes des Fées (Fairy Tales)*, 1697.

**National Origin:** France

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The following narrative is in most of its particulars a **variant** of “Ferdinand the True and Ferdinand the False” (AT 531). The tale, however, shares many **motifs** with “The Grateful Animals” (AT 554). Just as Charles Perrault is credited with establishing the major features of the **fairy tale**, the French author Marie-Catherine Le Jumel de Barneville, Baronne d'Aulnoy (1650/1651–1705) Madame d'Aulnoy, is credited with coining the term “fairy tale” for this **genre**.

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**O**nce upon a time there was a princess who was the prettiest creature in the world. And because she was so beautiful, and because her hair was like the finest gold, and waved and rippled nearly to the ground, she was called Pretty Goldilocks. She always wore a crown of flowers, and her dresses were embroidered with diamonds and pearls, and everybody who saw her fell in love with her.

Now one of her neighbors was a young king who was not married. He was very rich and handsome, and when he heard all that was said about Pretty

Goldilocks, though he had never seen her, he fell so deeply in love with her that he could neither eat nor drink. So he resolved to send an ambassador to ask her in marriage. He had a splendid carriage made for his ambassador, and gave him more than a hundred horses and a hundred servants, and told him to be sure and bring the Princess back with him. After he had started nothing else was talked of at Court, and the King felt so sure that the Princess would consent that he set his people to work at pretty dresses and splendid furniture, that they might be ready by the time she came. Meanwhile, the ambassador arrived at the Princess's palace and delivered his little message, but whether she happened to be cross that day, or whether the compliment did not please her, is not known. She only answered that she was very much obliged to the King, but she had no wish to be married. The ambassador set off sadly on his homeward way, bringing all the King's presents back with him, for the Princess was too well brought up to accept the pearls and diamonds when she would not accept the King, so she had only kept twenty-five English pins that he might not be vexed.

When the ambassador reached the city, where the King was waiting impatiently, everybody was very much annoyed with him for not bringing the Princess, and the King cried like a baby, and nobody could console him. Now there was at the Court a young man, who was more clever and handsome than anyone else. He was called Charming, and everyone loved him, excepting a few envious people who were angry at his being the King's favorite and knowing all the State secrets. He happened to one day be with some people who were speaking of the ambassador's return and saying that his going to the Princess had not done much good, when Charming said rashly, "If the King had sent me to the Princess Goldilocks I am sure she would have come back with me."

His enemies at once went to the King and said, "You will hardly believe, sire, what Charming has the audacity to say—that if HE had been sent to the Princess Goldilocks she would certainly have come back with him. He seems to think that he is so much handsomer than you that the Princess would have fallen in love with him and followed him willingly." The King was very angry when he heard this.

"Ha, ha!" said he; "does he laugh at my unhappiness, and think himself more fascinating than I am? Go, and let him be shut up in my great tower to die of hunger."

So the King's guards went to fetch Charming, who had thought no more of his rash speech, and carried him off to prison with great cruelty. The poor prisoner had only a little straw for his bed, and but for a little stream of water which flowed through the tower he would have died of thirst.

One day when he was in despair he said to himself, "How can I have offended the King? I am his most faithful subject, and have done nothing against him."

The King chanced to be passing the tower and recognized the voice of his former favorite. He stopped to listen in spite of Charming's enemies, who tried

to persuade him to have nothing more to do with the traitor. But the King said, "Be quiet, I wish to hear what he says."

And then he opened the tower door and called to Charming, who came very sadly and kissed the King's hand, saying, "What have I done, sire, to deserve this cruel treatment?"

"You mocked me and my ambassador," said the King, "and you said that if I had sent you for the Princess Goldilocks you would certainly have brought her back."

"It is quite true, sire," replied Charming; "I should have drawn such a picture of you, and represented your good qualities in such a way, that I am certain the Princess would have found you irresistible. But I cannot see what there is in that to make you angry."

The King could not see any cause for anger either when the matter was presented to him in this light, and he began to frown very fiercely at the courtiers who had so misrepresented his favorite.

So he took Charming back to the palace with him, and after seeing that he had a very good supper he said to him, "You know that I love Pretty Goldilocks as much as ever, her refusal has not made any difference to me; but I don't know how to make her change her mind; I really should like to send you, to see if you can persuade her to marry me."

Charming replied that he was perfectly willing to go, and would set out the very next day.

"But you must wait till I can get a grand escort for you," said the King. But Charming said that he only wanted a good horse to ride, and the King, who was delighted at his being ready to start so promptly, gave him letters to the Princess, and bade him good speed. It was on a Monday morning that he set out all alone upon his errand, thinking of nothing but how he could persuade the Princess Goldilocks to marry the King. He had a writing-book in his pocket, and whenever any happy thought struck him he dismounted from his horse and sat down under the trees to put it into the harangue which he was preparing for the Princess, before he forgot it.

One day when he had started at the very earliest dawn, and was riding over a great meadow, he suddenly had a capital idea, and, springing from his horse, he sat down under a willow tree which grew by a little river. When he had written it down he was looking round him, pleased to find himself in such a pretty place, when all at once he saw a great golden carp lying gasping and exhausted upon the grass. In leaping after little flies she had thrown herself high upon the bank, where she had lain till she was nearly dead. Charming had pity upon her, and, though he couldn't help thinking that she would have been very nice for dinner, he picked her up gently and put her back into the water. As soon as Dame Carp felt the refreshing coolness of the water she sank down joyfully to the bottom of the river, then, swimming up to the bank quite boldly, she said, "I thank you, Charming, for the kindness you have done me. You have saved

my life; one day I will repay you.” So saying, she sank down into the water again, leaving Charming greatly astonished at her politeness.

Another day, as he journeyed on, he saw a raven in great distress. The poor bird was closely pursued by an eagle, which would soon have eaten it up, had not Charming quickly fitted an arrow to his bow and shot the eagle dead. The raven perched upon a tree very joyfully.

“Charming,” said he, “it was very generous of you to rescue a poor raven; I am not ungrateful, some day I will repay you.”

Charming thought it was very nice of the raven to say so, and went on his way.

Before the sun rose he found himself in a thick wood where it was too dark for him to see his path, and here he heard an owl crying as if it were in despair.

“Hark!” said he, “that must be an owl in great trouble, I am sure it has gone into a snare”; and he began to hunt about, and presently found a great net which some bird-catchers had spread the night before.

“What a pity it is that men do nothing but torment and persecute poor creatures which never do them any harm!” said he, and he took out his knife and cut the cords of the net, and the owl flitted away into the darkness, but then turning, with one flicker of her wings, she came back to Charming and said, “It does not need many words to tell you how great a service you have done me. I was caught; in a few minutes the fowlers would have been here—without your help I should have been killed. I am grateful, and one day I will repay you.”

These three adventures were the only ones of any consequence that befell Charming upon his journey, and he made all the haste he could to reach the palace of the Princess Goldilocks.

When he arrived he thought everything he saw delightful and magnificent. Diamonds were as plentiful as pebbles, and the gold and silver, the beautiful dresses, the sweetmeats and pretty things that were everywhere quite amazed him; he thought to himself, “If the Princess consents to leave all this, and come with me to marry the King, he may think himself lucky!”

Then he dressed himself carefully in rich brocade, with scarlet and white plumes, and threw a splendid embroidered scarf over his shoulder, and, looking as gay and as graceful as possible, he presented himself at the door of the palace, carrying in his arm a tiny pretty dog which he had bought on the way. The guards saluted him respectfully, and a messenger was sent to the Princess to announce the arrival of Charming as ambassador of her neighbor the King.

“Charming,” said the Princess, “the name promises well; I have no doubt that he is good looking and fascinates everybody.”

“Indeed he does, madam,” said all her maids of honor in one breath. “We saw him from the window of the garret where we were spinning flax, and we could do nothing but look at him as long as he was in sight.”

“Well to be sure,” said the Princess, “that’s how you amuse yourselves, is it? Looking at strangers out of the window! Be quick and give me my blue satin

embroidered dress, and comb out my golden hair. Let somebody make me fresh garlands of flowers, and give me my high-heeled shoes and my fan, and tell them to sweep my great hall and my throne, for I want everyone to say I am really 'Pretty Goldilocks'."

You can imagine how all her maids scurried this way and that to make the Princess ready, and how in their haste they knocked their heads together and hindered each other, till she thought they would never have done. However, at last they led her into the gallery of mirrors that she might assure herself that nothing was lacking in her appearance, and then she mounted her throne of gold, ebony, and ivory, while her ladies took their guitars and began to sing softly. Then Charming was led in, and was so struck with astonishment and admiration that at first not a word could he say. But presently he took courage and delivered his harangue, bravely ending by begging the Princess to spare him the disappointment of going back without her.

"Sir Charming," answered she, "all the reasons you have given me are very good ones, and I assure you that I should have more pleasure in obliging you than anyone else, but you must know that a month ago as I was walking by the river with my ladies I took off my glove, and as I did so a ring that I was wearing slipped off my finger and rolled into the water. As I valued it more than my kingdom, you may imagine how vexed I was at losing it, and I vowed to never listen to any proposal of marriage unless the ambassador first brought me back my ring. So now you know what is expected of you, for if you talked for fifteen days and fifteen nights you could not make me change my mind."

Charming was very much surprised by this answer, but he bowed low to the Princess, and begged her to accept the embroidered scarf and the tiny dog he had brought with him. But she answered that she did not want any presents, and that he was to remember what she had just told him. When he got back to his lodging he went to bed without eating any supper, and his little dog, who was called Frisk, couldn't eat any either, but came and lay down close to him. All night Charming sighed and lamented.

"How am I to find a ring that fell into the river a month ago?" said he. "It is useless to try; the Princess must have told me to do it on purpose, knowing it was impossible." And then he sighed again.

Frisk heard him and said, "My dear master, don't despair; the luck may change, you are too good not to be happy. Let us go down to the river as soon as it is light."

But Charming only gave him two little pats and said nothing, and very soon he fell asleep.

At the first glimmer of dawn Frisk began to jump about, and when he had waked Charming they went out together, first into the garden, and then down to the river's brink, where they wandered up and down. Charming was thinking sadly of having to go back unsuccessful when he heard someone calling, "Charming, Charming!" He looked all about him and thought he must be

dreaming, as he could not see anybody. Then he walked on and the voice called again, "Charming, Charming!"

"Who calls me?" said he. Frisk, who was very small and could look closely into the water, cried out, "I see a golden carp coming." And sure enough there was the great carp, who said to Charming, "You saved my life in the meadow by the willow tree, and I promised that I would repay you. Take this, it is Princess Goldilock's ring." Charming took the ring out of Dame Carp's mouth, thanking her a thousand times, and he and tiny Frisk went straight to the palace, where someone told the Princess that he was asking to see her.

"Ah! poor fellow," said she, "he must have come to say good-bye, finding it impossible to do as I asked."

So in came Charming, who presented her with the ring and said, "Madam, I have done your bidding. Will it please you to marry my master?" When the Princess saw her ring brought back to her unhurt she was so astonished that she thought she must be dreaming.

"Truly, Charming," said she, "you must be the favorite of some fairy, or you could never have found it."

"Madam," answered he, "I was helped by nothing but my desire to obey your wishes."

"Since you are so kind," said she, "perhaps you will do me another service, for till it is done I will never be married. There is a prince not far from here whose name is Galifron, who once wanted to marry me, but when I refused he uttered the most terrible threats against me, and vowed that he would lay waste my country. But what could I do? I could not marry a frightful giant as tall as a tower, who eats up people as a monkey eats chestnuts, and who talks so loud that anybody who has to listen to him becomes quite deaf. Nevertheless, he does not cease to persecute me and to kill my subjects. So before I can listen to your proposal you must kill him and bring me his head."

Charming was rather dismayed at this command, but he answered, "Very well, Princess, I will fight this Galifron; I believe that he will kill me, but at any rate I shall die in your defense."

Then the Princess was frightened and said everything she could think of to prevent Charming from fighting the giant, but it was of no use, and he went out to arm himself suitably, and then, taking little Frisk with him, he mounted his horse and set out for Galifron's country. Everyone he met told him what a terrible giant Galifron was, and that nobody dared go near him; and the more he heard, the more frightened he grew. Frisk tried to encourage him by saying, "While you are fighting the giant, dear master, I will go and bite his heels, and when he stoops down to look at me you can kill him."

Charming praised his little dog's plan, but knew that this help would not do much good.

At last he drew near the giant's castle, and saw to his horror that every path that led to it was strewn with bones. Before long he saw Galifron coming. His



head was higher than the tallest trees, and he sang in a terrible voice, "Bring out your little boys and girls, Pray do not stay to do their curls, For I shall eat so very many, I shall not know if they have any."

Thereupon Charming sang out as loud as he could to the same tune, "Come out and meet the valiant Charming who finds you not at all alarming; Although he is not very tall, He's big enough to make you fall."

The rhymes were not very correct, but you see he had made them up so quickly that it is a miracle that they were not worse; especially as he was horribly frightened all the time. When Galifron heard these words he looked all about him, and saw Charming standing, sword in hand this put the giant into a terrible rage, and he aimed a blow at Charming with his huge iron club, which would certainly have killed him if it had reached him, but at that instant a raven perched upon the giant's head, and, pecking with its strong beak and beating with its great wings so confused and blinded him that all his blows fell harmlessly upon the air, and Charming, rushing in, gave him several strokes with his sharp sword so that he fell to the ground. Whereupon Charming cut off his head before he knew anything about it, and the raven from a tree close by croaked out, "You see I have not forgotten the good turn you did me in killing the eagle. Today I think I have fulfilled my promise of repaying you."

"Indeed, I owe you more gratitude than you ever owed me," replied Charming. And then he mounted his horse and rode off with Galifron's head.

When he reached the city the people ran after him in crowds, crying, "Behold the brave Charming, who has killed the giant!" And their shouts reached the Princess's ear, but she dared not ask what was happening, for fear she should hear that Charming had been killed. But very soon he arrived at the palace with the giant's head, of which she was still terrified, though it could no longer do her any harm.

"Princess," said Charming, "I have killed your enemy; I hope you will now consent to marry the King my master."

"Oh dear! no," said the Princess, "not until you have brought me some water from the Gloomy Cavern.

"Not far from here there is a deep cave, the entrance to which is guarded by two dragons with fiery eyes, who will not allow anyone to pass them. When you get into the cavern you will find an immense hole, which you must go down, and it is full of toads and snakes; at the bottom of this hole there is another little cave, in which rises the Fountain of Health and Beauty. It is some of this water that I really must have: everything it touches becomes wonderful. The beautiful things will always remain beautiful, and the ugly things become lovely. If one is young one never grows old, and if one is old one becomes young. You see, Charming, I could not leave my kingdom without taking some of it with me."

"Princess," said he, "you at least can never need this water, but I am an unhappy ambassador, whose death you desire. Where you send me I will go, though I know I shall never return."

And, as the Princess Goldilocks showed no sign of relenting, he started with his little dog for the Gloomy Cavern. Everyone he met on the way said, "What a pity that a handsome young man should throw away his life so carelessly! He is going to the cavern alone, though if he had a hundred men with him he could not succeed. Why does the Princess ask impossibilities?" Charming said nothing, but he was very sad. When he was near the top of a hill he dismounted to let his horse graze, while Frisk amused himself by chasing flies. Charming knew he could not be far from the Gloomy Cavern, and on looking about him he saw a black hideous rock from which came a thick smoke, followed in a moment by one of the dragons with fire blazing from his mouth and eyes. His body was yellow and green, and his claws scarlet, and his tail was so long that it lay in a hundred coils. Frisk was so terrified at the sight of it that he did not know where to hide. Charming, quite determined to get the water or die, now drew his sword, and, taking the crystal flask which Pretty Goldilocks had given him to fill, said to Frisk,

"I feel sure that I shall never come back from this expedition; when I am dead, go to the Princess and tell her that her errand has cost me my life. Then find the King my master, and relate all my adventures to him."

As he spoke he heard a voice calling, "Charming, Charming!"

"Who calls me?" said he; then he saw an owl sitting in a hollow tree, who said to him,

"You saved my life when I was caught in the net, now I can repay you. Trust me with the flask, for I know all the ways of the Gloomy Cavern, and can fill it from the Fountain of Beauty." Charming was only too glad to give her the flask, and she flitted into the cavern quite unnoticed by the dragon, and after some time returned with the flask, filled to the very brim with sparkling water. Charming thanked her with all his heart, and joyfully hastened back to the town.

He went straight to the palace and gave the flask to the Princess, who had no further objection to make. So she thanked Charming, and ordered that preparations should be made for her departure, and they soon set out together. The Princess found Charming such an agreeable companion that she sometimes said to him, "Why didn't we stay where we were? I could have made you king, and we should have been so happy!"

But Charming only answered, "I could not have done anything that would have vexed my master so much, even for a kingdom, or to please you, though I think you are as beautiful as the sun."

At last they reached the King's great city, and he came out to meet the Princess, bringing magnificent presents, and the marriage was celebrated with great rejoicings. But Goldilocks was so fond of Charming that she could not be happy unless he was near her, and she was always singing his praises.

"If it hadn't been for Charming," she said to the King, "I should never have come here; you ought to be very much obliged to him, for he did the most impossible things and got me water from the Fountain of Beauty, so I can never grow old, and shall get prettier every year."

Then Charming's enemies said to the King, "It is a wonder that you are not jealous, the Queen thinks there is nobody in the world like Charming. As if anybody you had sent could not have done just as much!"

"It is quite true, now I come to think of it," said the King. "Let him be chained hand and foot, and thrown into the tower."

So they took Charming, and as a reward for having served the King so faithfully he was shut up in the tower, where he only saw the jailer, who brought him a piece of black bread and a pitcher of water every day.

However, little Frisk came to console him, and told him all the news.

When Pretty Goldilocks heard what had happened she threw herself at the King's feet and begged him to set Charming free, but the more she cried, the more angry he was, and at last she saw that it was useless to say any more; but it made her very sad. Then the King took it into his head that perhaps he was not handsome enough to please the Princess Goldilocks, and he thought he would bathe his face with the water from the Fountain of Beauty, which was in the flask on a shelf in the Princess's room, where she had placed it that she might see it often. Now it happened that one of the Princess's ladies in chasing a spider had knocked the flask off the shelf and broken it, and every drop of the water had been spilt. Not knowing what to do, she had hastily swept away the pieces of crystal, and then remembered that in the King's room she had seen a flask of exactly the same shape, also filled with sparkling water. So, without saying a word, she fetched it and stood it upon the Queen's shelf.

Now the water in this flask was what was used in the kingdom for getting rid of troublesome people. Instead of having their heads cut off in the usual way, their faces were bathed with the water, and they instantly fell asleep and never woke up any more. So, when the King, thinking to improve his beauty, took the flask and sprinkled the water upon his face, HE fell asleep, and nobody could wake him.

Little Frisk was the first to hear the news, and he ran to tell Charming, who sent him to beg the Princess not to forget the poor prisoner. All the palace was in confusion on account of the King's death, but tiny Frisk made his way through the crowd to the Princess's side, and said,

"Madam, do not forget poor Charming."

Then she remembered all he had done for her, and without saying a word to anyone went straight to the tower, and with her own hands took off Charming's chains. Then, putting a golden crown upon his head, and the royal mantle upon his shoulders, she said, "Come, faithful Charming, I make you king, and will take you for my husband."

Charming, once more free and happy, fell at her feet and thanked her for her gracious words.

Everybody was delighted that he should be king, and the wedding, which took place at once, was the prettiest that can be imagined, and Prince Charming and Princess Goldilocks lived happily ever after.

## RICKY OF THE TUFT

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Ashliman, D. L. "Ricky of the Tuft." *Folktexts: A Library of Folktales, Folklore, Fairy Tales and Mythology*. <http://www.pitt.edu/~dash/perrault07.html> (July 21, 2007).

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Sources:** Johnson, A. E., trans. *Old-Time Stories Told by Master Charles Perrault*. New York: Dodd Mead and Company, 1921. Morals are from Littlewood, S. R., trans. *Perrault's Fairy Tales*. London: Herbert and Daniel, 1912.

**National Origin:** France

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"Ricky of the Tuft" is a **variant** of "The Beautiful and the Ugly Twin" (AT 711). A common version of the tale focuses on a childless woman's pact with a supernatural figure to bear a child. When conditions of the agreement are violated, twins are born: one ugly but clever, the other beautiful but inept. Rather than outshining her beautiful sister, the ugly twin assists her. This variant, however, focuses on the relationship between the beautiful sister and a deformed suitor to extol the virtues of both love and sensibility.

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Once upon a time there was a queen who bore a son so ugly and misshapen that for some time it was doubtful if he would have human form at all. But a fairy who was present at his birth promised that he should have plenty of brains, and added that by virtue of the gift which she had just bestowed upon him he would be able to impart to the person whom he should love best the same degree of intelligence which he possessed himself.

This somewhat consoled the poor queen, who was greatly disappointed at having brought into the world such a hideous brat. And indeed, no sooner did the child begin to speak than his sayings proved to be full of shrewdness, while all that he did was somehow so clever that he charmed everyone.

I forgot to mention that when he was born he had a little tuft of hair upon his head. For this reason he was called Ricky of the Tuft, Ricky being his family name.

Some seven or eight years later the queen of a neighboring kingdom gave birth to twin daughters. The first one to come into the world was more beautiful than the dawn, and the queen was so overjoyed that it was feared her great excitement might do her some harm. The same fairy who had assisted at the birth of Ricky of the Tuft was present, and in order to moderate the transports of the queen she declared that this little princess would have no sense at all, and would be as stupid as she was beautiful. The queen was deeply mortified,

and a moment or two later her chagrin became greater still, for the second daughter proved to be extremely ugly.

“Do not be distressed, Madam,” said the fairy. “Your daughter shall be recompensed in another way. She shall have so much good sense that her lack of beauty will scarcely be noticed.”

“May Heaven grant it!” said the queen. “But is there no means by which the elder, who is so beautiful, can be endowed with some intelligence?”

“In the matter of brains I can do nothing for her, Madam,” said the fairy, “but as regards beauty I can do a great deal. As there is nothing I would not do to please you, I will bestow upon her the power of making beautiful any person who shall greatly please her.”

As the two princesses grew up their perfections increased, and everywhere the beauty of the elder and the wit of the younger were the subject of common talk.

It is equally true that their defects also increased as they became older. The younger grew uglier every minute, and the elder daily became more stupid. Either she answered nothing at all when spoken to, or replied with some idiotic remark. At the same time she was so awkward that she could not set four china vases on the mantelpiece without breaking one of them, nor drink a glass of water without spilling half of it over her clothes.

Now although the elder girl possessed the great advantage which beauty always confers upon youth, she was nevertheless outshone in almost all company by her younger sister. At first everyone gathered round the beauty to see and admire her, but very soon they were all attracted by the graceful and easy conversation of the clever one. In a very short time the elder girl would be left entirely alone, while everybody clustered round her sister.

The elder princess was not so stupid that she was not aware of this, and she would willingly have surrendered all her beauty for half her sister’s cleverness. Sometimes she was ready to die of grief for the queen, though a sensible woman, could not refrain from occasionally reproaching her for her stupidity.

The princess had retired one day to a wood to bemoan her misfortune, when she saw approaching her an ugly little man, of very disagreeable appearance, but clad in magnificent attire.

This was the young prince Ricky of the Tuft. He had fallen in love with her portrait, which was everywhere to be seen, and had left his father’s kingdom in order to have the pleasure of seeing and talking to her.

Delighted to meet her thus alone, he approached with every mark of respect and politeness. But while he paid her the usual compliments he noticed that she was plunged in melancholy.

“I cannot understand, madam,” he said, “how anyone with your beauty can be so sad as you appear. I can boast of having seen many fair ladies, and I declare that none of them could compare in beauty with you.”

“It is very kind of you to say so, sir,” answered the princess; and stopped there, at a loss what to say further.

“Beauty,” said Ricky, “is of such great advantage that everything else can be disregarded; and I do not see that the possessor of it can have anything much to grieve about.”

To this the princess replied, “I would rather be as plain as you are and have some sense, than be as beautiful as I am and at the same time stupid.”

“Nothing more clearly displays good sense, madam, than a belief that one is not possessed of it. It follows, therefore, that the more one has, the more one fears it to be wanting.”

“I am not sure about that,” said the princess; “but I know only too well that I am very stupid, and this is the reason of the misery which is nearly killing me.”

“If that is all that troubles you, madam, I can easily put an end to your suffering.”

“How will you manage that?” said the princess.

“I am able, madam,” said Ricky of the Tuft, “to bestow as much good sense as it is possible to possess on the person whom I love the most. You are that person, and it therefore rests with you to decide whether you will acquire so much intelligence. The only condition is that you shall consent to marry me.”

The princess was dumfounded, and remained silent.

“I can see,” pursued Ricky, “that this suggestion perplexes you, and I am not surprised. But I will give you a whole year to make up your mind to it.”

The princess had so little sense, and at the same time desired it so ardently, that she persuaded herself the end of this year would never come. So she accepted the offer which had been made to her. No sooner had she given her word to Ricky that she would marry him within one year from that very day, than she felt a complete change come over her. She found herself able to say all that she wished with the greatest ease, and to say it in an elegant, finished, and natural manner. She at once engaged Ricky in a brilliant and lengthy conversation, holding her own so well that Ricky feared he had given her a larger share of sense than he had retained for himself.

On her return to the palace amazement reigned throughout the court at such a sudden and extraordinary change. Whereas formerly they had been accustomed to hear her give vent to silly, pert remarks, they now heard her express herself sensibly and very wittily. The entire court was overjoyed. The only person not too pleased was the younger sister, for now that she had no longer the advantage over the elder in wit, she seemed nothing but a little fright in comparison.

The king himself often took her advice, and several times held his councils in her apartment.

The news of this change spread abroad, and the princes of the neighboring kingdoms made many attempts to captivate her. Almost all asked her in marriage. But she found none with enough sense, and so she listened to all without promising herself to any.

At last came one who was so powerful, so rich, so witty, and so handsome, that she could not help being somewhat attracted by him. Her father noticed

this, and told her she could make her own choice of a husband. She had only to declare herself. Now the more sense one has, the more difficult it is to make up one's mind in an affair of this kind. After thanking her father, therefore, she asked for a little time to think it over. In order to ponder quietly what she had better do she went to walk in a wood—the very one, as it happened, where she had encountered Ricky of the Tuft.

While she walked, deep in thought, she heard beneath her feet a thudding sound, as though many people were running busily to and fro. Listening more attentively she heard voices. "Bring me that boiler," said one; then another, "Put some wood on that fire!"

At that moment the ground opened, and she saw below what appeared to be a large kitchen full of cooks and scullions, and all the train of attendants which the preparation of a great banquet involves. A gang of some twenty or thirty spit-turners emerged and took up their positions round a very long table in a path in the wood. They all wore their cook's caps on one side, and with their basting implements in their hands they kept time together as they worked, to the lilt of a melodious song.

The princess was astonished by this spectacle, and asked for whom their work was being done.

"For Prince Ricky of the Tuft, madam," said the foreman of the gang. "His wedding is tomorrow."

At this the princess was more surprised than ever. In a flash she remembered that it was a year to the very day since she had promised to marry Prince Ricky of the Tuft, and was taken aback by the recollection. The reason she had forgotten was that when she made the promise she was still without sense, and with the acquisition of that intelligence which the prince had bestowed upon her, all memory of her former stupidities had been blotted out.

She had not gone another thirty paces when Ricky of the Tuft appeared before her, gallant and resplendent, like a prince upon his wedding day.

"As you see, madam," he said, "I keep my word to the minute. I do not doubt that you have come to keep yours, and by giving me your hand to make me the happiest of men."

"I will be frank with you," replied the princess. "I have not yet made up my mind on the point, and I am afraid I shall never be able to take the decision you desire."

"You astonish me, madam," said Ricky of the Tuft.

"I can well believe it," said the princess, "and undoubtedly, if I had to deal with a clown, or a man who lacked good sense, I should feel myself very awkwardly situated. 'A princess must keep her word,' he would say, 'and you must marry me because you promised to!' But I am speaking to a man of the world, of the greatest good sense, and I am sure that he will listen to reason. As you are aware, I could not make up my mind to marry you even when I was entirely without sense; how can you expect that today, possessing the intelligence you

bestowed on me, which makes me still more difficult to please than formerly, I should take a decision which I could not take then? If you wished so much to marry me, you were very wrong to relieve me of my stupidity, and to let me see more clearly than I did."

"If a man who lacked good sense," replied Ricky of the Tuft, "would be justified, as you have just said, in reproaching you for breaking your word, why do you expect, madam, that I should act differently where the happiness of my whole life is at stake? Is it reasonable that people who have sense should be treated worse than those who have none? Would you maintain that for a moment—you, who so markedly have sense, and desired so ardently to have it? But, pardon me, let us get to the facts. With the exception of my ugliness, is there anything about me which displeases you? Are you dissatisfied with my breeding, my brains, my disposition, or my manners?"

"In no way," replied the princess. "I like exceedingly all that you have displayed of the qualities you mention."

"In that case," said Ricky of the Tuft, "happiness will be mine, for it lies in your power to make me the most attractive of men."

"How can that be done?" asked the princess.

"It will happen of itself," replied Ricky of the Tuft, "if you love me well enough to wish that it be so. To remove your doubts, madam, let me tell you that the same fairy who on the day of my birth bestowed upon me the power of endowing with intelligence the woman of my choice, gave to you also the power of endowing with beauty the man whom you should love, and on whom you should wish to confer this favor."

"If that is so," said the princess, "I wish with all my heart that you may become the handsomest and most attractive prince in the world, and I give you without reserve the boon which it is mine to bestow."

No sooner had the princess uttered these words than Ricky of the Tuft appeared before her eyes as the handsomest, most graceful and attractive man that she had ever set eyes on.

Some people assert that this was not the work of fairy enchantment, but that love alone brought about the transformation. They say that the princess, as she mused upon her lover's constancy, upon his good sense, and his many admirable qualities of heart and head, grew blind to the deformity of his body and the ugliness of his face; that his humpback seemed no more than was natural in a man who could make the courtliest of bows, and that the dreadful limp which had formerly distressed her now betokened nothing more than a certain diffidence and charming deference of manner. They say further that she found his eyes shine all the brighter for their squint, and that this defect in them was to her but a sign of passionate love; while his great red nose she found naught but martial and heroic.

However that may be, the princess promised to marry him on the spot, provided only that he could obtain the consent of her royal father.



The king knew Ricky of the Tuft to be a prince both wise and witty, and on learning of his daughter's regard for him, he accepted him with pleasure as a son-in-law.

The wedding took place upon the morrow, just as Ricky of the Tuft had foreseen, and in accordance with the arrangements he had long ago put in train.

Moral:

Here's a fairy tale for you,  
Which is just as good as true.  
What we love is always fair,  
Clever, deft, and debonair.

Another Moral:

Nature oft, with open arms,  
Lavishes a thousand charms;  
But it is not these that bring  
True love's truest offering.  
'Tis some quality that lies  
All unseen to other eyes—  
Something in the heart or mind.

# SEPHARDIM

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## THE SARAGOSSAN PURIM

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Hanauer, James Edward. *Folklore of the Holy Land: Moslem, Christian and Jewish*. London: Duckworth and Company, 1907, 124–126.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Spain

**National Origin:** Sephardim

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The Sephardim are the descendants of Jews whose origins are in Portugal or Spain, including those who were expelled from these countries by royal decrees in the late fifteenth century C.E. See “The Weight before the Door” (Volume 1, page 14) for additional discussion of the Sephardic Diaspora, after the Iberian expulsion. Purim is a Jewish festival that commemorates their deliverance from a plot by Persian noble Haman (ca. sixth century B.C.E.) to exterminate all the Jews in the Persian Empire. The following **legend** explains the origin of the “Saragossan Purim” festival and cautions against enemies both within and outside of the group.

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A few of the Jews resident at Jerusalem celebrate, beside the usual Jewish feasts of Passover, Pentecost, Tabernacles, etc., a yearly anniversary which they call “the Saragossan Purim,” in order to commemorate the deliverance of the Jews of Saragossa, the capital of the former kingdom of Arragon, from a great peril. The story of this escape, as recorded in certain small parchment scrolls or Megilloth written in the style and evident imitation of the Roll of Esther, is read in public at each celebration. I had heard of the custom a good many years ago, but on February 13, 1906, having been informed that the

festival had been held two days before, I obtained the loan, through a friend, of a copy of the roll. It was, of course, in Hebrew, and on parchment. The narrative is, briefly, as follows:

About the year 1420, in the reign of Alphonso V of Arragon, there were in the city of Saragossa twelve handsome synagogues supported by as many congregations of prosperous and influential Jews, who were so well treated by the Government that, whenever the king came to Saragossa, all the rabbis went out in procession to honor him, each carrying, in its case, the Roll of the Law belonging to his synagogue. People objected that it was dishonor for the Sacred Rolls to be carried out to flatter the vanity of a Gentile; and so the rabbis, possibly glad of an excuse not to carry the heavy manuscripts, got in the habit of leaving the scrolls at the synagogues on such occasions, and going out with the empty cases.

Now a certain Jew, named Marcus of Damascus, turned Christian, and in his zeal as a new convert became the deadly enemy of his own race. When the king one day was praising the loyalty of his Jewish subjects, this renegade, who was among the courtiers, replied that his majesty was being grossly deceived. The loyalty of the Jews was a sham, he averred, like their carrying empty cases before the king when pretending to bear the rolls of their respective synagogues.

At this the king was angered against the Jews, but would not punish them until he had ascertained the truth of the charge. He set out at once (Shebat 17th [fifth month of the Jewish civil calendar, eleventh month of the religious calendar]) for Saragossa, with Marcus in his train; and the latter was in high spirits, thinking he had ruined the Jews. But that night an aged man roused the servant of each synagogue, and told him how the king intended to surprise the rabbis. So when the noise of the king's coming went abroad next morning, and they went out to meet him as usual, they were not unprepared. Alphonso did not return their greetings but, frowning, ordered the cases to be opened. His command was obeyed very cheerfully, and every case was found to contain its scroll of the Pentateuch. The king then turned his anger upon Marcus, who was hanged from the nearest tree.

To commemorate this event the Jews of Saragossa instituted an annual feast, observed even after subsequent persecutions had driven them from Spain, and still, as we have seen, celebrated by their descendants on the 17th of Shebat.

## THE SLAVE'S FORTUNE

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Landa, Gertrude. *Jewish Fairy Tales and Legends*. New York: Bloch Publishing Co., Inc., 1919, 225–233.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Unavailable

**National Origin:** Sephardim

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In the years following the Reconquest of Spain from the Moors and the subsequent expulsion of the Jewish Spaniards in 1492, many of these Sephardim fled the Inquisition to settle in North Africa and the Middle East under the more tolerant Islamic rulers. As the following narrative attests, many became valued members of their communities where they prospered as traders and intellectuals. The plot of the following tale tests the quality of the education Ahmed received from his Jewish mentor. Had the rabbi instilled wisdom along with religious instruction?

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Ahmed was the only child of the wealthiest merchant in Damascus. His father devoted his days to doing everything possible to anticipate his wishes. The boy returned his father's love with interest, and the two lived together in the utmost happiness. They were seldom apart, the father curtailing his business journeys so that he could hastily return to Damascus, and finally restricting his affairs to those which he could perform in his own home.

For safety's sake, Ahmed, whenever he was out of his father's sight, was attended by a big negro slave, Pedro, an imposing looking person, richly attired as befitted his station and duties.

Pedro was a faithful servant, and he and Ahmed were the firmest friends.

When Ahmed grew up to be a youth, his father decided to send him to Jerusalem to be educated. He did so reluctantly, knowing, however, that it was the wisest course to adopt,

Gently he broke the news to Ahmed, for he knew the latter would dislike to leave home.

Ahmed was truly sorry to have to be parted from his father, but he kept back his tears and said bravely, "It is thy wish, father, therefore I question it not. I know that thou desirest only my welfare."

"Well spoken, my son," said his father.

"May I take Pedro with me?" asked Ahmed.

"Nay, that would not be seemly," answered his father, gently. "It would make thee appear anxious to display thy wealth. Such ostentation will induce people to regard thee and thy father as foolish persons, possessed of more wealth than is good for the exercise of wisdom. Also, my son, thy future teaching must be not confined to the learning that wise men can impart unto thee. Thou art going to the great city to learn the ways of the world, to train thyself in self-reliance, and to prepare thyself for all the duties of manhood."

The youth was somewhat disappointed to hear this. It was the first occasion, as far as his memory served him, that his father had failed to grant his wish; but

he was nevertheless flattered by the prospect of quickly becoming a man, and he answered, "I bow to thy wisdom, my father."

He left for Jerusalem, after bidding the merchant an affectionate farewell, and in the Holy City he applied himself diligently to his studies. He delighted his teachers with his cheerful attention to his lessons, and discovered a new source of happiness in learning things for himself from observation. Also, it was a pleasant sensation to conduct his own affairs, and in the great city, with its busy narrow thoroughfares and its wonderful buildings, he daily grew less homesick. Regularly he received letters by messengers from his father, and dutifully he returned, by the same means, long epistles, setting out all the big and little things that made up his life.

A year passed, and one day the usual message that Ahmed expected came to him in a strange hand-writing.

He opened it hastily, with a foreboding of evil and alarm. The writer of the letter was one of the merchant's closest friends. He said, "O worthy son of a most worthy father, greeting to thee, and may God give thee strength to hear the terrible and sad tidings which it is my sorrowful duty to convey unto thee. Know then that it hath pleased God in his wisdom to call from this earth thy saintly father, to sit with the righteous ones in Heaven. Here in the city of Damascus there is great weeping, for thy honored father was the most upright of men, a friend to all in distress, a man whose bounteous charity to the poor and unfortunate was unsurpassed. But our grief, deep and heartfelt as it is, cannot be compared to thine. We have all lost a wise counselor, a trusty friend, a guide in all things. But thou hast lost more. Thou hast lost a father. Thou art his only son, and on thee his duties will now devolve. Know then thy profound grief we share with thee. We tender to thee our sincere sympathy, and eagerly do we await thy coming. Thou hast a noble position to occupy and a tradition to continue. We, thy father's friends and thine, O Ahmed, will assist thee."

The young man was dumbfounded when he gathered the purport of the letter. For some moments he spoke not, but sat on the ground, weeping silently. Then, remembering his father's admonitions, he promptly took up the task of settling his affairs in Jerusalem prior to his departure for Damascus.

"I will take with me," he said, "the good rabbi who has been my religious instructor, for I am not fully prepared to undertake all the duties that will fall to my lot and need some strengthening counsel."

On arrival at Damascus he was greeted by a large concourse of people who expressed their sympathy with him and spoke in terms of highest praise of his father's benevolence.

After the funeral, Ahmed called the leading townspeople together to hear his father's will read, for he was certain that many gifts to charities would be announced. Such was the case, and there were subdued murmurs of applause when the amounts were read forth.

Then suddenly the friend who had written to the young man and was reading the will, paused.

"I fear there must be a mistake," he said, in a whisper to Ahmed.

"Go on," urged the assembled people, and the man read in a strange voice, "And now, having as I hope, faithfully performed my duty to the poor, I bequeath the rest of my possessions unto my devoted negro slave, Pedro."

"Pedro!" cried the astonished crowd.

They looked at the massive figure of the black attendant, but he stood motionless and impassive, betraying no sign whatsoever of joy or surprise.

Ahmed could not conceal his bewilderment. "Is naught left unto me?" he managed to ask.

"Yes," returned his friend, and amid a sudden silence, he continued to read, "This bequest is subject to the following proviso: that one thing be given to my son before the division of my property, the same to be selected by him within twenty-four hours of the reading of this will unto him."

The crowd melted away with mutterings of sympathy mingled with astonishment, but out of earshot of Ahmed, all said the merchant must have been mad to draw up so absurd a testament. Ahmed himself could hardly realize the great blow that had befallen him. He consulted with his father's friend and the rabbi, but, although they re-read the document many times, they could find no fault or flaw in it.

"Legally, this is correct and in perfect order and cannot be altered," said the friend.

"My father must have made a foolish mistake and must have misplaced the two words 'son' and 'slave,'" said Ahmed, bitterly.

"That does not so appear," said the rabbi; "thy father was a scholar and wise man. Speak not hastily, and above all act not rashly without thought. I would counsel thee to sleep over this matter, and in the morning we shall solve this puzzle."

Ahmed, who was exhausted with grief and rage and surprise, soon fell into a deep sleep, and when he awoke the rabbi was reciting his morning prayers.

"It is a beautiful day," he said, when he had finished. "The sun shines on thy happiness, Ahmed."

Ahmed was too depressed to make any comment, nor was he completely satisfied when the rabbi assured him all would be well.

"I have pondered deeply and long over thy father's words," he said. "I sat up through the night until the dawn, and I have been impelled to the conclusion that thy father was truly a wise man."

Ahmed interrupted with a gesture of disapproval. The rabbi took no notice but proceeded quietly, "Thy father must have feared that in thy absence after his death and pending thy possible delay in returning hither, slaves and others might rob thee of thy inheritance. Pedro, I have discovered, knew of the terms of the will. By informing him and making his strange will, thy father, O fortunate Ahmed, made sure of thy inheritance unto thee."

“I understand not,” muttered Ahmed.

“It is perfectly clear,” said the rabbi. “As soon as thou art ready, thou shalt make thy choice of one thing. Do as I bid thee, and thou shalt see thy father’s wisdom.”

Ahmed had no option but to agree. He could find no solution himself, and wretched though he felt, reason told him that his father loved him and that the rabbi was renowned for shrewdness.

The townspeople gathered early to hear Ahmed make his choice of one thing—and one only—from his father’s possessions. Ahmed looked less troubled than they expected, the rabbi wore his most benign expression, and Pedro stationed himself in his usual place at the door, statuesque, obedient, and expressionless as ever.

Ahmed held up his hand to obtain silence. “Acting under the terms of my father’s will,” he said, solemnly, “at this moment when all, before division, belongs to his estate, I choose but one of my father’s possessions—Pedro, the black slave.”

Then everybody saw the wisdom of the strange will, for with Pedro, Ahmed became possessed of his father’s vast wealth.

To Pedro, who still stood motionless, Ahmed said, “And thou, my good friend, shalt have thy freedom and possessions sufficient to keep thee in comfort for the rest of thy days.”

“I desire naught but to serve thee,” Pedro answered, “I wish to remain the faithful attendant of one who will follow nobly in the footsteps of thy father.”

So everybody was satisfied.

# SPAIN

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## THE KNIGHTS OF THE FISH

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Lang, Andrew. *The Brown Fairy Book*. London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1904, 343–350.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Caballero, Fernán (Cecilia Francisca Josefa de Arrom). *Cuentos, Oraciones, Adivinas*.

**National Origin:** Spain

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Occupying most of the Iberian Peninsula of Europe, Spain was conquered by North African Muslims (Berbers) early in the eighth century. Although the Moors were a diminishing presence from the eleventh century, Muslim dominance existed in some areas until the late fifteenth century. Thus, Spanish folktales are heirs to both European Christian traditions and North African Islamic traditions. In this Spanish **variant** of “The Twins or Blood-Brothers” (AT 303), the heroes are brought to life by magic and reunited by the magical resuscitation of the slain brother by his twin. The name of the murderous witch, “Berberisca” (Berber) may signify the embodiment in folklore of a lingering resentment directed toward the Moorish colonization of Andalusia, the autonomous community in the kingdom of Spain in which de Arrom, the collector of “The Knights of the Fish,” spent most of her life.

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Once upon a time there lived an old cobbler who worked hard at his trade from morning till night, and scarcely gave himself a moment to eat. But, industrious as he was, he could hardly buy bread and cheese for himself and his wife, and they grew thinner and thinner daily.



For a long while they pretended to each other that they had no appetite, and that a few blackberries from the hedges were a great deal nicer than a good strong bowl of soup. But at length there came a day when the cobbler could bear it no longer, and he threw away his last, and borrowing a rod from a neighbor he went out to fish.

Now the cobbler was as patient about fishing as he had been about cobbling. From dawn to dark he stood on the banks of the little stream, without hooking anything better than an eel, or a few old shoes, that even he, clever though he was, felt were not worth mending. At length his patience began to give way, and as he undressed one night he said to himself, "Well, I will give it one more chance; and if I don't catch a fish tomorrow, I will go and hang myself."

He had not cast his line for ten minutes the next morning before he drew from the river the most beautiful fish he had ever seen in his life. But he nearly fell into the water from surprise, when the fish began to speak to him, in a small, squeaky voice, "Take me back to your hut and cook me; then cut me up, and sprinkle me over with pepper and salt. Give two of the pieces to your wife, and bury two more in the garden."

The cobbler did not know what to make of these strange words; but he was wiser than many people, and when he did not understand, he thought it was well to obey. His children wanted to eat all the fish themselves, and begged their father to tell them what to do with the pieces he had put aside; but the cobbler only laughed, and told them it was no business of theirs. And when they were safe in bed he stole out and buried the two pieces in the garden.

By and by two babies, exactly alike, lay in a cradle, and in the garden were two tall plants, with two brilliant shields on the top.

Years passed away, and the babies were almost men. They were tired of living quietly at home, being mistaken for each other by everybody they saw, and determined to set off in different directions, to seek adventures.

So, one fine morning, the two brothers left the hut, and walked together to the place where the great road divided. There they embraced and parted, promising that if anything remarkable had happened to either, he would return to the cross roads and wait till his brother came.

The youth who took the path that ran eastwards arrived presently at a large city, where he found everybody standing at the doors, wringing their hands and weeping bitterly, "What is the matter?" asked he, pausing and looking round. And a man replied, in a faltering voice, that each year a beautiful girl was chosen by lot to be offered up to a dreadful fiery dragon, who had a mother even worse than himself, and this year the lot had fallen on their peerless princess.

"But where is the princess?" said the young man once more, and again the man answered him, "She is standing under a tree, a mile away, waiting for the dragon."

This time the Knight of the Fish did not stop to hear more, but ran off as fast as he could, and found the princess bathed in tears, and trembling from head to foot.

She turned as she heard the sound of his sword, and removed her handkerchief from his eyes.

“Fly,” she cried; “fly while you have yet time, before that monster sees you.”

She said it, and she meant it; yet, when he had turned his back, she felt more forsaken than before. But in reality it was not more than a few minutes before he came back, galloping furiously on a horse he had borrowed, and carrying a huge mirror across its neck.

“I am in time, then,” he cried, dismounting very carefully, and placing the mirror against the trunk of a tree.

“Give me your veil,” he said hastily to the princess. And when she had unwound it from her head he covered the mirror with it.

“The moment the dragon comes near you, you must tear off the veil,” cried he; “and be sure you hide behind the mirror. Have no fear; I shall be at hand.”

He and his horse had scarcely found shelter amongst some rocks, when the flap of the dragon’s wings could be plainly heard. He tossed his head with delight at the sight of her, and approached slowly to the place where she stood, a little in front of the mirror. Then, still looking the monster steadily in the face, she passed one hand behind her back and snatched off the veil, stepping swiftly behind the tree as she did so.

The princess had not known, when she obeyed the orders of the Knight of the Fish, what she expected to happen. Would the dragon with snaky locks be turned to stone, she wondered, like the dragon in an old story her nurse had told her; or would some fiery spark dart from the heart of the mirror, and strike him dead? Neither of these things occurred, but, instead, the dragon stopped short with surprise and rage when he saw a monster before him as big and strong as himself. He shook his mane with rage and fury; the enemy in front did exactly the same. He lashed his tail, and rolled his red eyes, and the dragon opposite was no whit behind him. Opening his mouth to its very widest, he gave an awful roar; but the other dragon only roared back. This was too much, and with another roar which made the princess shake in her shoes, he flung himself upon his foe. In an instant the mirror lay at his feet broken into a thousand pieces, but as every piece reflected part of himself, the dragon thought that he too had been smashed into atoms.

It was the moment for which the Knight of the Fish had watched and waited, and before the dragon could find out that he was not hurt at all, the young man’s lance was down his throat, and he was rolling, dead, on the grass.

Oh what shouts of joy rang through the great city, when the youth came riding back with the princess sitting behind him, and dragging the horrible monster by a cord! Everybody cried out that the king must give the victor the hand of the princess; and so he did, and no one had ever seen such balls and feasts and sports before. And when they were all over the young couple went to the palace prepared for them, which was so large that it was three miles round.

The first wet day after their marriage the bridegroom begged the bride to show him all the rooms in the palace, and it was so big and took so long that the sun was shining brightly again before they stepped on to the roof to see the view.

“What castle is that out there,” asked the knight; “it seems to be made of black marble?”

“It is called the castle of Albatroz,” answered the princess. “It is enchanted, and no one that has tried to enter it has ever come back.”

Her husband said nothing, and began to talk of something else; but the next morning he ordered his horse, took his spear, called his bloodhound, and set off for the castle.

It needed a brave man to approach it, for it made your hair stand on end merely to look at it; it was as dark as the night of a storm, and as silent as the grave. But the Knight of the Fish knew no fear, and had never turned his back on an enemy; so he drew out his horn, and blew a blast.

The sound awoke all the sleeping echoes in the castle, and was repeated now loudly, now softly; now near, and now far. But nobody stirred for all that.

“Is there anyone inside?” cried the young man in his loudest voice; “anyone who will give a knight hospitality? Neither governor, nor squire, not even a page?”

“Not even a page!” answered the echoes. But the young man did not heed them, and only struck a furious blow at the gate.

Then a small grating opened, and there appeared the tip of a huge nose, which belonged to the ugliest old woman that ever was seen.

“What do you want?” said she.

“To enter,” he answered shortly. “Can I rest here this night? Yes or No?”

“No, No, No!” repeated the echoes.

Between the fierce sun and his anger at being kept waiting, the Knight of the Fish had grown so hot that he lifted his visor, and when the old woman saw how handsome he was, she began fumbling with the lock of the gate.

“Come in, come in,” said she, “so fine a gentleman will do us no harm.”

“Harm!” repeated the echoes, but again the young man paid no heed.

“Let us go in, ancient dame,” but she interrupted him.

“You must call me the Lady Berberisca,” she answered, sharply; “and this is my castle, to which I bid you welcome. You shall live here with me and be my husband.” But at these words the knight let his spear fall, so surprised was he.

“I marry YOU? why you must be a hundred at least!” cried he. “You are mad! All I desire is to inspect the castle and then go.” As he spoke he heard the voices give a mocking laugh; but the old woman took no notice, and only bade the knight follow her.

Old though she was, it seemed impossible to tire her. There was no room, however small, she did not lead him into, and each room was full of curious things he had never seen before.

At length they came to a stone staircase, which was so dark that you could not see your hand if you held it up before your face.

"I have kept my most precious treasure till the last," said the old woman; "but let me go first, for the stairs are steep, and you might easily break your leg." So on she went, now and then calling back to the young man in the darkness. But he did not know that she had slipped aside into a recess, till suddenly he put his foot on a trap door which gave way under him, and he fell down, down, as many good knights had done before him, and his voice joined the echoes of theirs.

"So you would not marry me!" chuckled the old witch. "Ha! ha! Ha! ha!"

Meanwhile his brother had wandered far and wide, and at last he wandered back to the same great city where the other young knight had met with so many adventures. He noticed, with amazement, that as he walked through the streets the guards drew themselves up in line, and saluted him, and the drummers played the royal march; but he was still more bewildered when several servants in livery ran up to him and told him that the princess was sure something terrible had befallen him, and had made herself ill with weeping. At last it occurred to him that once more he had been taken for his brother. "I had better say nothing," thought he; "perhaps I shall be able to help him after all."

So he suffered himself to be borne in triumph to the palace, where the princess threw herself into his arms.

"And so you did go to the castle?" she asked.

"Yes, of course I did," answered he.

"And what did you see there?"

"I am forbidden to tell you anything about it, until I have returned there once more," replied he.

"Must you really go back to that dreadful place?" she asked wistfully. "You are the only man who has ever come back from it."

"I must," was all he answered. And the princess, who was a wise woman, only said, "Well, go to bed now, for I am sure you must be very tired."

But the knight shook his head. "I have sworn never to lie in a bed as long as my work in the castle remains standing." And the princess again sighed, and was silent.

Early next day the young man started for the castle, feeling sure that some terrible thing must have happened to his brother.

At the blast of his horn the long nose of the old woman appeared at the grating, but the moment she caught sight of his face, she nearly fainted from fright, as she thought it was the ghost of the youth whose bones were lying in the dungeon of the castle.

"Lady of all the ages," cried the new comer, "did you not give hospitality to a young knight but a short time ago?"

"A short time ago!" wailed the voices.

"And how have you ill-treated him?" he went on.

"Ill-treated him!" answered the voices. The woman did not stop to hear more; she turned to fly; but the knight's sword entered her body.

"Where is my brother, cruel hag?" asked he sternly.

“I will tell you,” said she; “but as I feel that I am going to die I shall keep that piece of news to myself, till you have brought me to life again.”

The young man laughed scornfully. “How do you propose that I should work that miracle?”

“Oh, it is quite easy. Go into the garden and gather the flowers of the everlasting plant and some of dragon’s blood. Crush them together and boil them in a large tub of water, and then put me into it.”

The knight did as the old witch bade him, and, sure enough, she came out quite whole, but uglier than ever. She then told the young man what had become of his brother, and he went down into the dungeon, and brought up his body and the bodies of the other victims who lay there, and when they were all washed in the magic water their strength was restored to them.

And, besides these, he found in another cavern the bodies of the girls who had been sacrificed to the dragon, and brought them back to life also.

As to the old witch, in the end she died of rage at seeing her prey escape her; and at the moment she drew her last breath the castle of Albatroz fell into ruins with a great noise.

## THE WHITE SLIPPER

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Lang, Andrew. *The Orange Fairy Book*. London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1904, 335–348.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Ceballos Quintana, Enrique. *Capullos de Rosa*.

**National Origin:** Spain

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In most cases, the folktales describe cures such as those classified by Aarne-Thompson as “Magic Remedies” (AT 610–619). In the present narrative, science—specifically, chemistry—rather than any occult remedy, provides the means by which a king is cured and the hero wins the hand of a princess. Any explanation for this deviation from the general rule is speculative, but under Muslim rule, cities such as Cordoba became centers of learning nurturing Christian, Jewish, and Islamic scholars in equal measure.

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Once upon a time there lived a king who had a daughter just fifteen years old. And what a daughter!

Even the mothers who had daughters of their own could not help allowing that the princess was much more beautiful and graceful than any of them;

and, as for the fathers, if one of them ever beheld her by accident he could talk of nothing else for a whole day afterwards.

Of course the king, whose name was Balancin, was the complete slave of his little girl from the moment he lifted her from the arms of her dead mother; indeed, he did not seem to know that there was anyone else in the world to love.

Now Diamantina, for that was her name, did not reach her fifteenth birthday without proposals for marriage from every country under heaven; but be the suitor who he might, the king always said him nay.

Behind the palace a large garden stretched away to the foot of some hills, and more than one river flowed through. Hither the princess would come each evening towards sunset, attended by her ladies, and gather herself the flowers that were to adorn her rooms. She also brought with her a pair of scissors to cut off the dead blooms, and a basket to put them in, so that when the sun rose next morning he might see nothing unsightly. When she had finished this task she would take a walk through the town, so that the poor people might have a chance of speaking with her, and telling her of their troubles; and then she would seek out her father, and together they would consult over the best means of giving help to those who needed it.

“But what has all this to do with the White Slipper?” my readers will ask.

“Have patience, and you will see.”

Next to his daughter, Balancin loved hunting, and it was his custom to spend several mornings every week chasing the boars which abounded in the mountains a few miles from the city. One day, rushing downhill as fast as he could go, he put his foot into a hole and fell, rolling into a rocky pit of brambles. The king’s wounds were not very severe, but his face and hands were cut and torn, while his feet were in a worse plight still, for, instead of proper hunting boots, he only wore sandals, to enable him to run more swiftly.

In a few days the king was as well as ever, and the signs of the scratches were almost gone; but one foot still remained very sore, where a thorn had pierced deeply and had festered. The best doctors in the kingdom treated it with all their skill; they bathed, and poulticed, and bandaged, but it was in vain. The foot only grew worse and worse, and became daily more swollen and painful.

After everyone had tried his own particular cure, and found it fail, there came news of a wonderful doctor in some distant land who had healed the most astonishing diseases. On inquiring, it was found that he never left the walls of his own city, and expected his patients to come to see him; but, by dint of offering a large sum of money, the king persuaded the famous physician to undertake the journey to his own court.

On his arrival the doctor was led at once into the king’s presence, and made a careful examination of his foot.

“Alas! your majesty,” he said, when he had finished, “the wound is beyond the power of man to heal; but though I cannot cure it, I can at least deaden the pain, and enable you to walk without so much suffering.”

“Oh, if you can only do that,” cried the king, “I shall be grateful to you for life! Give your own orders; they shall be obeyed.”

“Then let your majesty bid the royal shoemaker make you a shoe of goat-skin very loose and comfortable, while I prepare a varnish to paint over it of which I alone have the secret!” So saying, the doctor bowed himself out, leaving the king more cheerful and hopeful than he had been for long.

The days passed very slowly with him during the making of the shoe and the preparation of the varnish, but on the eighth morning the physician appeared, bringing with him the shoe in a case. He drew it out to slip on the king’s foot, and over the goat-skin he had rubbed a polish so white that the snow itself was not more dazzling.

“While you wear this shoe you will not feel the slightest pain,” said the doctor. “For the balsam with which I have rubbed it inside and out has, besides its healing balm, the quality of strengthening the material it touches, so that, even were your majesty to live a thousand years, you would find the slipper just as fresh at the end of that time as it is now.”

The king was so eager to put it on that he hardly gave the physician time to finish. He snatched it from the case and thrust his foot into it, nearly weeping for joy when he found he could walk and run as easily as any beggar boy.

“What can I give you?” he cried, holding out both hands to the man who had worked this wonder. “Stay with me, and I will heap on you riches greater than ever you dreamed of.” But the doctor said he would accept nothing more than had been agreed on, and must return at once to his own country, where many sick people were awaiting him. So king Balancin had to content himself with ordering the physician to be treated with royal honors, and desiring that an escort should attend him on his journey home.

For two years everything went smoothly at court, and to king Balancin and his daughter the sun no sooner rose than it seemed time for it to set. Now, the king’s birthday fell in the month of June, and as the weather happened to be unusually fine, he told the princess to celebrate it in any way that pleased her. Diamantina was very fond of being on the river, and she was delighted at this chance of delighting her tastes. She would have a merry-making such as never had been seen before, and in the evening, when they were tired of sailing and rowing, there should be music and dancing, plays and fireworks. At the very end, before the people went home, every poor person should be given a loaf of bread and every girl who was to be married within the year a new dress.

The great day appeared to Diamantina to be long in coming, but, like other days, it came at last. Before the sun was fairly up in the heavens the princess, too full of excitement to stay in the palace, was walking about the streets so covered with precious stones that you had to shade your eyes before you could look at her. By-and-by a trumpet sounded, and she hurried home, only to appear again in a few moments walking by the side of her father down to the river. Here a splendid barge was waiting for them, and from it they watched all sorts

of races and feats of swimming and diving. When these were over the barge proceeded up the river to the field where the dancing and concerts were to take place, and after the prizes had been given away to the winners, and the loaves and the dresses had been distributed by the princess, they bade farewell to their guests, and turned to step into the barge which was to carry them back to the palace.

Then a dreadful thing happened. As the king stepped on board the boat one of the sandals of the white slipper, which had got loose, caught in a nail that was sticking out, and caused the king to stumble. The pain was great, and unconsciously he turned and shook his foot, so that the sandals gave way, and in a moment the precious shoe was in the river.

It had all occurred so quickly that nobody had noticed the loss of the slipper, not even the princess, whom the king's cries speedily brought to his side.

"What is the matter, dear father?" asked she. But the king could not tell her; and only managed to gasp out, "My shoe! my shoe!" While the sailors stood round staring, thinking that his majesty had suddenly gone mad.

Seeing her father's eyes fixed on the stream, Diamantina looked hastily in that direction. There, dancing on the current, was the point of something white, which became more and more distant the longer they watched it. The king could bear the sight no more, and, besides, now that the healing ointment in the shoe had been removed the pain in his foot was as bad as ever; he gave a sudden cry, staggered, and fell over the bulwarks into the water.

In an instant the river was covered with bobbing heads all swimming their fastest towards the king, who had been carried far down by the swift current. At length one swimmer, stronger than the rest, seized hold of his tunic, and drew him to the bank, where a thousand eager hands were ready to haul him out. He was carried, unconscious, to the side of his daughter, who had fainted with terror on seeing her father disappear below the surface, and together they were placed in a coach and driven to the palace, where the best doctors in the city were awaiting their arrival.

In a few hours the princess was as well as ever; but the pain, the wetting, and the shock of the accident, all told severely on the king, and for three days he lay in a high fever. Meanwhile, his daughter, herself nearly mad with grief, gave orders that the white slipper should be sought for far and wide; and so it was, but even the cleverest divers could find no trace of it at the bottom of the river.

When it became clear that the slipper must have been carried out to sea by the current, Diamantina turned her thoughts elsewhere, and sent messengers in search of the doctor who had brought relief to her father, begging him to make another slipper as fast as possible, to supply the place of the one which was lost. But the messengers returned with the sad news that the doctor had died some weeks before, and, what was worse, his secret had died with him.

In his weakness this intelligence had such an effect on the king that the physicians feared he would become as ill as before. He could hardly be persuaded



to touch food, and all night long he lay moaning, partly with pain, and partly over his own folly in not having begged the doctor to make him several dozens of white slippers, so that in case of accidents he might always have one to put on. However, by-and-by he saw that it was no use weeping and wailing, and commanded that they should search for his lost treasure more diligently than ever.

What a sight the river banks presented in those days! It seemed as if all the people in the country were gathered on them. But this second search was no more fortunate than the first, and at last the king issued a proclamation that whoever found the missing slipper should be made heir to the crown, and should marry the princess.

Now many daughters would have rebelled at being disposed of in the manner; and it must be admitted that Diamantina's heart sank when she heard what the king had done. Still, she loved her father so much that she desired his comfort more than anything else in the world, so she said nothing, and only bowed her head.

Of course the result of the proclamation was that the river banks became more crowded than before; for all the princess's suitors from distant lands flocked to the spot, each hoping that he might be the lucky finder. Many times a shining stone at the bottom of the stream was taken for the slipper itself, and every evening saw a band of dripping downcast men returning homewards. But one youth always lingered longer than the rest, and night would still see him engaged in the search, though his clothes stuck to his skin and his teeth chattered.

One day, when the king was lying on his bed racked with pain, he heard the noise of a scuffle going on in his antechamber, and rang a golden bell that stood by his side to summon one of his servants.

"Sire," answered the attendant, when the king inquired what was the matter, "the noise you heard was caused by a young man from the town, who has had the impudence to come here to ask if he may measure your majesty's foot, so as to make you another slipper in place of the lost one."

"And what have you done to the youth?" said the king.

"The servants pushed him out of the palace, and, added a few blows to teach him not to be insolent," replied the man.

"Then they did very ill," answered the king, with a frown. "He came here from kindness, and there was no reason to maltreat him."

"Oh, my lord, he had the audacity to wish to touch your majesty's sacred person—he, a good-for-nothing boy, a mere shoemaker's apprentice, perhaps! And even if he could make shoes to perfection they would be no use without the soothing balsam."

The king remained silent for a few moments, then he said, "Never mind. Go and fetch the youth and bring him to me. I would gladly try any remedy that may relieve my pain."

So, soon afterwards, the youth, who had not gone far from the palace, was caught and ushered into the king's presence.

He was tall and handsome and, though he professed to make shoes, his manners were good and modest, and he bowed low as he begged the king not only to allow him to take the measure of his foot, but also to suffer him to place a healing plaster over the wound.

Balancin was pleased with the young man's voice and appearance, and thought that he looked as if he knew what he was doing. So he stretched out his bad foot which the youth examined with great attention, and then gently laid on the plaster.

Very shortly the ointment began to soothe the sharp pain, and the king, whose confidence increased every moment, begged the young man to tell him his name.

"I have no parents; they died when I was six, sire," replied the youth, modestly. "Everyone in the town calls me Gilguerillo [linnet], because, when I was little, I went singing through the world in spite of my misfortunes. Luckily for me I was born to be happy."

"And you really think you can cure me?" asked the king.

"Completely, my lord," answered Gilguerillo.

"And how long do you think it will take?"

"It is not an easy task; but I will try to finish it in a fortnight," replied the youth.

A fortnight seemed to the king a long time to make one slipper. But he only said,

"Do you need anything to help you?"

"Only a good horse, if your majesty will be kind enough to give me one," answered Gilguerillo. And the reply was so unexpected that the courtiers could hardly restrain their smiles, while the king stared silently.

"You shall have the horse," he said at last, "and I shall expect you back in a fortnight. If you fulfill your promise you know your reward; if not, I will have you flogged for your impudence."

Gilguerillo bowed, and turned to leave the palace, followed by the jeers and scoffs of everyone he met. But he paid no heed, for he had got what he wanted.

He waited in front of the gates till a magnificent horse was led up to him, and vaulting into the saddle with an ease which rather surprised the attendant, rode quickly out of the town amidst the jests of the assembled crowd, who had heard of his audacious proposal. And while he is on his way let us pause for a moment and tell who he is.

Both father and mother had died before the boy was six years old; and he had lived for many years with his uncle, whose life had been passed in the study of chemistry. He could leave no money to his nephew, as he had a son of his own; but he taught him all he knew, and at his death Gilguerillo entered an office, where he worked for many hours daily. In his spare time, instead of

playing with the other boys, he passed hours poring over books, and because he was timid and liked to be alone he was held by everyone to be a little mad. Therefore, when it became known that he had promised to cure the king's foot, and had ridden away—no one knew where—a roar of laughter and mockery rang through the town, and jeers and scoffing words were sent after him.

But if they had only known what were Gilguerillo's thoughts they would have thought him madder than ever.

The real truth was that, on the morning when the princess had walked through the streets before making holiday on the river Gilguerillo had seen her from his window, and had straightway fallen in love with her. Of course he felt quite hopeless. It was absurd to imagine that the apothecary's nephew could ever marry the king's daughter; so he did his best to forget her, and study harder than before, till the royal proclamation suddenly filled him with hope. When he was free he no longer spent the precious moments poring over books, but, like the rest, he might have been seen wandering along the banks of the river, or diving into the stream after something that lay glistening in the clear water, but which turned out to be a white pebble or a bit of glass.

And at the end he understood that it was not by the river that he would win the princess; and, turning to his books for comfort, he studied harder than ever.

There is an old proverb which says, "Everything comes to him who knows how to wait." It is not all men who know how to wait, any more than it is all men who can learn by experience; but Gilguerillo was one of the few and instead of thinking his life wasted because he could not have the thing he wanted most, he tried to busy himself in other directions. So, one day, when he expected it least, his reward came to him.

He happened to be reading a book many hundreds of years old, which told of remedies for all kinds of diseases. Most of them, he knew, were merely invented by old women, who sought to prove themselves wiser than other people; but at length he came to something which caused him to sit up straight in his chair, and made his eyes brighten. This was the description of a balsam—which would cure every kind of sore or wound—distilled from a plant only to be found in a country so distant that it would take a man on foot two months to go and come back again.

When I say that the book declared that the balsam could heal every sort of sore or wound, there were a few against which it was powerless, and it gave certain signs by which these might be known. This was the reason why Gilguerillo demanded to see the king's foot before he would undertake to cure it; and to obtain admittance he gave out that he was a shoemaker. However, the dreaded signs were absent, and his heart bounded at the thought that the princess was within his reach.

Perhaps she was; but a great deal had to be accomplished yet, and he had allowed himself a very short time in which to do it.

He spared his horse only so much as was needful, yet it took him six days to reach the spot where the plant grew. A thick wood lay in front of him, and,

fastening the bridle tightly to a tree, he flung himself on his hands and knees and began to hunt for the treasure. Many time he fancied it was close to him, and many times it turned out to be something else; but, at last, when light was fading, and he had almost given up hope, he came upon a large bed of the plant, right under his feet! Trembling with joy, he picked every scrap he could see, and placed it in his wallet. Then, mounting his horse, he galloped quickly back towards the city.

It was night when he entered the gates, and the fifteen days allotted were not up till the next day. His eyes were heavy with sleep, and his body ached with the long strain, but, without pausing to rest, he kindled a fire on his hearth, and quickly filling a pot with water, threw in the herbs and left them to boil. After that he lay down and slept soundly.

The sun was shining when he awoke, and he jumped up and ran to the pot. The plant had disappeared and in its stead was a thick syrup, just as the book had said there would be. He lifted the syrup out with a spoon, and after spreading it in the sun till it was partly dry, poured it into a small flask of crystal. He next washed himself thoroughly, and dressed himself, in his best clothes, and putting the flask in his pocket, set out for the palace, and begged to see the king without delay.

Now Balancin, whose foot had been much less painful since Gilguerillo had wrapped it in the plaster, was counting the days to the young man's return; and when he was told Gilguerillo was there, ordered him to be admitted at once. As he entered, the king raised himself eagerly on his pillows, but his face fell when he saw no signs of a slipper.

"You have failed, then?" he said, throwing up his hands in despair.

"I hope not, your majesty; I think not," answered the youth. And drawing the flask from his pocket, he poured two or three drops on the wound.

"Repeat this for three nights, and you will find yourself cured," said he. And before the king had time to thank him he had bowed himself out.

Of course the news soon spread through the city, and men and women never tired of calling Gilguerillo an impostor, and prophesying that the end of the three days would see him in prison, if not on the scaffold. But Gilguerillo paid no heed to their hard words, and no more did the king, who took care that no hand but his own should put on the healing balsam.

On the fourth morning the king awoke and instantly stretched out his wounded foot that he might prove the truth or falsehood of Gilguerillo's remedy. The wound was certainly cured on that side, but how about the other? Yes, that was cured also; and not even a scar was left to show where it had been!

Was ever any king so happy as Balancin when he satisfied himself of this?

Lightly as a deer he jumped from his bed, and began to turn head over heels and to perform all sorts of antics, so as to make sure that his foot was in truth as well as it looked. And when he was quite tired he sent for his daughter, and bade the courtiers bring the lucky young man to his room.

“He is really young and handsome,” said the princess to herself, heaving a sigh of relief that it was not some dreadful old man who had healed her father; and while the king was announcing to his courtiers the wonderful cure that had been made, Diamantina was thinking that if Gilguerillo looked so well in his common dress, how much improved by the splendid garments of a king’ son. However, she held her peace, and only watched with amusement when the courtiers, knowing there was no help for it, did homage and obeisance to the chemist’s boy.

Then they brought to Gilguerillo a magnificent tunic of green velvet bordered with gold, and a cap with three white plumes stuck in it; and at the sight of him so arrayed, the princess fell in love with him in a moment. The wedding was fixed to take place in eight days, and at the ball afterwards nobody danced so long or so lightly as king Balancin.

# Glossary

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**anecdote:** Originally, a short, humorous tale. Now, the term commonly refers to single-episode narratives, regarded as true and commonly concentrating on an individual.

**animal tales:** Narratives told as conscious fictions in which the characters, though they speak and behave like human beings, are animals. These animal characters are commonly stock types. For example, in many Native American traditions, coyote is regarded as an exploitive, impulsive manipulator. In African American tales, rabbit is type cast in the same role. The tales are most often moralistic (“don’t be greedy”) or etiological (why the frog has no tail) in intent.

**belief tales:** Legends or personal experience narratives that are told with the purpose of validating a particular folk belief.

**cautionary tales:** Narratives whose plots embody a message cautioning against the consequences of particular kinds of behavior.

**culture hero:** Character in myth who finishes the work that brings technology (usually symbolized as fire), laws, religion, and other elements of culture to humans. Culture heroes may take over the business of creating order out of chaos where a Supreme Creator left off. The culture hero serves as a secondary creator or transformer of the universe. He/she transforms the universe by means of his gifts into a universe in which humans can live. In some myths, the culture hero cleanses the universe of things that threaten human existence: monsters, cannibals, or meteorological phenomena.

**cumulative tale:** A tale that begins with an incident, action, or phrase and adds a succession of elements to create a lengthy chain of events.

**cycle:** A group of tales that focuses on a central character, plot, or theme.

**fable:** Fictional narrative ending with a didactic message that is often couched in the form of a “moral” or proverb.

**fairy tale:** See **ordinary folktale**.

**family saga:** Chronologically and often thematically linked collection of legends constituting the folk history of a particular family, usually over several generations. The term was coined by folklorist Mody C. Boatright.

**folk history:** Accounts based on perceptions of historical events rather than on written documentation or similar media.

- formula/formulaic element:** Conventional elements that recur in folk narrative. For example, clichés, structural patterns, stock characters, or situations.
- framing:** The act of setting apart a traditional performance from other types of activity by words, occasions of performance or other distinguishing features.
- genre:** Type, category.
- legend:** Narrative told as truth, set in the historical past, and that does not depart from the present reality of the members of the group.
- local legend:** Legends derived from and closely associated with specific places and events believed to have occurred in those locales.
- märchen:** See **ordinary folktale**.
- motif:** Small element of traditional narrative content, such as an event, object, concept, or pattern.
- myth:** Narratives that explain the will (the intent) and the workings (the orderly principles) of a group's major supernatural figures. Myth is set in a world that predates the present reality.
- natural context:** Setting, in all its elements, in which a performance would ordinarily take place.
- novelle:** Romantic tale.
- numskull:** Character who behaves in an absurdly ignorant fashion, also called "noodle."
- ordinary folktale:** Highly formulaic and structured fictional narrative that is popularly referred to as "fairytale" and designated by folklorists as *märchen* or "wonder tale." Term coined by folklorist Stith Thompson.
- personal experience narrative:** Narrative intended as truth performed in the first person by the individual to whom the described events happened.
- personal legend:** Narrative intended as truth told about a specific (usually well-known) individual.
- resource person:** The bearer of a particular tradition, such as the performer of a folktale.
- stock character:** Recurrent narrative character who invariably plays a stereotyped role such as trickster or fool.
- tale type:** Standard, recurrent folk narrative plot.
- tall tale:** Fictional narrative often told as a firsthand experience, which gradually introduces hyperbole until the audience realizes by the conclusion that the tale is a lie.
- trickster:** Character who defies the limits of propriety and often gender and species. Trickster lives on the margins of his world by his wits and is often regarded as possessing supernatural power. Often a mythic figure such as a coyote or hare will function as both culture hero and trickster.
- validating device:** Any element occurring within a traditional narrative that is intended to convince listeners that the tale is true.
- variant:** Version of a standard tale type.

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The Greenwood Library of

# world folktales

STORIES FROM THE GREAT COLLECTIONS

volume four

North and  
South America

EDITED BY THOMAS A. GREEN



The  
Greenwood Library  
of  
World Folktales



# The Greenwood Library of World Folktales

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Stories from the Great Collections

VOLUME 4

North and South America

Edited by Thomas A. Green

Jack Zipes, Advisory Editor



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# Introduction to Volume 4

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**N**orth America encompasses the United States and Canada. The vast territorial scope, ecological variety, and ethnic diversity of the continent compel selective rather than comprehensive coverage of narrative traditions. The two primary divisions utilized for North America are Native American and non-Native American.

**Native American** cultures from which narratives are drawn are arranged alphabetically. They are politically, socially, and economically diverse. Among the indigenous North American cultures are hunters and gathers, agriculturalists, mariners, small band societies, and theocracies with elaborate hierarchies. The major regions of the Northeast, the South, the Plains, the Southwest, the West, and the Northwest Coast are represented, and the locations of the groups and the lifestyles developed within these regions are presented in the headnotes to individual tales.

**Non-Native American** tales are classified as either ethnic or regional traditions. The former are labeled according to an ascribed ethnic affiliation, which may or may not exist within exclusively racial parameters. The latter traditions find a focus in social contexts and lifestyles that are peculiar to a given geographic location.

**Ethnic traditions** in North America are represented in this volume by the **African American** and the **Cajun** traditions. Both groups have maintained strong ethnic bonds while influencing and responding to the lore of their cultural neighbors.

Although by no means did all people of African descent in the Americas arrive as a result of slavery, the enslavement and importation of Africans into the American hemisphere provided a major African influence. This was especially true in the coastal states of the South with the development of a plantation economy. A similar expansion of the commerce in African slaves in the Caribbean had a similar impact as discussed later in this volume (page xvii). In spite of skewed social relationships, however, African and European expressive

culture met and produced new products that bore the marks of both worlds. See, for example, “How Brer Rabbit Bring Dust Out of the Rock” (page 187), a tale in which European and European American “Jack tale” motifs and plot structures converge with the African American trickster Brer Rabbit.

**Cajuns** are the descendents of Europeans of French ancestry who were exiled from Acadia (now Nova Scotia, Canada) when the British began a systematic program of deportation in 1755. Some of this population sought refuge in the French Caribbean. Others settled in territory inhabited primarily by Native Americans, which may account for the shared tales among the Cajun corpus and the repertoires of Native Americans in the southeastern United States. The largest and historically the most identifiable Cajun population, however, settled in what was then the Louisiana Territory. Maintaining a separate identity, these southern Cajuns held on to French narratives featuring Jean Sot (Foolish John) as in “Jean Sot Feeds Cows Needles” (page 217) and “Jean Sot Kills the Duck” (page 218). The preservation of identity, however, does not entail neither insulation from neighbors occupying the same region nor stagnation of the tale repertoire. The tales of Lapin and Bouqui provide particularly useful examples of borrowing between the Cajun and the African American communities. Particular tales such as “The Wine, the Farm, the Princess and the Tarbaby” (page 209) survived in both ethnic traditions. Moreover, the name given to the comic foil for trickster Lapin (rabbit), Bouqui, in the Cajun cycle of trickster tales owes a debt to Africa. The accepted origin of the name Bouqui lies in the Wolof (West African) word for hyena, and this character under a variety of spellings is found not only in the United States, but in the Caribbean as well. See, for example, “Brother Rabbit, Brother Booky, and Brother Cow” (page 418). Moreover, ample evidence of sharing among Cajun and African Americans is provided by a comparison of the Cajun tale “On Horseback” (page 214) to the African American “Mr. Deer’s My Riding Horse” (page 173).

**Regional traditions** provide a further means of classifying North American folktales. Ecology, history, and social conditions of a given locale often give rise to narrative responses to these factors. Conversely, ethnic and regional identities are not hermetically from each other. They often interact.

**Pennsylvania German** traditions, in fact, are on the cusp of the ethnic and the regional. The so-called Pennsylvania Dutch (actually the Pennsylvania Germans) are descendants of German-speaking immigrants who came to Pennsylvania from various parts of southwest Germany, Alsace, and Switzerland. Their migrations took them into several colonies in addition to Pennsylvania as early as the seventeenth century, although by 1776 they composed a third of the population of that state. Most eventually came to live in the southeastern region of the state. This population concentration notwithstanding, there were infusions from related Old World traditions and colonial settlements.

For example, the Dutch East India Company established trading posts on the Hudson River, claiming to the territory between the Connecticut and

Delaware Rivers, an area including the contemporary Connecticut, New York, and part of Pennsylvania. Between 1609 and 1664, 8,000 Dutch settlers inhabited the New Netherlands (contemporary New York and New Jersey). Among the areas populated early on by the Dutch was modern Schoharie County, a sub-region in which both Dutch and German immigrants came to live as neighbors. With time, distinctions as to national origin of tales became blurred. Migration between the two areas further blended the folklore of the communities. In one instance, in 1723, some thirty-three Palatine families migrated from Schoharie, New York, to Tulpehocken, Berks County, Pennsylvania, where other Palatines had settled previously. For purposes of the present collection, the German-descended traditions that developed within the coastal states mentioned above and Pennsylvania constitute a regional folk tradition.

**Appalachian** culture, similarly, displays both regional and ethnic allegiances. The southern Appalachian region encompasses West Virginia, large areas of North and South Carolina, Kentucky, Tennessee and Virginia, and portions of Alabama, Georgia, and Mississippi. The European ethnic makeup of the region is historically northern English and Scottish Irish who had been settled in Ulster during the early seventeenth century. By the late eighteenth century, many had immigrated to the American colonies and pushed westward into the Appalachian region from 1718–1775. Later, settlers from the southern Appalachian region moved on to the Ozarks, limited here to the northern Arkansas-southern Missouri area. These immigrants, though not the first of European descent to settle there eventually became the largest faction. As a result, they became the dominant influence on traditional narratives in the area. The relative isolation of the rural communities in the southern highlands encouraged the preservation of archaic British dialect features as well as various genres of folklore and folk-life. For example, localized versions of English folktales such as “The Brave Tailor” (AT 1640) and “The Lion and the Unicorn” (page 232) were collected in the early decades of the twentieth century along with personal experience narratives and legends of witchcraft and hauntings, as in “The Mysterious Deer” (page 228) and “The Witch and the Boiler” (page 226).

The **Southwest** as a regional tradition is limited, for the purpose of this collection, to Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona. The landscape of these states varies from thickly forested areas of East Texas to cedar and oak as one moves further into the state or into the mountains of New Mexico. The Gulf Coast of Texas is contrasted with the deserts to New Mexico and Arizona. With its dramatic extremes of blasting heat, which can range as high as 125 degrees Fahrenheit in the Sonoran desert and bitter cold in the higher elevations of the Rocky Mountains in Arizona and New Mexico, the climate itself has inspired the folk imagination—particularly tall tales. The southwestern region’s ecology has given rise in turn to a variety of occupations and the lifestyles attendant upon them. Farming, commercial and subsistence fishing, gathering, ranching, mining, subsistence hunting, and—before the virtual extermination of the great bison

herds—hide hunting were supported by fertile flatlands and river bottoms, the coasts, the open plains, and mountain ranges. Each of these vocations has left its trail in oral tradition. Although it is an extreme oversimplification, particularly in the twenty-first century, to ignore the presence and contributions of an extraordinary range of cultures to the Southwest region, two non-Native cultures, the Hispanic and the Anglo American, traditionally have been recognized as having exerted early and profound influence on the region.

**South America** extends from Venezuela in the north to Chile and Argentina in the south. As has been noted for most of the other continents whose traditions are covered in *The Greenwood Library of World Folktales*, the geographic and cultural diversity of the region make generalizations impossible. The continent is noteworthy as the home of some of the earliest and most highly developed of the indigenous civilizations in the Americas. By the end of the fifteenth century, the continent became the object of colonial struggles, introducing first Spanish and Portuguese influences into the area and later, to a lesser degree, other European traditions. European mercantilism also introduced a profound and enduring African presence in the wake of the slave trade. Brazil, alone, imported almost 40 percent of the African slaves that were brought into the Americas. In the twenty-first century, many South American nations continue to sustain a significant African American population. Suriname, for example, is home to the largest Maroon population (see Suriname Maroon, pages 324–331) in the Western hemisphere; these people have preserved and disseminated their culture throughout the region. The folktales of Native South Americans are categorized under the indigenous name for each group (for example, Aymara, Inca) or, in the case of those tales that have been perpetuated within a European-descended tradition, under the name of the nation that provided the most immediate source for the narrative (for example, Chile). This principle applies to the tales from Mexico and Central America and the Caribbean.

**Mexico and Central America** comprises the region extending from the southern border of the United States through Mexico, into Belize, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and Panama. Historically, certain native cultures of the region such as the Aztecs, the Olmecs, and the Maya were noted for the development of societies that created sophisticated aesthetic, theological, and scientific systems. Simultaneously, there existed in the region groups who based their subsistence on hunting and gathering, fishing, and small-scale horticulture. A significant number of the latter ethnic groups, many of whom were related culturally and linguistically to the empire builders, persist into the twenty-first century. Early in the sixteenth century, Spain invaded the area and established three centuries of Spanish rule. The effects on the culture of Mexico and Central America appear in the folktales in the form of a strong current of Roman Catholicism as well as in the persistence of European tale types and motifs.

**Caribbean** indigenous cultures, as is the case elsewhere in the Western hemisphere, provided the baseline in the area. At the time of European contact, the Caribbean was inhabited by cultures that had migrated from the South American mainland. The primary groups at the time of European contact were identified as the Taino, and the Carib from whom the name for the area was derived. A combination of military action beginning in the late fifteenth century and diseases brought first from Europe and later from Africa via the slave trade decimated the native population of the islands. As a result, the impact of Native Caribbean oral traditions on the folktale corpus was minimal compared with either the European or African traditions. Spanish influence arrived in the late fifteenth century, and the British established their Caribbean colonies in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, and in the Caribbean during the same period. The French became a factor in the Caribbean in the middle of the seventeenth century. The enslavement and importation of Africans into the Caribbean beginning in the late sixteenth century eventually resulted in a major African influence throughout the islands.



**NORTH AMERICA**

***Native North American***





# ACOMA

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## ORIGIN OF ACOMA

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Stirling, Matthew W. *Origin Myth of Acoma and Other Records*. Smithsonian Institution, Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin 135. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1942, 1–10.

**Date:** 1928

**Original Source:** Acoma Pueblo, New Mexico

**National Origin:** Native American

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As with all **myths** of origin, this one from Acoma Pueblo details the ways in which the orderly universe develops from primal chaos. The physical environment and its life forms are created, as are technology, religious practice, and elements of the social structure. The residents of Acoma were traditionally farmers who relied on the meager New Mexico rainfall rather than on irrigation as did the Pueblos further to the east. The image used to depict the development of the current order suggests maturation and emergence from an underground world and, as such, is derived from the model of the growing corn plant, the primary Acoma crop, and, therefore, the basis of traditional subsistence. The central place of the plant in practical and ceremonial life and the role of the Sun in nurturing the plant is given charter in the myth. The kiva, the underground site of Pueblo religious life, recreates Shipapu, which is identified in this narrative as the original source of life. The primacy of the sacred number “four” is reflected in four directions, four kinds of pine trees, four seeds, and four mountains, for example. The Acoma, like the rest of the Western Pueblos, emphasize clans related through the female line and both houses and gardens are owned by women. The female gender of the primal pair establishes these kinship and ownership

patterns. The two sisters embody messages concerning traditional ethics and morality as well. Iatiku's altruistic behavior is regarded as more appropriately Pueblo than is Nautsiti's self-absorption and hoarding. Thus, in a later myth, Nautsiti—whose behavior becomes increasingly less appropriate by Western Pueblo standards—eventually “disappears into the East,” while Iatiku remains to establish clans, ceremonies, and other features of Acoma culture.

---

In the beginning two female human beings were born. These two children were born underground at a place called Shipapu. As they grew up, they began to be aware of each other. There was no light and they could only feel each other. Being in the dark they grew slowly. After they had grown considerably, a Spirit whom they afterward called Tsichtinako spoke to them, and they found that it would give them nourishment. After they had grown large enough to think for themselves, they spoke to the Spirit when it had come to them one day and asked it to make itself known to them and to say whether it was male or female, but it replied only that it was not allowed to meet with them. They then asked why they were living in the dark without knowing each other by name, but the Spirit answered that they were nuk'timi (under the earth); but they were to be patient in waiting until everything was ready for them to go up into the light. So they waited a long time, and as they grew they learned their language from Tsichtinako. When all was ready, they found a present from Tsichtinako, two baskets of seeds and little images of all the different animals (there were to be) in the world. The Spirit said they were sent by their father. They asked who was meant by their father, and Tsichtinako replied that his name was Ūch'tsiti and that he wished them to take their baskets out into the light, when the time came. Tsichtinako instructed them, “You will find the seeds of four kinds of pine trees, lā'khok, gēi'etsu (dyai'its), wanūka, and lā'nye, in your baskets. You are to plant these seeds and will use the trees to get up into the light.” They could not see the things in their baskets but feeling each object in turn they asked, “Is this it?” until the seeds were found. They then planted the seeds as Tsichtinako instructed. All of the four seeds sprouted, but in the darkness the trees grew very slowly and the two sisters became very anxious to reach the light as they waited this long time. They slept for many years as they had no use for eyes. Each time they awoke they would feel the trees to see how they were growing. The tree lanye grew faster than the others and after a very long time pushed a hole through the earth for them and let in a very little light. The others stopped growing, at various heights, when this happened.

The hole that the tree lanye made was not large enough for them to pass through, so Tsichtinako advised them to look again in their baskets where they would find the image of an animal called dyu'pi (badger) and tell it to become alive. They told it to live, and it did so as they spoke, exclaiming, “A'uha! Why

have you given me life?" They told it not to be afraid nor to worry about coming to life. "We have brought you to life because you are to be useful." Tsichtinako spoke to them again, instructing them to tell Badger to climb the pine tree, to bore a hole large enough for them to crawl up, cautioning him not to go out into the light, but to return, when the hole was finished. Badger climbed the tree and after he had dug a hole large enough, returned saying that he had done his work. They thanked him and said, "As a reward you will come up with us to the light and thereafter you will live happily. You will always know how to dig and your home will be in the ground where you will be neither too hot nor too cold."

Tsichtinako now spoke again, telling them to look in the basket for Tāwāi'nū (locust), giving it life and asking it to smooth the hole by plastering. It too was to be cautioned to return. This they did and Locust smoothed the hole but, having finished, went out into the light. When it returned reporting that it had done its work, they asked it if it had gone out. Locust said no, and every time he was asked he replied no, until the fourth time when he admitted that he had gone out. They asked Locust what it was like outside. Locust replied that it was just tsī'īī (laid out flat). They said, "From now on you will be known as Tsi:k'ā. You will also come up with us, but you will be punished for disobedience by being allowed out only a short time. Your home will be in the ground and you will have to return when the weather is bad. You will soon die but you will be reborn each season."

The hole now let light into the place where the two sisters were, and Tsichtinako spoke to them, "Now is the time you are to go out. You are able to take your baskets with you. In them you will find pollen and sacred corn meal. When you reach the top, you will wait for the sun to come up and that direction will be called ha'nami (east). With the pollen and the sacred corn meal you will pray to the Sun. You will thank the Sun for bringing you to light, ask for a long life and happiness, and for success in the purpose for which you were created." Tsichtinako then taught them the prayers and the creation song, which they were to sing. This took a long while, but finally the sisters followed by Badger and Locust, went out into the light, climbing the pine tree. Badger was very strong and skillful and helped them. On reaching the earth, they set down their baskets and saw for the first time what they had. The earth was soft and spongy under their feet as they walked, and they said, "This is not ripe." They stood waiting for the sun, not knowing where it would appear. Gradually it grew lighter and finally the sun came up. Before they began to pray, Tsichtinako told them they were facing east and that their right side, the side their best aim was on, would be known as kū'āimē (south) and the left ti dyami (north) while behind at their backs was the direction pūna'me (west) where the sun would go down. They had already learned while underground the direction nūk'ūmi (down) and later, when they asked where their father was, they were told tyunami (four skies above).

And as they waited to pray to the Sun, the girl on the right moved her best hand and was named *Iatiku* which meant “bringing to life.” *Tsichtinako* then told her to name her sister, but it took a long time. Finally *Tsichtinako* noticed that the other had more in her basket, so *Tsichtinako* told *Iatiku* to name her thus, and *Iatiku* called her *Nautsiti* which meant “more of everything in the basket.”

They now prayed to the Sun as they had been taught by *Tsichtinako*, and sang the creation song. Their eyes hurt for they were not accustomed to the strong light. For the first time they asked *Tsichtinako* why they were on earth and why they were created. *Tsichtinako* replied, “I did not make you. Your father, *Uchtsiti* made you, and it is he who has made the world, the sun which you have seen, the sky, and many other things which you will see. But *Uchtsiti* says the world is not yet completed, not yet satisfactory, as he wants it. This is the reason he has made you. You will rule and bring to life the rest of the things he has given you in the baskets.” The sisters then asked how they themselves had come into being. *Tsichtinako* answered saying, “*Uchtsiti* first made the world. He threw a clot of his own blood into space and by his power it grew and grew until it became the earth. Then *Uchtsiti* planted you in this and by it you were nourished as you developed. Now that you have emerged from within the earth, you will have to provide nourishment for yourselves. I will instruct you in this.” They then asked where their father lived and *Tsichtinako* replied, “You will never see your father, he lives four skies above, and has made you to live in this world. He has made you in the image of himself.” So they asked why *Tsichtinako* did not become visible to them, but *Tsichtinako* replied, “I don’t know how to live like a human being. I have been asked by *Uchtsiti* to look after you and to teach you. I will always guide you.” And they asked again how they were to live, whether they could go down once more under the ground, for they were afraid of the winds and rains and their eyes were hurt by the light. *Tsichtinako* replied that *Uchtsiti* would take care of that and would furnish them means to keep warm and change the atmosphere so that they would get used to it.

At the end of the first day, when it became dark they were much frightened, for they had not understood that the sun would set and thought that *Tsichtinako* had betrayed them. “*Tsichtinako!* *Tsichtinako!* You told us we were to come into the light,” they cried, “why, then, is it dark?” So *Tsichtinako* explained, “This is the way it will always be. The sun will go down and the next day come up anew in the east. When it is dark you are to rest and sleep as you slept when all was dark.” So they were satisfied and slept. They rose to meet the sun, praying to it as they had been told, and were happy when it came up again, for they were warm and their faith in *Tsichtinako* was restored.

*Tsichtinako* next said to them, “Now that you have your names, you will pray with your names and your clan names so that the Sun will know you and recognize you.” *Tsichtinako* asked *Nautsiti* which clan she wished to belong to.

Nautsiti answered, "I wish to see the sun, that is the clan I will be." The spirit told Nautsiti to ask Iatiku what clan she wanted. Iatiku thought for a long time but finally she noticed that she had the seed from which sacred meal was made in her basket and no other kind of seeds. She thought, "With this name I shall be very proud, for it has been chosen for nourishment and it is sacred." So she said, "I will be Corn clan." They then waited for the sun to come up. When it appeared, Tsichtinako once more advised them to sing the first song and to pray, not forgetting their name and their clan name in starting their prayer. After the prayer they were to sing the second song.

When the sun appeared it was too bright for Iatiku and it hurt her eyes. She wondered if Nautsiti's eyes hurt her, too, so she put her head down and sideways, letting her hair fall, and looked at Nautsiti. By doing this the light did not strike her squarely in the face and her hair cast a shade. Tsichtinako said, "Iatiku, the sun has not appeared for you. Look at Nautsiti, see how strongly the light is striking her. Notice how white she looks." And although Iatiku turned to the sun, it did not make her as white as Nautsiti, and Iatiku's mind was slowed up while Nautsiti's mind was made fast. But both of them remembered everything and did everything as they were taught.

When they had completed their prayers to the sun, Tsichtinako said, "You have done everything well and now you are both to take up your baskets and you must look to the north, west, south, and east, for you are now to pray to the Earth to accept the things in the basket and to give them life. First you must pray to the north, at the same time lift up your baskets in that direction. You will then do the same to the west, then to the south and east." They did as they were told and did it well. And Tsichtinako, said to them, "From now on you will rule in every direction, north, west, south, and east."

They now questioned Tsichtinako again so that they would understand more clearly why they were given the baskets and their contents, and Tsichtinako, replied, "Everything in the baskets is to be created by your word, for you are made in the image of Uchtsiti and your word will be as powerful as his word. He has created you to help him complete the world. You are to plant the seeds of the different plants to be used when anything is needed. I shall always be ready to point out to you the various plants and animals."

The sisters did not realize that they were not taking food and did not understand when Tsichtinako told them they were to plant seeds to give them nourishment. But they were always ready to do as Tsichtinako, asked, and she told them to plant first that which would maintain life, grains of corn. "When this plant grows," said Tsichtinako, "it will produce a part which I will point out to you. This will be taken as food." Everything in the basket was in pairs and the sisters planted two of each kind of corn.

The corn grew very slowly so Tsichtinako told them to plant ısthě (the earliest plant to come up in the spring; gray with a small white flower; dies quickly) and to transmit its power of early ripening to the corn.

They were very interested in the corn and watched it every day as it grew. Tsichtinako showed them where the pollen came out. “That you will call *kū’āch’tīmu*,” she said, “there the pollen will appear. When the pollen is plentiful, you will gather it, and with it and corn meal you will pray to the rising sun each morning.” This they did always, but Nautsiti was sometimes a little lazy. After some time the corn ripened. Tsichtinako told them to look at it and to gather some. They saw that the corn was hard and they picked four ears. Iatiku took two ears carefully without hurting the plant, but Nautsiti jerked hers off roughly. Iatiku noticed this and cautioned her sister not to ruin the plants. They took the ears of corn to Tsichtinako saying, “We have brought the corn, it is ripe.” Tsichtinako agreed and explained that the corn ears when cooked would be their food. They did not understand this and asked what they would cook with. Tsichtinako then told them that Uchtsiti would give them fire. That night as they sat around they saw a red light drop from the sky. After they had seen it, Tsichtinako told them it was fire, and that they were to go over and get some of it. They asked with what, and she told them to get it with a flat rock because it was very hot and they could not take it in their hands. After getting it with a rock, they asked what they were to do with it, and were told they were to make a fire, to go to the pine tree they had planted, to break off some of the branches and put them in the fire. They went to the tree and broke some of the twigs from it. When they got back to the fire, they were told to throw the twigs down. They did so and a large pile of wood appeared there. Tsichtinako told them this wood would last many years till there was time for trees to grow, and showed them how to build a fire. She told them that with the flames from the fire they would keep warm and would cook their food.

Tsichtinako next taught them how to roast the corn. “When it is cooked,” she explained, “you are to eat it. This will be the first time you have eaten, for you have been fasting for a long time and Uchtsiti has been nourishing you. You will find salt in your baskets; with this you will season the corn.” They began to look for this and Tsichtinako pointed it out to them. As soon as they were told this, Nautsiti grabbed some corn and salt. She was the first to taste them and exclaimed that they were very good, but Iatiku was slower. After Nautsiti had eaten part, she gave it to Iatiku to taste. When both had eaten, Tsichtinako told them that this was the way they were going to live, and be nourished. They were very thankful, saying, “You have treated us well,” They asked if this would be their only food. Tsichtinako said, “No, you have many other things in your baskets; many seeds and images of animals, all in pairs. Some will be eaten and taken for nourishment by you.” After they had used the salt, they were asked by Tsichtinako to give life to this salt by praying to the Earth, first in the North direction, then in the West, then in the South, and then in the East. And when they did so, salt appeared in each of these directions. Tsichtinako then instructed them to take always the husks from the corn carefully and to dry them. They were then instructed to plant *hā’mi* (tobacco).

When the plant matured, they were taught how to roll the leaves in corn husks and to smoke it. (Even now in ceremonies the corn husks must be torn with the fingers and tied in the center with a little strip of corn husk. It may not be cut by artificial means. You smoke in order to make your prayers merge into the minds of the gods to whom prayer is addressed. This will also compel obedience. If a man smokes when a request is made of him, he must obey that request.) They were then told to place the tobacco with the pollen and the corn meal and to remember that these three were always to be together, and to be used in making prayers.

Now they were told that they were to give life to an animal whose flesh they were going to use for food. Tsichtinako named this animal as Ba'shya (kangaroo mouse) and also taught them the first song to be sung to animals. She told them to sing this song in order to make the images alive, and pointed out the images to them in the basket.

They did everything as they were taught. They sang the song to the image and with the word, "Come to life, Bashya," it came to life. As it did so it asked, "Why have I come to life?" Tsichtinako told it not to ask any questions because, "It is you that is going to give life to other life." After this was done, Nautsiti and Iatiku, told this animal that it was going to live on the ground and said to it, "Go now and increase." After the animal increased, Tsichtinako told the sisters to kill one of the animals. "Now eat the two together, the corn and the field mouse, and also the salt to see how it tastes." She had already told them never to let out the fire which had been given to them. They acted according to Tsichtinako's instructions. They roasted their corn and roasted the flesh of the field mouse with some salt on it. After it was cooked, Tsichtinako told them to pray with the food, not with all of it, but with little pieces from each—corn, flesh, and salt. Each sister did this and prayed to Uchtsiti, the creator of the world, who lives up in the fourth sky. Tsichtinako told them they were to do this always before eating. After this they ate the food. There was not very much of the meat, but it was good. They did not know that there were to be bones but these were not hard and they broke them with their teeth. They liked the flesh so well that they asked Tsichtinako if they might have something larger that would yield more flesh. Tsichtinako answered that they would find other things in their baskets. They went back to them, and Tsichtinako said they would find Tsū'na (rat) and another animal Katsa (mole) and also Nite (prairie dog). "Go, make these images alive," said Tsichtinako, pointing them out according to their names. They were to do this in the same way as with Bashya. Tsichtinako also told them that these animals were to be used as food and that they must tell each of these animals to live in the ground because as yet there was no shade on earth to live in. "But before you give life to them," said Tsichtinako, "it is necessary that you plant seeds of grass which will be the food for them." Tsichtinako pointed out the seeds they were to plant, and they took the seeds of the grasses and scattered them first to the North, next to the West,

then some to the South, and then to the East. And immediately grass covered the ground. They then took the images and prayed to the cardinal points, and, according to the instructions of Tsichtinako, gave life to all of these animals, giving them names as they came to life. Each one as it came to life asked why it had come to life but Tsichtinako told them not to ask questions, that they would give life to other life. As before, the sisters told the animals to increase. After all of this was done, they proceeded to eat the new animals after praying with them, doing just as they did before. The two sisters were now very happy, they had plenty and some to spare. "It is not yet time for the larger animals to be given life," said Tsichtinako, "first the world must have sufficient plants and small animals to feed them."

After a long time, Tsichtinako spoke to them, "What we are going to do now concerns the earth. We are going to make the mountains." She told them to remember the words she was going to say. They were to say, "Kaweshtima kōti (North Mountain), appear in the north, and we will always know you to be in that direction." Tsichtinako also pointed out an article in the basket that she named ya'ōni (stone) and instructed them to throw the stone to the North direction as they spoke the words. When they did so, a big mountain appeared in the North. After they had done this, Tsichtinako instructed them to do the same thing in the West, but to name this mountain Tsipīna koti, and in the South, naming it Da'ōtyuma koti, and in the East, naming it G'ūchana koti.

After all this was done, Tsichtinako spoke again and told them, "Now that you have all the mountains around you with plains, mesas, and canyons, you must make the growing things of these places." Tsichtinako told them to go back to the trees which they had planted underground, lakhok, geietsu, wanuka, and lanye. She told them to take the seeds from these trees, and they did so. Following her instructions they spread some to each of the four directions, naming the mountains in each direction, and saying, "Grow in North Mountain, grow in West Mountain, etc." Tsichtinako said to them, "These are going to be tall trees; from them you will get logs. Later you will build houses and will use these." They asked if that was all that was going to grow on the mountains, and Tsichtinako said, "No, there are many other seeds left in your baskets. You have seeds of trees which are going to yield food. You will find dyai'its (pinon tree), sē'isha (kind of cedar), hapani (oak, acorn) and maka'yawi (walnut)." She again instructed them what to do and taught them the prayer to use, which was, "From now on, grow in this mountain and yield fruit which will be used as food. Your places are to be in the mountains. You will grow and be useful." When everything had been done well, Tsichtinako told (them) that there were many smaller seeds left in the baskets and she gave a name to each, telling them to fill the rest of the land. These seeds were planted on every one of the four mountains and in the rest of the world. Tsichtinako spoke to the sisters again and told them, "You still have seeds in your baskets which you will know as scuts'ōibewi (wild fruits). These trees you will grow around you and care for." But they



mistook the instructions and instead of instructing them to grow nearby, they named the mountains, and that is where they grew. But there were also some that grew close around. It is not known how long they had to wait for these things to happen, but it was a very long time. They noticed that the wild plants grew very fast and produced much fruit, but Tsichtinako had not told them whether or not to eat these, so they left them alone.

They saw that there were still seeds and images in their baskets, and asked Tsichtinako how many more kinds there were. Tsichtinako, said there were yet many other seeds which would also be important food. They would grow quickly and easily and she named them squash and beans. They were instructed to act with them as with the other seeds, and these also grew into plants. After a time, when they were ripe, Tsichtinako pointed out the parts of the plants which they, were to use as food.

Iatiku later asked Tsichtinako, "What remains in my basket?" and she was answered, "You have still many animals; these will be multiplied to populate the mountains." And as the two grew larger, they required more food. Tsichtinako saw this and told them that they were now to bring to life larger animals. She said they would find in their baskets cottontails, jack rabbits, antelope, and water deer. They were told to give life to these animals and to send them into the open plains. Everything was done as before, and when they killed the animals for food they were always careful to pray to their father as before. As they again asked Tsichtinako what remained in their baskets, Tsichtinako said, "You have images of the still bigger game. You will find deer, elk, mountain sheep, and bison." Iatiku asked where these animals were to be told to live and Tsichtinako told them that the elk and deer were to live in the lower mountains and the mountain sheep higher and in the rougher places. The bison, however, were to live on the plains. They followed the instructions and gave life to these animals and told them to go to these places to live and multiply. They again tried all these different animals for food. Their flesh was very good and always they prayed to Uchtsiti before tasting them.

In Nautsiti's basket there were many more things left than in Iatiku's. Nautsiti was selfish and hoarded her images, but Iatiku was ready to let her seeds and images be used. She was more interested in seeing things grow. They again asked what remained, and Tsichtinako replied, "You will find lion, wolf, wildcat and bear. These are strong beasts; they are going to use as food the same game that you also use. There is now game enough for them." When all these had been selected they were brought to life in the same manner as before.

The sisters again asked what was in their baskets, and they were told, "You will find birds which will fly in the air. These birds will also use small game for their food. You will find in the basket the eagles and the hawks." Tsichtinako pointed these out to them and they brought them to life. The birds flew up into the high mountains and over the plains. The sisters told the birds to use small game for food, and again Iatiku asked what was in the basket. Tsichtinako

pointed out smaller birds which would populate the country, each living in a different kind of region. They were then given life, as the animals before them. The birds were of many and bright colors, some were blue. The wild turkey was among them and they were instructed to tell it not to fly easily like the others. They were told to tell these birds that their food was to be the different seeds on the mountains and the plains. And all these, animals were sampled for food after they had been given life. Again Iatiku asked what remained in the baskets, because she found things there that were thorny. Tsichtinako told them their names. They were the various cacti and were said to be very good for food. But Tsichtinako explained that most were intended for animals to eat. All these were planted as before and tried for food, and they found that some tasted good. After they asked again what was left, Tsichtinako pointed out to them that there were still fish, water snakes, and turtles, of which there were many kinds of each. They gave life to them as before and told them all to live in the water as instructed. Tsichtinako pointed out several that were to be used for food. They tried them all for food, and they found that some were good, and others poor, but offered prayers to all and gave thanks to Uchtsiti. So it happened that many animals came alive in the world and they all increased.

# ALABAMA

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## ORIGIN OF THE ALABAMA INDIANS

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Swanton, John R. *Myths and Tales of the Southeastern Indians*. Smithsonian Institution, Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin 88. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1929, 118–121.

**Date:** 1929

**Original Source:** Alabama

**National Origin:** Native American

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Initially, the following narrative has traits of **myth** in its **motifs** of migration across a great ocean and the invention of weapons and the means to make fire. For the most part, however, plausible events are set in the historical past leading to the tale's classification as a **legend**. Actual events and names are used in the narrative. The Alabama and the Coushatti with whom they eventually became affiliated were members of the Creek Confederacy in what eventually became Alabama. At this time in their history, they fought the Choctaw mentioned in the "Origin of the Alabama Indians." The berdache mentioned in the narrative was a male transvestite who acted socially as a woman; the role was neither uncommon nor maligned in many Native American cultures. By the early nineteenth century, they had moved to Texas and established several villages, the most prominent of which was Peach Tree Village, where they relied primarily on hunting and gathering and horticulture. The episode in which the Alabama befriended and fed white refugees seems based on the "Runaway Scrape" and other events of the Texas Revolution of 1836.

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Formerly the ocean was not as large as it is today, and at that time the Alabama Indians, who lived upon the other side, came westward across it in canoes. When they had gotten about halfway over they came upon an island where they rested and fished. Then they resumed their journey and presently reached this land.

At first they lived upon acorns, and they also roasted and ate cane sprouts. Later they made bows and arrows with which to kill deer, and having nothing with which to cut up the meat they used sharp rocks. They also had to learn how to kindle a fire. To accomplish this they used as a drill the stem of a weed called “plant-with-which-to-make-fire” which is like sassafras and the wood of a tree called bass for a base stick.

Traveling inland, they established their village near a river and lived there for a long time. Presently they came in contact with the Choctaw and warred against them, almost destroying one Choctaw town, so that the Choctaw became disheartened and wanted to make peace. For this purpose they selected a poor man, promising that, if he were successful, they would give him the two daughters of a certain prominent woman. They gave him a white deerskin shirt and white deerskin leggings and moccasins, put a string of white beads about his neck and a rattle in his hand.

Thus provided, the man crossed to the first Alabama village shaking his rattle and singing as he went. When the Alabama heard him they came out, took hold of him, and accompanied him back. On coming near the town they raised him on their backs and entered the place in this manner, singing continually. They set him down and he talked to them for a long time, laying down one string of white beads as he did so. Then he set out for another village, accompanied as before. On the way one of them seized a gun and shot under him. Another ran toward him and discharged a gun near his ear. At the next village he made another long talk and laid out a second string of white beads. He did the same at the third village. Then he returned to his people and they gave him the girls as they had promised, but soon afterwards he lay down and died.

One summer a man said he wanted to go west and several wished to accompany him, but a berdache (“half-man”) tried to stop them. “Why are you going?” he said. “I am going in order to kill and eat turkey, deer, and other game animals; after that I will return.”

“There are plenty of turkey and deer here,” said the berdache, but the other persisted in his plan and after they had disputed for some time the berdache said, “You are a man but you want to run away. I will not run. I will not run, although my grandfather used to say that the English, *Álâta*, and French are all hard fighters. When they come, I will take a knife, lie down under the bed, and keep striking at them until they kill me.”

Nevertheless the man and his friends started off. They came to a river, made canoes, and proceeded along it a great distance until they finally reached a Choctaw settlement. They stopped for a while, thinking that these people were

friends, but presently they observed that they were making arrows, so they became frightened and reentered their canoes.

Following the river, they came upon many bear swimming across and some wanted to kill them, but others said, "Don't shoot," and they kept on. Presently they heard the sound of firearms behind and said to one another, "People are following us." Not long afterwards they came upon a creek emptying into the river, its mouth almost obscured by canes, and they shoved their canoes into it and waited. After a while they heard the Choctaw canoes pass on up, so they remained where they were all that night. When it was nearly day they heard the sound of returning paddles and after they had died away they continued their journey.

After they had gone on for some time the Alabama came to the house of a white man. He exchanged corn for venison and told them that the route by the river which they had intended to take was very long, so he tied oxen to their canoes and dragged them across a narrow place. Then they paddled along for some time and reached a trading house belonging to a white blacksmith. They procured from him old knives and axes in exchange for venison. Some Choctaw lived there who said to them, "There is no war here. There is peace. We are friends of the Alabama." Afterwards, however, some of both tribes got drunk on whisky obtained at the store and wanted to fight. But the Alabama who had remained sober took their friends down to the canoes, put them in, and started along.

As they pushed off the Choctaw stood near the shore and shot at them until they got out into the middle of the river. Later they went back to the store and found that the Choctaw were all gone, so they had the blacksmith make knives for them and sharpen their old axes.

The white people came from the other side of the ocean long after the Alabama had crossed and tried to buy land from them. They would get the Indians drunk, and when they had become sober they would find bags of money hung to their necks in payment for land. It was after they had sold their lands in this way that they came westward.

After leaving the blacksmith the Alabama came to Bayou Boeuf. Later they moved to Opelousas, Louisiana, and still later to Tyler County, Texas. Afterwards they settled Peach-tree village. There were many Alabama at that time and they separated into a number of villages. One was north of North Woodville and was called "Cane Island" and afterwards simply island, because some canes were found near the creek. They were living in these towns when the Mexican War broke out.

When the Mexicans were here the white men came and built a town, putting up stores. After a while they heard that the Mexicans and whites were coming to fight with each other, and the people all ran off. They left their stores and went away. While they were moving on without stopping, it rained and the white girls walked along with their dresses half soaked. Some were weeping. Continuing on in this way they passed through Peach-tree village. Some of

them were perishing with hunger and asked the Indians for food. Then they gave them milk, but instead of drinking it they gave it to the children.

Just after the whites had left, the Mexicans came to this town, and their soldiers opened the stores which they had abandoned and used the goods. By and by they wanted to cross a big river there and threw bales of cotton into the water and crossed upon them. When they got over they found that the Indians had a camp on this side. They did not like them and wanted to kill them. But instead of killing them they drove them back and made them stay on the other side of the river. The Indians walked while two Mexicans rode on each horse.

After that the white people came to fight. Some of them went round the town and broke down a bridge over a bad creek, so that when the Mexicans arrived they could not cross and all were killed.

Their general Santa Anna, escaped alone on his horse. He fell down in a swampy place but got up and ran on and lay down in a thicket. While he lay there two deer whistled, and the whites came up and captured him. Then they demanded his land of him, and he left the people, got into a boat, and went away.

Another party of whites reached that town and the Mexicans all ran off. Some Mexicans who were drunk remained walking about holding each other up, and the whites throw them down and stabbed them. When the Mexicans ran off they had just been cooking and left earthen pots full of peas mixed with red peppers on the fire. When the white men saw the Indians there they recognized them and had them recross the river. "Hang up something white and stay by it," they said, "lest those coming after us make trouble." So they hung up a white cloth and remained by it.

## **RABBIT KILLS BIG MAN-EATER**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Swanton, John R. *Myths and Tales of the Southeastern Indians*. Smithsonian Institution, Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin 88. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1929, 161.

**Date:** 1929

**Original Source:** Alabama

**National Origin:** Native American

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Big Man-eater appears in a number of traditional tales from the Native American Southeast. The cannibal figure strikes at a particularly fearful element in the human psyche and is found in such widely dispersed forms as the Windigo figure of the subarctic, the giant at the top of Jack's beanstalk (see "Jack and the Bean-Pole," page 189), Hansel and Gretel's witch, and the Fire Dragaman of the southern highlands ("Jack and the Fire Dragaman," page 236). Rabbit exercises his deceptions in

this narrative to play the role of **culture hero**, the life-enhancing persona of **trickster**. Although the culture hero brings technology and social order in many traditions, his role as monster slayer who cleanses the natural order making the universe safe for humanity is well-represented as well. In typical fashion, rabbit changes shapes and even gender to gain the advantage over his monstrous adversary.

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**B**ig Man-eater lived with his wife at a certain place and wanted to kill human beings. People heard of it and said, “They want to kill us,” and all were afraid.

Then Rabbit said, “Give me an old dress,” and they gave it to him. He said, “Give me an old blanket,” and they gave that to him. Then he put on the dress, wrapped up his head in the old blanket, and started off.

When he reached the place and stood in the yard Big Man-eater’s wife saw him and came out, and asked who he was. “I am your youngest aunt who has traveled to this place,” he said. “Come in,” said Big Man-eater’s wife, so he started to go in. “Sit down,” she said, and down he sat. Then they gave the supposed aunt some hard deer meat to eat, but he said, “I can’t eat that, because I have no teeth. I need a hatchet, for I can’t eat that [as it is].” So they gave him a hatchet and he chopped the dry venison into small pieces and ate them. Then he said, “That is the way I always eat it.”

Now Big Man-eater lay down but the two women sat still by the fire. Rabbit said to Big Man-eater’s wife, “When your husband is asleep what kind of noise does he make?”

“When he is not sleeping very soundly he makes a noise like ‘sololon sololon.’ When he makes a noise like ‘soloñ soloñ’ he is very sound asleep.”

“I will stay all night with you; in the morning I will start on,” said Rabbit. So Big Man-eater’s wife lay down and Rabbit lay down close to the fire. As he lay there he listened to the noises Big Man-eater was making. Then he slept and made a noise like “sololon sololon.” After some time he made a noise like “soloñ soloñ.” Then Rabbit took the hatchet and, after he had sat close to Big Man-eater for a while listening, he struck him with it in the neck and cut his head off. Then he threw off his old dress and blanket, shouted, jumped up and down several times, went out of the house, and ran off.

## **RABBIT AND BIG MAN-EATER**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Swanton, John R. *Myths and Tales of the Southeastern Indians*. Smithsonian Institution, Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin 88. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1929, 160.

**Date:** 1929

Original Source: Alabama

National Origin: Native American

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The following **myth** is another in the **cycle** of adventures of rabbit and Big Man-eater (see the introductory remarks to the preceding narrative “Rabbit Kills Big Man-eater”).

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**B**ig Man-eater traveled along until he came to a town where he killed and ate all of the people. On the way to another town he met Rabbit, who said, “At this town all the people have run off. I kill and eat people and here are their bones.” When he met Big Man-eater he carried over his shoulder a child with a stick run through it. Then they sat down beside the trail to defecate. Both shut their eyes, and when they defecated Big Man-eater evacuated bones while Rabbit passed only grass. Rabbit opened his eyes, picked up Big Man-eater’s excrement and put it under himself and took his own and placed it under Big Man-eater. When both finally opened their eyes, Big Man-eater said, “I never passed anything like this before.” The next time both defecated with their eyes open and Rabbit passed nothing but grass while Big Man-eater defecated bones.

After that they struck up a friendship. Rabbit said, “Let us go to Tree-falling-down Camp.” So they set out. When they arrived Rabbit said, “Wait right here while I hunt for a good camping place.” He went on until he saw a tree that shook and was ready to fall, when he called his companion. “Over here there is a good place,” he said and Big Man-eater went there.

When night came, both lay down, and, while Big Man-eater slept, Rabbit awoke and pushed the tree down upon him. Then he threw small limbs upon himself and made a noise as if he had been hurt. Big Man-eater pushed the tree away and woke up. “This camp is always like that,” said Rabbit.

Next time Rabbit said, “Let us go to Ashes-thrown-on Camp,” and they started off. When they got there and had made camp Rabbit picked up a quantity of wood, kindled it, and made a big fire. But after the two had lain down Rabbit awoke, gathered up a lot of hot ashes on some bark with which he had provided himself, and threw them on Big Man-eater. On himself he threw cold ashes. Big Man-eater was badly hurt.

In the morning Rabbit said, “Let us go to Jumping-bluff Creek,” and they started on. After they had traveled for a while they reached the place and went down the creek. “Let us jump across it and back four times,” said Rabbit. Rabbit jumped first four times. When Big Man-eater prepared to jump Rabbit held for him the bag he was carrying. Before Big Man-eater had jumped four times he fell from the bluff into the water. The water rose and Big Man-eater went down into it. “My friend is gone; he is going far out into the sea,” said Rabbit. Rabbit, however, took Big Man-eater’s bag and started home.



# ALEUT

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## THE WOMAN WHO WAS FOND OF INTESTINES

**Tradition Bearer:** Mrs. C. A. Anderson

**Source:** Golder, F. A. "Aleutian Stories." *Journal of American Folklore* 18 (1905): 215–220.

**Date:** 1905

**Original Source:** Aleut

**National Origin:** Native American

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Historically, law among the Inuit (or Eskimo), Aleuts, and many other societies was customary law; it rested on custom, tradition, and taboo. The society at large would not move to settle grievances, rather it was the parties involved who sought justice. Just as the society would not act to ensure justice, neither would it come between disputants. In the case of murder, the family of the victim sought revenge, as in the following narrative. While the avengers in this tale use supernatural power to convert themselves into wild animals, the major focus of the plot is on social justice for the wronged wife.

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Once there lived an Aleut with his wife and little boy. The wife was very fond of intestines, and early each morning the husband would go out in his bidark (kayak) hunting, and return in the evening with a boat full of intestines which he gave to his wife, telling her to keep what she wanted for herself, and distribute the rest among her neighbors.

The wife was somewhat puzzled by the husband's actions; she could not understand why he went so early in the morning, where he got so many intestines, or his reasons for wishing to have them distributed among the villagers.

She, of course, did not know that her husband had a mistress in the village whom he went to see while his wife was asleep, and that he desired the intestines distributed in order that his wife's rival might have a share.

All of a sudden, without explanations, the man ceased going out early, and when he did go, he came back but lightly loaded. This did not in the least clear up the mystery to the wife. But one day, when he had gone somewhat later than usually, his mistress called on his wife, whom she found busy sewing a kamalayka [waterproof shirt] out of the intestines her husband brought. The two got into a conversation, and, among other questions, the mistress asked, "Does your husband love you?"

"Yes."

"Do you love him?"

"Yes."

"Do you know where he gets all the intestines?"

"No."

"Can you guess why he has them distributed over the village?"

"No."

"I will tell you," said the mistress, "but you must not tell him I told you. Every day your husband goes to the village where your parents and relatives live and where you lived before your marriage, and kills the people there and brings their intestines to you. Yesterday there were but five people remaining in the village: your mother, your two sisters, and two brothers. He killed your mother and sisters yesterday, and today he went to bring the intestines of your brothers. He is in love with another woman of this village, whom he visits nightly when you have fallen asleep."

With this parting shot she left the house, leaving the poor wife weeping so bitterly that the kamalayka was hot from her tears. For the rest of the day she did not stir from the house, but sat lamenting and sewing. Towards evening her little boy rushed in announcing the approach of his father, which she generally anticipated with pleasure, and always went down to the beach to meet him; but this time she neither answered nor made the least motion. A few minutes later the little son came again saying, "Father is here," but all the reply he got was a new outburst of weeping.

Missing the usual meeting and greeting of his wife, the father asked the little boy where his mother was, and when told of the state she was in, he hastened to the house, where he found her on the floor shedding bitter tears and sewing the kamalayka.

"Why do you weep? has some one offended you?"

"No one has offended me."

"Why then this lamentation?"

"I was thinking of my mother, sisters, and brothers, and my other relatives in my native village, and I wondered how they were getting along, and this made me weep."

He did not attempt to cheer her, but after a pause he said, "I did not kill many animals today—two only."

This enraged her so that she jumped up from the floor, picked up the little boy, who was near her, and threw him at him, saying, "If my two brothers do not satisfy you, take him also." The boy's forehead came in contact with the edge of a sharp knife on the father's breast, making quite a gash from which the blood flowed freely. This the mother noticed before escaping out of the house.

Putting aside the boy, the man made a dash for the woman, but she got out of his reach, and being the better runner of the two he did not succeed in laying hands on her. She would let him come up quite close to her, and then dash away again until he saw the hopelessness of the chase and gave it up.

In a short time the boy's wound healed, but it left a very noticeable scar. Now that his mother was gone, his father placed him in the care of his sister, with instructions that he should under no circumstances be allowed to go very far from home. In this manner he passed a few years longer, until he became the proud possessor of a bow and arrows, with which he often amused himself.

One day, while indulging in his favorite sport, he began to wonder why his father and aunt forbade his going far from the house; and the more he thought about it the more anxious did he become to go, until he finally concluded "to go just a little distance beyond that hill to see what is there." On the way he noticed a hillock just ahead of him, at which he discharged his arrow, then ran and got it, aimed at another and another, and became so absorbed in this amusement that he did not observe how far from home it was taking him.

One hillock somewhat different from the others especially attracted his attention as offering a good mark. He took aim and sent his arrow flying right into the center of it; but what was his surprise on approaching the supposed hillock to discover that it was a barrabara [dwelling], and that the arrow had gone inside through the hole in the top. When he peeped in, he was frightened at the sight of a very wild-looking woman who stared at him, and he began to cry.

"Why do you cry?" the woman asked.

"I want my arrow."

"Come in and get it," the woman invited. But he was too scared to do that; he however got up courage enough to stick his foot in, hoping to draw it out that way, and he had nearly succeeded when he heard the woman move. At this he ran away in tears.

The woman called him back, saying, "Do not be afraid of me. I am your mother. It is I who threw you at your father, making the scar on your forehead. Come in, I will not harm you." When he saw that it was really his mother, he went to her and remained with her two days. During that time she told him his father's wicked deeds, how he mistreated and neglected her for another, and finally wrought on him so that he swore he would revenge her wrongs. She bade him go home, but attempt nothing for the present, and make no mention of what he had seen and heard.

During the boy's absence the father was away hunting, but the aunt was quite worked up over the long absence, and ran about the fields looking for him. When he returned she asked him all sorts of questions as to his whereabouts, but all the satisfaction she got from him was that he had lost his way and could not get back. She offered him food, which he refused to touch, and finally refused to answer her when spoken to.

Toward evening of the same day his father returned, and, when told that the boy would neither eat nor drink, asked what was the matter with him; but for an answer the boy turned his back on him and went to sleep. The father then inquired of the aunt whether anything unusual had occurred and whether the boy had been far from home, and to all this she replied that all during his (father's) absence the boy's life had gone on as ordinarily, and that he was not out of sight of the house the whole time.

As the boy grew older he avoided his father more and more, and when he reached early manhood the father lost control over him and actually feared him. One day, while the older man was away hunting, the young man took his bow and arrows, some food and water, and set out to see his mother. Before going, he told his aunt that he intended going quite a distance from home, and not to be, therefore, uneasy over his long absence. He went to the place where he had last seen his mother, and, as she was not there, he wandered on until on the following day he came in sight of some barrabaras [native dwellings] and two men. They answered him when he spoke to them, but when he wished to enter into one of the barrabaras they barred his way. While they were thus disputing, his mother appeared on the scene and motioned to the men to let him pass.

When he came inside he was greatly surprised at the quantity of furs that was lying about in great disorder, and at the abundance of meats and other eatables that he found there. He was certain he had never seen anything like it before. After eating, his mother told him to spend the night there, and in the morning take as many of the best furs as he could carry and go back to the village of his father, in order to tempt him and his relatives to come hunting in this neighborhood, which would offer an opportunity to repay him for what he had done. The boy did as he was told, took with him a heavy load of precious furs, and started back.

In his absence, the mother and the people with whom she was living made elaborate and crafty preparations for the reception of the expected guests. In the large barrabara, where the feasts and dances were always held and where visitors were generally received, quantities of oil were sprinkled about and covered up with grass. Along the walls seal-bladders full of oil were concealed, and screened with straw mats. And in this place the visitors were to be received. The young man's father was home on his return, and received the present of furs which his son made him with much pleasure, for the boy seemed so kindly disposed that the father hoped that his natural affection for his parent had returned. He inquired the whereabouts of the hunting grounds where the son had secured

these skins, and the latter told him that it was not very far, and that it was very rich, and that he planned to go back the next day to the same place, and if he and his men cared to accompany him, he would be glad to show them the way. His offer was accepted, and the following morning a large party left the village for the hunting ground. Some of the people of the mother's village had been on the look-out, and when they saw the large party approaching, they changed themselves into wild beasts: bears, wolves, foxes, etc. The hunters marked them and shot at them, but it had no other result than to drive the beasts nearer and nearer to the village. These tactics the men-beasts repeated until the hunters were decoyed into the village. Seeing so many barrabaras, the men asked the boy who the people were that lived in them.

"They are friendly people," he replied, "with whom I spent the night the last time I was in this neighborhood. Tomorrow morning we will go to the other side of the village, where there is a great deal of game."

The people of the village greeted them very cordially, and assigned a place for the night to each one of them; the father and son were given the barrabara where the latter had been entertained on his previous visit. Although the mother was in the same room with them they were not aware of it, for she had concealed herself. Everywhere about them were scattered the richest furs, and the food before them was the choicest and best, and so much of it that it rather made the older man uneasy, for, though an old hunter, he had never seen anything like it before.

In the evening all the people of the village, including the guests, went to the large dance-hall, where the formal reception was held and the guests entertained as was customary. One by one they descended through the hole in the roof, the only entrance there was. The interior was lighted up by two rows of stone lamps filled with oil, and grass wicks. On one side of the room sat the local men, while the visitors faced them from the other; the center was occupied by the women, and on the two sides sat seven or eight men with drums in their hands, on which they played and accompanied their singing. They would take turns; first the local men would sing their local songs, and then the visitors sang theirs. To this music the women danced with men whom they invited from either side.

Everything moved along smoothly and joyfully until the father recognized his wife among the women. She was dancing and moving towards him. At this sight he turned pale and looked for away to get out, but the ladder had been removed. The woman moved up to him, grasped his hand, and dragged him to dance, but he resisted. The boy, who sat near, urged him and pushed him on, but all in vain.

Then the woman began to sing him a song in which she went over all his misdeeds, his unfaithfulness, his cruelties, his falsehoods, as well as many of his other shortcomings, and concluded with these words, "You and your men shall never leave this place alive."

When she had said this, all the local people, including the mother and son, were turned into birds or flying insects and flew out through the hole in the roof. The visitors, unable to follow them, remained behind.

On the outside grass and wood were ignited and thrown in, which set on fire the grass and oil inside. Then the smoke hole was stopped up, and in this way all those who were inside were smothered to death. A few days later the son went to his father's village, destroying it as completely as his father had destroyed his mother's. He spared, however, his aunt, whom he brought back with him.

# APACHE

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## ORIGIN OF THE APACHES

**Tradition Bearer:** Laforia

**Source:** Russell, Frank. "Myths of the Jicarilla Apaches." *Journal of American Folklore* 11 (1898): 253–254.

**Date:** ca. 1898

**Original Source:** Jicarilla Apache (New Mexico)

**National Origin:** Native American

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Although this narrative references physical features of the Jicarilla world and the deification of wind, the primary concern of this narrative is on human relations, ranging from the evil caused by witchcraft to the scattering of the original people into the various Apache bands and the distinct languages associated with each. The emergence of the people from an underground world may result from the influence of the neighboring Pueblo cultures (compare this **myth** to "Origin of Acoma," page 3).

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In the under-world, *Un-go-ya-yen-ni*, there was no sun, moon, or light of any kind, except that emanating from large eagle feathers which the people carried about with them. This method of lighting proved unsatisfactory, and the head men of the tribe gathered in council to devise some plan for lighting the world more brightly.

One of the chiefs suggested that they make a sun and a moon. A great disk of yellow paint was made upon the ground, and then placed in the sky. Although this miniature creation was too small to give much light, it was allowed to make one circuit of the heavens ere it was taken down and made larger. Four times the sun set and rose, and four times it was enlarged, before it was "as large as the earth and gave plenty of light."

In the underworld dwelt a wizard and a witch, who were much incensed at man's presumption, and made such attempts to destroy the new luminaries that both the sun and the moon fled from the lower world, leaving it again in darkness, and made their escape to this earth, where they have never been molested, so that, until the present time, they continue to shine by night and by day.

The loss of the sun and moon brought the people together, that they might take council concerning the means of restoring the lost light. Long they danced and sang, and made medicine. At length it was decided that they should go in search of the sun.

The Indian medicine-men caused four mountains to spring up, which grew by night with great noise, and rested by day. The mountains increased in size until the fourth night, when they nearly reached the sky.

Four boys were sent to seek the cause of the failure of the mountains to reach the opening in the sky, through which the sun and moon had disappeared. The boys followed the tracks of two girls who had caused the mountains to stop growing, until they reached some burrows in the side of the mountain, where all trace of the two females disappeared.

When their story was told to the people, the medicine-men said, "You who have injured us shall be transformed into rabbits, that you may be of some use to mankind; your bodies shall be eaten," and the rabbit has been used for food by the human race down to the present day.

All then journeyed to the tops of the mountains, where a ladder was built which reached the aperture in the sky or roof of the under-world. The badger was then sent out to explore the earth above; the messenger soon returned, and reported water everywhere except around the margin of the opening. The legs of the badger were covered with mud, which accounts for their dark color at the present day. Four days later, the turkey was sent to see if the waters had subsided. The turkey reported no land yet to be seen above. As the turkey came in contact with the foam of the flood surrounding the opening, his tail became wet and heavy; in shaking this he scattered filmy drops upon his wings, and that is why the feathers of the turkey to the present day present an iridescent play of colors.

Then the Wind came to the anxious people and said, "If you will ask me to help you, I will drive back the water for you." Thus the first prayers came to be addressed to the Wind, which yet remains a powerful deity.

When the Wind had rolled back the waters to the limits of the present ocean, the Indians began to ascend the ladder; four times the ladder broke with them, and four times it was replaced by a new one.

All the people reached the new world except one old woman, too old and infirm to climb the ladder, who said to them, "I do not wish to leave the land of my youth. Go your way and leave me here; you will come back to join me when you die. You have forgotten one thing; you will soon discover what it is."



For four days after their emergence no one could sleep; then the people remembered the warning of the old woman, and two boys were sent down to the under-world to learn what it was that had been forgotten.

The old woman said in reply to their question, “You forgot to take lice with you; without them you cannot sleep.” She took two black ones from her hair and two white ones from her body, saying, “These will be all you will need, for they will increase night and day.” So it has happened that the Apaches sleep well to this day because they harbor these parasites upon their bodies.

So well had the Wind performed his task of drying up the waters, that none remained for the people to drink; but prayers addressed to that deity were answered by the appearance of the present springs and rivers. The few lakes that occur in the Apache country are remnants of the primeval ocean. All the inhabitants of the earth were then Apaches, but the Cheyennes and Utes were soon created from willows.

The supreme god, Yi-na-yes-gon-i, directed the people westward; as they journeyed, small parties became separated, and settled by the wayside. These were given different names and languages.

## ORIGIN OF FIRE

**Tradition Bearer:** Laforia

**Source:** Russell, Frank. “Myths of the Jicarilla Apaches.” *Journal of American Folklore* 11 (1898): 261–262.

**Date:** ca. 1898

**Original Source:** Jicarilla Apache (New Mexico)

**National Origin:** Native American

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Fox is given the role of **culture hero** in the following **myth**. In contrast to some manifestations of the culture hero, the fox maintains more of the qualities of **trickster**. He tries to acquire the cry and flying ability of the geese, but he is unable to exercise sufficient restraint to do so. This inventiveness, coupled with deceit fueled by curiosity that is a cross-cultural combination in trickster figures, allows him to successfully steal fire. His theft, however, seems little more than a prank, particularly in contrast to other mythological fire-stealers such as the Greek Prometheus.

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**A**t that early day the trees could talk, but the people could not burn them, as they were without fire. Fire was at length obtained through the instrumentality of the Fox.

One day Fox went to visit the geese whose cry he wished to learn. They promised to teach him, but it would be necessary for him to accompany them in their flights, in order to receive instruction. They gave him wings with which to fly, but cautioned him not to open his eyes while using them.

When the geese rose in flight Fox flew with them. As darkness came on, they passed over the enclosure where the fire-flies lived. Some gleams from their flickering fires penetrated the eyelids of Fox, causing him to open his eyes.

His wings at once failed to support him, and he fell within the walls of the corral in which were pitched the tents of the fireflies. Two flies went to see the fallen Fox, who gave each a necklace of juniper berries to induce them to tell him where he could pass the wall which surrounded them.

The fireflies showed Fox a cedar tree which would bend down at command and assist any one to pass over the wall. In the evening Fox went to the spring where the fireflies obtained water, and found colored earths suitable for paint, with which he gave himself a coat of white.

Returning to the camp, he told the fireflies that they ought to have a feast; they should dance and make merry, and he would give them a new musical instrument. They agreed to his proposal, and gathered wood for a great camp-fire, which they ignited by their own glow.

Before the ceremonies began, Fox tied shreds of cedar bark to his tail, and then made a drum, the first ever constructed, which he beat for some time. Tired of beating the drum, he gave it to one of the fireflies and moved nearer the fire, into which he thrust his tail, in opposition to the advice of those about him, who said it would surely burn.

“I am a medicine-man,” said Fox, “and my tail will not burn.” However, he kept a close watch upon it, and when the bark was burning well he said, “It is too warm for me here; stand aside and let me go where it is cooler.”

Fox ran away with tail blazing, followed by the fireflies, who cried, “Stop, you do not know the road; come back.”

Straight to the cedar tree Fox ran, and called, “Bend down to me, my tree, bend down.” The tree lifted him out of the enclosure, and on he ran, still pursued by the fire-flies. As he passed along, the brush and wood on either side was ignited by the sparks which fell from the burning cedar, and fire was widely spread over the earth.

Fox became fatigued from running, and gave the firebrand to the hawk, which carried it on, and finally delivered it to the brown crane. This bird flew far southward, but not so far but that one tree was not reached, and it will not burn to this day.

The fireflies pursued Fox to his burrow and informed him that, as punishment for having stolen fire from them and spread it abroad over the land, he should never be permitted to use it himself.

## TALES OF FOX

**Tradition Bearer:** Laforia

**Source:** Russell, Frank. "Myths of the Jicarilla Apaches." *Journal of American Folklore* 11 (1898): 265–268.

**Date:** ca. 1898

**Original Source:** Jicarilla Apache (New Mexico)

**National Origin:** Native American

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Fox is the Jicarilla **trickster**. His reputation as a trickster with potentially fatal weaknesses precedes him, leading both deer and rabbit to exploit his foolish nature. The cruel results of their pranks may seem unmotivated, but practical jokes with sadistic results are common in trickster tales. So, too, are explanations of features such as the fox's characteristic cry and eye color. "Fox and Kingfisher" portrays coyote trying to play the host in an episode reminiscent of "The Coyote and the Woodpecker" (page 110). Fox's invitations and imitations, in that episode and in "Fox and Mountain Lion," are motivated more by the desire to impress than to be hospitable. The final "tar baby" episode is only the most obvious of many borrowed features in the tale.

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### Fox and Deer

**A**s Fox was going along he met a Deer with two spotted fawns beside her. "What have you done," said he, "to make your children spotted like that?"

"I made a big fire of cedar wood and placed them before it. The sparks thrown off burned the spots which you see," answered the Deer.

Fox was pleased with the color of the fawns, so he went home and told his children to gather cedar wood for a large fire. When the fire was burning well, he put the young foxes in a row before the fire, as he supposed the Deer had done. When he found that they did not change color, he pushed them into the fire and covered them with ashes, thinking he had not applied sufficient heat at first.

As the fire went out, he saw their white teeth gleaming where the skin had shriveled away and exposed them. "Ah, you will be very pretty now," said he. Fox pulled his offspring from the ashes, expecting to find them much changed in color, and so they were—black, shriveled, and dead.

Fox next thought of revenge upon the Deer, which he found in a grove of cottonwoods. He built a fire around them, but they ran through it and escaped. Fox was so disappointed that he set up a cry of woe, a means of expression which he has retained from that day to this.

## Fox and Kingfisher

As Fox went on his way he met Kingfisher, whom he accompanied to his home. Kingfisher said that he had no food to offer his visitor, so he would go and catch some fish for Fox. He broke through six inches of ice on the river and caught two fish, which he cooked and set before his guest. Fox was pleased with his entertainment, and invited the Kingfisher to return the call.

In due time the Kingfisher came to the home of the Fox, who said, "I have no food to offer you"; then he went down to the river, thinking to secure fish in the same manner as the Kingfisher had done.

Fox leaped from the high bank, but instead of breaking through the ice he broke his head and killed himself. Kingfisher went to him, caught him up by the tail, and swung Fox around to the right four times, thereby restoring him to life. Kingfisher caught some fish, and they ate together. "I am a medicine-man," said Kingfisher; "that is why I can do these things. You must never try to catch fish in that way again."

After the departure of Kingfisher, Fox paid a visit to the home of Prairie-dog, where he was cordially received. Prairie-dog put four sticks, each about a foot in length, in the ashes of the camp-fire; when these were removed, they proved to be four nicely roasted prairie-dogs, which were served for Fox's dinner.

Fox invited the Prairie-dog to return the visit, which in a short time the latter did. Fox placed four sticks in the fire to roast, but they were consumed by it, and instead of palatable food to set before his guest he had nothing but ashes.

Prairie-dog said to Fox, "You must not attempt to do that. I am a medicine-man; that is why I can transform the wood to flesh." Prairie-dog then prepared a meal as he done before, and they dined.

Fox went to visit Buffalo, who exclaimed, "What shall I do? I have no food to offer you." Buffalo was equal to the emergency, however; he shot an arrow upward, which struck in his own back as it returned. When he pulled this out, a kidney and the fat surrounding it came out also. This he cooked for Fox, and added a choice morsel from his own nose. As usual, Fox extended an invitation to his host to return the visit.

When Buffalo came to call upon Fox, the latter covered his head with weeds in imitation of the head of the Buffalo. Fox thought he could provide food for their dinner as the Buffalo had done, so fired an arrow into the air; but when it came close to him on its return flight, he became frightened and ran away. Buffalo then furnished meat for their meal as on the previous occasion. "You must not try this," said he; "I am a medicine-man; that is why I have the power."

Some time afterward, as Fox was journeying along, he met an Elk, lying beside the trail. He was frightened when he saw the antlers of the Elk moving, and jumped to avoid what seemed to be a falling tree. "Sit down beside me," said the Elk. "Don't be afraid."

“The tree will fall on us,” replied Fox. “Oh, sit down; it won’t fall. I have no food to offer you, but I will provide some.” The Elk cut steaks from his own quarter, which the Fox ate, and before leaving Fox invited the Elk to return the visit.

When Elk came to see Fox, the latter tried unsuccessfully to cut flesh from his own meager flanks; then he drove sharpened sticks into his nose, and allowed the blood to run out upon the grass. This he tried in vain to transform into meat, and again he was indebted to his guest for a meal.

“I am a medicine-man; that is why I can do this,” said Elk.

## **Fox and Mountain Lion**

Fox could find nothing to eat for a long time, so that he grew weak and thin. While on a journey in search of food he met the Mountain Lion, who, taking pity upon his unhappy condition, said, “I will hunt for you, and you shall grow fat again.”

The Fox agreed to this, and they went on together to a much frequented spring. Mountain Lion told Fox to keep watch while he slept if a cloud of dust was to be seen arising from the approach of animals Fox was to waken him. Fox presently beheld the dust caused by the approach of a drove of horses.

Fox wakened Mountain Lion, who said, “Just observe how I catch horses.” As one of the animals went down to the spring to drink, he sprang upon it, and fastened his fangs in its throat, clawing its legs and shoulders until it fell dying at the water’s edge. Mountain Lion brought the horse up to the rock, and laid it before the Fox. Stay here, eat, drink, and grow fat,” said he.

Fox thought he had learned how to kill horses, so when the Coyote came along he volunteered to secure one for him. Fox jumped upon the neck of the horse, as Mountain Lion had done, but became entangled in its mane and was killed.

## **Fox and Rabbit**

Fox one day met a Rabbit who was sewing a sack. “What do you intend to do with that sack?” asked he.

“I am making this coat to protect myself from being killed by the hard hail which we are going to have today,” replied Rabbit.

“My friend, you know how to make them; give me this coat and make another for your-self.” Rabbit agreed to this, and Fox put on the sack over his head.

Rabbit then hung him on a limb and pelted him with stones, while Fox, thinking it was hail striking him, endured the punishment as long as he could, but finally fell nearly dead from the tree, and looked out, to see no signs of hail, but discovered the Rabbit running away.

Fox wished to avenge himself by killing Rabbit, and set off in pursuit of him. When overtaken Rabbit was chewing soft gum with which to make spectacles.

Fox's curiosity was stronger than his passion for revenge. "What are you making those for?" said he.

"It is going to be very hot, and I am making them to protect my eyes," answered Rabbit.

"Let me have this pair; you know how to make them and can make yourself another pair."

"Very well," said Rabbit, and he put the eye-shields on Fox, who could then see nothing, as the gum was soft and filled his eyes. Rabbit set fire to the brush all around Fox, who was badly singed in running through it. The gum melted in the fire, and yet remains as the dark rings around his eyes.

Fox again started on the trail of Rabbit, with the determination of eating him as soon as he saw him. He found Rabbit sitting beside the opening of a beehive. "I am going to eat you," said Fox; "you have tried to kill me."

"You must not kill me," replied Rabbit. "I am teaching these children," and he closed the opening of the hive, so that Fox could not see what was inside. Fox desired very much to see what was in the hive making such a noise.

"If you wish to see, stay here and teach them while I rest. When it is dinner time, strike them with a club," said Rabbit, who then ran away.

Fox patiently awaited the dinner hour, and then struck the hive with such force that he broke into it. The bees poured out and stung him until he rolled in agony. "When I see you again, I will kill you before you can say a word," declared he, as he started after Rabbit again.

Fox tracked the Rabbit to a small hole in the fence around a field of watermelons belonging to a Mexican. The Rabbit had entered to steal, and was angered at sight of the gum figure of a man which the owner of the field had placed beside the path. "What do you desire from me?" he cried, as he struck at the figure with his fore-foot, which stuck fast in the soft gum. He struck at the gum with every foot, and even his head was soon stuck in the gum.

Thus Fox found him. "What are you doing here?" he asked.

"They put me in here because I would not eat chicken for them," said Rabbit.

"I will take your place," said Fox; "I know how to eat chicken."

The Mexican found him in the morning and skinned him, and then let him go, still on the trail of the Rabbit, who had so frequently outwitted him.

# CHEROKEE

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## KANATI AND SELU: THE ORIGIN OF CORN AND GAME

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Mooney, James. "Myths of the Cherokees." *Journal of American Folklore* 1 (1888): 98–106.

**Date:** 1887

**Original Source:** Cherokee

**National Origin:** Native American

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The Cherokee, along with the Chickasaw, Choctaw, Creek, and Seminoles, were one of the "Five Civilized Tribes." At various points in their history, the Cherokee resided in Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, North and South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia. The Cherokee were the most numerous native culture in the southeastern part of the United States and ultimately the most influential. They created a nation modeled on the governmental structure of the United States. They adopted a syllabary for writing their language created by Sequoia. The following **myth** required anyone who heard it to fast and take a ritual bath presided over by a holy man. Connected to this myth is a series of events occurring later in the first age of the Cherokee in which the people, starving from a lack of game, sent for the brothers who returned and gave them the rituals to use for calling game. This myth alludes to a range of esoteric knowledge shared by the traditional Cherokee. For example, the myth establishes the intimate relationship between Kanati (representative of hunters in general) and the wolf, thus establishing the animal's protected status among any Cherokee desiring a successful hunt. Similar narratives focused on two brothers—one who is "tame" and the other who is "wild" and lives on the margins of society and at the edge

of the social order—are distributed widely in Native American tradition. “The Story of Lodge Boy, After-Birth Boy and Double-Face” among the Omaha is one such closely related example. As other examples of the twin **motif**, see “Origin of Acoma” (page 3) and “The Two Boys Who Slew the Monsters and Became Stars” (page 148) in this volume.

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**W**hen I was a boy, this is what the old men told me they had heard when they were boys.

Long ages ago, soon after the world was made, a hunter and his wife lived at Looking-glass Mountain, with their only child, a little boy. The father’s name was Kanati, “The Lucky Hunter,” and his wife was called Selu, “Corn.” No matter when Kanati went into the woods, he never failed to bring back a load of game, which his wife cut up and prepared, washing the blood from the meat in the river near the house. The little boy used to play down by the river every day, and one morning the old people thought they heard laughing and talking in the bushes, as though there were two children there. When the boy came home at night, his parents asked who had been playing with him all day. “He comes out of the water,” said the boy, and he calls himself my elder brother. He says his mother was cruel to him, and threw him into the river.” Then they knew that the strange boy had sprung from the blood of the game which Selu had washed off at the river’s edge.

Every day, when the little boy went out to play, the other would join him; but, as he always went back into the water, the old people never had a chance to see him. At last, one evening, Kanati said to his son, “Tomorrow, when the other boy comes to play with you, get him to wrestle with you, and when you have your arms around him hold on to him and call for us.” The boy promised to do as he was told; so the next day, as soon as his playmate appeared, he challenged him to a wrestling-match. The other agreed at once, but as soon as they had their arms around each other Kanati’s boy began to scream for his father. The old folks at once came running down, and when the wild boy saw them he struggled to free himself, and cried out, “Let me go! You threw me away!” But his brother held on until his parents reached the spot, when they seized the wild boy and took him home with them. They kept him in the house until they had tamed him, but he was always wild and artful in his disposition, and was the leader of his brother in every mischief. Before long the old people discovered that he was one of those persons endowed with magic powers, and they called him, “He who grew up Wild.”

Whenever Kanati went into the mountains he always brought back a fat buck or doe, or may be a couple of turkeys. One day the wild boy said to his brother, “I wonder where our father gets all that game; let’s follow him next time, and find out.” A few days afterward, Kanati took a bow and some feathers



in his hand, and started off. The boys waited a little while, and then started after him, keeping out of sight, until they saw their father go into a swamp where there were a great many of the reeds that hunters use to make arrow-shafts. Then the wild boy changed himself into a puff of bird's down, which the wind took up and carried until it alighted upon Kanati's shoulder just as he entered the swamp, but Kanati knew nothing about it. The hunter then cut reeds, fitted the feathers to them, and made some arrows, and the wild boy—in his other shape—thought, "I wonder what those things are for." When Kanati had his arrows finished, he came out of the swamp and went on again. The wind blew the down from his shoulder; it fell in the woods, when the wild boy took his right shape again, and went back and told his brother what he had seen. Keeping out of sight of their father, they followed him up the mountain until he stopped at a certain place and lifted up a large rock. At once a buck came running out, which Kanati shot, and then, lifting it upon his back, he started home again. "Oho!" said the boys, "he keeps all the deer shut up in that hole, and whenever he wants venison he just lets one out, and kills it with those things he made in the swamp." They hurried and reached home before their father, who had the heavy deer to carry, so that he did not know they had followed him.

A few days after, the boys went back to the swamp, cut some reeds and made seven arrows, and then started up the mountain to where their father kept the game. When they got to the place they lifted up the rock, and a deer came running out. Just as they drew back to shoot it, another came out, and then another, and another, until the boys got confused and forgot what they were about. In those days all the deer had their tails hanging down, like other animals, but, as a buck was running past, the wild boy struck its tail with his arrow so that it stood straight out behind. This pleased the boys, and when the next one ran by, the other brother struck his tail so that it pointed upward. The boys thought this was good sport, and when the next one ran past, the wild boy struck his tail so that it stood straight up, and his brother struck the next one so hard with his arrow that the deer's tail was curled over his back. The boys thought this was very pretty, and ever since the deer has carried his tail over his back.

The deer continued to pass until the last one had come out of the hole and escaped into the forest. Then followed droves of raccoons, rabbits, and all the other four-footed animals. Last came great flocks of turkeys, pigeons, and partridges that darkened the air like a cloud, and made such a noise with their wings that Kanati, sitting at home, heard the sound like distant thunder on the mountains, and said to himself, "My bad boys have got into trouble. I must go and see what they are doing."

So Kanati went up the mountain, and when he came to the place where he kept the game he found the two boys standing by the rock, and all the birds and animals were gone. He was furious, but, without saying a word, he went down into the cave and kicked the covers off four jars in one corner, when out swarmed bed-bugs, fleas, lice, and gnats, and got all over the boys. They

screamed with pain and terror, and tried to beat off the insects; but the thousands of insects crawled over them, and bit and stung them, until both dropped down nearly dead from exhaustion. Kanati stood looking on until he thought they had been punished enough, when he brushed off the vermin, and proceeded to give the boys a lecture. "Now, you rascals," said he, "you have always had plenty to eat, and never had to work for it. Whenever you were hungry, all I had to do was to come up here and get a deer or a turkey, and bring it home for your mother to cook. But now you have let out all the animals, and after this, when you want a deer to eat, you will have to hunt all over the woods for it, and then may be not find one. Go home now to your mother, while I see if I can find something to eat for supper."

When the boys reached home again they were very tired and hungry, and asked their mother for something to eat. "There is no meat," said Selu, "but wait a little while, and I will get you some-thing." So she took a basket and started out to the provision-house.... This provision-house was built upon poles high up from the ground, to keep it out of the reach of animals, and had a ladder to climb up by, and one door, but no other opening. Every day, when Selu got ready to cook the dinner, she would go out to the provision-house with a basket, and bring it back full of corn and beans. The boys had never been inside the provision-house, and wondered where all the corn and beans could come from, as the house was not a very large one; so, as soon as Selu went out of the door, the wild boy said to his brother, "Let's go and see what she does." They ran around and climbed up at the back of the provision-house, and pulled out a piece of clay from between the logs, so that they could look in. There they saw Selu standing in the middle of the room, with the basket in front of her on the floor. Leaning over the basket, she rubbed her stomach—so—and the basket was half-full of corn. Then she rubbed under her armpits—so—and the basket was full to the top with beans. The brothers looked at each other, and said, "This will never do; our mother is a witch. If we eat any of that it will poison us. We must kill her."

When the boys came back into the house, Selu knew their thoughts before they spoke? "So you are going to kill me!" said Selu. "Yes," said the boys; "you are a witch."

"Well," said their mother, "when you have killed me, clear a large piece of ground in front of the house, and drag my body seven times around the circle.

"Then drag me seven times over the ground inside the circle, and stay up all night and watch, and in the morning you will have plenty of corn." Then the boys killed her with their clubs, and cut off her head, and put it up on the roof of the house, and told it to look for her husband. Then they set to work to clear the ground in front of the house, but, instead of clearing the whole piece, they cleared only seven little spots. This is the reason why corn now grows only in a few places instead of over the whole world. Then they dragged the body of Selu around the circles, and wherever her blood fell on the ground the corn

sprang up. But, instead of dragging her body seven times across the ground, they did this only twice, which is the reason why the Indians still work their crop but twice. The two brothers sat up and watched their corn all night, and in the morning it was fully grown and ripe.

When Kanati came home at last, he looked around, but could not see Selu anywhere, so he asked the boys where their mother was. "She was a witch, and we killed her," said the boys; "there is her head up there on top of the house." When Kanati saw his wife's head on the roof he was very angry, and said, "I won't stay with you any longer. I am going to the ... [Wolf] people." So he started off, but, before he had gone far, the wild boy changed himself again to a tuft of down, which fell on Kanati's shoulder.

When Kanati reached the settlement of the Wolf people, they were holding a council in the town-house. He went in and sat down, with the tuft of bird's down on his shoulder. When the Wolf chief asked him his business, he said, "I have two bad boys at home, and I want you to go in seven days from now and play against them." Kanati spoke as though he wanted them to play a game of ball, but the wolves knew that he meant for them to come and kill the two boys. The wolves promised to go. Then the bird's down blew off from Kanati's shoulder, and the smoke carried it up through the hole in the roof of the town-house. When it came down on the ground outside, the wild boy took his right shape again, and went home and told his brother all that he had heard in the town-house. When Kanati left the Wolf people, he did not return home, but went on farther.

The boys then began to get ready for the wolves, and the wild boy—the magician—told his brother what to do. They ran around the house in a wide circle until they had made a trail all around it, excepting on the side from which the wolves would come, where they left a small open space. Then they made four large bundles of arrows, and placed them at four different points on the outside of the circle, after which they hid themselves in the woods and waited for the wolves. On the appointed day a whole army of wolves came and surrounded the house, to kill the boys. The wolves did not notice the trail around the house, because they came in where the boys had left the opening, but the moment they were inside the circle the trail changed to a high fence, and shut them in. Then the boys on the outside took their arrows and began shooting them down, and, as the wolves could not jump over the fence, they were all killed excepting a few, which escaped through the opening into a great swamp close by. Then the boys ran around the swamp, and a circle of fire sprang up in their tracks, and set fire to the grass and bushes, and burned up nearly all the other wolves. Only two or three got away, and these were all the wolves which were left in the whole world.

Soon afterward some strangers from a distance, who heard that the brothers had a wonderful grain from which they made bread, came to ask for some; for none but Selu and her family had ever known corn before. The boys gave them

seven grains of corn, which they told them to plant the next night on their way home, sitting up all night to watch the corn, which would have seven ripe ears in the morning. These they were to plant the next night, and watch in the same way; and so on every night until they reached home, when they would have corn enough to supply the whole people. The strangers lived seven days' journey away. They took the seven grains of corn, and started home again. That night they planted the seven grains, and watched all through the darkness until morning, when they saw seven tall stalks, each stalk bearing a ripened ear. They gathered the ears with gladness, and went on their way. The next night they planted all their corn, and guarded it with wakeful care until daybreak, when they found an abundant increase. But the way was long and the sun was hot, and the people grew tired. On the last night before reaching home they fell asleep, and in the morning the corn they had planted had not even sprouted. They brought with them to their settlement what corn they had left, and planted it, and with care and attention were able to raise a crop. But ever since the corn must be watched and tended through half the year, which before would grow and ripen in a night.

As Kanati did not return, the boys at last concluded to go and see if they could find him. The wild boy got a wheel and rolled it toward the direction where it is always night? In a little while the wheel came rolling back, and the boys knew their father was not there. Then the wild boy rolled it to the south and to the north, and each time the wheel came back to him, and they knew their father was not there. Then he rolled it toward the Sun Land, and it did not return.

"Our father is there," said the wild boy, "let us go and find him." So the two brothers set off toward the east, and after traveling a long time they came upon Kanati, walking along, with a little dog by his side. "You bad boys," said their father, "have you come here?"

"Yes," they answered; "we always accomplish what we start out to do, we are men!"

"This dog overtook me four days ago," then said Kanati; but the boys knew that the dog was the wheel which they had sent after him to find him. "Well," said Kanati, "as you have found me, we may as well travel together, but I will take the lead."

Soon they came to a swamp, and Kanati told them there was a dangerous thing there, and they must keep away from it. Then he went on ahead, but as soon as he was out of sight the wild boy said to his brother, "Come and let us see what is in the swamp." They went in together, and in the middle of the swamp they found a large panther, asleep. The wild boy got out an arrow, and shot the panther in the side of the head. The panther turned his head, and the other boy shot him on that side. He turned his head away again, and the two brothers shot together ... But the panther was not hurt by the arrows, and paid no more attention to the boys. They came out of the swamp, and soon overtook Kanati, waiting for them. "Did you find it?" asked Kanati. "Yes," said the boys,

“we found it, but it never hurt us. We are men” Kanati was surprised, but said nothing, and they went on again.

After a while Kanati turned to them, and said, “Now you must be careful. We are coming to a tribe called the ‘Cookers’ [that is, Cannibals], and if they get you they will put you in a pot and feast on you.” Then he went on ahead. Soon the boys came to a tree which had been struck by lightning, and the wild boy directed his brother to gather some of the splinters from the tree, and told him what to do with them. In a little while they came to the settlement of the cannibals, who, as soon as they saw the boys, came running out, crying, and “Good! Here are two nice, fat strangers. Now we’ll have a grand feast!” They caught the boys and dragged them into the town-house, and sent word to all the people of the settlement to come to the feast. They made up a great fire, filled a large pot with water and set it to boiling, and then seized the wild boy and threw him into the pot, and put the lid on it. His brother was not frightened in the least, and made no attempt to escape, but quietly knelt down and began putting the splinters into the fire, as if to make it burn better. When the cannibals thought the meat was about ready, they lifted the lid from the pot, and that instant a blinding light filled the town-house, and the lightning began to dart from one side to the other, beating down the cannibals until not one of them was left alive. Then the lightning went up through the smoke-hole, and the next moment there were the two boys standing outside the town-house as though nothing had happened. They went on, and soon met Kanati, who seemed much surprised to see them, and said, “What! Are you here again?”

“Oh, yes, we never give up. We are great men!”

“What did the cannibals do to you?”

“We met them, and they brought us to their town-house, but they never hurt us.” Kanati said nothing more, and they went on. Kanati soon got out of sight of the boys, but they kept on until they came to the end of the world, where the sun comes out. The sky was just coming down when they got there, but they waited until it went up again, and then they went through and climbed up on the other side.

There they found Kanati and Selu sitting together. The old folks received them kindly, and were glad to see them, and told them they might stay there a while, but then they must go to live where the sun goes down. The boys stayed with their parents seven days, and then went on toward the sunset land, where they are still living.

## **ORIGIN OF THE BEAR: THE BEAR SONGS**

**Tradition Bearer:** Ayûn’inî (Swimmer)

**Source:** Mooney, James. *Myths of the Cherokee*. Nineteenth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, 1897–1898, Part I. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1900, 325–326.

Date: 1897–1898

Original Source: Cherokee

National Origin: Native American

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In the Cherokee worldview, the bear maintained a kinship to humans by virtue of having been descended from one of their clans during the mythic period. The widely held Native American belief that animals grant success to hunters who follow the proper rituals of respect is apparent in this **myth** of the origin of bears and the songs used to call them forth to be hunted. Like Cherokee sung incantations in general, the Bear Songs, when repeated precisely, have an ability to focus supernatural power and bring about a desired end. This myth explaining the origin of the bear and the sacred **formulas** used to appeal to bears are especially valuable by virtue of the fact that they were transcribed by Cherokee ritual expert Swimmer using the syllabary invented by Sequoia. Thus, there is far less of an opportunity for “interference” (extrapolation and reinterpretation) from the collector than was usually the case in the fieldwork context.

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Long ago there was a Cherokee clan called the Ani'-Tsâ'gûhî, and in one family of this clan was a boy who used to leave home and be gone all day in the mountains. After a while he went oftener and stayed longer, until at last he would not eat in the house at all, but started off at daybreak and did not come back until night. His parents scolded, but that did no good, and the boy, still went every day until they noticed that long brown hair was beginning to grow out all over his body. Then they wondered and asked him why it was that he wanted to be so much in the woods that he would not even eat at home. Said the boy, “I find plenty to eat there, and it is better than the corn and beans we have in the settlements, and pretty soon I am going into the woods to stay all the time.” His parents were worried and begged him not to leave them, but he said, “It is better there than here, and you see I am beginning to be different already, so that I can not live here any longer. If you will come with me, there is plenty for all of us and you will never have to work for it; but if you want to come you must first fast seven days.”

The father and mother talked it over and then told the headmen of the clan. They held a council about the matter and after everything had been said they decided, “Here we must work hard and have not always enough. There he says there is always plenty without work. We will go with him.” So they fasted seven days, and on the seventh morning all the Ani'-Tsâ'gûhî left the settlement and started for the mountains as the boy led the way.

When the people of the other towns heard of it they were very sorry and sent their headmen to persuade the Ani'-Tsâ'gûhî to stay at home and not go

into the woods to live. The messengers found them already on the way, and were surprised to notice that their bodies were beginning to be covered with hair like that of animals, because for seven days they had not taken human food and their nature was changing. The Ani'-Tsâ'gûhî would not come back, but said, "We are going where there is always plenty to eat. Hereafter we shall be called bears, and when you yourselves are hungry come into the woods and call us and we shall come to give you our own flesh. You need not be afraid to kill us, for we shall live always." Then they taught the messengers the songs with which to call them, and the bear hunters have these songs still. When they had finished the songs the Ani'-Tsâ'gûhî started on again and the messengers turned back to the settlements, but after going a little way they looked back and saw a drove of bears going into the woods.

### First Bear Song

He-e! Ani'-Tsâ'gûhî, Ani'-Tsâ'gûhî, akwandu'li e'lanti' ginûn'ti,  
 Ani'-Tsâ'gûhî, Ani'-Tsâ'gûhî, akwandu'li e'lanti' ginûn'ti—Yû!  
 He-e! The Ani'-Tsâ'gûhî, the Ani'-Tsâ'gûhî, I want to lay them low on  
 the ground,  
 The Ani'-Tsâ'gûhî, the Ani'-Tsâ'gûhî, I want to lay them low on the  
 ground—Yû!

The bear hunter starts out each morning fasting and does not eat until near evening. He sings this song as he leaves camp, and again the next morning, but never twice the same day.

### Second Bear Song

This song also is sung by the bear hunter, in order to attract the bears, while on his way from the camp to the place where he expects to hunt during the day. The melody is simple and plaintive.

He-e! Hayuya'haniwä', hayuya'haniwä', hayuya'haniwä', hayuya'haniwä',  
 Tsistuyi' nehandu'yanû', Tsistuyi' nehandu'yanû'—Yoho-o!  
 He-e! Hayuya'haniwä', hayuya'haniwä', hayuya'haniwä', hayuya'haniwä',  
 Kuwâhi' nehandu'yanû', Kuwâhi' nehandu'yanû'—Yoho-o!  
 He-e! Hayuya'haniwä', hayuya'haniwä', hayuya'haniwä', hayuya'haniwä',  
 Uyâhye' nehandu'yanû', Uyâhye' nehandu'yanû'—Yoho-o!  
 He-e! Hayuya'haniwä', hayuya'haniwä', hayuya'haniwä', hayuya'haniwä',  
 Gâte'gwâ' nehandu'yanû', Gâte'gwâ' nehandu'yanû'—Yoho-o!  
 (Recited) Ûlë-nû' asëhî' tadeyâ'statakûhî' gûñ'näge astû' tsiki'  
 He! Hayuya'haniwä' (four times),  
 In Tsistu'yî you were conceived (two times)—Yoho!  
 He! Hayuya'haniwä' (four times),

In Kuwâ'hî you were conceived (two times)—Yoho!  
He! Hayuya'haniwâ' (four times),  
In Uyâ'hye you were conceived (two times)—Yoho!  
He! Hayuya'haniwâ' (four times),  
In Gâte'gwâ you were conceived (two times)—Yoho!

And now surely we and the good black things, the best of all, shall see each other.

## THE RATTLESNAKE'S VENGEANCE

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable (perhaps Swimmer, see page 39)

**Source:** Mooney, James. *Myths of the Cherokee*. Nineteenth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, 1897–1898, Part I. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1900, 306.

**Date:** 1898

**Original Source:** Cherokee

**National Origin:** Native American

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According to Cherokee tradition, snakes were supernatural beings possessing power over meteorological phenomena as well as over other plant and animal life. The narrative traditions contain an extensive selection of **myths** and **legends** devoted to natural and mythic snakes. Snakes are the focus of prayers and rituals, and rattlesnakes are invested with particular power. While killing them is an invitation to disaster as in the following myth, holy persons who are trained in the appropriate rites, songs, and prayers may kill them to obtain teeth, rattles, flesh, or oil for medicinal or religious purposes. “The Rattlesnake’s Vengeance” reveals the character of this animal and relates the origin of one of the ritual songs associated with the feared and venerated rattlesnake.

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One day in the old times when we could still talk with other creatures, while some children were playing about the house, their mother inside heard them scream. Running out she found that a rattlesnake had crawled from the grass, and taking up a stick she killed it. The father was out hunting in the mountains, and that evening when coming home after dark through the gap he heard a strange wailing sound. Looking about he found that he had come into the midst of a whole company of rattlesnakes, which all had their mouths open and seemed to be crying. He asked them the reason of their trouble, and they told him that his own wife had that day killed their chief, the Yellow Rattlesnake, and they were just now about to send the Black Rattlesnake to take revenge.



The hunter said he was very sorry, but they told him that if he spoke the truth he must be ready to make satisfaction and give his wife as a sacrifice for the life of their chief. Not knowing what might happen otherwise, he consented. They then told him that the Black Rattlesnake would go home with him and coil up just outside the door in the dark. He must go inside, where he would find his wife awaiting him, and ask her to get him a drink of fresh water from the spring. That was all.

He went home and knew that the Black Rattlesnake was following. It was night when he arrived and very dark, but he found his wife waiting with his supper ready. He sat down and asked for a drink of water. She handed him a gourd full from the jar, but he said he wanted it fresh from the spring, so she took a bowl and went out of the door. The next moment he heard a cry, and going out he found that the Black Rattlesnake had bitten her and that she was already dying. He stayed with her until she was dead, when the Black Rattlesnake came out from the grass again and said his tribe was now satisfied.

He then taught the hunter a prayer song, and said, "When you meet any of us hereafter sing this song and we will not hurt you; but if by accident one of us should bite one of your people then sing this song over him and he will recover." And the Cherokee have kept the song to this day.

## THE SPIRIT DEFENDERS OF NĬKWÄSĬ'

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Mooney, James. *Myths of the Cherokee*. Nineteenth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, 1897–1898, Part I. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1900, 336–337.

**Date:** 1898

**Original Source:** Cherokee

**National Origin:** Native American

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The Nūñnē'hī ("the immortals"), in Cherokee belief, were a spirit race who lived much as humans did. They were invisible, except when they wanted to be seen. In traditional narrative, they are depicted as benevolent protectors of the Cherokee.

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Long ago a powerful unknown tribe invaded the country from the southeast, killing people and destroying settlements wherever they went. No leader could stand against them, and in a little while they had wasted all the lower settlements and advanced into the mountains. The warriors of the old town of Nĭkwäsi', on the head of Little Tennessee, gathered their wives and

children into the townhouse and kept scouts constantly on the lookout for the presence of danger. One morning just before daybreak the spies saw the enemy approaching and at once gave the alarm. The Nīkwāsī' men seized their arms and rushed out to meet the attack, but after a long, hard fight they found themselves overpowered and began to retreat, when suddenly a stranger stood among them and shouted to the chief to call off his men and he himself would drive back the enemy. From the dress and language of the stranger the Nīkwāsī' people thought him a chief who had come with reinforcements from the Overhill settlements in Tennessee. They fell back along the trail, and as they came near the townhouse they saw a great company of warriors coming out from the side of the mound as through an open doorway. Then they knew that their friends were the Nūñnē'hī, the Immortals, although no one had ever heard before that they lived under Nīkwāsī' mound.

The Nūñnē'hī poured out by hundreds, armed and painted for the fight, and the most curious thing about it all was that they became invisible as soon as they were fairly outside of the settlement, so that although the enemy saw the glancing arrow or the rushing tomahawk, and felt the stroke, he could not see who sent it. Before such invisible foes the invaders soon had to retreat, going first south along the ridge to where joins the main ridge which separates the French Broad from the Tuckasegee, and then turning with it to the northeast. As they retreated they tried to shield themselves behind rocks and trees, but the Nūñnē'hī arrows went around the rocks and killed them from the other side, and they could find no hiding place. All along the ridge they fell, until when they reached the head of Tuckasegee not more than half a dozen were left alive, and in despair they sat down and cried out for mercy.

Ever since then the Cherokee have called the place Dayûlsûñ'yï, "Where they cried." Then the Nūñnē'hī chief told them they had deserved their punishment for attacking a peaceful tribe, and he spared their lives and told them to go home and take the news to their people. This was the Indian custom, always to spare a few to carry back the news of defeat. They went home toward the north and the Nūñnē'hī went back to the mound.

And they are still there, because, in the last war, when a strong party of Federal troops came to surprise a handful of Confederates posted there they saw so many soldiers guarding the town that they were afraid and went away without making an attack.

There is another story, that once while all the warriors of a certain town were off on a hunt, or at a dance in another settlement, one old man was chopping wood on the side of the ridge when suddenly a party of the enemy came upon him—Shawano, Seneca, or some other tribe. Throwing his hatchet at the nearest one, he turned and ran for the house to get his gun and make the best defense that he might. On coming out at once with the gun he was surprised to find a large body of strange warriors driving back the enemy. It was no time for

questions, and taking his place with the others, they fought hard until the enemy was pressed back up the creek and finally broke and retreated across the mountain.

When it was over and there was time to breathe again, the old man turned to thank his new friends, but found that he was alone—they had disappeared as though the mountain had swallowed them. Then he knew that they were the Nūññē'hī, who had come to help their friends, the Cherokee.

## HOW THE DEER OBTAINED HIS HORNS

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Mooney, James. "Myths of the Cherokees" *Journal of American Folklore* 1 (1888): 106–108.

**Date:** 1887

**Original Source:** Cherokee

**National Origin:** Native American

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In this **myth** from the Cherokee, rabbit plays his familiar role of **trickster**. The myth of "Kanati and Selu" (page 33) focused on sacred features of the Cherokee world. In these narratives, however, the origins of the animals' attributes and the phenomena of the physical universe are at times overshadowed by the amusement value attending the escapades of characters such as rabbit. Therefore, the tales invite comparison to the African American tales of Brer Rabbit and the Cajun Comrade Lapin. These narrative similarities comprise an interesting continuity across the South.

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**I**n the old days the animals were fond of amusement, and were constantly getting up grand meetings and contests of various kinds, with prizes for the winner. On one occasion a prize was offered to the animal with the finest coat, and although the otter deserved to win it, the rabbit stole his coat, and nearly got the prize for himself. After a while the animals got together again, and made a large pair of horns, to be given to the best runner. The race was to be through a thicket, and the one who made the best time, with the horns on his head, was to get them. Everybody knew from the first that either the deer or the rabbit would be the winner, but bets were high on the rabbit, who was a great runner and a general favorite. But the rabbit had no tail, and always went by jumps, and his friends were afraid that the horns would make him fall over in the bushes unless he had something to balance them, so they fixed up a tail for him with a stick and some bird's down.

“Now,” says the rabbit, “let me look over the ground where I am to run.”

So he went into the thicket, and was gone so long that at last one of the animals went to see what had become of him, and there he found the rabbit hard at work gnawing down bushes and cutting off the hanging limbs of the trees, and making a road for himself clear through to the other side of the swamp. The messenger did not let the rabbit see him, but came back quietly and told his story to the others. Pretty soon the rabbit came out again, ready to put on the horns and begin the race, but several of the animals said that he had been gone so long that it looked as if he must have been cutting a road through the bushes. The rabbit denied it up and down, but they all went into the thicket, and there was the open road, sure enough. Then the chief got very angry, and said to the rabbit, “Since you are so fond of the business, you may spend the rest of your life gnawing twigs and bushes,” and so the rabbit does to this day. The other animals would not allow the rabbit to run at all now, so they put the horns on the deer, who plunged into the worst part of the thicket, and made his way out to the other side, then turned round and came back again on a different track, in such fine style that every one said he had won the horns. But the rabbit felt sore about it, and resolved to get even with him.

One day, soon after the contest for the horns, the rabbit stretched a large grape-vine across the trail, and gnawed it nearly in two in the middle. Then he went back a piece, took a good run, and jumped up at the vine. He kept on running and jumping up at the vine, until the deer came along and asked him what he was doing.

“Don’t you see?” says the rabbit. “I’m so strong that I can bite through that grape-vine at one jump.”

The deer could hardly believe this, and wanted to see it done. So the rabbit ran back, made a tremendous spring, and bit through the vine where he had gnawed it before. The deer, when he saw that, said, “Well; I can do it if you can.” So the rabbit stretched a larger grape-vine across the trail, but without gnawing it in the middle. Then the deer ran back as he had seen the rabbit do, made a powerful spring, and struck the grape-vine right in the center; but it only flew back, and threw him over on his head. He tried again and again, until he was all bruised and bleeding.

“Let me see your teeth,” at last said the rabbit. So the deer showed him his teeth, which were long and sharp, like a wolf’s teeth.

“No wonder you can’t do it,” says the rabbit; “your teeth are too blunt to bite anything. Let me sharpen them for you, like mine. My teeth are so sharp that I can cut through a stick just like a knife.” And he showed him a black-locust twig, of which rabbits gnaw the young shoots, which he had shaved off as well as a knife could do it, just in rabbit fashion.

The deer thought that was just the thing. So the rabbit got a hard stone, with rough edges, and filed and filed away at the deer’s teeth, until they were filed down almost to the gums.

“Now try it,” says the rabbit. So the deer tried again, but this time he couldn’t bite at all.

“Now you’ve paid for your horns,” said the rabbit, as he laughed and started home through the bushes. Ever since then the deer’s teeth are so blunt that he cannot chew anything but grass and leaves.

## **THE RAVEN MOCKER**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Mooney, James. *Myths of the Cherokee*. Nineteenth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, 1897–1898, Part I. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1900, 401–403.

**Date:** 1898

**Original Source:** Cherokee

**National Origin:** Native American

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In traditional Cherokee theories of disease causation and cure, death is caused by a personal attack. This attack may come from a nonhuman, supernatural source or from a human agent such as a witch. The witch, in general, carries out his or her mischief under cover of darkness. Therefore, the Cherokee term translates as “night-goer.” In his analysis of Cherokee sacred **formulas**, James Mooney discusses ravens as agents who never fail to take disease away from the afflicted individual and then hide these afflictions in mountain crevices at the cardinal points on the Cherokee compass.

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**O**f all the Cherokee wizards or witches the most dreaded is the Raven Mocker, the one that robs the dying man of life. They are of either sex and there is no sure way to know one, though they usually look withered and old, because they have added so many lives to their own.

At night, when some one is sick or dying in the settlement, the Raven Mocker goes to the place to take the life. He flies through the air in fiery shape, with arms outstretched like wings, and sparks trailing behind, and a rushing sound like the noise of a strong wind. Every little while as he flies he makes a cry like the cry of a raven when it “dives” in the air—not like the common raven cry—and those who hear are afraid, because they know that some man’s life will soon go out. When the Raven Mocker comes to the house he finds others of his kind waiting there, and unless there is a doctor on guard who knows how to drive them away they go inside, all invisible, and frighten and torment the sick man until they kill him. Sometimes to do this they even lift him

from the bed and throw him on the floor, but his friends who are with him think he is only struggling for breath.

After the witches kill him they take out his heart and eat it, and so add to their own lives as many days or years as they have taken from his. No one in the room can see them, and there is no sear where they take out the heart, but yet there is no heart left in the body. Only one who has the right medicine can recognize a Raven Mocker, and if such a man stays in the room with the sick person these witches are afraid to come in, and retreat as soon as they see him, because when one of them is recognized in his right shape he must die within seven days. There was once a man who had this medicine and used to hunt for Raven Mockers, and killed several. When the friends of a dying person know that there is no more hope they always try to have one of these medicine men stay in the house and watch the body until it is buried, because after burial the witches do not steal the heart.

The other witches are jealous of the Raven Mockers and afraid to come into the same house with one. Once a man who had the witch medicine was watching by a sick man and saw these other witches outside trying to get in. All at once they heard a Raven Mocker cry overhead and the others scattered "like a flock of pigeons when the hawk swoops." When at last a Raven Mocker dies these other witches sometimes take revenge by digging up the body and abusing it.

The following is told on the reservation as an actual happening:

A young man had been out on a hunting trip and was on his way home when night came on while he was still a long distance from the settlement. He knew of a house not far off the trail where an old man and his wife lived, so he turned in that direction to look for a place to sleep until morning. When he got to the house there was nobody in it. He looked into the sweatlodge and found no one there either. He thought maybe they had gone after water, and so stretched himself out in the farther corner to sleep. Very soon he heard a raven cry outside, and in a little while afterwards the old man came into the sweat lodge and sat down by the fire without noticing the young man, who kept still in the dark corner. Soon there was another raven cry outside, and the old man said to himself, "Now my wife is coming," and sure enough in a little while the old woman came in and sat down by her husband. Then the young man knew they were Raven Mockers and he was frightened and kept very quiet.

Said the old man to his wife, "Well, what luck did you have?"

"None," said the old woman, "there were too many doctors watching. What luck did you have?"

"I got what I went for," said the old man, "there is no reason to fail, but you never have luck. Take this and cook it and lees have something to eat." She fixed the fire and then the young man smelled meat roasting and thought it smelled sweeter than any meat he had ever tasted. He peeped out from one eye, and it looked like a man's heart roasting on a stick.

Suddenly the old woman said to her husband, "Who is over in the corner?"

“Nobody,” said the old man. “Yes, there is,” said the old woman, “I hear him snoring,” and she stirred the fire until it blazed and lighted up the whole place, and there was the young man lying in the corner. He kept quiet and pretended to be asleep. The old man made a noise at the fire to wake him, but still he pretended to sleep. Then the old man came over and shook him, and he sat up and rubbed his eyes as if he had been asleep all the time.

Now it was near daylight and the old woman was out in the other house getting breakfast ready, but the hunter could hear her crying to herself. “Why is your wife crying?” he asked the old man. “Oh, she has lost some of her friends lately and feels lonesome,” said her husband; but the young man knew that she was crying because he had heard them talking.

When they came out to breakfast the old man put a bowl of corn mush before him and said, “This is all we have—we have had no meat for a long time.” After breakfast the young man started on again, but when he had gone a little way the old man ran after him with a fine piece of beadwork and gave it to him, saying, “Take this, and don’t tell anybody what you heard last night, because my wife and I are always quarreling that way.” The young man took the piece, but when he came to the first creek he threw it into the water and then went on to the settlement. There he told the whole story, and a party of warriors started back with him to kill the Raven Mockers. When they reached the place it was seven days after the first night. They found the old man and his wife lying dead in the house, so they set fire to it and burned it and the witches together.

# CHEYENNE

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## YOUNG MEN WHO KILLED THE HORNED SERPENT AND RELEASED THE BUFFALO

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Kroeber, A. L. "Cheyenne Tales." *Journal of American Folklore* 13 (1900): 179–181.

**Date:** 1899

**Original Source:** Cheyenne

**National Origin:** Native American

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The original lifestyle of hunting and gathering cultures on the Plains used dogs for traction. As a result, small tepees were used that could be transported by dogs who could not travel far in a day, and bands had to remain close to timber and water. There was buffalo hunting on the Plains before the acquisition of the horse, but in the pre-horse culture, this was a seasonal activity only. This is the stage of Cheyenne culture described in the following **myth**. The communal hunt required careful preparation and close supervision to ensure that as much meat as possible would be taken. The **cautionary tale** about controlling dogs and proper actions and words in the following narrative alludes to these precautions.

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**F**ar away there was a large camp-circle. Food was very scarce, and some persons had starved. One day one of the old men went about inquiring whether the people wanted to travel to a large lake, where ducks and game abounded. They moved camp, packing their goods on dogs.

Two young men were sent ahead, but they returned with the news that they had found no game whatever. The children were all crying for food, and the



misery was extreme. The people selected two strong young men able to travel four days without food, and told them that they must find something for the whole tribe, and bring back good news.

The young men set out and traveled steadily for two days, until they were worn out and slept from the middle of the night until the morning star rose. Then they went on northward again.

Finally they came near a large river, and beyond it they saw a blue mountain. The river was slow, smooth, wide, and sandy on both sides, but beyond it rose bluffs, and close behind these the mountain. The two scouts put their clothes on their heads, and entered the river. In the center, one of them got stuck fast. He shouted that some powerful thing under water was taking him; and he asked his friend to tell his parents not to weep too much for him. The other man crossed in safety. Then his friend called to him to come back and touch him as a farewell. So the other went back into the river, and touched him.

Then he went out again, and cried all day, wandering about. A person came to the top of the bank above the river, and asked him why he cried, and whether he could do anything for him. The young man replied that a powerful animal was holding fast his friend in the river, and pointed to him.

The person who had come was powerful; he wore a wolfskin, painted red, on his back; it was tied around his neck and waist, so that he looked like a wolf; and he carried a large knife. He dived into the river, and the water moved and waved, and finally an immense snake with black horns came up, and he cut its throat. The man who had been held fast was already cold and stiff in his legs, but the two others dragged him off, and floated him ashore, and laid him in the sun.

The rescuer told the other young man, "Go to the mountain, to its stone door, and tell your grandmother that I have killed the animal that I have been after so long."

The young man ran to the foot of the mountain, stood before a flat stone door, and called as he had been told, telling the woman to bring a rope with her. The old woman was glad that the animal had at last been killed.

The young man ran back, and was told by the man to help him butcher the snake; then they would carry his friend to his house. They dragged the snake on shore by its horns, and cut it in two, and then into many smaller pieces. They made many trips to the mountain, carrying the meat.

Inside, the mountain was like the interior of a tepee, with tent-poles, beds, and so on. Then the young man carried his friend to the mountain, taking him on his back, and holding his hands. The woman made a sweat-house, and he was put into it. The woman told him to try to move. The second time they poured water on the hot rocks he moved a little, the third time more, and after the fourth time he was perfectly well.

Then they went into the mountain, and the man told his daughter to cook food—corn and buffalo meat. This was the first time the young men had seen the daughter, who was very handsome. They ate all the food given them, and

were well satisfied. Then the woman asked them why they had come. They told her that they were looking for game for their starving people.

The woman said, "It is well, you will have something for your tribe." Then she asked them what kin they would be to the girl; whether they would be her brothers. While they conferred, she said that they could marry her. The other young man proposed to the one that had been fast that he should marry her; and the latter agreed. They were then all very grateful to each other, and the young man married the girl.

The woman told her daughter to take the two young men to the herd of buffalo, and the girl showed them large herds of buffalo, and on the other side wide fields of corn. Then the woman told them to cross the river in the same place as before, and not to look backwards, and to rest four times on their way home. So they traveled for four days.

Then an old man cried through the village that they were coming. All their relatives and many others came forward; but when they saw that there were three persons, they held somewhat aloof. They entered a tent, and the new husband told an old man to cry to the people to come to shake hands with his wife and embrace her. This was done, and then the young man said that he brought good news, and that that same night his wife's herd would come from the mountain.

At night long strings of buffalo came, and the people heard them on all sides. Early in the morning they saw the buffalo, as far as they could look. It was announced that the dogs were not to disturb the game. Then the hunt commenced. The buffalo ran when pursued, but always came back. As many were killed as could be used, and there was abundance of meat. The chiefs gathered, and resolved that they were thankful to the girl for her kindness, and every family was to bring her a present, the best that they had; and they asked her to take the presents to her parents. So all gave to her, and she started back to her parents with her husband and his friend.

When they arrived at the mountain, the man stood there, calling to his wife to come out, for their son-in-law had returned. She embraced the two young men from joy and gratitude. When they returned, the tribe was still hunting successfully, and they were again given presents to bring to the girl's parents.

When they brought presents a second time, the man was still more grateful, and asked his daughter to take a few ears of corn to the tribe. But she, thinking that they had enough with the buffalo, was silent. When her parents asked her why she did not answer, she told them the reason. So they returned, after her parents had warned her not to feel sorry for any buffalo killed in her sight. Soon after, the children drove a young calf toward the village, and the boys shot at it, and it died in front of her tent.

As she came out, she said to herself that she pitied the calf. But as she said it, the herd ran back toward the mountain, and nothing could be seen but dust. A crier went about, saying that presents must again be sent to the old man in

the mountain. After prayer and with blessings, the two young men and the girl started once more. After four days they arrived.

At once the old man told his daughter that she ought to have been careful. But he would not let them return to the tribe. The parents of the young men and their relatives felt lonely at the long absence, and went out alone to cry. But the young men never returned.

## TWO-FACES

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Kroeber, A. L. "Cheyenne Tales." *Journal of American Folklore* 13 (1900): 184.

**Date:** 1899

**Original Source:** Cheyenne

**National Origin:** Native American

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The character known by various names such as "Two Faces" or "Double Face" appears among Native American Plains cultures other than the Algonquian Cheyenne (see, for example, the Wichita **myth**, "The Two Boys Who Slew the Monsters and Became Stars," page 148). The protagonist in this tale uses the cleverness and imitative skills reminiscent of a **trickster** to overcome the monster.

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**N**early every night a child disappeared from a camp. A young man wondered who stole the babies. One dark night he said to himself, "I will watch tonight. I will watch every tent where the people are sleeping. If any one takes a child tonight, I may hear it cry out." So he watched the whole village, and looked outside.

He found that the thief was Two-Faces, who had one face in front and one at the back of his head, so that he could look on both sides of him. The young man found him fast asleep. Near him were many dead babies that he had stolen. Most of them had their ears cut off, and Two-Faces had a long string of ears on a line, for he lived on human ears.

The young man ran to the river and looked for shells. He gathered a great number of shells, which looked almost like human ears, and strung them, and bloodied them. Then he cut a piece of meat, and shaped it like an ear. When Two-Faces awoke, he saw a person sitting near him eating an ear. It was this young man eating the meat. Two-Faces asked him where he learned to eat ears.

The man said to him, "I live on ears. I always steal children and cut off their ears. The only thing that I am afraid of is that if I eat salt, it will kill me."

Then Two-Faces said, "I should at once die if any one beat a gourd and fat was thrown in the fire."

When night came, they both went to the camp. The young man then told Two-Faces to wait for him; he would go ahead. Then he went to his friends and told them to prepare. He was bringing Two-Faces, who had stolen all the children.

He directed that a gourd be beaten and fat meat thrown at the fire. So at last they succeeded in killing Two-Faces. Then he was burned.

## **HOW THE WHITES BECAME RICH**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Kroeber, A. L. "Cheyenne Tales." *Journal of American Folklore* 13 (1900): 177–179.

**Date:** 1899

**Original Source:** Cheyenne

**National Origin:** Native American

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The Cheyenne were a nomadic Northern Plains culture who based their way of life on the horse for mobility (after Europeans introduced the modern horse to the Americas) and the buffalo for subsistence. Originally from the northeast, this Algonquian nation was pushed west where they settled in the area of the Black Hills in the modern Dakotas and Wyoming. Anthropologist A. L. Kroeber notes concerning this narrative that it "seems probable that we have not a case of adaptation and corruption of a European original, but a native story which for some reason has attracted European additions, perhaps because [the plot is] exceptionally European in spirit" (177).

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**T**here was a great medicine-man, who was powerful and did injury, but who had a good daughter. He lived near a geyser, in an earth-lodge. Several young men lived with him, and went out hunting for him. He had great quantities of dried buffalo meat hanging all around his lodge. When meat was scarce in a village near by, he sent his young men to summon the people to him, and then he gave a feast to the various companies.

Then this great man told the companies to dress, and dance before him. When the dance was almost over, he announced that he would pick out a young man to be his son-in-law.

So he selected a young man, but after the marriage he sent the village away again. He was malicious and did not treat his son-in-law rightly. Every night he

had a fire, and slept close by his son-in-law and daughter. When they moved, he raised his head, and said, "Don't stir! Sleep!" When they talked, or even whispered, he made them be quiet, and ordered them to sleep. Even when they were outside, and spoke against him, he was so powerful that he knew it. The first morning he sent his son-in-law out to cut arrows. He told him that if he brought no smooth, straight sticks, he need not come back.

The young man wandered through the woods, but he found only rough sticks, and he was discouraged, and tired, and cried. A person called to him, and asked him why he wept.

The young man related his trouble, and the person told him to cut bulrushes of the right length. So he got as many bulrushes as he could carry, and they turned to smooth sticks. Then he went on up a mountain, and cried again.

The birds heard him, and asked him why he cried. He said that he could not get the eagle-feathers that his father-in-law wanted for feathering the arrows. So the eagle shook himself, and feathers flew out, and he got as many as he could use. Then he returned, carrying the sticks and feathers.

His father-in-law had four men who could make bows and arrows, and they began to make the arrows for him. Then he sent his son-in-law to get plums for the arrow-makers. It was nearly winter, and there was no fruit of any sort left, but he told him to get fresh plums, and bring none that were rotten or dried. He knew this was impossible.

The young man took a bag, and went out, crying. Again a person asked him why he wept. The young man said it was because he was to get plums for the arrow-makers of his father-in-law.

The person told him to go to a plum-bush, and that contains foreign elements, these are not the same in different tribes the tree would shake itself, and only fresh plums would fall from it. All this happened.

When the great medicine-man saw his son-in-law returning well loaded, he was pleased and went to meet him. So they made the arrows, and ate the plums. Next morning the great man wanted to play at throwing arrows at a hoop with his son-in-law. They played near the geyser, and the medicine-man pushed his son-in-law into it. Only his bones came out again.

Three times the great man had selected a son-in-law, and all this had happened. His daughter did not like his acts; but even when she went far off to tell her husband of his danger, the great man could hear by the wind or the earth what she said.

The fourth time he got a very fine young man for son-in-law. He sent him out to drive a buffalo of good age immediately in front of his house, so that he could shoot him with his new arrows. The son-in-law went far off, crying. Seven buffalo were about him, and one asked him what he wanted.

The young man told him, but they said they were power-less against this great man, and told him to go farther south. He went on, and met four buffalo, who asked him what he wished. But they also were powerless, and sent him

farther south. He went on and came to two buffalo. With them the same happened. As he again went on southward, he was so discouraged that he walked with his head down, and when he met a single buffalo, did not stop even when the bull asked him what he wished. Finally he turned around, and told his story. He was hopeless, for the great man could not be cut or burnt or wounded in any way. "He is like this rock," he said, and pointed to a large black stone.

Then the buffalo said, "I will try on this whether I can do anything to him." He went off east, and charged against the stone, but did not injure it. He charged from the south, from the west, from the north—all vainly. The fifth time he went toward the northeast, and this time he broke a piece out of the rock.

Then he told the young man to drive him toward his father-in-law's house. They arrived there, both seeming completely tired out; the buffalo pretended to be trying to escape, while the young man headed him off. At last, after a long chase, he drove him near his father-in-law's door. The medicine-man came out with his new arrows, and shot at the bull. When the arrows neared the buffalo, they turned to reeds again, and did not injure him; but to the medicine-man they appeared to enter the bull, and disappear in him. The bull staggered and seemed nearly dead, and the man approached him. The bull staggered farther and farther away from the house, leading the medicine-man with him, so that he might not escape. Then he turned, charged, and tossed him. As the man fell, he tossed him again and again, so that he never touched the ground. Thus he tossed him until he was completely bruised and unable to move.

Then they put him in his lodge, covered him with brush and wood, and lit it. The flames burnt higher and higher, but they only heard the medicine-man inside the fire cursing and threatening them with death when he should come out. Then suddenly there were poppings, and explosions, and beads, diamonds, and precious stones flew out of the fire.

They were afraid to touch these, for fear the man might then come to life again, and put them back into the fire. But the whites to whom some of them flew kept them, and thus became richer.

# CREE

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## LITTLE ONE LEFT ALIVE (CHE-CHE-PUY-EW-TIS)

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Bell, Robert. "The History of the Che-che-puy-ew-tis. A Legend of the Northern Crees." *Journal of American Folklore* 10 (1897): 2–8.

**Date:** ca. 1897

**Original Source:** Northern Cree

**National Origin:** Native American (Canada)

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At the time of the collection of the following **myth**, author Robert Bell notes that the "Northern Crees have extended themselves from the north-west territories of the Dominion eastward around the head of James Bay, up the east main coast of Hudson Bay, and far into the Labrador peninsula, also southward towards the watershed of the St. Lawrence, a few of them having been met with on the Bell River, just north of the Ottawa" (2). **Variants** of the narrative have been found across the breadth of the Canadian Cree homeland. In the historical period, trapping and fur trading (especially beaver pelts) was a particularly important means of livelihood for the Cree. This tale develops from that central focus. The plot of the sons of a mother murdered by a monster and the creative power of the "thrown away" twin is widely distributed in Native North American myth (see, for example, the Cheyenne "Two Faces," page 53, and the Wichita "The Two Boys Who Slew the Monsters and Became Stars," page 148).

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Once upon a time there lived an Indian, his wife, and their only son. The period had nearly arrived for the woman to be delivered of her second child. The husband had a presentiment that some-thing was going

to happen to his wife, for he repeatedly warned her when he went off hunting to take care of herself, and that if any sign of danger arose she was to hide their son under the brush flooring of the wigwam.

One day, while the man was away from the wigwam hunting, a Toosh, or devil, came, and finding only the woman in the tent, cruelly killed and disemboweled her, throwing aside the womb containing the unborn child. The Indian returned from his hunt and found the mutilated corpse of his wife, but he was in time to catch the Toosh, which he put to an ignominious death. His son he found alive, as his wife had taken the precaution to hide him under the brush of the wigwam floor, as she had been told. For a number of days the man remained in his tent, mourning the death of his wife.

It happened that just after the womb had been thrown aside, an A-pook-a-shish (mouse) chanced to hunt in that direction, and saw what she thought to be food, but on nibbling at it she was surprised to find it quivering, and on further examination she saw what proved to be a living child. Being of a kind disposition, she took it home and nursed it tenderly, and called it Che-che-puy-ew-tis (the little one that moves or quivers). The Indian and his son now moved their wigwam (which is an universal custom among these people when a death has occurred).

When the son had almost arrived at manhood he became a keen hunter, but was very unfortunate in losing his arrows. So frequently did this happen that at last he told his father of it.

“Come now,” said the old man, “shoot an arrow a short distance from where we stand, and we cannot fail to see what will become of it.” The boy did as he was told, and was surprised to see an A-pook-a-shish run away with it. “This is how my arrows are lost,” he said. “I will follow and see where she takes them.” He did so, and came to the wigwam of the A-pook-a-shish. On entering he saw all the arrows he had lost, but they were in possession of a young boy, who was amusing himself with them. The A-pook-a-shish now told the young man that this child was his brother, and related exactly the manner in which she had saved him, but cautioned him not to tell his father when he returned, as the old man might not be pleased. The lad did as the A-pook-a-shish told him, and after that he often went and visited his brother. Occasionally, when they thought the father was absent, they returned home together.

The father at last noticed that there were footprints of two sizes about the tent, and questioned his son regarding them. But the boy, still wishing to keep secret the identity of his brother, gave a misleading answer. The A-pook-a-shish having heard about it, said it would be much better for them to go to the wigwam together, for sooner or later their father would be certain to find them out. So Che-che-puy-ew-tis took his little brother home to their father’s wigwam.

When the Indian returned in the evening with his hunt, he noticed the boy in the tent, and asked his son who the little stranger was, and where he had found him. The lad told him it was his young brother, and related how the



A-pook-a-shish had discovered him after the murder of his mother, and gave him full particulars, which satisfied the man that this was really his child. He pre-tended to be very glad, and told his sons to go at once to the A-pooka-shish's wigwam with the meat of a whole beaver, and thank her for having rescued his son. But all the time he was meditating on a scheme to get rid of both the boys, as he intended taking a second wife. Still, for some time after this they all lived together in harmony with one another. Whilst the father was off hunting, the sons always used to remain about the wigwam, but they noticed that he always went to hunt in one direction, and wondered why he did this. So they made up their minds to follow his path when an opportunity should occur, and find out the reason for his strange behavior.

The next day the old man did not go hunting as usual, so the boys took advantage of this chance to investigate, and they followed up his tracks until they stopped at the margin of a deep lake, and further pursuit seemed impossible. But Che-che-puy-ew-tis was equal to the occasion. He said to his brother, "Pull up some strong spruce-roots fasten them around my waist, then take hold of the other end and I will go under the water. When you feel the roots shake, be sure and pull me out again." Che-che-puy-ew-tis then went into the water and found, as he expected, a large wigwam in the bottom of the lake. At the door were two Pishews (lynxes). He took hold of both of them, shook the roots, and his brother pulled him to the surface again. They killed the Pishews, and returning presented them to their father; but the old man, instead of being pleased, wept bitterly, and told his sons that hereafter it would be better for them to live separate; so going out of the tent, he left them together.

Che-che-puy-ew-tis, knowing their father was angry, said to his brother, "Our father will certainly come again in the morning, so let us make a number of arrows and be prepared. They did so, and, as the elder brother said, their father appeared in the morning, in company with a number of Pishews, who began to attack the boys; but the arrows they had made the night before played havoc among the Pishews, so that not one of them escaped. The following morning the attack was repeated with a fresh lot of Pishews, but Che-che-puy-ew-tis this time, after the animals were all slaughtered, shot an arrow at his father and slew him also.

The two boys now lived together and were very happy, hunting in company and killing all kinds of game.

Years had passed when one night Che-che-puy-ew-tis was awakened by his brother talking to some person, as he thought, and wondered who it could be. In the morning, when his brother went out, Che-che-puy-ew-tis looked into his robe, but found only some rotten wood. He threw it out of the wigwam, saying, "Why do you soil my brother's robe?" The next night he again heard his brother in conversation with some unknown person, and in the morning, on looking into his robe, found this time an Atik (frog), which he threw outside with the same exclamation.

Then Che-che-puy-ew-tis said to himself, "I will find wives for my brother," and he did find them, bringing home two young squaws, whom he presented to him. Thus they lived for some time, the younger brother having two wives and the elder not even one. At length one of the wives became discontented and said to the other, "I will remove to the left side of the wigwam, where our brother-in-law sits. He has no mate, and besides I find it inconvenient for both of us to be staying with one man." The other wife consented, and the next time the young men returned they found only the oldest of the wives sitting in her usual place on the right side of the wigwam, the youngest having gone over to the left side, where Che-che-puy-ew-tis generally sat.

When the men laid down their day's hunt at the door, as is customary, the youngest of the women pulled Che-che-puy-ew-tis's share to the side she had taken possession of, which clearly showed that she wanted this hunter for herself. But Che-che-puy-ew-tis did not agree with the arrangement which had been made by the women, and he also knew that his brother would be displeased with it. Besides, he wanted a wife of his own choosing. He therefore left the tent secretly.

After Che-che-puy-ew-tis had walked a considerable distance, he met with an Atik (deer). They conversed together for some time, and then he told her to find a suitable spot on which to erect a wigwam whilst he went hunting for some food for their supper. He returned in the evening and stayed with Atik one night, but would not remain another, as he thought Atik's legs were too long. So he departed in the morning.

He next met a Muskwa (black bear), but only remained with her one night as he had done with the Atik, her claws being too long and sharp to suit him.

Then he fell in with Kak (porcupine), but again one night was sufficient for him to remain with her. She could not look him straight in the face, her neck being too short and her sharp quills were also very disagreeable. So he left her, as he had done the others, and went on his journey, still determined to find a suitable mate.

The next creature Che-che-puy-ew-tis fell in with was a Wes-ku-chan ("whiskey-jack," the Canada jay). They made a wigwam for the night, as usual, and Che-che-puy-ew-tis provided a beaver for their supper, leaving it, Indian fashion, at the door. But it proved too heavy for poor Wes-ku-chan to manage, and she broke both her legs in trying to haul the carcass into the tent. Che-che-puy-ew-tis was equal to the occasion, and, taking the string off his bow, he bound the legs up nicely and the little bones soon grew together again, but to this day the marks of the bowstring can be seen on the legs of all Wes-ku-chan's descendants. Che-che-puy-ew-tis did, not remain more than one night with her, she being altogether too inquisitive. So he proceeded on his way again.

All at once an Amisk (beaver) met him, and without waiting to be asked she said to him, "If you want a mate, I will go and live with you." She appeared more to his taste than the others, so he answered, "Yes, but you must not be

lazy. You will always require to work hard; and one thing which I shall insist upon is, that when-ever we come upon a creek you must lay brush or sticks for me to walk upon. If you fail once in doing this, the creek will turn into a river and we will be lost to each other." So the Amisk agreed to the terms and they lived happily together. One day, unfortunately, Amisk (who was supposed to know a creek when she came to one) made a mistake. She was not certain that what she saw was a creek or not, and did not lay sticks or brush for her husband as usual.

Che-che-puy-ew-tis, when he returned to his mate in the evening, was horrified to find that the water at which he had left her had now turned into a large river. He only now found out that Amisk had made a mistake, and he bewailed the loss of his mate for a long time.

Walking one day along the bank of this large river, he saw to his surprise his wife swimming and diving about in the water, evidently enjoying herself. Che-che-puy-ew-tis called out, "Come ashore; you must not leave me." But Amisk said, "I cannot live ashore any longer; I find this water more to my liking; you had better come to me instead; see how easy it is to swim and dive. Throw me one of your mittens and I will show you that the water is not even wet." This she said in order to entice Che-che-puy-ew-tis to go to her. He threw one of his mittens to her as she had requested, and Amisk, diving down, brought it to the surface quite dry, having secretly anointed it with her oil. She threw it to Che-che-puy-ew-tis, saying, "Have I not told you that the water will not even wet you, just as it does not wet your mitten?"

Che-che-puy-ew-tis was now convinced, so he jumped into the water and was astonished to find that he was quite at home therein, and he stayed with his mate and lived as the beavers live.

Towards the autumn they started to build a house, but Che-che-puy-ew-tis was not at all satisfied with the way Amisk set about it, which was after the manner of the old-time beavers. He knew that, if they did not make it better than that, the Indian hunters would surely be able to kill them, as they had killed so many beavers already, if they should find their house. So he showed Amisk how to fasten large sticks, knit together the smaller ones, and mix them with stones, and how to plaster it with mud which would freeze solid, till at length they had made quite a secure abode. They lived happily together there for a time, but after a while something happened which broke the harmony, and one day Che-che-puy-ew-tis said to Amisk, "As I left my brother's wigwam without his knowledge, and as I know he has a great regard for me, I am certain, it being now winter, that he will look everywhere till he finds me, and if he discovers us here he will be sure to kill you. Come, let us make holes along the bank, so that, should the house be broken into, you will be able to escape."

Several months had passed, and the elder brother (Mejigwis) was very much annoyed at Che-che-puy-ew-tis for having left him without giving any warning, and was displeased with his youngest wife, who had been the cause of his

departure. Whilst hunting this winter it had seemed to him that the character of the Westa (beaver houses) had changed, that the Amisks had constructed them differently from those of former years. In consequence of this he now found it difficult enough to keep his family in beaver meat. At last it dawned upon him that there must be some one wiser than the Amisks themselves guiding and directing them, and who could this person be but his brother Che-che-puy-ew-tis. He therefore redoubled his efforts to find him, and, acting on the idea he had formed, he directed his attention to the beaver-houses. One day, while out hunting, a larger Westa than he had been accustomed to see attracted his attention, and cautiously approaching he broke into it and was rewarded by finding his long-lost brother; but the Amisk escaped to the holes they had made in the bank.

Che-che-puy-ew-tis was brought back to his brother's wigwam, and the best of everything was given to him, but one thing he stipulated was, that when any of the party brought home a Pay-uko Amisk (a solitary beaver), he was to be sure and mention it, as he was afraid that some day his brother might kill his mate, and he did not wish to eat her, as he knew that something would happen to himself if he did so.

His brother obeyed his wish as long as there were plenty of Amisks to kill, but frequently he was able to bring home only barely sufficient meat to feed the party, and one day he came back to the wigwam with only one beaver, and it was a Pay-uko Amisk. But he did not let Che-che-puy-ew-tis know about it, as they did not like to see him take no part in the meal. So they cooked the Amisk, and first offered Che-che-puy-ew-tis some of the liquid it had been boiled in; but he refused it, saying he feared that, as his brother had killed only one, it might be a Pay-uko Amisk. "Oh, no," said his brother; "there were quite a number of Amisks along with this one, only all the rest escaped." So Che-che-puy-ew-tis, believing his brother, drank of the liquor and ate of the flesh; but immediately after he had done so, he was transformed into a real Amisk, and jumping into the creek, on the bank of which the wigwam stood, he dived under the water and was lost forever to his brother. But he still lives as a Kitche-kisaimisk (a great old beaver), and it is his wisdom to this day that prevents the Indians from entirely exterminating the Amisk tribe, of which he is the great chief and counselor.

# CREEK

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## RABBIT GETS A TURKEY FOR WILDCAT

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Swanton, John R. *Myths and Tales of the Southeastern Indians*. Smithsonian Institution, Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin 88. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1929, 47–48.

**Date:** 1929

**Original Source:** Creek

**National Origin:** Native American

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The Creek Nation was a confederation of tribes in the “deep” southern states of Georgia and Alabama, and the contiguous areas. Prior to their removal to “Indian Territory” (Oklahoma), the Creeks developed close ties with African Americans, including offering refuge to runaway slaves. This undoubtedly influenced the **animal tales** that were collected from their descendants in later centuries. The following narrative is one such tale. In it, rabbit as **trickster** reveals his willingness to sacrifice his neighbors to save himself. Typically, he couples his guile with the character flaws of his victims to attain his ends.

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**A** Rabbit was overtaken by a Wildcat, who threatened to kill and eat him. The Rabbit said, “Do not kill me; I will bring you a turkey.” The Wildcat consented to let Rabbit try, so he ran into the woods to find the turkey, first telling the Wildcat to lie down and pretend he was dead.

Rabbit soon found some Turkeys and told them the Wildcat was dead and proposed that they all go and dance and sing around his body. The Turkeys agreed and went with Rabbit and when they saw the Wildcat’s body stretched

on the ground and his mouth and eyes looking white as if he were flyblown (for Rabbit had rubbed rotten wood on the edges of his eyes and mouth) they were satisfied that he was really dead.

Rabbit took his place at the head of the Wildcat and began to beat his drum and to sing while the Turkeys danced around him.

After the song and dance had continued a while they heard Rabbit sing, “Jump up and catch the red leg, Jump up and catch the red leg.”

“Why, he is dead and cannot jump,” they said, but since they objected, he promised not to say that any more.

So Rabbit sang and drummed away and the Turkeys again danced around their enemy’s body; but soon Rabbit sang in a low tone:

“Jump up and catch the biggest, Jump up and catch the biggest.”

The Turkeys stopped their dance, but too late, for the Wildcat jumped up and caught the biggest gobbler. Rabbit ran away to the woods and the Turkeys pursued him, threatening to kill him for his trickery. They chased him round and round the trees till at last one of the Turkeys bit at his long tail and bit it off, and ever since that time all rabbits have had short tails.

## **RABBIT STEALS FIRE**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Swanton, John R. *Myths and Tales of the Southeastern Indians*. Smithsonian Institution, Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin 88. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1929, 47–48.

**Date:** 1929

**Original Source:** Creek

**National Origin:** Native American

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In this **myth**, fire symbolizes technology in general, and one of the common exploits of the **culture hero** is the theft of fire. In the overwhelming majority of cases, the bringer of fire in other narratives serves as a **trickster** figure. Although there is an innate irony in the coupling of the wily exploiter and the clever culture bearer, the combination is appropriate. Innovation must deviate from the norm, by definition, and who deviates better than the trickster? In the following myth, rabbit turns his guile to the service of humanity rather than to his own selfish ends.

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**A**ll the people came together and said, “How shall we obtain fire?” It was agreed that Rabbit should try to obtain fire for the people.  
He went across the great water to the east. He was received gladly,

and a great dance was arranged. Then Rabbit entered the dancing circle, gaily dressed, and wearing a peculiar cap on his head into which he had stuck four sticks of rosin.

As the people danced they approached nearer and nearer the sacred fire in the center of the circle. The Rabbit also danced nearer and nearer the fire. The dancers began to bow to the sacred fire, lower and lower. Rabbit also bowed to the fire, lower and lower. Suddenly, as he bowed very low, the sticks of rosin caught fire and his head was a blaze of flame.

The people were amazed at the impious stranger who had dared to touch the sacred fire. They ran at him in anger, and away ran Rabbit, the people pursuing him. He ran to the great water and plunged in, while the people stopped on the shore.

Rabbit swam across the great water, with the flames blazing from his cap. He returned to his people, who thus obtained fire from the east.

## **RABBIT FOOLS ALLIGATOR**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Swanton, John R. *Myths and Tales of the Southeastern Indians*. Smithsonian Institution, Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin 88. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1929, 52–53.

**Date:** 1929

**Original Source:** Creek

**National Origin:** Native American

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Rabbit in the following Creek tale exemplifies **trickster** in his malicious persona. The narrative is of particular interest for the variety of cultural influences it displays. The devil is an obvious European introduction to the tale, while rabbit is an indigenous trickster in African (as hare), African American, and Native American traditions. Rabbit's strategy of asking an apparently innocent question designed to victimize Alligator by means of his own vanity, however, could be classified as "signifying," the African American rhetorical strategy of directing by indirection.

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**T**he Alligator was sunning himself on a log when the Rabbit said to him, "Mr. Alligator, did you ever see the devil?"

"No, Mr. Rabbit, but I am not afraid to see him," replied the Alligator.

"Well, I saw the devil, and he said you were afraid to look at him," said the Rabbit. "I'm not afraid of him, and you tell him so," bravely responded the Alligator.

“Are you willing to crawl up the hill tomorrow and let me show you the devil?” asked the Rabbit. “Yes, I am willing,” said the Alligator. The Rabbit spoke up and said, “Now Mr. Alligator, when you see smoke rising don’t be afraid, the devil will be just starting out.”

“You need not be so particular about me. I am not afraid,” said he. “Now when you see birds flying and deer running past you don’t get scared.”

“I shall not get scared.”

“When you hear fire crackling close to you and the grass burning all around you, don’t get scared. The devil will come along and you can get a good look at him,” and with this advice the Rabbit left.

The next day he returned and told Alligator to crawl out and lie in the high grass and wait until the devil came. So out crawled the Alligator and took his position in the grass as directed by the Rabbit.

When he saw the Alligator so far from the water the Rabbit laughed to himself. He ran across the prairie till he reached a burning stump, got a chunk of fire, and returned to a spot near his confiding friend, where he kindled the grass and soon had the pleasure of seeing a blaze all around the Alligator. Then, running to a sandy place where there was no grass, he sat down to see the fun. He had not long to wait, for when the smoke rose in clouds and the birds flew by, and the animals ran for life over the prairie, the Alligator cried out, “Oh, Mr. Rabbit, what’s that?”

The Rabbit answered, “Oh, you lie still; that’s nothing but the devil starting out.”

Soon the fire began to crackle and roar, and the flames swept over the prairie, and the Alligator called, “Oh, Mr. Rabbit, what’s that?”

“Oh, that’s the devil’s breath. Don’t be scared. You will see him directly.” The Rabbit rolled over in the sand and kicked his heels in the air. The fire came nearer and nearer and began to burn the grass all around the Alligator, and under him, till he rolled and twisted in pain. “Don’t be scared, Mr. Alligator. Just lie still a little longer and the devil will be right there and you can get a good look at him,” cried out the Rabbit, as he saw the movements of the Alligator. But the latter could stand it no longer and started down the hill to the water through the burning grass, snapping his teeth and rolling over in pain, while the Rabbit laughed and jumped in delight, saying, “Wait, Mr. Alligator, don’t be in such a hurry. You are not afraid of the devil.” But the Alligator tumbled into the water to cool his roasted skin, and wondered how the Rabbit could stand such awful scenes.



# CROW

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## FAMINE

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Hoffman, W. J. "An Absaroka Myth." *Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 10 (1881): 239–240.

**Date:** 1880

**Original Source:** Crow (Absaroka)

**National Origin:** Native American

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The Absaroka (popularly known as the Crow) shared the same nomadic lifestyle as the Cheyenne (pages 50–56) and the Lakota (pages 112–120) discussed elsewhere in this anthology. The Fool Dog of this **myth** refers to a member of a Plains fraternity often called the Contraries, or among the Crow "Crazy-Dogs-Wishing-to-Die." The Contraries did things opposite to the norm, including such acts as riding a horse backward into battle or rolling in the snow and then complaining of the heat. They were pledged to what might be labeled self-destructive madness during war. The bravery that was expected of the young men in general was carried to extremes by the Fool Dogs. Thus, in spite of the suicidal appearance of many of their actions, they served the needs of the group. This theme is echoed in the following narrative.

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**A** long time ago, before we had either guns or horses, and lived in a country where the snow never fell, there dwelt among us a beautiful maiden whom the sun saw and fell in love with. The maiden was the pride of the Absaroka, and every warrior tried to excel the others in making her presents of the finest robes. She was surrounded with every comfort, and lived in the best

lodge in the village. The sun came here to visit her every night, and in time a child was born, which, as it grew older would amuse itself by sliding down the rays of sunlight that entered the lodge. After a while, Fool Dog also saw this woman and fell in love with her, but finding his love was not returned, he ravished her. The next time the sun visited her, she related all that had happened, whereupon the sun became very angry and threatened to destroy the Absaroka.

There came a great famine; the snow fell, and the buffalo did not return to the hunting grounds. The weather continued so cold during the following summer that the corn did not grow and the Absaroka were rapidly dying off from starvation and disease. Then the chief men met in council, where it was decided that it were better for them to seek a new home. It happened that while the Absaroka were moving, that Fool Dog was obliged to fall behind on the trail, as he was weak, sick, and starving; then White Wolf, the servant of the sun, appeared to him and said that the Absaroka might yet be saved if his directions were followed: Fool Dog must hasten on to overtake the party at their next camp, where an offering must be made to the sun; he must gather a large pile of dry wood and grass for kindling; also some corn and the fat of the buffalo, of which he must make ten balls, to be thrown upon the pile, when the fire would instantly appear.

When White Wolf had finished talking he disappeared, and Fool Dog started on the trail, though he had great difficulty in reaching the party who had already encamped at some distance for the night. He began to search in the various lodges for the corn and buffalo fat, but meeting only with disappointment, he strolled away from camp to meditate. Here he observed a solitary lodge, occupied by an old woman who, upon seeing the distress of Fool Dog, inquired the cause. Fool Dog told her of his meeting with White Wolf, and the instructions he had received, but said he was unable to complete the offering to the sun, necessary for the preservation of the tribe. The old woman replied that she had a little corn left that had been laid by for planting in the country to which they were going, but was willing to part with some of it for the purpose required; also, that her son had a necklace to which was attached a small buckskin sack containing buffalo fat, which he always carried about with him as "medicine"; this, said the old woman, she would also give with the corn. The old woman then left, but soon returned again with the promised articles, of which Fool Dog at once made ten balls, and hastening back to camp, he threw them upon the pile of wood, which was immediately ignited.

Then White Wolf came again and told Fool Dog that he must take a "buffalo chip" (dried bit of bison dung), pulverize it and sprinkle it upon the snow, and that upon the following morning he would find ten buffalo there, of which the Absaroka must not permit any to escape. Fool Dog followed these instructions, and all the warriors who were strong enough turned out the next morning, surrounded the buffalo which they found, and killed them.

As there was scarcely enough meat to satisfy the starving people, they began to fear that they should yet perish, when White Wolf came a third time, and told Fool Dog that he must take another "buffalo chip," pulverize it, and sprinkle it upon the snow as he had done the other, when he would find one hundred buffalo at that place upon the following morning, but the Absaroka must be careful to kill every one, and not allow a single animal to escape. Fool Dog again did as he was told, and next morning the buffalo were found as promised, when the slaughter began. It happened that one young bull escaped, who immediately ran to the sun and complained. Then the sun cursed the buffalo, and told him he would no longer protect the herds. He next called White Wolf and cursed him, saying he was no longer a servant of the sun, but would be obliged to subsist upon such offal as the Absaroka chose to leave him. The sun no longer tried to destroy the Absaroka, but remained neutral, and since that time he has had no children with an Absaroka woman.

# ESKIMO

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## THE BEWITCHED WIVES

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Burrows, Elizabeth. "Eskimo Tales." *Journal of American Folklore* 39 (1926): 79–80.

**Date:** 1926

**Original Source:** Eskimo

**National Origin:** Native American

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In this and the following narratives, the name "Eskimo" is used for the native people of the northern regions of North America. These groups are more accurately classified by other labels, for example, Inuit or Yupik. The more widely known though less precise term was chosen to preserve a user-friendly category for the collection. The cure for supernatural assault among the Eskimo is by recourse to a shaman, an individual who through personal power (as distinct from divine intervention) is able to discover the source of evil influence and remove it. In many cases, the shaman then sends the malevolent force from the victim to the original aggressor. This is the case in the following narrative when the ferns used to remove the girl's bewitchment are then used as the instrument of attacking the evil woman-spirit.

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A little girl, who lived alone with her grandmother, followed tracks along the river till at a water-hole she found a house where a man was making arrows. He gave her no greeting, but warned her to be careful lest the door close upon her. She got away safely to the ceremonial house near-by, but here the door in closing upon her bit off a piece of her dress. On her return home her grandmother suspected her adventure from the torn garment, but the girl claimed that the rent was made by a fall on the ice.

Early next morning she returned to the Arrow-maker's with a plate of fish-heads. The house was empty. She lifted up the grass-mat on the wall and discovered another door. She went through it into a passage where she commenced sliding, first on her feet till her moccasins were worn out, then on one side, then on the other, then on her breasts, and then on her back, in each position wearing out the dress on that side. She held on to her plate of fish-heads, and at last came to a high cliff overlooking the water. She heard some one singing.

It was the Arrow-maker she had seen the previous day; he was sealing in his kayak. When he had speared the seal, lifted it on his raft, cut it up, and put it into the kayak, he came in close to the cliff, and told the girl to jump into the boat. She was afraid, but he pointed out that the place where she was covered with the bones of people who had starved to death there, and warned her that unless she obeyed, she would meet the same fate. The girl jumped, and the man took her home, warning her not to look behind at anyone who called to her. She heard people crying out, and he told her it was his wives making a great racket.

Finally they came to his home where there were two houses. He told her to go to the smaller one, where were the head-man and the head-woman who welcomed her with gifts of clothing, and sent food to the ceremonial house for the man. Several times the girl heard someone calling, but each time she refused to look in the direction of the call.

In the course of a year, the girl married the Arrow-maker. One day as she carried his food to him at the ceremonial house, she at last looked behind her at the person whom she heard calling. At once she was in the power of this evil woman-spirit, and followed her to her house. There this evil spirit gave her snow-and-oil to eat, and immediately she began to cry out continuously like the other wives. Thereupon the evil woman threw her out of the house, where her husband found her and put her into the house with the other wives.

In the large village across the river an old woman lived with her grandson, and the girl had been accustomed to give them food. When the old woman knew that the girl had been bewitched, she sent her grandson to get her. She put her on a grass-mat, removed her clothes, and with a bunch of ferns whipped her from the feet to the face, until at last the girl sat up and asked why she had been awakened.

Then the old woman directed her to take the ferns and use them in the same way on the face of the evil woman-spirit. When she had done so, the bad woman began to call out continuously as she had made others do. In the same way the girl transformed also the evil woman's father and mother, and then took them all by the hair and threw them out of the house.

Meanwhile her husband searched for her, and when he found her cured in the house of the old woman, he took her home where they lived together and had children. He always took care of the old woman who had saved her life, but the rest of the villagers all died.

## THE ORIGIN OF THE NARWHAL

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Kroeber, A. L. "Tales of the Smith Sound Eskimo." *Journal of American Folklore* 12 (1899): 169–170.

**Date:** ca. 1897

**Original Source:** Eskimo

**National Origin:** Native American

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The Arctic can be a land of meager resources. The neglect and even abandonment of those who are not able to contribute to community survival was a matter of course in the traditional culture. The cannibalistic Adlet appear in this tale (see "Origin of the Adlet and the Whiteman," page 73) as one of the trials the siblings must endure in their quest for community. This tale is widely distributed not only among the Eskimo but also among Athabascans and the Bella Bella of the Northwest Coast.

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**T**here was a blind boy who lived with his mother and sister. They went to a place where there was no one and lived alone. One day, when they were in their tent, a bear came up to it.

Though the boy was blind he had a bow, and the woman aimed it at the bear for him. The arrow struck the bear and killed it. The mother, however, deceived her son and told him he had missed it. She cut it up and then cooked it. The young man now smelled the bear-meat, and asked his mother whether it was not bear he was smelling. She, however, told him he was mistaken. Then she and her daughter ate it, but she would give him nothing. His sister, however, put half her food in her dress secretly, to give him later.

When her mother asked her why she was eating so much (noticing that she seemed to eat an unusual quantity), the girl answered that she was hungry. Later, when her mother was away, she gave the meat to her brother. In this way he discovered that his mother had deceived him. Then he wished for another chance to kill something, when he might not be thus deceived by his mother.

One day, when he was out of doors, a large loon came down to him and told him to sit on its head. The loon then flew with him toward its nest, and finally brought him to it, on a large cliff. After they had reached this, it began to fly again, and took him to a pond [the ocean].

The loon then dived with him, in order to make him recover his eyesight. It would dive and ask him whether he was smothering; when he answered that he was, it took him above the surface to regain his breath. Thus they dived, until the blind boy could see again. His eyesight was now very strong; he could

see as far as the loon, and could even see where his mother was, and what she was doing. Then he returned. When he came back, his mother was afraid, and tried to excuse herself, and treated him with much consideration.

One day he went narwhal-hunting, using his mother to hold the line. “Spear a small narwhal,” his mother said, for she feared a large one would drag her into the water by the line fastened around her. He speared a small one, and she pulled it ashore. Then they ate its blubber.

The next time two appeared together, a small white whale and a large narwhal. “Spear the small one again,” she told him. But he speared the large one, and when it began to pull, he let go the line, so that his mother was dragged along, and forced to run, and pulled into the water.

“My knife,” she cried, in order to cut the rope. She kept calling for her knife, but he did not throw it to her, and she was drawn away and drowned. She became a narwhal herself, her hair, which she wore twisted to a point, becoming the tusk.

After this, the man who had recovered his sight, and his sister, went away. Finally they came to a house. The brother was thirsty, and wanted water. He asked his sister for some, telling her to go to the house for it. She went up to it, but was at first afraid to go in.

“Come in, come in!” cried the people inside, who were murderous Adlet. When she entered, they seized her and ate her. She had stayed away a long time, and finally her brother went to look for her.

He entered the house, but could not find her. An old man there, after having eaten of her, tried to say he did not have her, and did not know where she was. The brother, however, kept stabbing the inmates of the house with a tusk he had, trying to make them confess, but vainly, and finally killed them.

Then her brother put her bones together and went away, carrying them on his back. Then the flesh grew on the bones again, and soon she spoke, “Let me get up!”

But he said to her, “Don’t get up!”

At last she got up, however. Then they saw a great many people, and soon reached them. By this time his sister had quite recovered; she ate, and went into a house. She married there, and soon had a child. Her brother also married.

## ORIGIN OF THE ADLET AND THE WHITEMAN

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Rink, H., and Franz Boas. “Eskimo Tales and Songs.” *Journal of American Folklore* 2 (1889): 125.

**Date:** 1889

**Original Source:** Eskimo

**National Origin:** Native American

It is erroneous to think of the Eskimo habitat as barren land. As their north-south range is great, there is variation in topography and land form, climate, vegetation, and the availability of fish and game. The arctic is a desert in truest sense of the world. The cold reduces the amount of moisture in the air so that some areas receive as little as four inches of precipitation a year, so it is a difficult task to obtain fresh water. Summers are short and defined when temperatures above freezing. Streams begin to flow. Water travel becomes possible, but walking becomes virtually impossible over the swampy tundra because of melting surface areas. At the onset of winter and freezing temperatures, the people begin to settle down. Nuclear families are often organized into bands. Band leadership is personal or charismatic: family allegiance, personality qualities, or physical strength. An episode in the following **myth** of the origin of the Adlet and the Whiteman recalls the a central figure in Eskimo myth, the female sea spirit called various names—including, for example, Takanakapsaluk, Nuliajuk, and Sedna. She is a terrifying presence living in a house at the bottom of the sea. Often the shamans traveled on spirit journeys to confront her and her entourage of monsters in times of famine or danger to win her help for the people, such help as asking her to provide seals and other sea mammals, which according to myth grew from the severed parts of he own body.

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**S**aviqong (that is, the knifeman), an old man, lived alone with his daughter. Her name was Niviarsiang (that is, the girl), but as she did not want to take a husband she was also called Uinigumissuitung (that is, she who did not want to take a husband).

She refused all her suitors, but at last a dog, spotted white and red, whose name was Ijiqang (that is the powerful eye), won her affection and she married him. They had ten children, five of whom were Adlet and five dogs.

The legs of the Adlet were like those of dogs, and hairy all over, the soles excepted, while the upper part of their bodies was human. When the children grew up they became very voracious, and as the dog Ijiqang did not go hunting at all, but let his father-in-law provide for the whole family, Saviqong found great difficulty in feeding them. Moreover, the children were very clamorous and noisy; so at last their grandfather, being tired of their manifold demands and the trouble they gave him, put the whole family into his boat and carried them to a small island. He told Ijiqang to come every day and fetch meat.

Niviarsiang hung a pair of boots on his neck and he swam across the narrow channel separating the island from the mainland. But Saviqong, instead of giving him meat, filled the boots with heavy stones which drowned Ijiqang when he attempted to return to the island.



Niviarsiang thought of revenging the death of her husband. She sent the young dogs to her father's hut and let them gnaw off his feet and hands. In return Saviqong, when his daughter happened to be in his boat, threw her overboard, and cut off her fingers when she clung to the gunwale. As they fell into the sea they were transformed into seals and whales. At last he allowed her to climb again into the boat.

As she feared that her father might think of killing or maiming her children, she ordered the Adlet to go inland, where they became the ancestors of a numerous people. She made a boat for the young dogs, setting up two sticks for masts in the sole of one of her boots, and sent the puppies across the ocean. She sang, "Angnaijaja. When you will have arrived on the other side, you will make many little things. Angnaija."

## WHEN RAVEN WANTED TO MARRY SNOWBIRD AND FLY WITH THE GEESE

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Kroeber, A. L. "Tales of the Smith Sound Eskimo." *Journal of American Folklore* 12 (1899): 173–174.

**Date:** 1897–1898

**Original Source:** Eskimo

**National Origin:** Native American

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Raven served as **trickster** and **culture hero** for both the Eskimo and for many other native cultures along the Northwest Coast. Despite his gift of fire, the tales of raven also depict him with the common flaws of trickster figures—in this case lying, to satisfy his selfish impulses and intruding where his company is not wanted.

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A small snowbird was crying because she had lost her husband. While she was crying, the raven, who had no wife, came along. When the raven reached her he said, "Why are you crying?"

"I am crying for my husband, because he has been away so long a time," said the snowbird. "My husband went out to look for food for me, and has not come back."

The raven told her that her husband was dead; that he had been sitting on a rock, when this became loosened and fell through the ice, and that he had fallen with it. "I will marry you," he said. "You can sleep here under my armpit. Take me for a husband; I have a pretty bill; I have a pretty chin I have good enough nostrils and eyes; my wings are good and large, and so are my whiskers."

But the little snowbird said, “I don’t want you for my husband.” Then the raven went away, because the snowbird did not want to marry him.

After a while the raven, who was still without a wife, came to some geese who had become persons. The geese were just going away. The raven said, “I too, I who have no wife, I am going.” The geese, because they were about to leave, now became birds again. One of them said, “It is very far away that we are going. You (meaning the raven) had better not go with us. Don’t come with us.”

The raven said, “I am not afraid to go. When I am tired, I shall sleep by whirling up.” Then they started, the raven going with them. They flew a great distance (having now become birds), passing over a large expanse of water, where there was no land to be seen. Finally, when the geese wanted to sleep, they settled and swam on the water, and there they went to sleep. The raven also grew very tired, and wanted to sleep, but of course could not swim. So he whirled upwards towards the sky. But as soon as he went to sleep, he began to drop from up there.

When he fell into the water he woke up and said, “Get together, so that I can climb on your backs and go to sleep there.” The geese did as he told them, and he was soon asleep on their backs.

Then one of the geese said, “He is not light at all. Let us shake him off, because he is so heavy.” Then they shook him off their backs into the water.

“Get together,” cried the raven. But they did not do so, and thus the raven was drowned.

## **RECOVERING THE SUN**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Boas, Franz. “Notes on the Eskimo of Port Clarence, Alaska.” *Journal of American Folklore* 7 (1894): 205–206.

**Date:** ca. 1894

**Original Source:** Eskimo

**National Origin:** Native American

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Many Eskimo live in an environment in which the land is mostly tundra that remains permanently frozen except for the few inches of surface that thaw during the brief summers and the nights of winter darken until there is twilight at noon in the northernmost areas. A **myth** such as the following gives voice to the anxiety that this lack of light can generate. In the course of the search for the sun, the party covers a territory filled with monsters and approaches the edge of a world that Eskimo tradition maintained was flat and balanced on wooden pillars. The party succeeds because of a **motif** that has appeared in other Eskimo narratives: a young woman defying a parent.

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Once upon a time the people were assembled in a singing house. While they were dancing the sun disappeared, and nobody knew what had become of it. The people were unable to go hunting, and soon all their provisions were exhausted. Then they told the women to mend their clothing carefully, and to make as many boots as possible.

These they put into bags and set out in search of the sun. It was dark all the time. They followed the seacoast, and went so long that they wore out their boots. Then they took new ones from their traveling-bags.

After many days they came to a country which swarmed with seals, walrus, and deer. There they found a people whose language they did not understand. After some time, however, they learned to converse with them. They asked these people if they had seen the sun.

The latter replied that they would come to five places. At the fifth place there lived a woman who had both the sun and the moon in her house. Then they went on. It was very cold, and they ran as fast as they could in order to keep warm. When their provisions began to run short, they reached another country which swarmed with game.

They found a people whose language they did not understand, but after some time they were able to converse with each other. There they obtained the same information as before, and went on.

It was very cold, and they ran as fast as they could, in order to keep warm. When their provisions began to run short, they reached a third country which swarmed with game.

They met a people whose language they did not understand. After some time they were able to converse, and upon their inquiries they were told that at the second place which they would reach there lived a woman named Itudlu'g-piaq, who had both sun and moon, but that it was very doubtful if they would be able to obtain it.

Then they went on. It was very cold, and they ran as fast as they could, in order to keep warm. When their provisions began to run low, they reached a country which swarmed with game. There they found dwarfs, who tried to escape when they saw the strong men coming. They caught them, however, and learned that at the next place they would find the house of Itudlu'g-piaq, who had both sun and moon.

They went on. On their way they found ice and driftwood obstructing their way, but they kicked it aside. At that time the people were very strong and able to lift heavy stones. After they had gone a long time they saw a singing house. When they came near, they went very slowly, because they were afraid.

At last one of the men tied his jacket around his waist and tied his pants around his knees. Then he crept cautiously through the entrance and put his head through the door in the bottom of the floor. He saw a young woman, Itudlu'g-piaq, sitting in the middle of the rear of the house. Her father was sitting in the middle of the right-hand side of the house, her mother in the middle of the

left-hand side. In each of the rear corners a ball was hanging from the roof. At the right-hand side was a large ball, and at the left-hand side a smaller one.

Then he whispered, "Itudlu'gpiag, we came to ask you for some light."

Then her mother said, "Give them the small ball."

The man, however, refused and asked for the large ball. Then Itudlu'gpiag took it down and gave it a kick. It fell right into the entrance hole. The people took it and ran outside. Then they tore the ball to pieces and the daylight came out of it. It was not warm at once, but it grew warmer day after day. If they had taken the small ball it would have been light, but it would have remained cold.

# HAIDA

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## STORY OF THE FIN-BACK CREST

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Deans, James. "Legend of the Fin-Back Whale Crest of the Haidas, Queen Charlotte's Island, B.C." *Journal of American Folklore* 5 (1892): 44-46.

**Date:** ca. 1890

**Original Source:** Haida

**National Origin:** Native American (Canada)

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Because of the predictability of sources of subsistence, Northwest Coast cultures such as the Haida were able to develop stable settlements and devote less time to the business of staying alive. As a result, the Northwest Coast societies were highly stratified with hereditary chiefs and lineages ranging from commoners to the nobility. In any consideration of the social structure on the Northwest Coast, the references to rank and status must at some point turn to the consideration of crests. These crests were the outward symbols of rank and ancestry. They operated like coats-of-arms and parallel the crests painted on shields in medieval Europe where a similar type of art was used to reflect rank and position among European nobility. According to James Deans, "As a people, the Haidas were divided into a number of crests, or clans, each having for its crest some animal, bird, or fish. There were formerly two principal crests, or as some people style them, phratries, each being divided into a number of smaller ones. Each of these crests had a **legend**" (43). The following narrative is the **myth** of the fin-back whale, often called the killer whale.

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It has long been related among the Haidas that at Quilcah, where the oil-works stand, about three miles west from the village of Skidegat's Town, lived, long ago, a boy, who dwelt with his aged grandmother. He was the youngest of a family of eleven sons, both his parents being dead, and also his brothers, of whom I shall say more by and by. Excepting himself and the old woman, no other person lived in that place, all the other Indians in that quarter being on Mand Island. Our hero and his grandmother belonged to a different crest from the others. Close to the spot where they lived were three stone boats or canoes. What is meant by these I do not know, unless it be canoes made entirely by hot stones and stone hammers, as used to be the case in by-gone ages. This boy, it seems, was so weak and sickly that he could neither stand upright nor walk. His weakest parts were from the knees down.

One day he said, "Granny, put me into one of these three canoes," and this she did. After sitting in the canoe for a considerable length of time he became quite strong, and was able to walk like any other person.

After becoming strong, he used to swim about in the bay. One day, instead of a swim, he concluded to have a sail, and with this idea got his grandmother's aid to put one of them into the water. While this was being done, two of them broke, but they were successful with the third. After this, instead of swimming, he used to sail about on the bay, gradually venturing farther and farther from the shore.

One day, making a further venture than usual, he sailed up the Hunnah River, a mountain stream emptying its waters into Skidegat channel, four or five miles west of the place where he lived.

Tradition says that this river in olden times was three times larger than it now is. At present there is seldom water enough to float a canoe. It is also related that the waters of the sea came higher up on the land than is now the case. (Of the rise of the land evidence is everywhere to be found.)

After pulling up the river, he became tired, so in order to rest he pulled ashore and lay down. In those days at the place where he went ashore, in the bed of the river, were a number of large boulders, while on both sides of the stream were many trees.

While resting by the river, he heard a dreadful noise, up stream, coming toward him. Looking to see what it was, he was surprised to behold all the stones in the river bed coming down towards him. The movement of these frightened him so much that he jumped to his feet and ran into the timber.

He found he had made a mistake, because all the trees were cracking and groaning, and all seemed to him to say, "Go back, go back at once to the river, and run as fast as you can." This he lost no time in doing. When again at the river, led by his curiosity, he went to see what was pushing the stones and breaking the trees; on reaching them he found that a large body of ice was coming down, pushing everything before it. Seeing this, he took his canoe and fled towards home.

Some time after this adventure with the ice, *Scanna gan Nuncus* [the Fin-back Whale Boy] took his trusty bow and quiver filled with arrows and went out in order to shoot a few birds.

Walking along the shore, he saw at a distance what seemed to be a man, standing on shore at the edge of the bushes, looking at him. Wondering who the stranger could be, he walked over toward him and hailed him. Receiving no answer, he went up to him, and was surprised to find only a stump with a curving dome resembling a man's head. Turning to go away, a voice which seemed to come from the head said, "Don't go away; take me down, take me down." Hearing these words, he took the stump in his arms, pulling him down at the same time. I say him, because it was a man under enchantment. Taking him down broke the spell, and he instantly became himself again.

When thus restored, he told our hero that long ago he had been taking liberties with the Cowgans [wood spirits], who as a punishment had cast upon him a spell, under the influence of which he was to remain as a stump until a young man who lived with his grandmother would come and set him free, and he, our hero, was the person predicted. The Cowgans, or wood nymphs (literally, wood mice), were said to be a number of beautiful young women whose homes were in the woods and among the mountains. At the head of these was a queen who was remarkable for her beauty, and who also lived in a magnificent palace in some unknown locality.

In order to discover the palace, and to see the queen, a thing permitted to none except those who could show some act of kindness done, the young man used to go to the woods and mountains, from which quest many never returned, and of this number were the ten brothers of our hero. These nymphs, it also appears, used to seek the company of young men, and lead them to take liberties with them, and when tired of their services would turn them into stumps.

The stump man asked our hero if he would like to see the queen and her palace, to which he answered yes.

"Well, then, go your way until you find a lame mouse trying to run on a big log, be kind to it, and it will show you what to do, and where to go."

After leaving the stump man, our hero did not go far until he saw a poor lame mouse trying to run along a large log of wood; he watched it for a while, and saw that it would run a little way and then fall off. Seeing this, he went and picked it up, put it on the log and set it going again; this he did several times. At last it stopped trying, and told our hero, "You are a good man and a kind one. Instead of killing me, every time I fell off the log you picked me up and put me on again. Many a one would have chased me and tried to kill me, but you did neither. I am not lame; I only feigned lameness in order to try you. You are *Scanna gan Nuncus*, and you would like to see the queen of the Cowgans. Your ten brothers also wished to see her. They could not because they were bad men; they ran after me and tried to kill me. No bad man can try to kill me and see the queen and live. That was why they all disappeared so mysteriously. By trying

to put me out of the way, they all met the same fate. Now, come follow me, and I will show you the queen and her palace.”

The mouse led and our hero followed, through long grass bushes and timber, until they reached a beautiful country, where everything was fair and young. After traveling across this region for some time, they came to the palace. Anything so beautiful Scanna gan Nuncus never saw, nor ever could picture in his imagination.

“Now,” said the mouse, “let us go inside, and I will introduce you to the queen of the Cowgans.” This it did, telling her that he was a good and kindly man who, unlike his brothers, did not run after it to kill it.

When they found the queen, she was sitting spinning with a wheel. She was so pretty and fair to look on that our hero nearly forgot himself. The queen made him welcome, left her spinning, and came and sat beside him, telling him that as he was a good man he should be always welcome to her palace, and whenever he decided to visit her he had only to come to the log, and he would find her servant, the mouse, who would show him the way. How long he stayed with her I have as yet been unable to learn. Thus much I can say, that his grandmother asked him where he had lived so long. He replied that while absent he had been where few or none had ever been before; he had visited the queen of the Cowgans.



# Hopi

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## HOW THE TWINS VISITED THE SUN

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Fewkes, J. Walter. "The Destruction of the Tusayan Monsters." *Journal of American Folklore* 8 (1895): 136–137.

**Date:** ca. 1895

**Original Source:** Hopi (Arizona)

**National Origin:** Native American

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The Hopi were a farming culture that relied on rainfall to grow their crops of corn, beans, and squash. Given the fact that they are at the mercy of forces of nature, great energy was devoted to religious ceremonies that literally caused natural acts such as rainfall to occur. Religious life was developed through the religious societies and clans that were headed by strong females. Spider-Woman, the mother of the Twins, was an especially powerful female figure. Hopi witches, who were believed to be possessed of "two hearts," were traced back to mythic times. Spider-Woman (or Grandmother Spider as she is sometimes called) brought both death and witchcraft into the lives of the people.

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The Twins lived with Spider-Woman, their mother, on the west side of Mt. Taylor, and desired to see the home of their father. Spider-Woman gave them as a charm a kind of meal, and directed that when they met the guardians of the home of the Sun, to chew a little and spurt it upon them.

The Twins journeyed far to the sunrise where the Sun's home is entered through a canon in the sky. There Bear, Mountain Lion, Snake, and "Canyon Closing" keep watch. The sky is solid in this place, and the walls of the entrance

are constantly opening and closing, and would crush any unauthorized person who attempted passing through.

As the Twins approached the ever fierce watchers, the trail lay along a narrow way; they found it led them to a place on one side of which was the face of a vertical cliff, and on the other a precipice which sunk sheer to the Below (Underworld). An old man sat there, with his back against the wall and his knees drawn up close to his chin.

When they attempted to pass, the old man suddenly thrust out his legs, trying to knock the passers over the cliff. But they leaped back and saved themselves, and in reply to a protest the old man said his legs were cramped and he simply extended them for relief. Whereupon the hero remembered the charm which he had for the southwest direction, and spurted it upon the old man and forced the malignant old fellow to remain quite still with legs drawn up, until the Twins had passed.

They then went on to the watchers, guardians of the entrance to the Sun's house, whom they subdued in the same manner. They also spurted the charm on the sides of the cliff, so that it ceased its oscillation and remained open until they had passed.

These dangers being past, they entered the Sun's house and were greeted by the Sun's wife, who laid them on a bed of mats. Soon Sun came home from his trip through the underworld, saying, "I smell strange children here; when men go away their wives receive the embraces of strangers. Where are the children whom you have?" So she brought the Twins to him, and he put them in a flint oven and made a hot fire. After a while, when he opened the door of the oven, the Twins capered out laughing and dancing about his knees, and he knew that they were his sons.

## HOW THE TWINS KILLED THE GIANT ELK

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Fewkes, J. Walter. "The Destruction of the Tusayan Monsters." *Journal of American Folklore* 8 (1895): 135–136.

**Date:** ca. 1895

**Original Source:** Hopi (Arizona)

**National Origin:** Native American

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Moving beyond the role of mischievous young **tricksters** that is given to them in Hopi mythology, the twins mature into **culture heroes** in this **myth**. They do so by cleansing the land of a monster and giving chipmunk its distinctive markings.

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**G**reat Elk was one day lying down in a valley near Mount Taylor (one of the San Francisco mountains), and the Twins went out against him. Mole met them and said, “Do not encounter him, for he is mighty, and may kill you; wait here, and I will help you.” Mole then excavated four chambers in the earth, one below the other, and made the Twins remain in the upper one.

He dug a long tunnel, and coming up under Elk, plucked a little soft hair from over his heart, at which Elk turned his head and looked down, but Mole said, “Be not angry, I only want a little soft down to make a bed for my children.” So Elk allowed him to continue the plucking. But Mole took away enough fur to leave the skin quite bare over the heart. He returned to the Twins and told them what he had done.

Then each Twin threw his lightning, and wounded Elk, who sprang to his feet, and charged them, but the Twins concealed themselves in the upper chamber, and when Elk tried to gore them. His horns were not long enough; again he charged, and thrust his horns downward, but the Twins had safely retreated to the second chamber; again he tried to reach them, but they were safe in the third room. They retreated to the fourth chamber, and when Elk made another attempt he fell dead.

Chipmunk hurried to them, and after thanking the Twins said he had come to show them how to cut up the monster’s body, which with his sharp teeth he soon accomplished. One of the Twins thanked Chipmunk, and stooping he dipped the tips of the first two fingers of his right hand in Elk’s blood, and, drawing them along the body of Chipmunk, made on it the marks which he still bears.

## HOW TIYO PUNISHED MAN-EAGLE

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Fewkes, J. Walter. “The Destruction of the Tusayan Monsters.” *Journal of American Folklore* 8 (1895): 132–137.

**Date:** ca. 1895

**Original Source:** Hopi (Arizona)

**National Origin:** Native American

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Tiyo, in the following Hopi **myth**, is not a **culture hero** as were the twins. Although he serves one of the functions associated with the culture hero by destroying the monster Man-Eagle, he does so because he has enlisted powerful allies. The familiar figure Spider-Woman shows her abilities as a shape-shifter (a trait associated with witches) as well as her knowledge of medicines such as “charm flour” (bewitched corn

meal). In contrast to his role in European culture, mole has been shown to be an important character in Pueblo mythology. He is an underground hunter who demonstrates talents as a **trickster** as he works behind the scenes in Tiyo's physical contests against Man-Eagle.

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The ravages of Man-Eagle extended over the whole earth, afflicting all people. He carried off their women and maids, and took them to his home in the sky, where he was accustomed to sleep with such as he wished, during four nights, and then devour them.

The Youth, while on his way to the San Francisco mountains, met at the foothills the Pinon Maids, dressed in mantles of pinon bark and grass. There likewise he found Spider-Woman and Mole. After they had greeted him and bade him be seated, they inquired where he was going. He replied that Man-Eagle had carried off his bride, and that he sought to bring her back.

"I will aid you," said Spider-Woman, and told the Pinon Maids to gather pinon gum, wash it, and make a garment in exact imitation of the flint arrow-head armor which Man-Eagle is said to wear. The Pinon Maids bathed themselves, gathered and washed the gum, and made the desired garment for Spider-Woman, who gave it with charm flour to the Youth. Then she changed herself into a spider, so small as to be invisible, and perched on the Youth's right ear, that she might whisper her advice.

Mole led the way to the top of the mountains, but the Pinon Maids remained behind. When they reached the summit, Eagle swooped down; they got on his back, and he soared aloft with them until he was tired; Hawk came close by, they were transferred to his back, and he carried them still higher in the sky. When he was weary, Gray Hawk took them and mounted the heavens with them, until he could go no farther, and Red Hawk received the burden; thus for an immense distance upward they flew, until the adventurers reached a passageway through which the Youth, Spider-Woman, and Mole passed, and saw the white house in which Man-Eagle lived.

Spider-Woman advised the Youth, before mounting the ladder which led into this house, to pluck a handful of sumac berries and give them to Lizard, who received them with thanks, chewed them, and gave him back the cud. The ladder of the house had for each rung a sharp stone like a knife, which would lacerate the hands and feet of any one who attempted to climb it. The Youth rubbed these sharp edges with the chewed berries and instantly they became dull, and he was able to climb the ladder without cutting himself.

Upon entering the house of Man-Eagle, one of the first objects which met his eye was the fabulous flint arrow-head garment hanging on a peg in a recess, and he at once exchanged it for his own, the imitation which the Pinon Maids had manufactured. Glancing into another recess, he saw Man-Eagle and his lost wife. He called out to her that he had come to rescue her from the monster,

and she replied that she was glad, but that he could not do so as no one ever left the place alive. Youth replied, "Have no fear; you will soon be mine again."

So powerful was Spider-Woman's charm that it prevented Man-Eagle from hearing the conversation, but he soon awoke and put on the imitation flint garment without detecting the fraud. He then for the first time became aware of the Youth's presence, and demanded what he wished.

"I have come to take my wife home," responded the hero.

Man-Eagle said, "We must gamble to decide that, and you must abide the consequences, for if you lose I shall slay you," to which the Youth agreed. Man-Eagle brought out a huge pipe, larger than a man's head, and having filled it with tobacco gave it to the hero, saying, "you must smoke this entirely out, and if you become dizzy or nauseated, you lose." So the Youth lit the pipe and smoked but exhaled nothing. He kept the pipe aglow and swallowed all the smoke, and felt no ill effect, for he passed it through his body into an underground passageway that Mole had dug. Man-Eagle was amazed, and asked what had become of the smoke. The Youth going to the door showed him great clouds of dense smoke issuing from the four cardinal points, and the monster saw that he had lost.

But Man-Eagle tried a second time with the hero. He brought out two deer antlers, saying, "We will each choose one and he who fails to break the one he has chosen loses." The antler which he laid down on the northwest side was a real antler, but that on the southeast was an imitation made of brittle wood. Spider-Woman prompted the Youth to demand the first choice, but Man-Eagle refused him that right. After the Youth had insisted four times, Man-Eagle yielded, and the hero chose the brittle antler and tore its prongs asunder, but Man-Eagle could not break the real antler, and thus lost a second time.

Man-Eagle had two fine large pine trees growing near his house, and said to the hero, "You choose one of these trees and I will take the other, and whoever plucks one up by the roots shall win." Now Mole had burrowed under one of them, and had gnawed through all its roots, cutting them off, and had run through his tunnel and was sitting at its mouth, peering through the grass anxious to see Youth win. The hero, with the help of his grandmother, chose the tree that Mole had prepared, and plucked it up, and threw it over the cliff, but Man-Eagle struggled with the other tree and could not move it, so he was unhappy in his third defeat.

Then Man-Eagle spread a great supply of food on the floor and said to Youth that he must eat all at one sitting. Tiyo (the Youth) sat and ate all the meat, bread, and porridge, emptying one food basin after another, and showed no sign of being satisfied before all was consumed; for Mole had again assisted him, and dug a large hole below to receive it, and the Youth was a winner the fourth time.

Man-Eagle then made a great wood-pile and directed Tiyo to sit upon it, saying he would ignite it, and that if the Youth were unharmed he would submit

himself to the same test. The Youth took his allotted place, and Man-Eagle set fire to the pile of wood at the four cardinal points, and it speedily was ablaze. The arrow-heads of which the flint armor was made were coated with ice, which melted so that water trickled down and prevented Youth from being burnt, and all the wood-pile was consumed, leaving Tiyo unharmed.

The monster was filled with wonder, and grieved very much when he saw Youth making another great pile of wood. Still, thinking that he wore his fire-proof suit, he mounted the wood-pile, which Youth lit at the four cardinal points. The fuel blazed up, and as soon as the fire caught the imitation garment of gum, it ignited with a flash and the monster was consumed. At the prompting of Spider-Woman Tiyo approached the ashes, took the charm in his mouth and spurted it over them, when suddenly a handsome man arose. Then Spider-Woman said to him, "Will you refrain from killing people, will you forsake your evil habits?"

Man-Eagle assented with a fervent promise, and the Youth rejoicing ran to his wife, embraced her and set free all the captive women wives of the Hopi and other peoples, of whom there were many. Eagle and Hawk carried them to the earth.

# IROQUOIS

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## GRANDMOTHER O-NE-HA-TAH, MOTHER OO-KWA-E, AND THE LOST BOY

**Tradition Bearer:** Albert Cusick

**Source:** Beauchamp, W. M. "Onondaga Tales." *Journal of American Folklore* 6 (1893): 173–178.

**Date:** 1893

**Original Source:** Onondaga

**National Origin:** Native American

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This tale is from the Onondaga whose ancestral home is in New York and who were one of the original nations of the Iroquois League. The narrative shares the qualities of a folktale by virtue of taking place in a universe that has already formed, unlike the world of **myth**. Conversely, the narrator's final comment seems to situate the events in the very recent past giving it at least some elements of **legend**. The obvious irony of the plot is that an animal, especially the porcupine that in the traditions of this culture area is rarely regarded as benevolent, should be kinder than the boy's peers. It is significant that the other animals in the tale are among the clan totems of the traditional Onandaga. Bear, in many Native American traditions, is regarded as the most anthropomorphic of the animals. Some mythologies, in fact, maintain that bears were once human. This makes Oo-kwa-e the logical guardian for the lost boy. Inevitably, however, the tale seems to argue that the established boundaries (in this case, the dividing line between human and nonhuman) cannot be violated.

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A long time ago, among the Onondaga Indians, were several families who went off to camp near the wildwood streams, where fish, deer, bear, otter, beaver, and other like game could be caught for winter use.

These Onondagas, or People of the Hill, journeyed several days, and finally came to the hunting-grounds. The hunting-ground where they stopped was a very beautiful place, with its little hills and the river with high banks. Not far from their camp was a beautiful lake, with high rocky banks, and with little islands full of cedar trees. When they came there it was in the moon or month of Clzut-ho-wa-ah, or October.

Some of these Indians made their camps near the river, and some near the lake. As it was quite early in the season for hunting, some of the Indians amused themselves by making birch-bark canoes. With these they could go up and down the river and on the lakes, fishing and trapping, or making deadfalls for smaller game.

In the party were five little boys, who had their own bows and arrows, and would go hunting, imitating their fathers and uncles. Among them was one much smaller than the rest, who was greatly teased by the older boys. Sometimes they would run away from him and hide themselves in the woods, leaving him crying; then they would come back and show themselves, and have a great laugh over the little boy's distress. Sometimes they would run for the camp, and would tell him that a bear or a wolf was chasing them, leaving the little boy far behind, crying with all his might. Many a time he sought his father's camp alone, when the other boys would leave him and hide themselves in the woods.

One day these little Indians found a great hollow log lying on the ground. One of them said, "Maybe there is a Ta-hone-tah-na-ken [rabbit] or a Hi-sen [red squirrel] in this hollow log. Let us shoot into it, and see if there is any Ta-hone-tah-na-ken in it."

All agreed to this, and they began to take the little boy's arrows from him and shoot them into the hole; then the larger boys said to him, "Now go into the hollow log, and get your arrows."

The little boy said, "No; I am afraid something might catch me." Then he began to cry, and was not at all willing to go into the log.

The others coaxed him to do so, and one said he would get his uncle to make him a new bow and arrows if he would go into the hollow log, and get the arrows they had shot there. At last this tempted the little boy. He stopped crying, got down on his hands and knees, and crawled into the log. When he had gone in a little way, he found one of his arrows, and handed it out. This gave him courage to go in a little farther.

When he had advanced some distance in the log, one of the larger boys said, "Let's stop up the log, and trap that boy in it, so that he can't get out." This was soon agreed to, and the boys began to fetch old rotten wood and old limbs, stopping up the hollow, and trapping the little boy in it. When this mischief was done, the four boys ran to their camp, not saying a word about the little boy who was trapped in the log.



It was two days before the mother and father began to notice the absence of their boy, for they thought he must have stayed over night with one of the others, as very often he had done, but the second day a search was begun, and the other four boys were asked whereabouts they had left him.

They all said that they did not know, and that the last time they were out the little boy did not go with them. Then the entire camp turned out to join in the search, as now they knew that the boy must be lost. After they had hunted a long time he could not be found, and they ceased to look for him; they thought he must have been killed and eaten by a wolf or a bear.

When he was first shut up in the log the little boy tried to get out, but could not do it, as the chunks of rotten wood were too large for him to move. He could not kick or push them out.

Then he cried for help, but no one came. There he was for three days and three nights, crying loudly for help, and now and then falling asleep.

But on the fourth night, while he was in the hollow log, he thought he heard some one coming. He listened, and was sure he heard the crying of a very old woman and the noise of the tramping of human feet. The crying and the tramping came nearer and nearer to the log where he was. At last the crying came very close to him, and then he heard a noise, as though some one sat down on the log.

Now he heard the old woman cry in earnest, and now and then she would say, "Oh, how tired I am! How tired I am! and yet I may have come too late, for I do not hear my grandchild cry. He may be dead! He may be dead!" Then the old woman would cry in earnest again.

At last he heard a rap on the log and his own name called, "Ha-yah-noo! Ha-yah-noo! are you still alive?"

Ha-yah-noo, or Footprints under the Water (for this was the name of the little lost boy), answered the old woman, and said that he still lived.

The old woman said, "Oh, how glad I am to find my grandchild still alive!"

Then she asked Ha-yah-noo if he could not get out, but he said he could not, for he had already tried.

Then said the old woman, "I will try to get you out of this log." He heard her pull at the chunks of old wood, but at last she said she could not get him out, as she was too old and tired. She had heard him crying three days before, and had journeyed three days and nights to come and help her grandchild out of his trouble. Now this old woman was an O-ne-ha-tah, or Porcupine. She lived in an old hemlock tree near the spot where the boy was shut up in the log.

When Grandmother O-ne-ha-tah had said that she had to journey three days and nights, and now she could not help Ha-yah-noo out of the log, she was very sorry, and began to cry again. Finally she said that she had three children, who were very strong, and that she would get them to help her; so she went after them.

It was almost daylight when they came, and then Ha-yah-noo heard them pull out the chunks which stopped up the log. At last Grandmother

O-ne-ha-tah said to Ha-yah-noo, "Come out now. My children have got the chunks out of the log. You can come out."

When Ha-yah-noo came out, he saw four wild animals around him. There was Grandmother O-ne-ha-tah and her three children, as she called them. They were Oo-kwa-e, the Bear; Sken-no-doh, the Deer; and Tah-you-ne, the Wolf. "Now," said O-ne-ha-tah, "I want one of you to take care of this boy, and love him as your own child. You all know that I have got to be very, very old. If I were younger I would take care of him myself."

Tah-you-ne, the Wolf, was the first one to speak. She said she could take care of the boy, as she lived on the same meat on which he fed.

"No," said Grandmother O-ne-ha-tah, "you are too greedy. You would eat up the boy as soon as he is left with you alone." The Wolf was very angry. She showed her teeth, and snapped them at the boy, who was very much afraid, and wanted no such mother.

The next that spoke was Sken-no-doh, the Deer. She said that she and her husband would take care of the boy, as they lived on corn and other things which they knew the boy liked. Her husband would carry him on his back wherever they went.

But Grandmother O-ne-ha-tah said, "No, you can't take care of the boy, for you are always traveling, and never stay in one place. The boy cannot do the traveling that you do, for you run very fast and make very long journeys. The boy cannot stand it, and you have no home for him for the winter. Boys like this have homes." Then the Deer ran away, very happy, as though she were glad to be rid of the boy.

Then Oo-kwa-e, the Bear, said that she knew she could take care of the boy, as she lived in a large stone house and had plenty to eat. She lived on meats and fishes, and all kinds of nuts and berries, and even wild honey, all of which the boy would like. She had a good warm bed for him to sleep on through the winter, and she was a loving mother to her children. She would rather die than see them abused.

Then O-ne-ha-tah said, "You are just the right one to take care of this boy. Take him and carry him home." So the Bear, like a loving mother, took the boy and brought him to her home.

When they got there, Oo-kwa-e said to her two children, the Oo-tutch-ha, or Young Bears, "Don't play with him roughly, and he will be your kind little brother." Then she gave him some berries to eat, and they were all happy together.

The stone house was a cave in the rocks, but to the little boy it seemed to have rooms like any other house, and the little bears seemed to him like human children. They did not tease him, but lived in the most friendly way, and the old Oo-kwa-e was a very kind mother to the boy.

It was now quite late in the fall, and the days became short and dark. Then Mother Oo-kwa-e said, "It is late and dark now. We had better go to bed." The nights were cold, but the bed was warm, and they slept until the spring.

One evening it thundered; for the bears do not wake up until the thunder is heard. It made such a noise that they thought the walls were coming down. Then the old Oo-kwa-e said, "Why, it's getting light. We had better get up." So they lived happily together for a very long time. She went out in the woods, going to and fro for food, and the children amused themselves at home.

Every now and then, through the summer, the Bear people would come in and say, "In such a place are plenty of berries." These would be strawberries, raspberries, or others, according to the season. Later they told of chestnuts and other kinds of nuts, of which they were fond. Then they would say, "Let us go and gather them."

So the Mother Bear and the little Bears went, taking the little boy along with them; for they always expected a good time. The other bears knew nothing about the little boy. When they came near the spot, and he was seen, these would be frightened, and say, "There is a human being! Let us run! let us run!" So they would scamper off as fast as bears can, leaving their heaps of nuts or berries behind them. Then the old Oo-kwa-e would gather these up, she and her children, and take them home, which was a very easy way of getting plenty of food. Thus the boy became very useful to Mother Bear.

The boy lived with them thus for about three years, and the same things happened every year. In the third year Mother Bear said, "Some one is coming to kill us." Then all looked out, and saw a man coming through the woods, with his bow and arrows in his hand, and his dog running all around looking for game. Then Mother Bear said, "I must see what I can do." So she took a forked stick, and pointed the open fork towards the man. It seemed to come near him, and appeared to him like a line of thick brush that he did not wish to break through. So he turned aside, and went another way, and they were safe that time.

Another day she again said, "Someone is coming towards us again, and we shall be killed." She put forth the forked stick again; but the man did not mind it, and came straight towards her stone house. The stick itself split, and there was nothing in the way. Then she took a bag of feathers and threw these outside. They flew up and down, and around and around, and seemed like a flock of partridges. The dog ran after them, through the bushes and trees, supposing them to be birds, and so the second man went away.

The days went by, and the third time Mother Bear saw a man coming. This time she said, "Now we certainly are all going to die."

Then she said to the boy, "Your father is coming now, and he is too good a hunter to be fooled. There is his dog, with his four eyes, and he, too, is one of the best of hunters." Now when a dog has light spots over each eye, the Indians say that he has four eyes. So the man came nearer, and she tried the forked stick, but it split; and still the man and dog came on. Then she scattered the feathers, and they flew around as before; but the hunter and dog paid no attention to them, and still they both came on. At last the dog reached

the door and barked, and the man drew his bow to shoot at anything that came out.

When the Mother Oo-kwa-e saw the man standing there, she said, "Now, children, we must all take our bundles and go." So each of the Bears took a small bundle and laid it on its back, but there was no bundle at all for the boy. When all were ready, Mother Oo-kwa-e said, "I will go first, whatever may happen." So she opened the door, and as she went out the man shot, and she was killed.

Then the oldest of the Oo-tutch-ha said, "I will go next"; and as he went he also was killed.

The last little Bear was afraid, and said to the boy, "You go first." But the little boy was afraid, too, and said, "No; you go first. I have no bundle." For all the Bears tried to get their bundles between them and the man. So the little Bear and the boy at last went out together; but though the Bear tried to keep behind, the man shot at him first, and he was killed. As the hunter was about to shoot again, the boy called out, "Don't shoot me! Don't shoot me! I am not a bear!"

His father dropped his arrow, for he knew his voice at once, and said, "Why did you not call out before? Then I would not have killed the Oo-kwa-e and Oo-tutch-ha. I am very sorry for what I have done, for the Bears have been good to you."

But the boy said, "You did not kill the Bears, though you thought so. You only shot the bundles. I saw them thrown down, and the spirits of the Bears run off from behind them." Still, the man was sorry he had shot at the Bears, for he wished to be kind to them, as they had been to his boy.

Then the father began to look at his boy more closely, to see how he had grown and how he had changed. Then he saw that long hairs were growing between his fingers, for, living so long with them, he had already begun to turn into a Bear. He was very glad when he took the boy back to his home, and his friends and relatives, and the whole town, rejoiced with him. All day they had a great feast, and all night they danced, and they were still dancing when I came away.

## GA'NA'A'S ADVENTURES AMONG THE CHEROKEE

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Mooney, James. *Myths of the Cherokee*. Nineteenth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, 1897–1898, Part I. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1900, 367–370.

**Date:** 1883

**Original Source:** Iroquois (Seneca)

**National Origin:** Native American

The linking of athletic endeavors, dance, warfare, and spirituality in this **legend** is found not only in the Northeast but throughout Native America cultures and in myriad other warrior cultures globally. Dance and games (in this case what came to be called “lacrosse”) are used for training warrior attributes and for displaying these attributes both within one’s own group and to the enemy. For example, peace terms are accepted by the Cherokee after the Seneca (like the Mohawk, also members of the Iroquois League) vigorously demonstrate their physical prowess through dance. Conversely, the Seoqgwageono (possibly an indigenous name for either the Catawba or Tuscarora) decide to wage war on the Cherokee after defeating their representative in a foot race. Furthermore, warfare and athletic competition both are seen as activities that must be supported by supernatural power. Strengthening and purification rituals, taboos, and amulets all figure into the preparation for both. Often success at one of these enterprises is evidence of the spiritual superiority of oneself or one’s spiritual support system. It is probably in the light of such supernatural strength that the Seoqgwageono’s assertion of being a “double man” should be interpreted.

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**G**a'na'a was a Seneca war chief. He called a council and said, “We must go to the Cherokee and see if we can’t agree to be friendly together and live in peace hereafter.” The people consented, and the chief said, “We must go to water first before we start.” So they went, a great party of warriors, far away into the deep forest by the river side. There were no women with them. For ten days they drank medicine every morning to make them vomit and washed and bathed in the river each day.

Then the chief said, “Now we must get the eagle feathers.” They went to the top of a high hill and dug a trench there the length of a man’s body, and put a man into it, with boughs over the top so that he could not be seen, and above that they put the whole body of a deer. Then the people went off out of sight, and said the words to invite the Great Eagle that lives in the clouds, to come down.

The man under the brushwood heard a noise, and a common eagle came and ate a little and flew away again. Soon it came back, ate a little more, and flew off in another direction. It told the other birds and they came, but the man seared them away, because he did not want common birds to eat the meat. After a while he heard a great noise coming through the air, and he knew it was the bird he wanted. The Great Eagle is very cautious, and looked around in every direction for some time before he began to eat the meat. As soon as he was eating the man put his hand up cautiously and caught hold of the bird’s tail and held on to it. The Great Eagle rose up and flew away, and the man had pulled

out one feather. They had to trap a good many eagles in this way, and it was two years before they could get enough feathers to make a full tail, and were ready to start for the Cherokee country.

They were many days on the road, and when they got to the first Cherokee town they found there was a stockade around it so that no enemy could enter. They waited until the gate was open, and then two Seneca dancers went forward, carrying the eagle feathers and shouting the signal yell.

When the Cherokee heard the noise they came out and saw the two men singing and dancing, and the chief said, "These men must have come upon some errand." The Seneca messengers came up and said, "Call a council; we have come to talk on important business." All turned and went toward the townhouse, the rest of the Seneca following the two who were dancing. The townhouse was crowded, and the Seneca sang and danced until they were tired before they stopped. The Cherokee did not dance.

After the dance the Seneca chief said, "Now I will tell you why we have come so far through the forest to see you. We have thought among ourselves that it is time to stop fighting. Your people and ours are always on the lookout to kill each other, and we think it is time for this to stop. Here is a belt of wampum to show that I speak the truth. If your people are willing to be friendly, take it," and he held up the belt.

The Cherokee chief stepped forward and said, "I will hold it in my hand, and tomorrow we will tell you what we decide." He then turned and said to the people, "Go home and bring food." They went and brought so much food that it made a great pile across the house, and all of both tribes ate together, but could not finish it.

Next day they ate together again, and when all were done the Cherokee chief said to the Seneca, "We have decided to be friendly and to bury our weapons, these knives and hatchets, so that no man may take them up again."

The Seneca chief replied, "We are glad you have accepted our offer, and now we have all thrown our weapons in a pile together, and the white wampum hangs between us, and the belt shall be as long as a man and hang down to the ground."

Then the Cherokee chief said to his people, "Now is the time for any of you that wishes to adopt a relative from among the Seneca to do so."

So some Cherokee women went and picked out one man and said, "You shall be our uncle," and some more took another for their brother, and so on until only Ga'na'a, the chief, was left, but the Cherokee chief said, "No one must take Ga'na'a for a young man is here to claim him as his father."

Then the young man came up to Ga'na'a and said, "Father, I am glad to see you. Father, we will go home," and he led Ga'na'a to his own mother's house, the house where Ga'na'a had spent the first night. The young man was really his son, and when Ga'na'a came to the house he recognized the woman as his wife who had been carried off long ago by the Cherokee.

While they were there a messenger came from the Seoqgwageono tribe, that lived near the great salt water in the east, to challenge the Cherokee to a ball play. He was dressed in skins which were so long that they touched the ground. He said that his people were already on the way and would arrive in a certain number of days. They came on the appointed day and the next morning began to make the bets with the Cherokee. The Seneca were still there.

The strangers bet two very heavy and costly robes, besides other things. They began to play, and the Cherokee lost the game. Then the Seneca said, "We will try this time." Both sides bet heavily again, and the game began, but after a little running the Seneca carried the ball to their goal and made a point. Before long they made all the points and won the game. Then the bets were doubled, and the Seneca won again. When they won a third game also the Seoqgwageono said, "Let us try a race," and the Seneca agreed.

The course was level, and the open space was very wide. The Cherokee selected the Seneca runner, and it was agreed that they would run the first race without betting and then make their bets on the second race. They ran the first race, and when they reached the post the Seneca runner was just the measure of his body behind the other. His people asked him if he had done his best, but he said, "No; I have not," so they made their bets, and the second race—the real race—began. When they got to the middle the Seneca runner said to the other, "Do your best now, for I am going to do mine," and as he said it he pulled out and left the other far behind and won the race.

Then the Seoqgwageono said, "There is one more race yet—the long race," and they got ready for it, but the Cherokee chief said to his own men, "We have won everything from these people. I think it will be best to let them have one race, for if they lose all, they may make trouble." They selected a Cherokee to run, and he was beaten, and the Seoqgwageono went home.

In a few days they sent a messenger to challenge the Cherokee to meet them halfway for a battle. When the Cherokee heard this they said to the Seneca, "There are so few of you here that we don't want to have you killed. It is better for you to go home." So the Seneca went back to their own country.

Three years later they came again to visit the Cherokee, who told them that the Seoqgwageono had won the battle, and that the chief of the enemy had said afterward, "I should like to fight the Seneca, for I am a double man." Before long the enemy heard that the Seneca were there and sent them a challenge to come and fight.

The Seneca said, "We must try to satisfy them," so with Cherokee guides they set out for the country of the Seoqgwageono. They went on until they came to an opening in the woods within one day's journey of the first village. Then they stopped and got ready to send two messengers to notify the enemy, but the Cherokee said, "You must send them so as to arrive about sundown." They did this, and when the messengers arrived near the town they saw all the people out playing ball.

The two Seneca went around on the other side, and began throwing sumac darts as they approached, so that the others would think they were some of their own men at play. In this way they got near enough to kill a man who was standing alone. They scalped him, and then raising the scalp yell they rushed off through the woods, saying to each other as they ran, “Be strong—Be strong.”

Soon they saw the Seoqgwageono coming on horses, but managed to reach a dry creek and to bide under the bank, so that the enemy passed on without seeing them.

The next morning they came out and started on, but the enemy was still on the watch, and before long the two men saw the dust of the horses behind them. The others came up until they were almost upon them and began to shoot arrows at them, but by this time the two Seneca were near the opening where their own friends were hiding, drawn up on each side of the pass. As the pursuers dashed in the two lines of the Seneca closed in and every man of the Seoqgwageono was either killed or taken.

The Seneca went back to the Cherokee country and after about a month they returned to their own homes. Afterward the Cherokee told them, “We hear the Seoqgwageono think you dangerous people. They themselves are conjurers and can tell what other people are going to do, but they cannot tell what the Seneca are going to do. The Seneca medicine is stronger.”

## THE UNSEEN HELPERS

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Mooney, James. *Myths of the Cherokee*. Nineteenth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, 1897–1898, Part I. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1900, 360–362.

**Date:** 1883

**Original Source:** Iroquois (Seneca)

**National Origin:** Native American

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The Seneca of this **legend** were one of the nations of the Iroquois League. Although no particular clan membership was specified for Ganogwioeoñ, the Wolf Clan was one of the eight traditional Seneca clans. If he was, in fact, one of the Wolf Clan, this might explain the behavior of his “unseen helpers.” A more likely bond, however, would be that the wolf was his guardian spirit animal. As such, the wolf taught and protected its protégée, and the man would be obliged to pay homage in various ways to the guardian. This may be the reason that, as the wolf says in this supernatural legend, he always gave the best part of his hunt to them.

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**G**anogwioeñ, a war chief of the Seneca, led a party against the Cherokee. When they came near the first town he left his men outside and went in alone. At the first house he found an old woman and her granddaughter. They did not see him, and he went into the sweatlodge and hid himself under some wood.

When darkness came on he heard the old woman say, "Maybe Ganogwioeñ is near; I'll close the door." After a while he heard them going to bed. When he thought they were asleep he went into the house. The fire had burned down low, but the girl was still awake and saw him. She was about to scream, when he said, "I am Ganogwioeñ. If you scream I'll kill you. If you keep quiet I'll not hurt you." They talked together, and he told her that in the morning she must bring the chief's daughter to him. She promised to do it, and told him where he should wait. Just before daylight he left the house.

In the morning the girl went to the chief's house and said to his daughter, "Let's go out together for wood." The chief's daughter got ready and went with her, and when they came to the place where Ganogwioeñ was hiding he sprang out and killed her, but did not hurt the other girl. He pulled off the scalp and gave such a loud scalp yell that all the warriors in the town heard it and came running out after him. He shook the scalp at them and then turned and ran. He killed the first one that came up, but when he tried to shoot the next one the bow broke and the Cherokee got him.

They tied him and carried him to the two women of the tribe who had the power to decide what should be done with him. Each of these women had two snakes tattooed on her lips, with their heads opposite each other, in such a way that when she opened her mouth the two snakes opened their mouths also. They decided to burn the soles of his feet until they were blistered, then to put grains of corn under the skin and to chase him with clubs until they had beaten him to death.

They stripped him and burnt his feet. Then they tied a bark rope around his waist, with an old man to hold the other end, and made him run between two lines of people, and with clubs in their hands. When they gave the word to start Ganogwioeñ pulled the rope away from the old man and broke through the line and ran until he had left them all out of sight. When night came he crawled into a hollow log. He was naked and unarmed, with his feet in a pitiful condition, and thought he could never get away.

He heard footsteps on the leaves outside and thought his enemies were upon him. The footsteps came up to the log and someone said to another, "This is our friend." Then the stranger said to Ganogwioeñ, "You think you are the same as dead, but it is not so. We will take care of you. Stick out your feet." He put out his feet from the log and felt something licking them.

After awhile the voice said, "I think we have licked his feet enough. Now we must crawl inside the log and lie on each side of him to keep him warm." They crawled in beside him. In the morning they crawled out and told him to stick out his feet again.

They licked them again and then said to him, "Now we have done all we can do this time. Go on until you come to the place where you made a bark shelter a long time ago, and under the bark you will find something to help you." Ganogwioeñ crawled out of the log, but they were gone. His feet were better now and he could walk comfortably. He went on until about noon, when he came to the bark shelter, and under it he found a knife, an awl, and a flint, that his men had hidden there two years before. He took them and started on again.

Toward evening he looked around until he found another hollow tree and crawled into it to sleep. At night he heard the footsteps and voices again. When he put out his feet again, as the strangers told him to do, they licked his feet as before and then crawled in and lay down on each side of him to keep him warm. Still he could not see them. In the morning after they went out they licked his feet again and said to him, "At noon you will find food." Then they went away.

Ganogwioeñ crawled out of the tree and went on. At noon he came to a burning log, and near it was a dead bear, which was still warm, as if it had been killed only a short time before. He skinned the bear and found it very fat. He cut up the meat and roasted as much as he could eat or carry. While it was roasting he scraped the skin and rubbed rotten wood dust on it to clean it until he was tired. When night came: he lay down to sleep. He heard the steps and the voices again and one said, "Well, our friend is lying down. He has plenty to eat, and it does not seem as if he is going to die. Let us lick his feet again." When they had finished they said to him, "You need not worry anymore now. You will get home all right." Before it was day they left him.

When morning came he put the bearskin around him like a shirt, with the hair outside, and started on again, taking as much of the meat as he could carry. That night his friends came to him again. They said, "Your feet are well, but you will be cold," so they lay again on each side of him. Before daylight they left, saying, "About noon you will find something to wear." He went on and about midday he came to two young bears just killed. He skinned them and dressed the skins, then roasted as much meat as he wanted and lay down to sleep. In the morning he made leggings of the skins, took some of the meat, and started on.

His friends came again the next night and told him that in the morning he would come upon something else to wear. As they said, about noon he found two fawns just killed. He turned the skins and made himself a pair of moccasins, then cut some of the meat, and traveled on until evening, when he made a fire and had supper.

That night again he heard the steps and voices, and one said, "My friend, very soon now you will reach home safely and find your friends all well. Now we will tell you why we have helped you. Whenever you went hunting you always gave the best part of the meat to us and kept only the smallest part for

yourself. For that we are thankful and help you. In the morning you will see us and know who we are.”

In the morning when he woke up they were still there—two men as he thought—but after he had said the last words to them and started on, he turned again to look, and one was a white wolf and the other a black wolf. That day he reached home.

# ISLETA

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## THE ANTELOPE BOY

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Lummis, Charles. *Pueblo Indian Folk-Stories*. New York: Century, 1910, 12–21.

**Date:** 1910

**Original Source:** Isleta Pueblo, New Mexico

**National Origin:** Native American

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The Tiwa of Isleta, like the Acoma (see “Origin of Acoma,” page 3), developed an agricultural way of life based on raising corn, beans, and squash. The diet provided by these crops was supplemented by hunting, as was the case with Acoma. Eastern, or Rio Grande, Pueblos such as Isleta, unlike the Western Pueblo of Acoma, relied on irrigation for their crops and thus developed a strong village identity and loyalty. The village was divided into halves, called moieties, the Summer People and the Winter People. Each of the moieties had a Cacique (principal religious authority) who governed the village’s religious life for half of the year. The Caciques were elders who were chosen for wisdom, even temperament, and their ability to maintain village harmony. They stood in polar opposition to the witches who play so prominent a role in the following **myth**. The cigarettes smoked by Antelope Boy to create rain clouds are the equivalent to the pipe that is familiar to other Native American traditions. The power of Antelope Boy comes from both his animal spirit helpers and from his marginal status as a human who was raised by antelopes. This marginality is also an attribute of **trickster**.

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Once upon a time there were two towns of the Tiwa, called White Village and Yellow Village. A man of White village and his wife were attacked by Apaches while out on the plains one day, and took refuge in a cave, where they were besieged. And there a boy was born to them. The father was killed in an attempt to return to his village for help; and starvation finally forced the mother to crawl forth by night seeking roots to eat. Chased by the Apaches, she escaped to her own village, and it was several days before she could return to the cave-only to find it empty.

The baby had begun to cry soon after her departure. Just then a Coyote was passing, and heard. Taking pity on the child, he picked it up and carried it across the plain until he came to a herd of antelopes. Among them was a Mother-Antelope that had lost her fawn; and going to her the Coyote said, "Here is a poor thing that is left by its people. Will you take care of it?"

The Mother Antelope, remembering her own baby, with tears said "Yes," and at once adopted the tiny stranger, while the Coyote thanked her and went home.

So the boy became as one of the antelopes, and grew up among them until he was about twelve years old. Then it happened that a hunter came out from White village for antelopes, and found this herd. Stalking them carefully, he shot one with an arrow. The rest started off, running like the wind; but ahead of them all, as long as they were in sight, he saw a boy!

The hunter was much surprised, and, shouldering his game, walked back to the village, deep in thought. Here he told the Cacique what he had seen. Next day the crier was sent out to call upon all the people to prepare for a great hunt, in four days, to capture the Indian boy who lived with the antelopes.

While preparations were going on in the village, the antelopes in some way heard of the intended hunt and its purpose. The Mother-Antelope was very sad when she heard it, and at first would say nothing. But at last she called her adopted son to her and said, "Son, you have heard that the people of White village are coming to hunt. But they will not kill us; all they wish is to take you. They will surround us, intending to let all the antelopes escape from the circle. You must follow me where I break through the line, and your real mother will be coming on the northeast side in a white *manta* (robe). I will pass close to her, and you must stagger and fall where she can catch you."

On the fourth day all the people went out upon the plains. They found and surrounded the herd of antelopes, which ran about in a circle when the hunters closed upon them. The circle grew smaller, and the antelopes began to break through; but the hunters paid no attention to them, keeping their eyes upon the boy. At last he and his antelope mother were the only ones left, and when she broke through the line on the northeast he followed her and fell at the feet of his own human mother, who sprang forward and clasped him in her arms.

Amid great rejoicing he was taken to White village, and there he told the *principales* (Council of advisors) how he had been left in the cave, how the

Coyote had pitied him, and how the Mother-Antelope had reared him as her own son.

It was not long before all the country round about heard of the Antelope Boy and of his marvelous fleetness of foot. You must know that the antelopes never comb their hair, and while among them the boy's head had grown very bushy. So the people called him *Pée-hleh-o-wah-wée-deh* (big-headed little boy).

Among the other villages that heard of his prowess was Yellow Village, all of whose people "had the bad road." They had a wonderful runner named *Pée-k'hoo* (Deer-foot), and very soon they sent a challenge to White village for a championship race. Four days were to be given for preparation, to make bets, and the like. The race was to be around the world. Each village was to stake all its property and the lives of all its people on the result of the race. So powerful were the witches of Yellow Village that they felt safe in proposing so serious a stake; and the people of White village were ashamed to decline the challenge.

The day came, and the starting-point was surrounded by all the people of the two villages, dressed in their best. On each side were huge piles of ornaments and dresses, stores of grain, and all the other property of the people. The runner for the Yellow Village was a tall, sinewy athlete, strong in his early manhood; and when the Antelope Boy appeared for the other side, the witches set up a howl of derision, and began to strike their rivals and jeer at them, saying, "We might as well begin to kill you now! What can that little thing do?"

At the word "*Hái-ko!*" ("Go!") the two runners started toward the east like the wind. The Antelope Boy soon forged ahead; but Deer-foot, by his witchcraft, changed himself into a hawk and flew lightly over the lad, saying, "We do this way to each other!" The Antelope Boy kept running, but his heart was very heavy, for he knew that no feet could equal the swift flight of the hawk.

But just as he came halfway to the east, a Mole came up from its burrow and said: "My son, where are you going so fast with a sad face?"

The lad explained that the race was for the property and lives of all his people; and that the witch-runner had turned to a hawk and left him far behind.

"Then, my son," said the Mole, "I will be he that shall help you. Only sit down here a little while, and I will give you something to carry."

The boy sat down, and the Mole dived into the hole, but soon came back with four cigarettes. Holding them out, the Mole said, "Now, my son, when you have reached the east and turned north, smoke one; when you have reached the north and turn west, smoke another; when you turn south, another, and when you turn east again, another. Go!"

The boy ran on, and soon reached the east. Turning his face to the north he smoked the first cigarette. No sooner was it finished than he became a young antelope; and at the same instant a furious rain began. Refreshed by the cool drops, he started like an arrow from the bow. Halfway to the north he came to a

large tree; and there sat the hawk, drenched and chilled, unable to fly, and crying piteously.

“Now, friend, we too do this to each other,” called the boy-antelope as he dashed past. But just as he reached the north, the hawk—which had become dry after the short rain—caught up and passed him, saying, “We too do this to each other!”

The boy-antelope turned westward, and smoked the second cigarette; and at once another terrific rain began. Halfway to the west he again passed the hawk shivering and crying in a tree, and unable to fly; but as he was about to turn to the south, the hawk passed him with the customary taunt. The smoking of the third cigarette brought another storm, and again the antelope passed the wet hawk halfway, and again the hawk dried its feathers in time to catch up and pass him as he was turning to the east for the home-stretch. Here again the boy-antelope stopped and smoked a cigarette—the fourth and last. Again a short, hard rain came, and again he passed the water-bound hawk halfway.

Knowing the witchcraft of their neighbors, the people of White village had made the condition that, in whatever shape the racers might run the rest of the course, they must resume human form upon arrival at a certain hill upon the fourth turn, which was in sight of the goal. The last wetting of the hawk’s feathers delayed it so that the antelope reached the hill just ahead; and there, resuming their natural shapes, the two runners came sweeping down the home-stretch, straining every nerve. But the Antelope Boy gained at each stride. When they saw him, the witch-people felt confident that he was their champion, and again began to push, and taunt, and jeer at the others. But when the little Antelope Boy sprang lightly across the line, far ahead of Deer-foot, their joy turned to mourning.

The people of White village burned all the witches upon the spot, in a great pile of corn; but somehow one escaped, and from him come all the witches that trouble us to this day.

The property of the witches was taken to White village; and as it was more than that village could hold, the surplus was sent to Isleta, where we enjoy it to this day; and later the people themselves moved here. And even now, when we dig in that little hill on the other side of the pool, we find charred corn-cobs, where our forefathers burned the witch-people of the Yellow Village.

## **THE HERO TWINS**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Lummis, Charles. *Pueblo Indian Folk-Stories*. New York: Century, 1910, 206–214.

**Date:** 1910

**Original Source:** Isleta Pueblo, New Mexico

**National Origin:** Native American

According to Charles Lummis who collected the following **myth** at Isleta Pueblo, the narrative was imported into the Tiwa village by Keres (Quères) speakers from the villages of Laguna and Acoma who were given refuge from crop failure brought on by a drought and stayed to become residents of Isleta. The Hero Twins are prominent figures in Pueblo **myth** as **tricksters** and **culture heroes**. Similar twin figures, in fact, are found throughout Native North America (see, for example, the Wichita “The Two Boys Who Slew the Monsters and Became Stars,” page 148).

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**M**áw-Sahv and Oó-yah-wee, as the Hero Twins are named in Quères, had the Sun for a father. Their mother died when they were born, and lay lifeless upon the hot plain. But the two wonderful boys, as soon as they were a minute old, were big and strong, and began playing.

There chanced to be in a cliff to the southward a nest of white crows; and presently the young crows said, “Nana, what is that over there? Isn’t it two babies?”

“Yes,” replied the Mother-Crow, when she had taken a look. “Wait and I will bring them.” So she brought the boys safely, and then their dead mother; and, rubbing a magic herb on the body of the latter, soon brought her to life.

By this time Máw-Sahv and Oó-yah-wee were sizable boys, and the mother started homeward with them. “Now,” said she when they reached the edge of the valley and could look across to that wondrous rock whereon stands Acoma, “go to yonder town, my sons, for that is where live your grandfather and grandmother, my parents; and I will wait here. Go ye in at the west end of the town and stand at the south end of the council-grounds until some one speaks to you; and ask them to take you to the Cacique, for he is your grandfather. You will know his house, for the ladder to it has three uprights instead of two. When you go in and tell your story, he will ask you a question to see if you are really his grandchildren, and will give you four chances to answer what he has in a bag in the corner. No one has ever been able to guess what is in it, but there are birds.”

The Twins did as they were bidden, and presently came to Acoma and found the house of the old Cacique. When they entered and told their story, he said, “Now I will try you. What is in yonder bag?”

“A rattlesnake,” said the boys.

“No,” said the Cacique, “it is not a rattlesnake. Try again.”

“Birds,” said the boys.

“Yes, they are birds. Now I know that you are truly my grandchildren, for no one else could ever guess.” And he welcomed them gladly, and sent them back with new dresses and jewelry to bring their mother.



When she was about to arrive, the Twins ran ahead to the house and told her father, mother, and sister to leave the house until she should enter; but not knowing what was to come, they would not go out. When she had climbed the big ladder to the roof and started down through the trap-door by the room-ladder, her sister cried out with joy at seeing her, and she was so startled that she fell from the ladder and broke her neck, and never could be brought to life again.

Máw-Sahv and Oó-yah-wee grew up to astounding adventures and achievements. While still very young in years, they did very remarkable things; for they had a miraculously rapid growth, and at an age when other boys were toddling about home, these Hero Twins had already become very famous hunters and warriors. They were very fond of stories of adventure, like less precocious lads; and after the death of their mother they kept their grandmother busy telling them strange tales. She had a great many anecdotes of a certain ogre-giantess who lived in the dark gorges of the mountains to the South, and so much did Máw-Sahv and Oó-yah-wee hear of this wonderful personage—who was the terror of all that country—that their boyish ambition was fired.

One day when their grandmother was busy they stole away from home with their bows and arrows, and walked miles and miles, till they came to a great forest at the foot of the mountain. In the edge of it sat the old Giant-woman, dozing in the sun, with a huge basket beside her. She was so enormous and looked so fierce that the boys' hearts stood still, and they would have hidden, but just then she caught sight of them, and called, "Come, little boys, and get into this basket of mine, and I will take you to my house."

"Very well," said Máw-Sahv, bravely hiding his alarm. "If you will take us through this big forest, which we would like to see, we will go with you."

The Giant-woman promised, and the lads clambered into her basket, which she took upon her back and started off. As she passed through the woods, the boys grabbed lumps of pitch from the tall pines and smeared it all over her head and back so softly that she did not notice it. Once she sat down to rest, and the boys slyly put a lot of big stones in the basket, set fire to her pitched hair, and hurriedly climbed a tall pine.

Presently the Giant-woman got up and started on toward home; but in a minute or two her head and manta were all of a blaze. With a howl that shook the earth, she dropped the basket and rolled on the ground, grinding her great head into the sand until she at last got the fire extinguished. But she was badly scorched and very angry, and still angrier when she looked in the basket and found only a lot of stones. She retraced her steps until she found the boys hidden in the pine tree, and said to them, "Come down, children, and get into my basket, that I may take you to my house, for now we are almost there."

The boys, knowing that she could easily break down the tree if they refused, came down. They got into the basket, and soon she brought them to her home in the mountain. She set them down upon the ground and said, "Now, boys, go

and bring me a lot of wood, that I may make a fire in the oven and bake you some sweet cakes.”

The boys gathered a big pile of wood, with which she built a roaring fire in the adobe oven outside the house. Then she took them and washed them very carefully, and taking them by the necks, thrust them into the glowing oven and sealed the door with a great, flat rock, and left them there to be roasted.

But the Trues were friends of the Hero Twins, and did not let the heat harm them at all. When the old Giant-woman had gone into the house, Máv-Sahv and Oó-yah-wee broke the smaller stone that closed the smoke-hole of the oven, and crawled out from their fiery prison unsigned. They ran around and caught snakes and toads and gathered up dirt and dropped them down into the oven through the smoke-hole; and then, watching when the Giant-woman's back was turned, they sneaked into the house and hid in a huge clay jar on the shelf.

Very early in the morning the Giant-woman's baby began to cry for some boy-meat. “Wait till it is well cooked,” said the mother; and hushed the child till the sun was well up. Then she went out and unsealed the oven, and brought in the sad mess the boys had put there. “They have cooked away to almost nothing,” she said; and she and the Giant-baby sat down to eat. “Isn't this nice?” said the baby; and Máv-Sahv could not help saying, “You nasty things, to like that!”

“Eh? Who is that?” cried the Giant-woman, looking around till she found the boys hidden in the jar. So she told them to come down, and gave them some sweet cakes, and then sent them out to bring her some more wood.

It was evening when they returned with a big load of wood, which Máv-Sahv had taken pains to get green. He had also picked up in the mountains a long, sharp splinter of quartz. The evening was cool, and they built a big fire in the fireplace. But immediately, as the boys had planned, the green wood began to smoke at a dreadful rate, and soon the room was so dense with it that they all began to cough and strangle. The Giant-woman got up and opened the window and put her head out for a breath of fresh air; and Máv-Sahv, pulling out the white-hot splinter of quartz from the fire, stabbed her in the back so that she died. Then they killed the Giant-baby, and at last felt that they were safe.

Now the Giant-woman's house was a very large one, and ran far back into the very heart of the mountain. Having got rid of their enemies, the Hero Twins decided to explore the house; and, taking their bows and arrows, started boldly down into the deep, dark rooms. After traveling a long way in the dark, they came to a huge room in which corn and melons and pumpkins were growing abundantly. On and on they went, till at last they heard the growl of distant thunder. Following the sound, they came presently to a room in the solid rock, wherein the lightning was stored. Going in, they took the lightning and played with it awhile, throwing it from one to the other, and at last started home, carrying their strange toy with them.

When they reached Acoma and told their grandmother of their wonderful adventures, she held up her withered old hands in amazement. And she was nearly scared to death when they began to play with the lightning, throwing it around the house as though it had been a harmless ball, while the thunder rumbled till it shook the great rock of Acoma. They had the blue lightning which belongs in the West; and the yellow lightning of the North; and the red lightning of the East; and the white lightning of the South; and with all these they played merrily.

But it was not very long till Shée-wo-nah, the Storm-King, had occasion to use the lightning; and when he looked in the room where he was wont to keep it, and found it gone, his wrath knew no bounds. He started out to find who had stolen it; and passing by Acoma he heard the thunder as the Hero Twins were playing ball with the lightning. He pounded on the door and ordered them to give him his lightning, but the boys refused. Then he summoned the storm, and it began to rain and blow fearfully outside; while within the boys rattled their thunder in loud defiance, regardless of their grandmother's entreaties to give the Storm-King his lightning.

It kept raining violently, however, and the water came pouring down the chimney until the room was nearly full, and they were in great danger of drowning. But luckily for them, the Trues were still mindful of them; and just in the nick of time sent their servant, Tee-oh-pee, the Badger, who is the best of diggers, to dig a hole up through the floor; all the water ran out, and they were saved. And so the Hero Twins outwitted the Storm-King.

South of Acoma, in the pine-clad gorges and mesas, the world was full of Bears. There was one old She-Bear in particular, so huge and fierce that all men feared her; and not even the boldest hunter dared go to the south—for there she had her home with her two sons.

Máw-sahv and Oó-yah-wee were famous hunters, and always wished to go south; but their grandmother always forbade them. One day, however, they stole away from the house, and got into the cañon. At last they came to the She-Bear's house; and there was old Quéé-ah asleep in front of the door. Máw-sahv crept up very carefully and threw in her face a lot of ground chili, and ran. At that the She-Bear began to sneeze, ah-húтч! ah-húтч! She could not stop, and kept making ah-húтч until she sneezed herself to death.

Then the Twins took their thunder-knives and skinned her. They stuffed the great hide with grass, so that it looked like a Bear again, and tied a buckskin rope around its neck.

"Now," said Máw-sahv, "We will give our grandma a trick!"

So, taking hold of the rope, they ran toward Acoma, and the Bear came behind them as if leaping. Their grandmother was going for water; and from the top of the cliff she saw them running so in the valley, and the Bear jumping behind them. She ran to her house and painted one side of her face black with charcoal, and the other side red with the blood of an animal; and, taking a bag

of ashes, ran down the cliff and out at the Bear, to make it leave the boys and come after her.

But when she saw the trick, she reproved the boys for their rashness—but in her heart she was very proud of them.

## THE COYOTE AND THE WOODPECKER

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Lummis, Charles. *Pueblo Indian Folk-Stories*. New York: Century, 1910, 49–52.

**Date:** 1910

**Original Source:** Isleta Pueblo, New Mexico

**National Origin:** Native American

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This story of the **trickster** trying to imitate another occurs in other **variants** in the Southwest (see, for example, the Jicarilla Apache “Tales of Fox: Fox and Kingfisher,” page 30). As in the **tale types** designated by folklorist Stith Thompson as **animal tales**, “The Coyote and the Woodpecker” offers a moral lesson. The philosophy of acceptance and non-competitiveness is consistent with general Pueblo worldview and morality.

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**W**ell, once upon a time a Coyote and his family lived near the edge of a wood. There was a big hollow tree there, and in it lived an old Woodpecker and his wife and children. One day as the Coyote-father was strolling along the edge of the forest he met the Woodpecker-father.

“Good evening,” said the Coyote; how do you do today, friend?”

“Very well, thank you; and how are you, friend?”

So they stopped and talked together awhile; and when they were about to go apart the Coyote said, “Friend Woodpecker, why do you not come as friends to see us? Come to our house to supper this evening, and bring your family.”

“Thank you, friend Coyote,” said the Woodpecker; “we will come with joy.”

So that evening, when the Coyote-mother had made supper ready, there came the Woodpecker-father and the Woodpecker-mother with their three children. When they had come in, all five of the Woodpeckers stretched themselves as they do after flying, and by that showed their pretty feathers—for the Woodpecker has yellow and red marks under its wings. While, they were eating supper, too, they sometimes spread their wings, and displayed their bright underside. They praised the supper highly, and said the Coyote-mother was a perfect housekeeper.

When it was time to go, they thanked the Coyotes very kindly and invited them to come to supper at their house the following evening. But when they were gone, the Coyote-father could hold himself no longer, and he said, "Did you see what airs those Woodpeckers put on? Always showing off their bright feathers? But I want them to know that the Coyotes are equal to them. I'll show them!"

Next day, the Coyote-father had all his family at work bringing wood, and built a great fire in front of his house. When it was time to go to the house of the Woodpeckers he called his wife and children to the fire, and lashed a burning stick under each of their arms, with the burning end pointing forward; and then he fixed himself in the same way.

"Now," said he, "we will show them! When we get there, you must lift up your arms now and then, to show them that we are as good as the Woodpeckers."

When they came to the house of the Woodpeckers and went in, all the Coyotes kept lifting their arms often, to show the bright coals underneath. But as they sat down to supper, one Coyote-girl gave a shriek and said:

"Oh, papa! My fire is burning me!"

"Be patient, my daughter," said the Coyote-father, severely, "and do not cry about little things."

"Ow!" cried the other Coyote-girl in a moment, "my fire has gone out!"

This was more than the Coyote-father could stand, and he reproved her angrily.

"But how is it, friend Coyote," said the Woodpecker, politely, "that your colors are so bright at first, but very soon become black?"

"Oh, that is the beauty of our colors," replied the Coyote, smothering his rage; "that they are not always the same—like other people's—but turn all shades."

But the Coyotes were very uncomfortable, and made an excuse to hurry home as soon as they could. When they got there, the Coyote-father whipped them all for exposing him to be laughed at.

But the Woodpecker-father gathered his children around him, and said, "Now, my children, you see what the Coyotes have done. Never in your life try to appear what you are not. Be just what you really are, and put on no false colors."

# LAKOTA

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## THE STONE BOY

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Wissler, Clark. "Some Dakota Myths II." *Journal of American Folklore* 20 (1907): 199–202.

**Date:** ca. 1900

**Original Source:** Ogalala Lakota (Sioux)

**National Origin:** Native American

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The Lakota (popularly labeled the Sioux by outsiders) like the Cheyenne (page 50) and Crow (page 67) were a nomadic northern Plains bison-hunting culture that depended on the horse for their migrations in pursuit of the herds. The sweat lodge that plays a central role in the following narrative is used for healing and ritual purification. These lodges are found throughout Native North America and, according to some sources, are likely to have been brought across the Bering Strait during migrations of the ancestors of the Native Americans into the New World. As described in the **myth** of the **culture hero** Stone Boy, heated stones (regarded as the "bones" of Mother Earth) are piled inside a covered structure and water is poured over them to produce steam. The emergence from the lodge can be symbolically interpreted as a rebirth, reflecting the literal birth of Stone Boy and rebirth of three brothers and four uncles in the course of the following narrative.

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**F**our brothers lived together in the same tepee. One day a strange woman came and stood outside. They sent the youngest brother out to see what it was that stood outside. The youngest brother went out to see, and came

back with the information that a woman was standing there. Then the eldest brother said to the youngest, "Call her your sister and invite her inside."

When she was invited she hesitated. She kept her face hidden in her robe. The brothers were cooking buffalo tongues for their meal. They gave some of these to the woman, but she turned her back while eating them so as not to show her face.

After a while the three older brothers went out to hunt. The youngest brother was curious to see the face of the woman. So he went to the top of a high hill and sat down. Then he left his robe on the hill and changed himself into a bird. He flew to the tepee and sat upon the poles at the top. He began to sing and to peck upon a pole, looking down at the woman.

Now she had her face exposed, and he saw that it was covered with hair. Spread out before her was a robe with a row of scalps half way around it. The woman heard the bird pecking on the poles above, and looking up said, "You bad bird, go away."

Then she began to count the scalps in the row, and, talking to herself, said, "I will take the scalps of these four brothers and fill out this row with them in the order of their ages, beginning with the oldest."

Now when the little bird heard this he returned to the hill, resumed his former shape, and waited for his three brothers. When he saw them coming he went out to meet them. He related what he had seen. Then they planned to take a pack strap and boil it so as to make it weak and soft. When this was done they gave it to the woman and sent her out for wood. Now when the woman had gone they took up the bundle she had brought with her and in which she kept the robe with the scalps and tossed it into the fire. Then the brothers went away.

The woman gathered together some wood, but every time she tried to tie it up with the pack strap the strap broke. At last she became very angry and said, "I will kill the brothers." So she returned to the tepee, but found the brothers gone and her bundle burned up. She was very angry.

She thrust her hands into the fire and pulled out the robe. Then she took up a large knife, tied an eagle feather on her hair, and started in pursuit of the brothers. As she was very swift, she soon over-took them, and, shaking the knife at them, said, "I will kill you."

All of the brothers shot arrows at her, but could not hit her. She came up, knocked down the oldest, then the second in order, and then the third. The youngest brother stood far off, with a bow and arrows in his hands.

The woman ran at him, but a crow that was flying around over his head said, "Young man shoot her in the head where the feather is."

The young man did as directed, and killed the woman. He beheaded her and buried the body. Then he made a fire, heated some stones, and made a sweat house. When this was done, he dragged his three dead brothers into the sweat house, where he began to sing a song and beat with a rattle. Then he poured water

upon the heated stones, and as the steam began to rise one of the brothers began to sigh. Then all of them sighed. When the youngest brother poured more water upon the stones, the three brothers came to life again. They all returned to their tepee. One day another young woman came and stood outside of the tepee as before. The youngest brother looked out and said, "My sister, come in."

This woman did not hide her face. After a time she said, "Have you any brothers?" The youngest brother told her that he had.

The youngest brother cooked some buffalo tongues and gave one to the woman. She thanked him for this and they talked pleasantly together.

Now the brothers were out hunting for buffalo as before, and the youngest went out to the top of a high hill and left his robe, became a bird, and sat upon the poles on the top of the tepee. He pecked at the poles.

The woman looked up and said, "Get away from here. You will spoil my brother's poles." Looking down the bird saw a row of moccasins laid out in front of the woman. She put her hand upon one pair saying to herself, "These are for the oldest." Then she took up another pair, saying, "These are for the next of age." So she went on until all were provided for.

Then the bird flew back to the hill and became a boy again. When he met his brothers, he related to them what he had seen. They were all happy. They had as much buffalo meat as they could carry, and when they came into the tepee the woman said, "Oh my, you are good." At once she began to dry and cook meat.

One day the oldest brother went out to hunt, but did not return. The following day the next in order of age went out to search for him, but he never came back. Then the next went out, but he also failed to come back. Then the youngest went out to look for his brothers, and as he did not come back the woman began to cry. She went out to the top of a hill and found a nice smooth round pebble there. So she slept at that place one night and then swallowed the pebble. When she reached the tepee her abdomen had become very much distended. After a little while she gave birth to a child. It was a boy.

As this boy grew up he always wanted a bow and arrows. And when he got them he was always shooting at birds and small animals. At last he became a tall man. Some of his uncles' arrows were still in the tepee, and one day, as he took them down, his mother related the fate of his four uncles. When the young man heard this story he said to his mother, "I shall find them."

"No, you are too young," said his mother.

"No, I am old enough," said the young man.

So the young man started out to search for his uncles. After a time he came to a high hill, from the top of which he saw a little old tepee. He went up to it and looked in at the door. He saw a very old woman in-side.

When the old woman saw him she said, "Come in, my grandchild; come in and break my ribs."



As the young man entered, the old woman stooped over toward the ground, and the young man kicked her with his foot until all her ribs were broken. At last, as he kicked, one of the ribs turned inward and pierced the old woman's heart. This killed her. Looking around inside the tepee, the young man saw the skeletons of many people. These were killed when breaking the old woman's ribs, because the last rib when broken turned outward and pierced the heart of the kicker. But this young man, who was called the Stone Boy, could not be killed in that way.

Among the skeletons in the tepee were those of the four uncles of the Stone Boy. He looked over the bones, then went outside, made a sweat house, and heated some stones. Then he took the bones into the sweat house, sang some songs, and beat with a rattle as his uncle had done. When he poured water on the stones and the steam began to rise, the dead all came to life. The Stone Boy addressed his uncles and said to them, "You are my four uncles who went away and never came back. Now I shall take you home with me."

One day Stone Boy said to his mother, "I am going out in this direction" (pointing to the left).

"No," said she, "you must not go that way, for it is dangerous."

"Yes, but I am going that way," said he. This was in the winter. He came to a very high hill where four girls were sliding down on the snow.

"Come chase us," said they. Stone Boy sat down behind them on the piece of raw hide they were sliding with. At the bottom of the hill they ran against a bank and Stone Boy bumped the girls so hard that they were killed. Then he went home.

After a time he went out on another journey, and saw an old buffalo bull hooking at a rock. Stone Boy stood watching him for a while and then said, "What are you doing there?"

The buffalo replied, "A man named Stone Boy killed four girls. These girls were four white buffalo, and now all the buffalo are hunting for Stone Boy. So I am practicing my horns on this rock, because Stone Boy is very hard to kill. When winter comes, we shall go out to hunt for Stone Boy."

"I am the one you are looking for," said Stone Boy to the buffalo, as he shot an arrow into his heart.

Then Stone Boy went home, and told his four uncles that they should gather together a lot of brush, because the buffalo were coming, and they would cover the earth. With the brush they built four fences around their tepee. Then the buffalo came. Stone Boy and his uncles shot down many of them with their arrows, but the buffalo tore down one fence after the other until just one remained. But so many buffalo had been killed by this time that the leader of the herd called the others away, and Stone Boy and his uncles were left to live in peace.

## COYOTE AND THE BUFFALO

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Wissler, Clark. "Some Dakota Myths I." *Journal of American Folklore* 20 (1907): 124–126.

**Date:** ca. 1900

**Original Source:** Ogalala Lakota (Sioux)

**National Origin:** Native American

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The following **myth** illustrates a typical introduction of coyote tales, "Once Coyote was walking along." Coyote's behavior throughout the narrative is also typical of this **trickster** role. He is motivated by petty passions such as hunger, fear, and curiosity. He attempts to use objects and powers that he does not comprehend and, as a result, ends up in no better condition than he was at the beginning of the adventure.

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Once Coyote was walking along. He had nothing to eat for a long time and was thin and weak. Finally he came to a deserted camp, but could find nothing save the remains of the fire. While he was looking around for food, he came upon a knife and an arrow. He carried them away with him, and when he came to the top of a high hill he saw many buffalo grazing in the valley below. He crept up close to the crest of the hill and looked over. Then he said to himself as he looked at the arrow and the knife, "Now those people kill buffalo with these things." So he took up the arrow and threw it toward the buffalo, saying, "Now, go and kill the buffalo. Go, hit that one."

The arrow fell down upon the ground and said, "You must take a piece of wood and a string before I can go and kill the buffalo."

Then Coyote went up to a tree, took the knife and cut off one of the branches, trimmed it and peeled off the bark. He twisted the bark into a cord and tied it to the stick. Then he went back, laid the bow on the ground, picked up the arrow, put it on the stick, and said, "Now, go."

The arrow said to him, "No, that is not the way. You must pull on the string."

Then Coyote put the arrow down, took hold of the string, and dragged the bow along the ground.

"No, no!" said the arrow, "that is not the way. You must hold me against the stick with one hand and hold the string with the other." Coyote did so.

"Now," said the arrow, "pull with all your might and then let loose."

The arrow flew towards the buffalo, struck one of them in the side, but did not bring it down. Coyote picked up the knife and ran after the wounded buffalo as fast as he could. He shouted so loud that the wounded buffalo soon fell over

from fright. Coyote stopped at once to lick up the blood from his wounds. Then he took up the knife and got ready to butcher the buffalo. Just then he looked up and saw a bear sitting on the other side.

“Come on,” said Coyote, “I will give you some.” But the bear did not move.

Coyote invited him again. Then he came over and helped Coyote to butcher. Now, Coyote was afraid of the bear and so kept on the other side of the buffalo from him. After a while the blood in Coyote’s stomach began to roll. The bear heard the noise. He stopped and said, “What’s that?”

Then Coyote struck his stomach, and said in a loud voice, “Keep quiet, my brother.”

“What did your brother say?” said the bear.

“Well,” said Coyote, “my brother just said that he eats bear.”

The bear was puzzled by this, and started to go away.

“Where are you going?” said Coyote.

“Oh,” said the bear, “I am just going over the hill.”

As soon as the bear was out of sight, Coyote went up on the hill to look, and saw the bear running off as fast as he could. So he called out to the bear, “Come back, come back. I thought you were going to help me with my butchering.”

Then Coyote went back to the buffalo, and as there were many leaves upon the ground he covered the meat up with them. Then he went on with his butchering and a magpie flew by.

Coyote threw a piece of fat to the bird, saying, “Eat this, and then fly all around the world and tell the people to come here (all the birds and animals). There will be a great feast.”

The magpie went out and flew all around the country, inviting all the animals to come to the feast. They soon arrived, and gathered around in a circle. Then Coyote sat down to have a talk with them. As soon as he sat down the night hawk began to fly around over his head and make a noise.

“Oh, you get away, you jealous woman,” said Coyote. “I am going to talk now.” Then he tried to get up to begin his speech, but he could not rise. The night hawk had defecated around him, causing him to stick fast to his seat. Then all of the animals sprang up, ran to the carcass, and began to eat. Some of them soon found the meat hidden in the leaves, scratched it out, and ate it. Just as the meat was gone, Coyote got loose, but the animals ran away and left him. Then he sat down and cried.

After a time he started on his journey again and saw four buffalo. Now he had lost his knife and the arrow. The buffalo were in a hole among some tall grass. “Now, how can I get them,” said Coyote to himself. He went close up to them, and, when the buffalo looked at him, he said, “Brothers, turn me into a buffalo so that I can eat grass.”

“Well,” said a bull, “you stand over to one side and do not move.”

“Now,” said the buffalo, “get down and roll in the dust.”

When Coyote arose, the buffalo charged upon him, but Coyote was afraid and stepped to one side. The buffalo reproved him for this, and reminded him of the injunction to stand still. So they tried it again, but when the buffalo charged, Coyote stepped to one side as before. The buffalo reproved him, but said he would try again. The third time Coyote stepped aside as before. Now the buffalo was very angry, and he told Coyote he would try once more, and that, if he did not stand still, he would kill him.

This time Coyote stood still when the buffalo charged. The buffalo tossed him up into the air and as he came down he became a buffalo. At once Coyote began to eat grass. He was very hungry. The buffalo started to go, but Coyote lingered behind eating grass. Finally, he refused to follow altogether, and the herd left him.

Coyote saw a wolf, and called out to him, "Here, brother, let me turn you into a buffalo." Then Coyote instructed the wolf to stand to one side and not to move. Then he told the wolf to roll in the dust as before. When Coyote charged upon the wolf, the latter stepped to one side. This he did three times, but the fourth time he stood still. Coyote said, "Now, I will make you eat grass."

Then he tossed the wolf into the air, but he did not change. Coyote, himself, became a coyote again. Then the wolf began to fight him. Coyote was angry and said, "Now, you have spoiled all my fun, and I will punish you." So Coyote bit the wolf.

## THE WOMAN WITH A BEAR LOVER

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Wissler, Clark. "Some Dakota Myths II." *Journal of American Folklore* 20 (1907): 195–196.

**Date:** ca. 1900

**Original Source:** Ogalala Lakota

**National Origin:** Native American

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In the "Obstacle Flight" (AT 313 and 314), victims throw objects (in this case, a whetstone) behind them that are magically transformed into obstacles (here, a mountain). This narrative is cross-culturally distributed.

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Once there was a man who lived alone with his three children and his young wife. One day, when the man returned from deer hunting, he found the children cooking bear's flesh. The next day, when he returned, he found them again cooking bear. Then he thought to him-self,

“I wonder how they kill these bears. The next time I shall watch.” So the next day he made ready as if to go deer hunting, but as soon as he got into the brush he concealed himself and waited.

In a little while he saw his young wife come out of the tepee with an axe on her back and walk toward the woods. As she went along, she struck the trees with her axe until she came to one that sounded hollow. When she struck on this a bear came out of the top, sprang to the ground, and after caressing the woman had sexual relations with her. Then the woman arose from the ground and killed him with the axe.

After the man saw what had happened, he went on with his hunting. When he returned he found his children cooking bear as before. He told the children not to eat any of the meat. His purpose was to make the woman eat all of it. Then he told his wife to eat.

At last she said, “I have enough now.” The man did not listen to her but took up the meat and forced it all down her throat until she died.

Then the man said, “Now children, you are to go back to your father [the bear].”

He gave them the skin of an oriole and a whetstone. Then he sent them out to look for their father. “Go home,” he said, “you do not belong here.”

So the children started on their way. While they were going they heard a little thing coming after them. They looked around and saw their mother’s head rolling along. “Where are you going?” said the head to the children.

The children were afraid and made no reply, but went on as fast as they could. They cried when the head was about to overtake them.

One of the children threw down the whetstone, and it turned into a very high mountain. This mountain separated the children from their mother’s head. When the head came to the foot of the mountain, a snake came along and the head said to it, “Grandfather, make a hole through this mountain for me. If you will make a hole through this mountain for me I will give you some scrapings from a buffalo-hide.”

So the snake bored a hole through the mountain. When the head had rolled through to the other side, it turned upon the snake and said, “No, I will not give you anything.”

Then the head took the snake and pulled it in two. Then the head went on in pursuit of the children, who were very tired. At last they went up into a tree to rest. The head came to the foot of the tree, looked up and saw the children at the top.

The head called to them, “My children, I have very hard times; come down and go home with me.” The children did not come down. The head waited a while at the foot of the tree, and then said angrily, “If you do not come down I will punish you. I will crush you, I will pound you up fine.”

Then the head began to shake the tree, and when the tree began to tremble a voice from above said to the children, “Take the bird’s nest you see near you

and sit on it.” Just as the children got into the nest, the tree began to fall, but the wind carried the nest far off. At last the nest came to the ground, and the children got out and hurried on their way. Finally they came to a very large river.

They looked back and saw the head still following them. Out in the river they saw something black moving along.

When the head saw the children, it called out, “Now, I shall get you. You will drown.”

The black object in the water was a boat with a man in it. When the man saw the children on the shore and the head pursuing, he called out to them, “My children, come here. I will kill your mother.”

The children sprang into the water and swam to the boat. When they neared it, the man put out his oar and raised the children into the boat one after the other. The head rolled into the water and swam toward the boat also.

The head said to the man, “Take me, too.” So the man put out his oar, and the head rolled up on it, but instead of lifting the head into the boat, the man swung the oar with all his might, and the head fell far out into the stream. Then he rowed out to where the head was floating and beat it under with his oar.

# NATCHEZ

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## THE TAR BABY

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Swanton, John R. *Myths and Tales of the Southeastern Indians*. Smithsonian Institution, Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin 88. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1929, 258–259.

**Date:** 1929

**Original Source:** Natchez

**National Origin:** Native American

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By the earliest period of European contact, the Natchez had developed along the eastern bank of the Mississippi River a culture of such complexity that it was unrivaled north of Mexico. By the middle of the eighteenth century, however, the Natchez had been destroyed as a distinct cultural entity, although individuals survived passing along oral traditions such as the following tale. Influences from neighboring non-native cultures are readily apparent in tales such as “The Tar Baby.” The following narrative offers another version of a widely spread **tale type** (AT 175), known not only in the Americas but also in the Old World. There are many similarities among versions. For example, the “Briar Patch Punishment for Rabbit” (AT 1310A) is included in the Caribbean “Brother Rabbit an’ Brother Tar-Baby” (page 414). In the Natchez version of the tale, however, the **trickster** hero rabbit plays the role of shape-shifter. He does this by literally donning the skin of gray squirrel to gain initial access to the well. Taking on the shape of another being by donning its skin is commonly associated with witchcraft, but does not seem to do so in this case. Also, no apparent significance can be found for gray squirrel’s being the shape adopted by rabbit. Therefore, the similarity may indicate an exchange of **motifs** among neighboring groups that share a common

environment and way of life in the same region. There is an irony in rabbit who is seen to be the master of disguise in most narratives being trapped by a similarly false image.

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All of the wild animals appointed a time to dig for water and when the time came assembled and began digging. But presently Rabbit gave up digging, and the others went on digging without him. They found water. Then they stationed two people to watch it. But Rabbit became very thirsty. He killed a gray squirrel, stripped off its hide, got into it, and came to the watchers. It was Rabbit who did it, but in the form of the gray squirrel he said that he had become very thirsty for lack of water. "You may drink water because you are just a gray squirrel," they said to him, and he drank. He drank all he wanted and went away. Then he pulled off the hide.

But when he thought of going back to drink again the hide had become hard and he could not get it on, so when he became thirsty he dipped up the water at night. But when he set out water for his visitors they said to him, "Where did you find it?" and he answered, "I got it from the dew." Then, following the tracks by the water, they saw signs of Rabbit, made an image of a person out of pitch and set it up near the place where they had dug the well.

The next night Rabbit came and stood there. "Who are you?" he said. There was no reply and he continued, "If you do not speak I will strike you." Rabbit struck it with one hand and his hand stuck to it. "Let me go. If you do not let me go I will strike you with my other hand," he said, and he struck it with that hand. When he hit it that hand also stuck. "Let me go. Stop holding me. If you do not let me go I will kick you," he said, and he kicked it. When he kicked it his foot stuck. "If you do not let go I will kick you with my other foot," he said, and he kicked it with that foot. When he did so his other foot stuck. "Let me go," he said, "I have my head left, and if you do not let me go I will butt you." He pulled back and forth to get free and butted it with his head and his head stuck. Then he hung there all doubled up.

While he was hanging there day came. And when it was light the water watchers came and found Rabbit hanging there. They picked him up, made a prisoner of him, and carried him off. They assembled together to kill him. "Let us throw him into the fire," they said, but Rabbit laughed and replied, "Nothing can happen to me there. That is where I travel around."

"If that is the case we must kill him some other way," they said, and after they had debated a long time concluded, "Let us tie a rock around his neck and throw him into the water," but Rabbit laughed and called out, "I live all the time in water. Nothing can happen to me there."

"Well," they said, "he will be hard to kill. How can we kill him?" After all had conferred for a while, they said, "I wonder what would become of him if we threw him into a brier patch?" At that Rabbit cried out loudly. "Now you have



killed me,” he said. “Now we have killed him,” they replied. “If we had known that at first we would have had him killed already,” so they carried him to a brier thicket, Rabbit weeping unceasingly as he was dragged along. Then they threw him into the brier thicket with all their strength, and he fell down, got up, and ran off at once, whooping.

# NAVAJO

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## NOQOÏLPI, THE GAMBLER: A NAVAJO MYTH

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Matthews, Washington. "Noqoilpi, the Gambler: A Navajo Myth." *Journal of American Folklore* 2 (1889): 89–94.

**Date:** ca. 1889

**Original Source:** Navajo (New Mexico)

**National Origin:** Native American

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According to folklorist Washington Matthews, "In the cañon of the Chaco, in northern New Mexico, there are many ruins of ancient pueblos which are still in a fair state of preservation, in some of them entire apartments being yet, it is said, intact. One of the largest of these is called by the Navajos Kintyèl or Kintyèli, which signifies 'Broad-house.' It figures frequently in their legends" (89). These are ruins of dwellings built by the Anasazi who occupied the area from about 1 C.E. to 1300 C.E. farming corn, beans, and squash. There are varied opinions concerning the reasons for the abandonment of the cliff dwellings and the fragmenting of the Anasazi culture; their descendants are probably the modern Zuni Pueblo. Some scholars contend that the Navajo migrated to the area as early as 1000 C.E., which would place them in the area before the Anasazi abandonment. At the time of their arrival, the Navajo, like the Apache, were hunters and gatherers. They were strongly influenced by the sedentary Pueblo farmers, which wrought changes in areas such as their means of obtaining subsistence and their religious life. The formulaic use of the number four is common not only in Navajo tradition, but among the majority of Native American groups. The story of "Noqoilpi, the Gambler" is a single episode in the Navajo myth of the creation and their migration to the Southwest.

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Some time before, there had descended among the Pueblos, from the heavens, a divine gambler or gambling-god, named *Noqoilpi*, or He-who-wins-men (at play); his talisman was a great piece of turquoise. When he came, he challenged the people to all sorts of games and contests, and in all of these he was successful. He won from them, first their property, then their women and children, and finally some of the men themselves.

Then he told them he would give them part of their property back in payment if they would build a great house; so when the Navajos came, the Pueblos were busy building in order that they might release their enthralled relatives and their property. They were also busy making a race-track, and preparing for all kinds of games of chance and skill.

When all was ready, and four days notice had been given, twelve men came from the neighboring pueblo of *Kinçolij* (Blue-house) to compete with the great gambler. They bet their own persons, and after a brief contest they lost themselves to *Noqoilpi*. Again a notice of four days was given, and again twelve men of *Kinçolij*—relatives of the former twelve—came to play, and these also lost themselves. For the third time an announcement, four days in advance of a game, was given; this time some women were among the twelve contestants, and they too lost themselves. All were put to work on the building of *Kintyèl* as soon as they forfeited their liberty. At the end of another four days the children of these men and women came to try to win back their parents, but they succeeded only in adding themselves to the number of the gambler's slaves. On a fifth trial, after four days' warning, twelve leading men of Blue-house were lost, among them the chief of the pueblo. On a sixth duly announced gambling-day twelve more men, all important persons, staked their liberty and lost it. Up to this time the Navajos had kept count of the winnings of *Noqoilpi*, but afterwards people from other pueblos came in such numbers to play and lose that they could keep count no longer. In addition to their own persons the later victims brought in beads, shells, turquoise, and all sorts of valuables, and gambled them away. With the labor of all these slaves it was not long until the great *Kintyèl* was finished.

But all this time the Navajos had been merely spectators, and had taken no part in the games. One day the voice of the beneficent god *Qastcèyalçi* was heard faintly in the distance crying his usual call "hu'hu'hu'hu'." His voice was heard, as it is always heard, four times, each time nearer and nearer, and immediately after the last call, which was loud and clear, *Qastcèyalçi* appeared at the door of a hut where dwelt a young couple who had no children, and with them he communicated by means of signs.

He told them that the people of *Kinçolij* had lost at game with *Noqoilpi* two great shells, the greatest treasures of the pueblo; that the Sun had coveted these shells, and had begged them from the gambler; that the latter had refused the request of the Sun and the Sun was angry. In consequence of all this, as *Qastcèyalçi* related, in twelve days from his visit certain divine personages would

meet in the mountains, in a place which he designated, to hold a great ceremony. He invited the young man to be present at the ceremony, and disappeared.

The Navajo kept count of the passing days; on the twelfth day he repaired to the appointed place, and there he found a great assemblage of the gods. There were *Qastcèyalçi*, *Qastcèqogan* and his son, *Niltci*, the Wind, *Tcalyèl*, the Darkness, *Tcàapani*, the Bat, *Klictsò*, the Great Snake, *Tsilkkàli* (a little bird), *Nasísi*, the Gopher, and many others. Beside these, there were present a number of pets or domesticated animals belonging to the gambler, who were dissatisfied with their lot, were anxious to be free, and would gladly obtain their share of the spoils in case their master was ruined. *Niltci*, the Wind, had spoken to them, and they had come to enter into the plot against *Noqoilpi*.

All night the gods danced and sang, and performed their mystic rites, for the purpose of giving to the son of *Qastcèqogan* powers as a gambler equal to those of *Noqoilpi*. When the morning came they washed the young neophyte all over, dried him with corn meal, dressed him in clothes exactly like those the gambler wore, and in every way made him look as much like the gambler as possible, and then they counseled as to what other means they should take to outwit *Noqoilpi*.

In the first place, they desired to find out how he felt about having refused to his father, the Sun, the two great shells.

"I will do this," said *Niltci*, the Wind, "for I can penetrate everywhere, and no one can see me"; but the others said, "No, you can go everywhere, but you cannot travel without making a noise and disturbing people. Let *Tcalyèl*, the Darkness, go on this errand, for he also goes wherever he wills, yet he makes no noise."

So *Tcalyèl* went to the gambler's house, entered his room, went all through his body while he slept, and searched well his mind, and he came back saying, "*Noqoilpi* is sorry for what he has done."

*Niltci*, however, did not believe this; so, although his services had been before refused, he repaired to the chamber where the gambler slept, and went all through his body and searched well his mind; but he too came back saying *Noqoilpi* was sorry that he had refused to give the great shells to his father.

One of the games they proposed to play is called *çàka-çqadsàç*, or the thirteen chips; it is played with thirteen thin flat pieces of wood, which are colored red on one side and left white or uncolored on the other side. Success depends on the number of chips, which, being thrown upward, fall with their white sides up.

"Leave the game to me," said the Bat; "I have made thirteen chips that are white on both sides. I will hide myself in the ceiling, and when our champion throws up his chips I will grasp them and throw down my chips instead."

Another game they were to play is called *nanjoj*; it is played with two long sticks or poles, of peculiar shape and construction (one marked with red and the other with black), and a single hoop. A long many-tailed string, called the "turkey-claw," is secured to the center of each pole.

“Leave *nanjoj* to me,” said the Great Snake; “I will hide myself in the hoop and make it fall where I please.”

Another game was one called *tsínbetsil*, or push-on-the-wood; in this the contestants push against a tree until it is torn from its roots and falls.

“I will see that this game is won,” said *Nasísi*, the Gopher; “I will gnaw the roots of the tree, so that he who shoves it may easily make it fall.”

In the game of *tol*, or ball, the object was to hit the ball so that it would fall beyond a certain line.

“I will win this game for you,” said the little bird, *Tsilkáli*, “for I will hide within the ball, and fly with it wherever I want to go. Do not hit the ball hard; give it only a light tap, and depend on me to carry it.”

The pets of the gambler begged the Wind to blow hard, so that they might have an excuse to give their master for not keeping due watch when he was in danger, and in the morning the Wind blew for them a strong gale. At dawn the whole party of conspirators left the mountain, and came down to the brow of the *cañon* to watch until sunrise.

Noqoilpi had two wives, who were the prettiest women in the whole land. Wherever she went, each carried in her hand a stick with something tied on the end of it, as a sign that she was the wife of the great gambler.

It was their custom for one of them to go every morning at sunrise to a neighboring spring to get water. So at sunrise the watchers on the brow of the cliff saw one of the wives coming out of the gambler’s house with a water jar on her head, whereupon the son of *Qastcèqogan* descended into the *cañon*, and followed her to the spring. She was not aware of his presence until she had filled her water-jar; then she supposed it to be her own husband, whom the youth was dressed and adorned to represent, and she allowed him to approach her. She soon discovered her error, however, but deeming it prudent to say nothing, she suffered him to follow her into the house. As he entered, he observed that many of the slaves had already assembled; perhaps they were aware that some trouble was in store for their master. The latter looked up with an angry face; he felt jealous when he saw the stranger entering immediately after his wife.

He said nothing of this, however, but asked at once the important question, “Have you come to gamble with me?” This he repeated four times, and each time the young *Qastcèqogan* said “No.” Thinking the stranger feared to play with him, Noqoilpi went on challenging him recklessly.

“I’ll bet myself against yourself”;

“I’ll bet my feet against your feet”;

“I’ll bet my legs against your legs”; and so on he offered to bet every and any part of his body against the same part of his adversary, ending by mentioning his hair.

In the mean time the party of divine ones, who had been watching from above, came down, and people from the neighboring pueblos came in, and among these were two boys, who were dressed in costumes similar to those worn

by the wives of the gambler. The young *Qastcèqogan* pointed to these and said, "I will bet my wives my against your wives."

The great gambler accepted the wager, and the four persons, two women and two mock women, were placed sitting in a row near the wall. First they played the game of thirteen chips. The Bat assisted, as he had promised the son of *Qastcèqogan*, and the latter soon won the game, and with it the wives of *Noqòilpi*.

This was the only game played inside the house; then all went out of doors, and games of various kinds were played. First they tried *nanjoj*. The track already prepared lay east and west, but, prompted by the wind god, the stranger insisted on having a track made from north to south, and again, at the bidding of the Wind, he chose the red stick. The son of *Qastcèqogan* threw the wheel: at first it seemed about to fall on the gambler's pole, in the "turkey-claw" of which it was entangled; but to the great surprise of the gambler it extricated itself, rolled farther on, and fell on the pole of his opponent. The latter ran to pick up the ring, lest *Noqòilpi* in doing so might hurt the Snake inside; but the gambler was so angry that he threw his stick away and gave up the game, hoping to do better in the next contest, which was that of pushing down trees.

For this the great gambler pointed out two small trees, but his opponent insisted that larger trees must be found. After some search they agreed upon two of good size, which grew close together, and of these the wind-god told the youth which one he must select. The gambler strained with all his might at his tree, but could not move it, while his opponent, when his turn came, shoved the other tree prostrate with little effort, for its roots had all been severed by the Gopher.

Then followed a variety of games, on which *Noqòilpi* staked his wealth in shells and precious stones, his houses, and many of his slaves, and lost all.

The last game was that of the ball. On the line over which the ball was to be knocked all the people were assembled: on one side were those who still remained slaves; on the other side were the freedmen and those who had come to wager themselves, hoping to rescue their kinsmen. *Noqòilpi* bet on this game the last of his slaves and his own person. The gambler struck his ball a heavy blow, but it did not reach the line; the stranger gave his but a light tap, and the ball within it flew with it far beyond the line, where at the released captives jumped over the line and joined their people.

The victor ordered all the shell beads and precious stones and the great shells to be brought forth. He gave the beads and shells to *Qastèyalçi*, that they might be distributed among the gods; the two great shells were given to the Sun.

In the mean time *Noqòilpi* sat to one side saying bitter things, bemoaning his fate, and cursing and threatening his enemies, "I will kill you all with the lightning. I will send war and disease among you. May the cold freeze you! May the fire burn you! May the waters drown you!" he cried.

“He has cursed enough,” whispered *Niltci* to the son of *Qastcèqogan*. “Put an end to his angry words.”

So the young victor called Noqoilpi to him, and said, “You have bet yourself and have lost; you are now my slave and must do my bidding. You are not a god, for my power has prevailed against yours.”

The victor had a bow of magic power named the Bow of Darkness; he bent this upwards, and placing the string on the ground, he bade his illustrious slave stand on the string; then he shot Noqoilpi up into the sky as if he had been an arrow. Up and up he went, growing smaller and smaller to the sight till he faded to a mere speck, and finally disappeared altogether. As he flew upwards he was heard to mutter in the angry tones of abuse and imprecation, until he was too far away to be heard; but no one could distinguish anything he said as he ascended.

He flew up in the sky until he came to the home of *Bekotcic-e*, the god who carries the moon, and who is supposed by the Navajos to be identical with the god of the Americans. He is very old, and dwells in a long row of stone houses. When Noqoilpi arrived at the house of *Bekotcic-e*, he related to the latter all his misadventures in the lower world and said, “Now I am poor, and this is why I have come to see you.”

“You need be poor no longer,” said *Bekotcic-e*. “I will provide for you.”

So he made for the gambler pets or domestic animals of new kinds, different to those which he had in the Chaco valley; he made for him sheep, asses, horses, swine, goats, and fowls. He also gave him *bayeta*, and other cloths of bright colors, more beautiful than those woven by his slaves at *Kintyèli*. He made, too, a new people, the Mexicans, for the gambler to rule over, and then he sent him back to this world again, but he descended far to the south of his former abode, and reached the earth in old Mexico.

Noqoilpi’s people increased greatly in Mexico, and after a while they began to move toward the north, and build towns along the Rio Grande. Noqoilpi came with them until they arrived at a place north of Santa Fé. There they ceased building, and he returned to old Mexico, where he still lives, and where he is now the *Nakàì C-igíni*, or God of the Mexicans.

# OJIBWA

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## THE FLOOD

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Radin, Paul, and A. B. Reagan. "Ojibwa Myths and Tales: The Manabozho Cycle." *Journal of American Folklore* 41 (1928 ): 71–76.

**Date:** 1911–1914

**Original Source:** Ojibwa

**National Origin:** Native American

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Manabozho is the preeminent **trickster** in the Algonquin cultures of the North and Northeastern Woodlands. In this **myth**, however, his primary role is that of **culture hero** who cleanses the environment of monstrous sea-lions and snakes, making the world safe for human life. His supernatural power is demonstrated further by powers of prophesy, restoring life to the dead and shape-shifting.

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**M**anabozho, as he is known to the Indians, is the Eastern God. When he was a boy he lived with his grandmother. His father and mother had been killed in war. When he became of age, he prepared to go to war.

The enemy (the sea lion) that had killed his parents lived on an island surrounded by water. Surrounding this island and extending to a distance of a mile and a half from shore was floating pitch-like ice, such that a canoe could not get ashore over it. He asked his grandmother for advice but she told him it was futile for him to fight with the sea-lion that lived on that island. However, Manabozho was determined. He made a large canoe and covered it with tallow so that it would float and go through the pitch that surrounded the island. The purpose of the pitch was to catch the canoe in it; after which the sea-lion would



come out and devour the canoe and its occupants. When Manabozho had completed his canoe, he made a good bow and prepared plenty of arrows to fight with. After everything was ready, he started on the war path.

When he had launched his canoe, he told his grandmother to go ahead of him with another canoe in a zigzag course up the channel for a little way. (This custom of having the women precede a war party for a little way on its start was long afterwards followed by the Chippewas in starting on the war path against the Sioux.) So Manabozho started on his war expedition.

After considerable labor in paddling and pushing his canoe through and over the pitch-like ice, he landed safely on the island in the night. There on the shore he stayed till the break of day. At dawn, he gave a war-whoop and ran toward the chief's house, the sea-monster's home. Upon hearing the war-whoop, the chief jumped from his bed and got his bow and arrows.

The two powerful beings started to fight in accordance with the powers with which they were endowed by their superior givers. The fight was terrible. They fought two days continually without killing each other, and rested on their arms, with the contest undecided. But Manabozho had advisors at hand.

On the evening following the second day's battle, Batter, the bird called Bluejay, accosted Manabozho and said, "You can not kill the Sea-lion by shooting him in the body. His heart and vital parts are not in his body. I will tell you where his heart is if you will promise to give me some meat from his dead carcass."

With open mouth and wide eyes, Manabozho listened to Batter's statements and advice until he was through, then replied, "My brother, if you will tell me where the chief Sea-lion's heart is, I will give you the meat and make you chief of the Blue jays and all carnivorous birds."

"In truth," spoke up Batter, as he flew to a limb over Manabozho so as to be heard more easily without talking loud enough to be heard by anyone else, "this monster's heart is in his little toe. Aim for the little toe the next time you go into battle with him, and you will succeed in killing him."

The morning of the third day, Manabozho started again to fight after giving a war-whoop. The chief Sea-lion came out with his full equipment for another battle. The fight had begun. Manabozho aimed for the little toe of his adversary. The arrow struck the mark squarely and penetrated the vital organs. The chief Sea-lion keeled over and died. Seeing him fall, Manabozho ran towards him, pulled his knife out and cut the chief's scalp off.

He then set out for his canoe and sailed across to the place where he had left his grandmother, singing his song of victory as he went, as the Indians used to sing when returning from the battle field.

When the grandmother heard Manabozho coming, singing his song of victory, she started out to meet him in her canoe, and nearing the canoe of her grandson she took the scalp from him and set out ahead toward the shore.

Landing, she called the village neighbors, and all began to have the war dance around the scalp in the middle of the dance hall, as it was the custom of the Indians to dance the war dance in the past. Thus they danced till they had completed the ceremony. Then they smoked the pipe of peace.

After the close of the four-days dance over the scalp of the chief Sea-lion, Manabozho bid his grandmother good-bye, and started west over the earth. After four days of journeying, he met four wolves. One of the four was a chief.

Meeting him, they then accompanied him for four days. As he thus journeyed west with them, he noticed every evening when they camped for the night that they would pile sticks in a heap and the chief wolf would jump over the pile four times. Then the wood would catch fire without the aid of any fire-starter. So Manabozho learned this manner of starting fires from the chief. As they traveled about, young wolves came along behind and chased down the moose and deer and killed them as they were needed. Then they would dress and cook them and all would eat to their satisfaction. So all were happy.

After journeying four days with the wolf pack, Manabozho took one of the young wolves to accompany him, and leaving the rest of, the wolves, he continued on his way west. He called the young wolf his nephew. The first night after they had parted company with the rest of the wolves, Manabozho had a bad dream.

The next morning he told his nephew to be careful, as he was to chase a moose that morning, a moose which they had tracked the evening before, and he warned his nephew on account of his dream. This he told his nephew as he was about to start, for the hunt. He continued, "In chasing this moose you are tracking whenever you come to a little stream always cut a tree down and walk across on it. Don't jump over. Be careful, I had a bad dream about you in connection with this chase."

The nephew started out on the chase, and Manabozho, followed his tracks. Soon the nephew came to a little stream. He felled a tree across the stream as he had been instructed by his uncle Manabozho. Over this he crossed safely. After a while he came to another very small stream. This he thought he would jump over, as it seemed much too small to take time to cut a tree down on which to cross. In addition he could see the moose only just a little way farther on staggering with fatigue, and by crossing immediately, he could soon overtake it. He could even taste fresh meat, he imagined, so sure was he of the moose.

So he jumped. As he jumped, the stream swelled instantly into a raging torrent and swept him away; it became a large river through the power of the great snake god living a little way off from the outlet near a point that projected into the open lake. It was on an island just beyond this sand-point that the Snake God and other snakes and bears lived, animals that live in the water. Here to this island home the wolf was taken a prisoner, killed and skinned and his hide used to cover the door-way of the lodge where the snakes go in and out.

Manabozho, following along behind, tracked his nephew to this second stream, now a big river. He found that his nephew's tracks ended there. He knew at once that he had disobeyed his orders of the morning, to cut a tree and place it across every stream he came to. He had cut one tree down and had crossed the stream there safely; but now he had disobeyed orders. He had tried to jump the stream but had been caught by the current, and the stream getting larger and swifter as it passed on toward the lake, had taken him out with it to the residence of the Chief Snake God, who had then killed him and placed his hide as a door cover for the snake-passage.

Finding that his nephew's tracks ended at the stream crossing and that he had undoubtedly been swept out into the lake by the stream, Manabozho started down its winding course, hoping that he might find his nephew stranded and alive yet, or that he might be lucky enough to find his body, if dead. As he neared the stream's mouth he saw a bird looking down into the water. He sneaked slowly up to it. When it was within reach, he made a grab for its head, but unfortunately he just missed his hold and merely ruffled the feathers on the back of its head and neck. (The bird was a kingfisher; the top bunch of feathers on his head became a pompadour.) Having escaped the bird flew away a short distance and lit.

Then looking back and seeing Manabozho he said, "I would have told you where your nephew was had you not grabbed me by the head as you did."

But Manabozho was equal to the occasion, for he knew the vanity of living beings. So he said to the bird, "Come over and tell me and I will make you a pretty bird." Then the bird flew near to Manabozho and told him that his nephew had been killed by the Chief Snake who lived near the sand point yonder. He told him further that the snakes and bears and other water beasts came out to sun themselves about noon on the sand point each nice day and that the Chief Snake would be the last to come ashore to sun himself and take a nap. Manabozho thanked the bird for the information and made a nice bird of him, rubbed his breast with white clay and painted his back blue.

Having completed his conversation with the bird, Manabozho started for the sand point, after he had made a strong bow and had prepared bullrush tops for arrows. When he got near the sand beach he said to himself, "I will be a tree-stump." So he turned into a stump of a poplar tree.

After a while, as the sun ascended the heavens, the snakes came out to sun themselves on the sandy beach as they were wont to do, the white bears coming last. Then the Chief Snake came. The others had noticed nothing; but the Chief Snake at once noticed the tree-stump.

"What is that?" he exclaimed instantly. On scanning it further, he said, "I believe that is Manabozho standing there." Then he turned to another of the snakes and said, "You go and coil around that stump and squeeze it hard."

So the snake did as he was bidden. He went to the stump, coiled himself around it and squeezed it; but Manabozho never moved. After the snake had

tried this for a considerable time, he gave it up and went back to where the Chief Snake was, saying, "That can't be Manabozho."

But the chief Snake was not satisfied. He turned to the white bear and commanded him also to examine the supposed stump, saying to him, "You go and climb on that stump to the top and slide down so as to scratch it as you come down."

The bear did as he was told and Manabozho nearly squealed, but he never moved. Going back to his master, the bear then said, "That can't be Manabozho."

So the chief Snake was satisfied. He came ashore and stretched himself on the sand to sun himself. Then after all the reptiles were fast asleep, Manabozho turned into a man again, took out his bow and arrows and went near the chief snake and shot him in the body; but the chief Snake never moved.

Then Manabozho remembered what the kingfisher had told him, that to injure the chief Snake he must shoot his shadow. This time Manabozho shot the chief Snake's shadow. Instantly he stretched out and gasped in awful pain.

Seeing this, Manabozho started to run back to get a few logs together to make a raft. The kingfisher had told him that if he wounded the chief Snake, he would flood the world as high as the topmost tree; that then the water would go down again; but that if he killed him, the dying reptile would destroy the whole world with a mighty flood. The water had already begun to rise. So Manabozho got on the little raft he had succeeded in making and floated about, as he watched the water rise until the trees all disappeared. Then the water went slowly down again.

After it was dry on the earth, Manabozho went back to tell the chief wolf what had happened. After narrating this to the wolf tribe, he went back to the lake where he had the encounter with the chief Snake. He knew by the fact that the world was not destroyed completely that the chief Snake had only been wounded, and he had it in his mind to kill him, whatever the consequence might be.

As he was walking along the shore of the lake, he heard something rattling. Looking ahead, he saw a large frog-like old lady jumping along. She had a rattle which she used in doctoring. She also had a pack of basswood bark on her back. "Hello, grandma," shouted Manabozho to her, "where are you going?"

"I am going to the chief Snake's house to doctor him," answered the frog-lady.

"Why, what is the matter with the chief Snake, grandma?"

"Why, a great god Manabozho, shot the chief Snake for revenge."

"Grandma, teach me your medicine song," broke in Manabozho, "I will pay you."

So, tempted with the promised pay, the old medicine-frog-lady told Manabozho all about her doctoring and medicine songs. Then Manabozho, after he had learned all she could impart to him, killed her, skinned her, then put the

skin on himself, took the rattle and the pack of basswood bark and started for the village where the chief Snake lived. On the way, he stopped where the old frog-lady lived and there he made himself at home and waited.

That evening a messenger came saying, "Grandma, you are invited again to come and doctor the chief."

"All right," answered Manabozho. Then imitating the old frog-lady, he started to finish his killing of the chief Snake. As he journeyed toward the home of the King Snake he got a lot of trees together for a raft, in case he should need them. Getting everything ready, he continued on his journey to the chief Snake's house.

As he neared the door, he noticed his nephew's skin hanging as a curtain in the doorway. The sight of it made him feel so bad that he almost cried. They, thinking he was the old medicine-frog-lady, invited him into the house, and he entered.

They led him to the room where the chief Snake lay very sick. On entering the room, Manabozho took his rattles and started to sing the medicine songs he had learned from the aged frog-lady. As he sang he crawled nearer and nearer to the chief's side. As he did so, he saw that the arrow that he had shot that previous time was still imbedded in his flesh with the broken end sticking out. He waited.

At the opportune moment, he pushed the arrow completely in and instantly killed the chief, as he had intended. Immediately he fled from the house, singing to cover his tracks and to prevent suspicion. He knew the consequence of his act, and set out with all speed for his raft arriving there none too soon.

While Manabozho was still running, the water began to rise, and by the time he reached his raft it was knee-deep. He got on top of the raft just as it began to float away. The whole world was immediately submerged.

In this catastrophe the animals began to swim around the raft trying to get somewhere safe from the raging waters. Some succeeded in getting up on the raft—all that could; others hung on. For three days they were floating as if it were an ocean and they were in the middle of it; there was no land to be seen anywhere. The whole land surface had been swallowed up.

One thing Manabozho had forgotten before he got aboard his raft: he had forgotten to get a handful of dirt from the earth. So on the morning of the fourth day of the flood, he called a council, saying, "We must do something. We can not stay here on this raft for all time. We must get some dirt." So he chose four divers: Beaver, Otter, Loon, and Muskrat. These were to try to secure some earth from the bottom of the sea so as to be able to start land again.

Beaver first dove down; but died before he reached the bottom of the waters. The Otter dove likewise but died and floated lifeless on the water. Then the loon went down and down and returned again without anything. He had seen it but had lost his life just as he was nearing the green land and the trees. He floated dead near the raft and Manabozho brought him back to life by

blowing his breath into his face. The Muskrat then started to dive downward. For two days nothing was seen of him. At last, however, he floated again on the waters' surface near the raft, dead and all doubled up. They pulled him aboard. Then Manabozho blew life into him again and examined him to see what he had found.

In the Muskrat's hands he found a little earth and sand, also in his feet and mouth, also a leaf and some seed. Having obtained the coveted gifts of earth, Manabozho dried them in his hands and caused them to increase till he had a hand full of them. The re-creation of the world was at hand.

Being all ready for the great work before him, Manabozho held his hand filled with dirt, sand, and seed up to his face, palm up. At once he began to blow his breath strongly over the lump and blow particles of it off around the raft. In this way he formed an island. At once the animals left the raft and began to roam around on the land surface, but Manabozho kept on blowing the particles from his hand out further and further, thus extending the land area. He kept on blowing till the "land extended beyond human sight." He then sent the raven to fly around the earth (land) to see how big it was.

He was gone for two days, then returned. Manabozho said, "That's too small." So he blew more and more sand. Then he sent the dove to see how large the earth was. But it was so large that the dove never came back. Manabozho was satisfied that the world was big enough. Then he started to plant things, including the great forest of the Northwest. Having completed his re-creation of the earth, he departed for his home.

Manabozho now lives down East, the great chief of all spirits of the Indians. He conquered and killed the great enemy of mankind, the Chief-Snake God. If Indians live good lives, according to the teachings of the Grand Medicine lodge, they will be guided to the happy hunting ground when they die, there to be forever happy, happy throughout all eternity with Manabozho, their elder brother.

## **BEAR MAIDEN**

**Tradition Bearer:** Pa-skin

**Source:** Jenks, Albert Ernest. "The Bear Maiden: An Ojibwa Folk-Tale from Lac Courte Oreille Reservation, Wisconsin." *Journal of American Folklore* 15 (1902): 33–35.

**Date:** 1899

**Original Source:** Ojibwa

**National Origin:** Native American

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According to the author, Albert Ernest Jenks, the narrator Pa-skin, was an elderly woman more than one hundred years old. Jenks goes on to suggest that the only European influence in this **ordinary folktale** enters

with the horse, the bells, and the dishes at the end of the narrative. However, elements such as the pervasive patterns of threes, the success of the devalued younger of three siblings, and the winning of a spouse by performing extraordinary tasks for a chief (king) suggest more extensive European impact.

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**T**here was an old man and woman who had three daughters, two older ones, and a younger one who was a little bear. The father and mother got very old and could not work any longer, so the two older daughters started away to find work in order to support themselves. They did not want their little sister to go with them, so they left her at home.

After a time they looked around, and saw the little Bear running to overtake them. They took her back home, and tied her to the door-posts of the wigwam, and again started away to find work; and again they heard something behind them, and saw the little Bear running toward them with the posts on her back. The sisters untied her from them and tied her to a large pine tree.

Then they continued on their journey. They heard a noise behind them once more, and turned around to find their younger sister, the little Bear, running to them with the pine tree on her back. They did not want her to go with them, so they untied her from the pine tree and fastened her to a huge rock, and continued on in search of work.

Soon they came to a wide river which they could not get across. As they sat there on the shore wondering how they could cross the river, they heard a noise coming toward them. They looked up and saw their younger sister running to them with the huge rock on her back. They untied the rock, threw it into the middle of the river, laid a pine tree on it, and walked across. This time the little Bear went with them.

After a short journey they came to a wigwam where an old woman lived with her two daughters. This old woman asked them where they were going. They told her that their parents were old, and that they were seeking work in order to support themselves. She invited them in, gave them all supper, and after supper the two older sisters and the two daughters of the old woman went to sleep in the same bed.

The old woman and the little Bear sat up, and the little Bear told many stories to the old woman. At last they both appeared to fall asleep. The little Bear pinched the old woman, and finding her asleep, went to the bed and changed the places of the four sleeping girls. She put the daughters of the old woman on the outside and her own sisters in the middle. Then she lay down as though asleep. After a short time the old woman awoke and pinched the little Bear to see whether she slept. She sharpened her knife and went to the bed and cut off the heads of the two girls at the outer edges of the bed. The old woman lay down and soon was sleeping. The little Bear awoke her sisters, and they all three crept away.

In the morning when the old woman got up and found that she had killed her two daughters, she was very angry. She jumped up into the sky, and tore down the sun and hid it in her wigwam, so that the little Bear and her sisters would get lost in the dark. They passed on and on, and at last met a man carrying a light. He said he was searching for the sun. They passed on, and soon came to a large village where all of the men were going around with lights. Their chief was sick because the sun had vanished.

He asked the little Bear whether she could bring back the sun. She said, "Yes, give me two hands full of maple-sugar and your oldest son." With the maple-sugar she went to the wigwam of the old woman, and, climbing up to the top, threw the sugar into a kettle of wild rice which the old woman was cooking.

When the old woman tasted the rice she found it too sweet, so she went away to get some water to put in the kettle, and the little Bear jumped down, ran into the wigwam, grabbed up the hidden sun, and threw it into the sky. When the little Bear returned to the village, she gave the oldest son of the chief to her oldest sister for a husband.

The old woman was angry, very angry, to find that the sun was again up in the sky, so she jumped up and tore down the moon. The good old chief again became sick because the nights were all dark. He asked the little Bear whether she could bring back the moon.

She said, "Yes, if you give me two handfuls of salt and your next oldest son." She took the salt, climbed on top of the wigwam of the old woman, and threw it into her boiling kettle. Again the old woman had to go away for water. The little Bear then ran into the wigwam, and, catching up the moon, tossed it into the sky. The little Bear returned to the village and gave the chief's second son to her other sister.

Again the old chief got sick, and he asked the little Bear whether she could get him his lost horse which was all covered with bells. She answered, "Yes, give me two handfuls of maple-sugar and your youngest son." The little Bear went to the old woman's wigwam, and, doing as she had done before, she made the old woman go away for water.

She then slipped into the wigwam and began taking the bells from the horse which was there. She led the horse outside, but she had neglected to take off one bell. The old woman heard the bell, and ran and caught the little Bear. She put the bells all back onto the horse, and put the little Bear into a bag and tied the bag to a limb of a tree. When this was done she went far away to get a large club with which to break the little Bear's neck.

While she was gone the little Bear bit a hole in the bag and got down. This time she took all of the bells from the horse, and then she caught all of the dogs and pet animals of the old woman, and put them and her dishes into the bag, and tied it to the limb. Pretty soon the old woman returned with her large club, and she began to beat the bag furiously. The little Bear could see from her



hiding-place, and could hear the animals and hear the dishes breaking as the old woman struck the bag.

When the little Bear took the horse to the chief, he gave her his youngest son. They lived close to the other two brothers and sisters. The little Bear's husband would not sleep with her, so she became very angry, and told him to throw her into the fire.

Her sisters heard the noise, and came in to see what the matter was. The young man told them what their sister had ordered him to do. When they went away he turned toward the fire, and a beautiful, very beautiful maiden sprang out from the flames. Then this beautiful maiden would not sleep with her husband.

# Tlingit

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## EL: THE MYTH OF RAVEN

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Golder, F. A. "Tlingit Myths." *Journal of American Folklore* 20 (1907): 290–294.

**Date:** ca. 1907

**Original Source:** Tlingit

**National Origin:** Native American

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The Tlingit are the northern neighbors of the Haida (see "Story of the Fin-Back Crest," page 79, for background on the Northwest Coast cultures) residing along the west coast where northwestern Canada meets southwestern Alaska. As the following **myth** reveals, raven (or El as he is called in this **variant**) is the divine creator, **culture hero**, and **trickster** for the Tlingit. Raven figures prominently and in many of the same roles for other Northwest Coast cultures, including the Eskimo (see, for example, "When Raven Wanted to Marry Snowbird and Fly with the Geese," page 75). While the tales of raven's exploits, in general, are shared among the people regardless of clan membership, other myths are regarded as the property of individual clans. Such is the case with the final episode of this narrative, which describes raven's encounter with Kanu, the clan ancestor of the wolf lineage. As might be expected, the wolf myth asserts that their clan ancestor is even older and more powerful than raven.

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**T**here was a time, say the followers of El [Raven], when there was no light, and all the people lived and moved in the darkness. At that time lived a certain man who had a wife and a sister. He loved his wife to such an extent that he would not allow her to do any kind of work; and she spent the

day either sitting in the house, or sunning herself on the hillock outside. She had eight little red birds, four on each side of her, who were always near her, and who would instantly leave her if there was any familiarity between her and any man except her husband. Of such a jealous disposition was her husband, that, whenever he went away, he locked her in a chest. Every day he went to the forest, where he made boats and canoes, being very proficient in such work.

His sister, who was called Kitchuginsi (daughter of a sea-swallow), had several sons (it is not known by whom); but the jealous uncle, so soon as they reached manhood, destroyed them. Some say that he took them out to sea and drowned them; but others say that he sealed them up in a hollow log. The helpless mother could only weep for her children. One day when she was sitting on the beach, mourning over a son, who disappeared in the usual way, she saw a school of small whales passing by, and one of them coming in closer, stopped and started a conversation with her. When he had learned the cause of her grief, he told her to throw herself into the sea and from the bottom bring up a pebble, swallow it, and wash it down with a little sea-water. So soon as the whale departed, Kitchuginsi went down to the bottom of the sea, fetched up a small pebble, swallowed it, and drank some sea-water. The effect of this extraordinary dose was that she conceived, and in eight months gave birth to a son, whom she considered an ordinary mortal, but he was El. Kitchuginsi, before giving birth to El, hid herself away from her brother in a secret place.

When El began to grow up, his mother made him a bow and arrows and instructed him in the use of them. El liked this kind of exercise, and soon became such an excellent shot that not a bird could fly by him; and from the hummingbirds alone that he killed his mother made herself a parka; and to fully indulge his passion for the chase he made a hunting-barrabara. Sitting there one morning in the early dawn, he saw that directly in front of his door sat a large bird resembling a magpie, with a long tail and a long and thin bill, bright and strong as iron. El killed her instantly and carefully skinned her, as is usually done for stuffing, and put the skin on himself. He had no sooner done this when he felt the desire and ability to fly, and immediately flew up, and soared so high and with such a force that his bill pierced into the clouds, and he was held there so strongly that with difficulty he extricated him-self. After that he flew back to his barrabara, took off his skin and hid it. At another time and in the same manner he killed a duck, and, taking off her skin, put it on his mother, who instantly received the ability to swim.

When El reached full growth, his mother told him of all his uncle's doings. El, so soon as he heard about them, went to his uncle's, and at the time when he is usually at his work. Going into the barrabara, he opened the chest in which his uncle's wife was kept, and debauched her; the birds instantly deserted her. The uncle, returning from his work and seeing all that happened, became extremely angry; but El sat very quietly and did not even move from his place. Then the uncle, calling him outside, seated himself with him in a canoe, and

went with him to a place where many sea-monsters gathered; there he threw him into the sea, and thought that he had again got rid of a rival. But El walked on the bottom of the sea till he came to the shore, and reappeared before his uncle.

The uncle, seeing that he could not destroy his nephew in the usual way, said, in his anger, "Let there be a flood." The sea began to overflow its banks and rose higher and higher. El put on his magpie skin and flew up into the clouds, and, as before, pierced them with his bill, and hung there suspended until the water, which had covered all the mountains, even reaching so high that his tail and wings were wet, subsided entirely. He then began to descend as lightly as a feather, and thinking, "Ah, if I could only drop on some good place," and he dropped there where the sun goes down. But he fell not on land, but into the sea, on the kelp; from there a sea-otter brought him safely away. Others say that he fell on the Queen Charlotte Islands, and, taking in his bill chips of the fir tree, flew away to other islands, and where he dropped the chips there trees grow; and where he did not there they are not.

On coming to land again after the flood, El went towards the east, and in one place finding some dead boys, brought them to life by tickling them in the nose with hair which he had pulled out from a certain woman; in another place he set the sea-gull and heron to quarrel, and in this manner obtained a smelt fish which he afterwards exchanged for a canoe and other things. But of all his adventures and doings, which are so numerous that it is impossible for one man to know them all, the most remarkable is the way he obtained the light.

At the time when the above-mentioned wonders were worked there was no light on the earth; it was in the possession of a rich and powerful chief, being kept in three small boxes, which he guarded jealously and did not permit any one even to touch them. El, learning this, wished above all things to obtain the light, and he obtained it.

That chief had an only daughter, a virgin, whom he loved dearly, indulged, and tended, even to the extent of carefully examining her food and drink before she used it. There was no other way to obtain the light from the chief except by becoming his grandson, and El concluded to be born of his daughter. To accomplish his end was not difficult for him; since he could assume the shape of any object that he desired, birds, fish, grass, etc., appearing as crow the oftenest, however. In this case he changed himself into a tiny piece of grass, and stuck to the side of the cup out of which the chief's daughter drank, and when she, after the usual examination, began drinking, it slid down her throat. Small though it was, she felt that she had swallowed something, and she tried hard but unsuccessfully to bring it up. The result, of all this was that she conceived; and, when the time came around for her to give birth, the chief ordered to be placed under her sea-otter skins and other valuable things. But the woman could not give birth, although her father and others assisted her in every known way. Finally a very old woman took her into the forest, where she made a bed of moss for her

under a tree and laid her on it; and just as soon as she lay on it she gave birth to a son.

No one even suspected that the new-born child was El; the grandfather was delighted with his grandson, and loved him even more than his daughter. One day, after El commenced to understand a little, he set up a loud bawl and no one nor anything could quiet him. No matter what was given him, he threw it away and cried louder than before, and kept reaching out and pointing to the three little boxes which contained the heavenly lights. They could not be given to him without the permission of the chief, and he would not for a long time consent; at last he was obliged to give the boy one of the boxes. He immediately became quiet and happy, and began playing with it. A little later he took it out-of-doors, and, when unobserved, opened it and instantly stars appeared in the sky. Seeing this, the chief regretted the loss of his treasure, but he did not reprove the boy. In the same cunning manner El obtained the second box, in which the moon was kept, and opened it; he even cried for the last and most precious box, containing the sun. The chief would not indulge him any longer; El did not leave off crying and bawling, refused to eat and drink, and consequently became ill. To humor him, the tender grandfather gave him the last box too, and ordered that he be watched and prevented from opening it; but El, so soon as he came outside, changed himself into a crow, flew away with the box, and appeared on the earth.

In passing over one place, El heard human voices, but could see no one; for the sun was not yet. El asked them, "Who are you; and would you like to have light?"

"You are deceiving us," they said; "you are not El, who is the only one that can make light." To convince the unbelievers, El opened the box, and at once the sun in all his splendor appeared in the sky. At this sight the people scattered themselves in all directions, some to the forests and became beasts, others to the trees and became birds, still others to the waters and became fishes. There was no fire on the earth, but on an island in the mid-sea. Thither El, dressed in his magpie skin, flew, and snatching a live brand, he hastened back. But the distance was so great that by the time the mainland was reached the brand and half of his bill were nearly consumed. Near the shore he dropped the brand, and the sparks were blown on to the rocks and trees. This explains why fire is found in these substances.

Until El's time there was no fresh water on the mainland and islands, with one exception. On this island, situated not far from Cape Ommaney, was a small well of fresh water guarded by Kanuk, the hero and ancestor of the Wolf tribe of the Tlingit. El (the details will be told later in connection with Kanuk) went over there, and taking in his bill as much water as it would hold, and after suffering racking tortures, flew back to the mainland of America. While flying over the earth, the water dripped on the land; where small drops fell springs and creeks appeared, and the larger drops formed lakes and rivers.

At last El, providing the people with all the necessities, went to his home, Nasshakiel, which is inaccessible both to men and spirits, as is shown from the following. One daring spirit undertook to go there, and as a punishment had his left side turned to stone; for in flying forward he looked on the left side where El's palace was. The left side of the spirit's mask, which was at the time in possession of the shaman at Chilkat, also became stone.

Once upon a time Kanuk lived on a treeless island, Tikenum, "sea-fortress," not far from Cape Ommaney. On that island is a small, square, stone well of fresh water, covered with a stone. Inside the well, on the stone, is a narrow horizontal line of a different color than the rest. This mark dates from the time, and indicates the quantity of water El drank and stole out of the well. The well is known as Kanuk's Well, because formerly, when there was no fresh water elsewhere on the earth, Kanuk kept it in the well and guarded it jealously; he even built a barrabara [small dwelling used in the Northwest Coast culture area] over it and slept on the cover of the well. One time Kanuk, while out at sea in his canoe, met El there in his canoe and asked him, "Have you been living long in this world?"

"I was born," said El, "before the earth was in its present place; and have you been living here long?"

"Since the time when the liver came out from below," answered Kanuk.

"Yes," said El, "you are older than I."

While continuing their conversation, they went farther and farther from the shore, and Kanuk, thinking it a good time to demonstrate his strength and superiority, took off his hat and put it behind himself; instantly such a thick fog appeared that one, sitting in one end of a canoe, could not see the other end. During that time Kanuk paddled away from his companion. El, unable to see Kanuk, and not knowing which way to go, began to cry to him, "Achkani, Achkani," but Kanuk made no answer; he called many times with the same result; finally, El, weeping, implored Kanuk to come to him. Kanuk then coming up to him, said, "What are you crying about?" Saying this, he put on his hat and the fog raised.

"Nu Achkani (my father-in-law and brother-in-law), you are stronger than I," said El.

After this Kanuk invited El to go home with him to his island; there they refreshed themselves, and fresh water was one of the many things that El had. It tasted so sweet and good that he could not get enough to satisfy him, and he was too bashful to ask for more. When dinner was over, El commenced to tell about his origin and the history of the world. At first Kanuk listened attentively, then drowsily, and at last fell into a sound sleep in his usual place on the cover of the well. While he was sleeping El quietly placed some dung under and around Kanuk, and then going outside, called, "Achkani, wake up, look around you; you are, it seems, not well."

Kanuk woke up and felt around, and believing what El said, ran to the beach to wash himself. In the mean time El pushed the cover off the well, and

drank all the water he could, and, changing to a crow, filled his bill with water and started to fly out by way of the chimney, but was mysteriously held back when almost at the top. Kanuk, re-turning from his wash, made a fire, and began smoking his guest until he turned black. This explains why the crow, who was formerly white, is now black. Finally Kanuk, pitying El, let him go, and he (El) flew away to his earth, and dripped the water on it, as was mentioned before.

## THE DOOM OF THE KATT-A-QUINS

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Deans, James. "The Doom of the Katt-a-quins: From the Aboriginal Folk-lore of Southern Alaska." *Journal of American Folklore* 5 (1892): 233–235.

**Date:** 1862

**Original Source:** Tlingit

**National Origin:** Native American

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The Tlingit, like the other cultures of the Northwest Coast, attained an extremely high level of cultural complexity because of the abundance and dependability of food resources and because of the presence of thick jungle-like forests that provided building materials. The Tlingit were able to develop stable settlements and devote less time to the business of staying alive. Raven, who acts as an agent of justice in the following **myth**, was the **culture hero** of many Northwest Coast Native Americans, including the Tlingit.

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**K**att-a-quin was a chief among the Tlingit. He lived very long ago, our fathers tell us, so long that no man can count the time by moons nor by snows, but by generations.

He was a bad man, the worst that ever lived among our people. Not only were he himself and his wife bad, but the whole family were like him. They were feared and shunned by every one, even by little children, who would run away screaming when any of the family came near.

Nothing seemed to give them so much pleasure as the suffering of other people. Dogs they delighted to torture, and tore their young ones to pieces. Most persons love and fondle a nice, fat little puppy, but not so the Katt-a-quin family; when they got a nice puppy it was soon destroyed by hunger and ill-usage.

When the people met their neighbors from above, at Shakes-heit, if Katt-a-quin came there, he generally spoiled the market, and if he could not get what he wanted by fair means, he would take it by force. The people, seeing this, would pack up and leave.

So tired had they grown of the family, that the rest of the tribe had decided to make them all leave the village, or, failing in that, endeavor to get clear of them by some other means. But before doing anything of that sort, they were delivered in a way terrible and unthought of. From old versions of the story, it appears that the people had become so disgusted with the family that when they wished to go hunting, or to gather wild fruit, they would strictly conceal their object and the direction of their journey from those whom they disliked.

One morning, while all were staying at Shakes-heit, they made up their minds to go to the large flat where these rocks stand, and lay in a stock of wild fruits for winter use. So in order that none of the Katt-a-quin might come, they all left early and quietly. When the others got up, which was far from early, as they were a lazy lot, and found that they were left alone, they were displeased at not being asked to go along with the others. After a time they all got into a canoe, and went up the river in order to find the rest, which after a while they did, by finding their canoes hauled up on shore.

After this they also landed, and began to pluck berries, but finding that the people who preceded them had got the best of the fruit, they gave up picking in disgust, and were seated on the shore when the others returned, having, as might be expected, plenty of fine fruit. Seeing that the rest had a fine supply, and they themselves nothing but sour, unripe stuff, they asked for a few, which the others gave them; at the same time saying that they should not be so lazy, as they might also have got their share of good ones. After a while, the old fellow demanded more of the best fruit; this the people flatly refused, saying that the late comers ought to go picking for themselves.

Just then a number of the first party, who had gone in another direction, returned with baskets full of nice, large, and ripe fruit. Seeing this, the whole family of the Katt-a-quins went and demanded the whole; this the others refused, saying they had no idea of toiling all day gathering fruit for such a worthless, lazy set as they were. A scuffle began, which ended in the family upsetting all the fruit, and trampling it under foot in the sand, thus destroying the proceeds of a long and hard day's work.

Seeing all this, the people made a rush, some for their bows and arrows, others arming themselves with whatever came to hand, all determined to wreak vengeance on those who had caused the destruction of their day's labor, and whom all disliked.

Seeing this turn of affairs, and the determination of the people, the offenders knew that their only safety lay in getting aboard their canoe, and going down the river before the others could follow them. This they did, leaving in their hurry one or two of their children behind them. But a new and terrible retribution awaited them. When they reached the middle, Yehl (Raven), who had been watching their conduct, turned them in an instant to these stones, and placed them where they now stand, to be an eternal warning to evil-doers. The largest one is Katt-a-quin. The next is his wife, and the small stones in the



land and in the water, his children. What is seen is only their bodies; their souls, which can never die, went to Seewuck-cow, there to remain for ages, or until such time as they have made reparation for the evil done while in the body. After this they will ascend to Kee-wuck-cow, a better land. Such was the doom of the Katt-a-quins. As our fathers told the story to us, said the Tlingit, so I tell it to you.

# WICHITA

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## THE TWO BOYS WHO SLEW THE MONSTERS AND BECAME STARS

**Tradition Bearer:** Ahahe

**Source:** Dorsey, George A. "The Two Boys Who Slew the Monsters and Became Stars."  
*Journal of American Folklore* 17 (1904): 153–160.

**Date:** 1904

**Original Source:** Wichita

**National Origin:** Native American

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The Wichita, proper, were one band of the Wichita Confederacy who at various historical periods occupied territory on the southern plains in modern Kansas, Oklahoma, and northern Texas. They lived in dome-shaped dwellings and built their villages along streams. They grew crops of corn, melons, and tobacco and engaged in a seasonal buffalo hunt. The village divided by a street and governed by two different chiefs is a common **motif** in Wichita **myth**. The following narrative is a Native American example of the Twin Hero category, and as is the case in many similar tales, the more extraordinary and marginal of the two brothers has gifts that allow the boys to accomplish their marvelous deeds of cleansing the world by killing the monsters that reside in each of the cardinal directions (that is, the entire universe was dangerous and in need of taming). The transformation into stars is common not only in Native American myth, but worldwide, as in the Greek Heracles cycle, for example.

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**T**here was once a village where there were two chiefs. The village was divided by a street, so that each chief had his part of the village. Each chief had a child. The child of the chief living in the west village was a

boy; the child of the chief living in the east village was a girl. The boy and the girl remained single and were not acquainted with each other. In these times, children of prominent families were shown the same respect as was shown to their parents, and they were protected from danger. The chief's son had a sort of scaffold fixed up for his bed, which was so high that he had to use a ladder to get upon it. When he came down from the bed the ladder was taken away.

Once upon a time the young man set out to visit the young woman, to find out what sort of a looking woman she was. He started in the night. At the very same time, the girl set out to visit the young man, to see what sort of looking man he was. They both came into the street-like place, and when they saw one another the girl asked the young man where he was going. The young man replied that he was going to see the chief's daughter, and he asked her where she was going. She replied that she was going to see the chief's son. The young man said that he was the chief's son, and the girl said that she was the chief's daughter. They were undecided whether to go to the young man's home or to the girl's home. They finally decided to go to the young man's home.

The next morning, the young man's people wondered why he was not up as early as usual. It was the custom of all the family to rise early and sit up late, for the people of the village came around to the chief's place at all times. They generally woke the young man by tapping on the ladder, so they tapped on the ladder to have him come down. When they could not arouse the young man they sent the old mother up to wake him. When she got there she found her son sleeping with another person. She came down and told the others about it. She was sent back to ask them to come down from the bed and have breakfast. When they came down it was found that the son's companion was the other chief's daughter.

Meanwhile, the other chief wondered why his daughter did not rise as early as usual. It was her custom to rise early and do work inside the lodge. In the village where the girl was from, there lived the Coyote. Since the girl was not to be found, the chief called the men and sent them out to find her. The Coyote was there when the father sent the men in search of his daughter. The Coyote went all through his own side of the village, and then went to the side of the other chief, where he found the girl living with the chief's son. He went back immediately to the girl's father and told where he had found her. After she was found, the chief was angry and sent word that she was never to come back to her home; and the young man's father did not like the way his son had acted.

The time came when the young man decided to leave the village. He told his wife to get what she needed to take along for the journey. They started at midnight, and went towards the south. They went a long way and then stopped for rest and fell asleep. On the next day they continued their journey in search of a new home. They traveled for three days, then they found a good place where there was timber and water, and there they made their home. The man went out daily to hunt, so that they might have all the meat they wanted. The

woman fixed up a home, building a grass-lodge, and there they resided for a long while.

One time, when the man was about to go out hunting, he cut a stick and put some meat on it and set it by the fire to cook. He told his wife that the meat was for some one who would come to visit the place; and that she must not look at him; that when she should hear him talking she should get up in bed and cover her head with a robe. The man left to go hunting that day, and the woman stayed and remembered what she had been told. After her husband had gone the woman heard some one talking, saying that he was coming to get something to eat. When she heard him she went to her bed and covered her head. The visitor came in, took down the meat that the woman's husband had placed by the fire, and ate it.

Before leaving, he spoke and said, "I have eaten the meat and will go back home." When the visitor had gone, the woman got up again, for she had her morning work to do. It was late in the evening when her husband returned from his hunting trip. Every time he went hunting he put the meat up before leaving, and when the visitor came the wife would get in her bed so as not to see who he was. Every time he came in and ate she would listen, and it would sound like two persons eating together.

One morning, after her husband had left, the woman made a hole in her robe and took a piece of straw that had a hole in it. When the visitor came she got in her bed and put the robe over her, with the hole over her eye, having the straw in her hand. As soon as the person came in he commenced to eat. After he had finished eating and was starting out, the woman quickly placed the straw in the hole in the robe, looked through it and saw the person. She saw that he had two faces, one face on the front and one on the back side of his head.

When she looked at him he turned back, telling the woman that she had disobeyed her husband's orders and that she would be killed. Thereupon the Double-Faced-Man (Witschatska) took hold of the woman and cut her open. She was pregnant, so that when the Double-Faced-Man cut her open, he took out a young child, which he wrapped with some pieces of a robe and put on the back of some timber in the grass-lodge, and covered the woman again with her robe. Then he took the afterbirth and threw it into the water.

When the husband returned, he found that his wife was dead. He was there alone and so he spoke out, saying, "Now you have done wrong, disobeying my orders. I told you never to run any risk, but you made up your mind to look and see what sort of a person that was who came here, and he has killed you." The man took his wife's body to the south, laid her on the ground, and covered her with buffalo robes.

When he came back he heard a baby crying, and he looked around inside of the lodge, then outside, but he could not find the child. He finally heard the baby crying again and the sound came from behind one of the lodge poles. He looked there and found the child. He cooked some rare meat and had the child

suck the juice. In this way the man nourished his child. He stayed with it most of the time, and when hunting, he took the child on his back.

Whenever he killed any game he would not hunt any more until all of his meat was gone. This child was a boy, and it was not very long before he began to walk, though his father would still take him on his back when he went hunting. When the child was old enough the father made him a bow and arrows, and left him at home when he went hunting.

One day when the boy had been left he heard some one saying, "My brother, come out and let us have an arrow game." When he turned around he saw a boy about his own age standing at the entrance of the grass-lodge. The little boy ran out to see his little visitor, who told him that he was his brother. They fixed up a place and had a game of arrows, which is often played to this day. When Double-Faced-Man had killed the woman, he had taken a stick that she had used for a poker and he thrust it into the afterbirth and threw it in the water. This stick was still fastened in the visiting boy. The boy wondered what this stick was there for. They commenced to play. The visiting boy promised not to tell their father about winning the arrows, and the other boy promised not to tell that he had had company. When the visiting boy left he went towards the river and jumped into the water.

When the father came home he asked his boy what had become of his arrows. The boy replied that he had lost all his arrows shooting at birds. His father tried to get him to go where he had been shooting at birds, to see if he could not find the arrows, but the boy said that he could not find the arrows. Next day, the father made other arrows for the boy and then went out hunting again.

As soon as the father left, the visiting boy came, calling his brother to come and have another game. They played all day, until the visiting boy won all the arrows, then he left the place, going toward the river. When the man came back from his hunting trip he found the boy with no arrows, and he asked him what had become of them. The boy said that he had lost his arrows by shooting birds. His father asked him to go out and look around for the arrows, but the boy refused, and said that the arrows could not be found. Again the father made more arrows for his boy.

After a long time the boy told his father of his brother's visits. The father undertook to capture the visiting boy one day, and so he postponed his hunting trip until another time. About the time the boy was accustomed to make his appearance, the father hid himself and turned himself into a piece of stick that they used for a poker. The father instructed his son to invite his brother to come in and have something to eat before they should play. As soon as the visiting boy came and called his brother, his brother invited him to come in, but he refused, because he was afraid that the old man might be inside. He looked all around, and when he saw the poker he knew at once that it was the old man, and he went off. The father stayed still all that day, intending

to capture the boy. On the next day he again postponed and instructed his boy as before about capturing the visiting boy. About the time for the boy to make his appearance the father hid himself behind the side of the entrance and turned into a piece of straw. When the visiting boy arrived, he called, and his brother invited him in again. He looked around in the grass-lodge, but not seeing anything this time, he entered and ate with his brother. The father had told his boy that when his brother came he should get him to look into his hair for lice; then the boy was to look into the visiting boy's hair, and while he was looking he was to tie his hair so that the father could get a good hold on it. Then he was to call his father. After eating, they both went out to begin their game. They played until the visiting boy won all his brother's arrows.

When they stopped, the boy asked his brother if they might not look into each other's hair for lice. The visiting boy agreed and looked into his brother's hair first, then allowed his brother to look into his hair. While the boy was looking into his hair the visiting boy would ask him what he was doing; and he would say that he was having a hard time to part his hair.

When he got a good hold of the visiting boy's hair he called his father. The visiting boy dragged him a good ways before their father reached them. When the old man got hold, the boy was so strong that he dragged both the father and brother toward the river, but the father begged him to stop. They finally released the visiting boy and he jumped in the water and came out again with his arms full of arrows. They started back toward their home. This boy was named Afterbirth-Boy.

After that, Afterbirth-Boy began to dwell with his father and brother. When their father would go out hunting the boys would go out and shoot birds. When the father was home he forbid his boys to go to four certain places: one on the north, where there lived a woman; on the east, where there was the Thunderbird that had a nest up in a high tree; on the south, where there lived the Double-Faced-Man.

The father made his boys a hoop and commanded them not to roll it toward the west. It was a long time before the boys felt inclined to lengthen their journeys; but after a time, during their father's absence, Afterbirth-Boy asked his brother to go with him to visit the place at the north, where they were forbidden to go. The brother agreed, and they at once started for the place. On their way, they shot a good many birds, which they carried along with them.

When they arrived they saw smoke. The woman who lived there was glad to see the little boys and asked them to her place. They gave her their birds, and went in. The old woman was pleased to get the birds, and said that she always liked to eat birds; then she asked the boys to go to the creek and bring her a pot full of water. She told the boys that she must put the birds in the water and boil them before she could eat them, so the boys went to the creek and brought the pot full of water.

When they returned with the pot of water the woman hung it over the fire, snatched the boys and threw them in, instead of the birds. The water began to boil and Afterbirth-Boy got on the side where the water was bubbling. He told his brother to make a quick leap, while he did the same. They at once made a quick jump and poured the boiling water upon the old woman and scalded her to death.

When they had done this they started back home. They reached home before their father. On their father's arrival they told him that they had visited the place he had warned them against, and what dangers they had met while visiting the woman, who was the Little-Spider-Woman.

The next day they started to visit the Thunderbird. When they came to the place they saw a high tree where was the nest of the Thunderbird. Afterbirth-Boy spoke to his brother, saying, "Well, brother, take my arrows and I will climb the tree and see what sort of looking young ones these Thunderbirds have." He began to climb the tree and all at once he heard thundering and saw a streak of lightning, which struck him and took off his left leg. Afterbirth-Boy told his brother to take care of his leg while he kept on climbing. When he began to climb higher the bird came again. The thundering began and the streak of lightning came down and took off his left arm. Still he kept on, for he was anxious to get to the nest. He was near the nest when his right leg was taken off, so that he had just one arm left when he reached the nest.

Now the Thunderbirds did not bother him any more. He picked up one of the young ones and asked whose child he was. The young one replied that he was the child of the Weather-Followed-by-hard-Winds, and that sometimes he appeared in thunder and lightning. When the boy heard this he threw the bird down, saying that he was not the right kind of a child, and he asked his brother to destroy him.

Afterbirth-Boy took another bird and asked him the same question. The young one replied that he was the child of Clear-Weather-with Sun-rising-slowly. He put the bird back in the nest, telling him that he was a pretty good child.

He took up another, asking whose child he was, and the bird said that he was the child of Cold-Weather-following-Wind-and-Snow. Afterbirth-Boy dropped him down and said that he was the child of a bad being, and he ordered his brother to put the bird to death.

He then picked up the last one and asked whose child he was. The young one answered that he was the child of Foggy-Day-followed-by-small-Showers. This child Afterbirth-Boy put back into the nest, telling him that he was the right kind of a child.

He then started to climb down with his one arm. When he reached the ground his brother put his right leg on him, and he jumped around to see if it was on all right. His brother then put his left arm on him, and he swung it around to see if it was all right. Then the brother put on the left leg, and he felt just as good as he did when he first began to climb the tree.

The two boys returned home before their father came back from the chase. When their father came back, Afterbirth-Boy began to tell what they had done while visiting the Thunderbirds and how his limbs were taken off, and the boys laughed to think how Afterbirth-Boy looked with one arm and both legs gone. The father began to think that his boy must have great powers, and he did not say much more to the boys about not going to dangerous places.

Some time after, the boys went out again and came to the place where their mother was put after her death. They saw a stone in the shape of a human being, and they both lay on the stone. When they started to get up they found that they were stuck to it, and they both made an effort and got up with the stone. They took it home for their father to use for sharpening his stone knife. When they reached home the old man told them to take the stone back where they had found it. He told them that that was their mother, for she had turned into stone after her death. They took the stone back where they had found it.

Some time after, Afterbirth-Boy and his brother started out to the forbidden place where Double-Faced-Man lived who had killed their mother. These creatures were living in a cave. When the boys arrived at the cave they both went in and the Double-Faced-Man's children came forward and scratched the boys. If there was any blood on their fingers they would put them in their mouths. Afterbirth-Boy took the string of his bow and slew the young ones. He caught the old Double-Faced-Man and tied his bow-string around his neck so that he could take him home to his father to have in the place of a dog. When they returned home the old man walked out, and seeing the old Double-Faced-Man, told his boys to take him off and kill him, and they obeyed.

Every day they played, the same as they had always done before, going out shooting birds and playing with their hoop. Afterbirth-Boy said to his brother, "Let us roll the hoop toward the west and see what will happen."

They rolled it toward the west, and it began going faster and faster. The boys kept running after it until they were going so fast that they could not stop. They kept going faster, until they ran into the water where the hoop rolled. When they went into the water they fell in the mouth of a water-monster called, "Kidiarkat," and he swallowed them.

It appeared to them as though they were in a tepee, for the ribs of the monster reminded them of tepee poles. They wondered how they could get out. Afterbirth-Boy took his bow-string with his right hand, drew it through his left hand to stretch it, then swung it round and round. When he first swung it, the monster moved. He swung the string the second time, and the monster began to move more. He swung it the third time, and the monster began to move still more. At this time Afterbirth-Boy told his brother that their father was getting uneasy about them and that they must get out of the place at once, for they had been away from home a long time. Again he swung his bow-string, and the monster jumped so high that he fell on the dry land. He opened his mouth and the boys quickly stepped out and started for home.



When the boys arrived at the lodge they found no one. Their father had gone off somewhere, but they could not find out where he had gone. Afterbirth-Boy looked all around for his trail, but could find no trace of him. At last he grew weary and decided to wait until night to look for their father.

When darkness came, Afterbirth-Boy again looked around to see where his father had gone. He finally found his trail and he followed it with his eye until he found the place where his father had stopped.

He called his brother and told him to bring his arrows and to shoot up right straight overhead. The boy brought his arrows and shot one up into the sky. Then he waited for a while and finally saw a drop of blood come down. It was the blood of their father.

When the boys did not return, he gave up all hope of ever seeing them again, and so he went up into the sky and became a star. They knew that this blood belonged to their father, and in this way they found out where he had gone. They at once shot up two arrows and then caught hold of them and went up in the sky with the arrows. Now the two brothers stand by their father in the sky.



# **NON-NATIVE CULTURES**

*Ethnic*



# AFRICAN AMERICAN

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## GRANDFATHER'S ESCAPE TO FREE HAVEN

**Tradition Bearer:** Mary Thomas

**Source:** Hubert, Levi C. *Interview of Mary Thomas. American Life Histories: Manuscripts from the Federal Writers' Project, 1936–1940.* Manuscript Division, Library of Congress. *American Memory.* Library of Congress, Washington, DC. <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/wpaintro/wpahome.html> (October 12, 2005).

**Date:** 1938

**Original Source:** New Jersey

**National Origin:** African American

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In this segment of her **family saga**, Mary Thomas provides precise details dating back a century at the time of the telling. While various historical elements may be lost or altered during the process of oral transmission, narratives such as the following fill in crucial gaps in our historical knowledge.

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**A**s a child I remember hearing the old folks telling me of their terrible life which they led on the large farms of Maryland before the Emancipation.

My grandfather had been a chieftain's son [in Africa], and he remembered the time when he was a little fellow, playing with some other boys on the banks of the sea, and a band of men swooped down on them and carried them from their own people. My grandfather remembered the heavy gold bracelets and armlets of his rank and those slave-stealers took the gold ornaments from him.

My grandfather had a black mark about an inch wide running down his forehead to the tip of his nose. This mark was the sign of his tribe. He was tall and very much respected by the other slaves and the slave-holder down in

Maryland. He married, raised a family and grew old. Even in his old age he was a valuable piece of property, but soon he became useless in the fields and his master agreed to give him his freedom.

But the old man, my grandfather, asked for the freedom of his youngest son, who was my father. This the master refused to do at first but at the earnest insistence of my grandfather, he agreed ... upon condition that the son, who was a great swimmer and diver, should dive into the Chesapeake Bay where a ship had sunk years before with a load of iron. If the son were successful in bringing to the surface this load of iron, then my grandfather and his son, my father, should go free.

My grandfather tied a rope around my father's waist and for over three months the two of them brought the pieces of iron to the shore for old master. They say that sometimes the son stayed under the water so long that my grandfather had to drag him up from the wreck and lay him on the ground and work over him like you'd work over a drowned person.

Day after day the two worked hard and finally there wasn't no more iron down there and they told the master so and he came down to the wreck and found out they was telling the truth ... but still he wouldn't let them go. The old man, yes, but not the son who was handy around the place, an' everything.

But my grandfather kept asking for his son and the old master said that if the two of them brought up the sound timbers of the old wreck, then he would keep his word and let them go. So my grandfather and his son, my father, between them brought up all the sound timber that was part of the wreck. It was cheaper to get this wood and iron from the wreck than to buy it, so the master wanted it.

The wreck had stayed down on the bottom of the Chesapeake Bay for over twenty years but nobody except my father had been able to dive that deep. So you see it was just like trading off some of the young slaves on the farm to be able to get the iron and wood.

When the two finished that chore, and it was a mighty big chore, too, they went up to the big house and asked for their freedom.

The master sent them back to their cabin and said that since the old man wasn't no good any more, and it just cost the master money to feed him, he could go whenever he pleased, but the son was going to stay on the farm and if he tried any foolishness, he would sell him south. Selling a slave south meant that the slave would be taken to one of the slave trader's jails and put on the block and be sold to some plantation way down south. And no worsen thing could happen. Many a family was separated like that, mothers from their children, fathers from their children, wives from their husbands, and the old folks say that a pretty girl fetched (brought) a higher price and didn't have to work in the fields. These young girls, with no one to protect them, were used by their masters and bore children for them. These white masters were the ones who didn't respect our women and all the mixing up today in the south is the result of this power the law gave over our women.

Well, when the old man and his son knew it was no use, that their master did not intend to let them go, they began to plot an escape. They knew of the Underground Railroad, they knew that if they could get to Baltimore, they would meet friends who would see them to Philadelphia and there the Friends (Quakers) would either let them settle there or send them to other people who would get them safely over the border into Canada.

Well, one night my grandfather and my father made up their minds and my grandfather could read and write so he wrote hisself out a pass. Any slave who went off the farm had to have a pass signed by the master or he would be picked up by a sheriff and put in jail and be whipped.

So my grandfather had this pass and got safely through to Baltimore. There they hid for several days and waited for an agent of the Underground Railroad.

One night they were dressed in some calico homespun like a woman and rode to Philadelphia on the back seat of a wagon loaded with fish. In Philadelphia, the town was being searched by slave-holders looking for runaway slaves, so the people where they were supposed to stay in Philadelphia hurried them across the river about ten miles.

My grandfather and my father stayed across the Delaware from Philadelphia, helping a farmer harvest his crops, and they built a cabin and soon other escaped slaves from among their former neighbors slipped into New Jersey where they were.

Finally there was almost a hundred escaped slaves in the one spot and because they were free at last and this place was a haven just like the Bible talked about, they decided to stay there and so they got together and called the place Free Haven.

My uncle says that he reached there by hiding in the woods all day and walking at night. So many people came from Maryland that they changed the name of the little village to Snow Hill, which was the name of the town nearest the farms from which all or most of the people had run away from. The post office people made them change the name again and now it is Lawnside, but I was born there sixty-four years ago and I still think of it as Free Haven.

## HOW COME BRER BEAR SLEEP IN THE WINTER

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Backus, Emma M. "Animal Tales from North Carolina." *Journal of American Folklore* 11 (1898): 287–288.

**Date:** 1898

**Original Source:** North Carolina

**National Origin:** African American

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The exploits of a **trickster** or **culture hero** are commonly celebrated in the animal **fables** and the origin tales that arise not only in African

American repertoires, but also in the traditional narratives of many of the world's cultures. Despite the role played by rabbit, in most cases the master trickster, this narrative deviates from that model and instead celebrates cooperation and community action. In concert, the group bands together to manage the behavior of a larger and more powerful tyrant. As such, the tale offers alternative strategies to trickster's wily deviance or the outlaw hero's bold frontal attacks for dealing with a common threat. The threat is simply diminished, however, rather than eliminated because of individual frailties—"a meddlesomeness to move them rocks." Thus the narrative simultaneously praises cooperation and warns against potential pitfalls to community action. Neither message would have been lost on the African American audiences for whom the tale originally was performed.

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When the animals was young, Brer Bar, he never sleep in the winter, no more'n the rest. The way it was in them days, old man Bar was flying roun' more same than the other creeters, and he was the meanest one in the lot, and 'cause he the biggest he get in he mind that he king of the country, and the way he put on the animals was scand'lous, that it was.

Well, the animals was all crossways wid the old man a long time, but they bound to step up when he tell 'em, cause you kin see in these times old Brer Bar ain't a powerful man, but he just on the onery side, was what he was in the old times. 'Pears like all the animals is getting mighty low down these here times, 'cept old Sis Coon, and sure you born she get more heady every year.

Well, they talk it over 'twixt themselves many and many a day, how they going to take down Mr. Bar. They know he mighty fond of sleepin' in the dark, and one day Brer Rabbit 'low that they stop the old man up when he sleep in a dark tree; he take a mighty long nap, and they get a little comfort.

So they all watch out, and when the old man sleep that night in a hollow tree they all turn in and tote rocks and brush, and stop up the hole.

And sure 'nough, when morning come, Brer Bar don't know it, and he just sleep on; when he wake up he see it all dark, and he say day ain't break yet, and he turn over and go sleep, and there the old man sleep just that a way till the leaves turn out the trees, and I 'spect the old man been sleeping there to this day; but the animals, they all hold the old man dead for sure, and they just feel a meddlesomness to move them rocks; and when they let the light in, old Brer Bar he just crack he eye and stretch hissself and come out, and when he see the spring done come he say, the old man did, that he done had a mighty comfortable winter, and from that time every year, when the cold come, old Brer Bar go to sleep.



## HOW COME MR. BUZZARD TO HAVE A BALD HEAD

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Backus, Emma M. "Animal Tales from North Carolina." *Journal of American Folklore* 11 (1898): 288–289.

**Date:** 1898

**Original Source:** North Carolina

**National Origin:** African American

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Ann Nancy, the protagonist of this tale, is a North American incarnation of the familiar West African and Caribbean **trickster** Anansi given an alternative name that is more comprehensible in nineteenth-century North Carolina. With this name change, comes a change in gender from male to female, which is in keeping with the name shift. Like her Caribbean and Continental African counterpart, however, Ann Nancy is an anthropomorphic spider with a penchant for pranks and an insatiable appetite. As with other trickster figures, Ann Nancy lives by her wits—usually at the expense of her neighbors, employing subterfuge to gain her selfish ends and to extricate herself from the trouble to which her schemes inevitably lead. Ann Nancy, as noted by the narrator, is particularly mean-spirited and unforgiving. Her “sour” mind and temper not only fulfills her desire for revenge, but alters forever buzzard’s appearance and appetite.

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One day, in the old times, Ann Nancy started out to find a good place for to build her house; she walk on till she find a break in a nice damp rock, and she set down to rest, and take ‘servation of the points to throw her threads.

Presently, she hear a great floppin’ of wings, and the old Mr. Buzzard come flying down and light on the rock, with a big piece of meat in he mouth. Ann Nancy, she scroon in the rock and look out, and she hear Mr. Buzzard say, “Good safe, good safe, come down, come down,” and sure ‘nough, when he say it three times, a safe come down, and Mr. Buzzard, he open the door and put in he meat and say, “Good safe, good safe, go up, go up,” and it go up aright, and Mr. Buzzard fly away.

Then Ann Nancy, she set and study ‘bout it, ‘cause she done see the safe was full of all the good things she ever hear of, and it come across her mind to call it and see if it come down; so she say, like Mr. Buzzard, “Good safe, good safe, come down, come down,” and sure ‘nough, when she say it three times, down it come, and she open the door and step in, and she say, “Good safe, good safe, go up, go up,” and up she go, and she eat her fill, and have a fine time.

Directly she hear a voice say, “Good safe, good safe, come down, come down,” and the safe start down, and Ann Nancy, she so scared, she don’t know what to do, but she say soft and quickly, “Good safe, go up,” and it stop, and go up a little, but Mr. Buzzard say, “Good safe, come down, come down,” and down it start, and poor Ann Nancy whisper quick, “Go up, good safe, go up,” and it go back. And so they go for a long time, only Mr. Buzzard can’t hear Ann Nancy, ‘cause she whisper soft to the safe, and he cock he eye in ‘stonishment to see the old safe bob up and down, like it gone ‘stracted [distracted, crazy].

So they keep on, “Good safe, good safe, come down.”

“Good safe, good safe, go up,” till poor Ann Nancy’s brain get ‘fused [confused], and she make a slip and say, “Good safe, come down,” and down it come.

Mr. Buzzard, he open the do’, and there he find Ann Nancy, and he say, “Oh you poor mis’rable creeter,” and he just ‘bout to eat her up, when poor Ann Nancy, she begged so hard, and compliment his fine presence, and compare how he sail in the clouds while she ‘bliged [is obliged] to crawl in the dirt, till he that proudful and set up he feel mighty pardoning spirit, and he let her go.

But Ann Nancy ain’t got no gratitude in her mind; she feel she looked down on by all the creeters, and it sour her mind and temper. She ain’t gwine forget anybody what cross her path, no, that she don’t, and while she spin her house she just study constant how she gwine get the best of every creeter.

She knew Mr. Buzzard’s weak point am he stomach, and one day she make it out dat she make a dining, and ‘vite Mr. Buzzard and Miss Buzzard and the children. Ann Nancy, she know how to set out a-dining for sure, and when they all done got sot down to the table, and she mighty busy passing the hot coffee to Mr. Buzzard and the little Buzzards, she have a powerful big pot of scalding water ready, and she slop it all over poor old Mr. Buzzard’s head, and the poor old man go bald-headed from that day. And he don’t forget it on Ann Nancy, ‘cause you see she de onliest creeter on the top side the earth what Mr. Buzzard don’t eat.

## PLAYING GODFATHER

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Fauset, Arthur Huff. “Negro Folk Tales from the South. (Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana).” *Journal of American Folklore* 40 (1927): 237–238.

**Date:** 1927

**Original Source:** Mississippi

**National Origin:** African American

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This tale type, “Theft of Butter (Honey) by Playing Godfather” (AT 15), is distributed widely throughout the South and the Caribbean.

Typically, the **trickster**, rabbit, shifts the blame for the theft onto one of the dupes. The slow-witted possum appears as rabbit's victim elsewhere in "How Brer Fox Dream He Eat Brer Possum" (page 177).

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Rabbit an' Fox make a proposition once to start farmin'. Dey bought lot of groceries for the year, butter, coffee, everything you could mention. So the butter was the most important. So they all went out in the field to work.

Rabbit studied a plan to leave Possum an' Fox in the field an' make believe that some one was callin' him away. So he let on some one callin' him, "Yoo-hoo-yoo-hoo-yoo-hoo!"

So Fox an' Possum said, "What's that?"

Rabbit said, "Aw, I can't work here for bein' bothered by these people. I'm goin' this time but I won't go no more." So Rabbit goes to the house an' sees the bucket o' butter. He ate some of the butter. Pretty soon he come back.

Pretty soon somebody callin', "Yoo-hoo-yoo-hoo-yoo-hoo!"

So they all said, "What's the matter, Brother Rabbit?"

Rabbit said, "Aw, they want me to christen another baby. These people are botherin' me too much. I'm not goin'."

So they all said, "You better go ahead. Hurry on." So he went an' got another stomach full o' butter. So when he come back they said, "Well, what did you name the baby?"

He said, "Just begun." So pretty soon they heard somebody callin', "Yoo-hoo-yoo-hoo-yoo-hoo."

So they all said, "What's the matter, Brother Rabbit?"

Rabbit said, "Aw, those people just won't let me alone. They want me to christen another child. I'm not goin' this time, tho, deed I'm not."

But they all said, "You better go ahead." So he went an' got some more butter. So he come back an' they asked him what name the baby had. He said, "Pretty Well On The Way." He comes back an' works a little while an' somebody yells, "Yoo-hoo-yoo-hoo-yoo-hoo."

They all said, "What's that?"

So Rabbit said, "Aw, it's them same people want me to come christen another baby. I'm not goin', I tell you."

They said, "You better go ahead." So he went off an' eat some more butter. When he come back they asked him what the baby's name was.

He said, "About Quarter Gone." So he went on workin' some more an' somebody yelled, "Yoo-hoo-yoo-hoo-yoo-hoo."

They said, "What's that?"

He said, "It's those same people again. I tell you I just won't go an' christen any more of their children."

But they said, "You better go on ahead." So he went off an' eat some more of the butter. When he returned they asked him what was the child's name.

He said, "Half Gone." So he went on back to work. This time somebody yelled, "Yoo-hoo-yoo-hoo-yoo-hoo."

So they all said, "What's that?"

He said, "Doggone the luck, you know that's rotten. A fellow can't work here for those people callin' on you to christen their children."

So they all said, "You better go on ahead." He went on an' eat some more of the butter.

When he come back he said, "Well I christened another child."

They said, "What you name him?"

He said, "Quarter Left." So he come on back, work awhile, an' pretty soon somebody cry, "Heh-h-h-h-h-h-h-h." Rabbit say, "Doggone the luck. I ain't goin' this time. By God they want to run a fellow to death."

So they all said, "You better go on ahead." So he went this time an' eat all the butter.

When he come back they said, "What happened this time?"

He said, "I had another child to christen."

They said, "What did you name him?"

He said, "All Gone." Well about the middle o' June they was gonna open the keg of butter. The crops were half grown. So when they got there the butter was all gone.

They all said, "Who stole the butter?" Rabbit didn't know; Fox didn't know; Possum didn't know.

So Rabbit say, "I tell you, Possum, he been layin' around dat house all time. I believe he must o' done it." So he said, "bet's build a big fire. Then all three of us will lay aroun' the fire, an' whoever et the butter the grease will come out o' his stomach." So they made a big fire an' everybody went to sleep but Rabbit. So he peeped. Everybody sound asleep. So Rabbit say, "All right, I got him now." So he took his tail an' greased it an' his belly right good. He oiled Fox up too. So pretty soon Fox woke up.

He spied Possum an' cried, "Dah, dah, I tot' you, Possum done it!" Possum woke up an' looked aroun'. He say, "Hey there, Fox, you had some too; look at your belly." Fox made for Rabbit but Rabbit got away. So Fox struck Possum a lick an' Possum went through the blaze of fire. That's why his tail is bare of hair today.

## WHEN BRER RABBIT WAS PRESIDIN' ELDER

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Backus, Emma M. "Folk-Tales from Georgia." *Journal of American Folklore* 13 (1900): 20–21.

**Date:** 1900

**Original Source:** Georgia

**National Origin:** African American

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In the African American folktale corpus, the **stock character** of preacher, like rabbit, appears as a figure that creates a façade to exploit gullible members of the community with the power of wit and words. This critique of preacher puts Brer Rabbit in the role of self-appointed presiding elder (in this case, a traveling preacher). At first offended to the point of “churching” (evicting from membership) Brer Rabbit, the congregation demonstrates similar greed by finally taking such a “good-paying member” back into the fold.

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**N**ow Brer Rabbit he never get to be no sure ‘nough presidin’ elder. Brer Rabbit he always been a meeting going man, but it all along [alongside] of his trifling ways that he never get no higher than a steward in the church. Brer Rabbit he never get to be a preacher, not to say a sure ‘nough presidin’ elder.

But one year Brer Rabbit he get powerful ambitious. He see all his neighbors building fine houses, and Brer Rabbit he say to his-self he going to have a fine house. So Brer Rabbit he study and he study how he going get the money for his house, and one day he say to Miss Rabbit, You bresh up my meeting clothes.

So Miss Rabbit she get out Brer Rabbit’s meeting clothes, and bresh em up, and take a few stitches, and make the buttons fast.

One Saturday Brer Rabbit he put on all his meeting clothes, and his church hat, and take his bible and hymn-book, and cut hisself a fine walking cane, and Brer Rabbit he start off.

Brer Rabbit he take the circuit, and he preach in every church, and Brer Rabbit he say how he be the presiding elder of the district, and how he taking up a collection to build anew parsonage; and being as Brer Rabbit am a powerful preacher when he aim to try hisself, and preach in the spirit, the people they give with a free hand.

Brer Rabbit he know what he doing, Brer Rabbit do, and he ride the circuit just before Christmas, and they tells how nigh ‘bout the lastest one enduring the whole circuit done rob his Christmas for Brer Rabbit’s parsonage.

Well, when they see Brer Rabbit’s fine house going up and hear how Brer Rabbit done used they alls money, well, there was a time, you may be sure, and they church Brer Rabbit; but Brer Rabbit he don’t trouble hisself, he just go on and build his fine house. But bless you, the last shingle ain’t laid before here they come begging Brer Rabbit to come back in the church, ‘cause Brer Rabbit be a good paying member. So Brer Rabbit he go back in the church and he live in his fine house and hold his head powerful high, and what the people done say they done say, but you may be sure they don’ say a word when Brer Rabbit listen.

## HOW BRER RABBIT PRACTICE MEDICINE

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Backus, Emma M. "Tales of the Rabbit from Georgia Negroes." *Journal of American Folklore* 12 (1899): 108–109.

**Date:** 1899

**Original Source:** Georgia

**National Origin:** African American

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The following tale of Brer Rabbit has at its heart messages concerning why rabbit and perhaps all conmen for that matter can make their way so successfully in society. Poor judgment leads Brer Wolf to take him on as a partner despite his "bad name for a partner." Then, gullibility and avarice set up wolf for the "fool's bargain" rabbit proposes. When Brer Rabbit's ploy is discovered and a jury is being selected to decide the disposition of the money from their venture, Sheriff 'Coon is given the job of finding bigger fools than the plaintiff and defendant to sit on the jury. When 'Coon is successful, the judge, plaintiff, jury, and spectators become so caught up in the courtroom drama that rabbit is able to win the day by keeping his wits about him and putting his ethics on hold. Compare this tale to "Playing Godfather" (page 164).

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Ole Brer Rabbit had a bad name for a partner, but one time he get Mr. Wolf to work a crop on shares with him, and they have a 'greement writ out on paper, how in the harvest they goin' to divide half and half. Mr. Rabbit know Ole Mr. Wolf mighty good hand in the field, and sure to make a good crop. But when Ole Brer Rabbit set in to work, he get mighty tired, and the corn rows, they look so mighty long, and he 'gin to lag behind and work he brain.

Presen'ly he jump to the work, and make he hoe cut the air, and soon catch up with Mr. Wolf, and he open the subject of the education in medicine, and he tell how he am a reg'lar doctor, and got his 'plomy in a frame to home, but he say he don't know how all the patients goin' get on now he turn over the farming, and Ole Mr. Wolf ask how much money he get for he doctoring, and when he hear so much, he tell Mr. Rabbit to go when he have a call, and put by the money, and in the fall put in the crop money and then divide. So that night Mr. Rabbit, he instruct his children how they got for to run and call him frequent, and how they got to tell Mr. Wolf they wants the doctor.

And sure 'nough, Mr. Rabbit ain't more'n in the front row next day, when here come little Rab all out of breath and say, "Some-body send in great 'stress for the doctor." Mr. Rabbit make out like he can't go and leave Mr. Wolf to do

all the work, but Mr. Wolf studying 'bout that big fee Brer Rabbit goin' turn in to the company, and he tell him, "Go 'long, he can get on with the work."

So Mr. Rabbit clips off in great haste, and he just go down on the edge of the woods, and what you 'spect he do? Well, sir, he just stretch hisself out in the shade of a swamp maple and take a nap, while Ole Mr. Wolf was working in the corn rows in the hot sun. When Mr. Rabbit sleep he nap out, he set up and rub he eyes, then he mosey off down by the spring for a drink, then he come running and puffing like he been running a mile, and tell Mr. Wolf what a mighty sick patient he got, and make out like he that wore out he can't more'n move the hoe.

Well, when they come back from dinner, Mr. Rabbit, he strike and make he hoe fly, but directly here come little Rab for the doctor, and Ole Mr. Rabbit, he take hisself off for 'nother nap, and matters goes on just dis here way all summer. Ole Mr. Wolf, he have to do all the work, but he comfort himself with the reflection, that he have half them big fees what Brer Rabbit turning in to the company money.

Well, when the fodder done pulled, and all the crop done sold, and they go for to count the money, Mr. Wolf ask Brer Rabbit where the doctor's fees what he goin' turn in. Brer Rabbit say they all such slow pay, he can't collect it. Then they fell out, and Mr. Wolf that mad, he say he goin' eat Brer Rabbit right there, and make an end of he tricks. But Mr. Rabbit beg that they take the trouble up to the court-house to Judge Bar.

So they mosey off to the court-house, and the old judge say it were a jury case, and he send Sheriff Coon out to fetch the jurymans, and he say, "Don' you fetch no mans here, 'cepter they be more fool than the parties in the case." But Sheriff Coon 'low he don' know where he goin' find any man what's more fool than Brer Wolf's in dis here case, but he take out down the county, and by and by he seed a man rolling a wheelbarrow what ain't got nothing in it round the house and round the house, and he ask him what he doing that for? And he say, he trying to wheel some sunshine in the house. Sheriff Coon say, "You is the man I wants to come with me and sot on the jury."

They go 'long, and directly they see a man pulling a long rope up a tall tree that stand 'longside a house; they ask him what he goin' do? He say he goin' to haul a bull up on top of the house to eat the moss off the roof, and Sheriff Coon say, "I'll be bound you is my man for the jury, and you must go long with we all to the court." So they take their way back to the court-house, then they have a great time taking evidence and argufying.

Ole Brer Wolf, he set up there, and 'sider every word of the evidence, but Ole Brer Rabbit he lean back and shut he eye, and work he brain on he own account. He settin' right close to the door; when the lawyer done get everybody worked up so they take no noticement, Brer Rabbit just slip softly out the back door, and he creep 'round the side of the cabin back to where Ole Judge Bar set wid de bag of money on the floor, and what you 'spect? When they all talking,

Ole Brer Rabbit just slide he hand in the crack, and softly slip out the bag of money, and take out home, and leave the case in the care of the court. That just like Ole man Rabbit.

## **BRER RABBIT'S COOL AIR SWING**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Backus, Emma M. "Tales of the Rabbit from Georgia Negroes." *Journal of American Folklore* 12 (1899): 22–24.

**Date:** 1900

**Original Source:** Georgia

**National Origin:** African American

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In this narrative, Brer Rabbit plays the **trickster** to its fullest extent. He deceives the powerful Brer Wolf with an outright lie. To get Brer Squirrel to release him from the knots tied by Mr. Man, he uses the African American rhetorical device of indirect direction. In describing his situation to Brer Squirrel, Brer Rabbit is not bound and seeking a means of escape. He is enjoying a "cool air swing." The deception is so convincing that squirrel begs to take his place, unties the knots, and takes rabbit's place. The **motif** of trickster as shape-shifter is evident in Mr. Man's observation that "I done hear of many and many your fine tricks, but I never done hear you turn yourself into a squirrel before."

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**M**r. Man he have a fine garden. Brer Rabbit he visit Mr. Man's garden every day and destroy the everything in it, 'til Mr. Man plum wore out with old Brer Rabbit. Mr. Man he set a trap for old Brer Rabbit down 'longside the big road.

One day when Mr. Man going down to the crossroads, he look in his trap, and sure 'nough, there old Brer Rabbit. Mr. Man he say, "Oh, so old man, here you is. Now I'll have you for my dinner."

Mr. Man he take a cord from his pocket, and tie Brer Rabbit high on a limb of a sweet gum tree, and he leave Brer Rabbit swinging there 'til he come back from the crossroads, when he aim to fetch Brer Rabbit home and cook him for his dinner.

Brer Rabbit he swing this away in the wind and that away in the wind, and he swing this away in the wind and that away in the wind, and he think he time done come. Poor old Brer Rabbit don't know where he's at.

Presently here come Brer Wolf loping down the big road. When Brer Wolf see old Brer Rabbit swinging this away and that away in the wind, Brer Wolf he



stop short and he say, "God a' mighty, man! what you doing up there? "Brer Rabbit he say, "This just my cool air swing. I just taking a swing this morning."

But Brer Rabbit he just know Brer Wolf going to make way with him. Brer Rabbit he just turn it over in his mind which way he going to get to. The wind it swing poor Brer Rabbit way out this-away and way out that away. While Brer Rabbit swinging, he work his brain, too.

Brer Wolf he say, "Brer Rabbit, I got you fast; now I going eat you up." Brer Rabbit he say, "Brer Wolf, open your mouth and shut your eyes, and I'll jump plum in your mouth." So Brer Wolf turn his head up and shut his eyes. Brer Rabbit he feel in his pocket and take out some pepper, and Brer Rabbit he throw it plum down Brer Wolf's throat. Brer Wolf he nigh 'bout 'stracted with the misery. He cough and he roll in the dirt, and he get up and he strike out for home, coughing to beat all. And Brer Rabbit he swing this away and that away in the wind.

Presently here come Brer Squirrel. When Brer Squirrel he see the wind swing Brer Rabbit way out this away and way out that away, Brer Squirrel he that 'stonished, he stop short. Brer Squirrel he say, "Fore the Lord, Brer Rabbit, what you done done to yourself this here time?"

Brer Rabbit he say, "This here is my cool air swing, Brer Squirrel. I taking a fine swing this morning." And the wind it swing Brer Rabbit way out this away and way back that away.

Brer Rabbit he fold his hands, and look mighty restful and happy, like he settin' back fanning hisself on his front porch.

Brer Squirrel he say, "Please sir, Brer Rabbit, let me try your swing one time."

Brer Rabbit he say, "Certainly, Brer Squirrel, you do me proud," and Brer Rabbit he make like he make haste to turn hisself loose. Presently Brer Rabbit he say, "Come up here, Brer Squirrel, and give me a hand with *this* knot," and Brer Squirrel he make haste to go up and turn Brer Rabbit loose, and Brer Rabbit he make Brer Squirrel fast to the cord. The wind it swing Brer Squirrel way out this away and way out that away, and Brer Squirrel he think it fine.

Brer Rabbit he say, "I go down to the spring to get a fresh drink. You can swing 'til I come back."

Brer Squirrel he say, "Take your time, Brer Rabbit, take your time." Brer Rabbit he take his time, and scratch out for home fast as he can go, and he ain't caring how long Brer Squirrel swing.

Brer Squirrel he swing this away and he swing that away, and he think it fine.

Presently here come Mr. Man. When Mr. Man he see Brer Squirrel, he plum 'stonished. He say, "Oh, so old man, I done hear of many and many your fine tricks, but I never done hear you turn yourself into a squirrel before. Powerful kind of you, Brer Rabbit, to give me fine squirrel dinner." Mr. Man he take Brer Squirrel home and cook him for dinner.

## WHY THE PEOPLE TOTE BRER RABBIT FOOT IN THEIR POCKET

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Backus, Emma M. "Tales of the Rabbit from Georgia Negroes." *Journal of American Folklore* 12 (1899): 109–111.

**Date:** 1900

**Original Source:** Georgia

**National Origin:** African American

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Rabbit as **trickster** figure in African American folklore at times acts in the community interest. In this tale, Brer Rabbit uses more than his wits to overcome Ole Mammy Witch Wise. He turns to his knowledge of the occult practices of the shape-shifting witches who slip off their skins to cause nocturnal mischief, thus revealing himself to be "wise" as well. In other tales, Brer Rabbit betrays skills at conjuration and hoodoo. This knowledge allows him to save the community from Mammy Wise Witch and marks his foot as a powerful protective amulet.

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**W**hy do people tote Brer Rabbit's foot in their pocket? Well, sir, that's cause Ole Brer Rabbit done killed the last witch what ever live. They tells how they done hang some of 'em, and burn some, till they get mighty scarce, but there was one ole witch what was risin' on five hundred years old, and 'cause she keep clear of all the folks what try to catch her, they done name her Ole Mammy Witch Wise.

Well, she do carry on to beat all them times, she 'witch all the folks, and she 'witch all the animals, and when they go to get their meal out some of the gardens, she just witch them animals, and they can't get in to save 'em, and they all nigh 'bout starved out, that they was, and they all hold a big consultation and talk over what they gwine do.

They was a mighty ornery lookin' set, just nigh 'bout skin an' bone, but when Ole Brer Rabbit come in, they observe how he mighty plump and in fine order, and they ask him, however he so mighty prosp'rous and they all in such powerful trouble. And then he allow, Brer Rabbit did, dat Ole Mammy Witch Wise can't 'witch him, and he go in the gardens more same as ever.

Why, Ole Mammy Wise don't 'low the animals get in the garden, she just want the pick of 'em herself, cause she don't have no garden that year; but when she set her mind on some Major Brayton's peas, she just put the pot on the fire, an' when the water bile smart, she just talk in the pot and say, "Bile peas, bile peas," and there they come, sure 'nough, for dinner; but you see if the animals

done been troubling them peas, and there ain't no peas on the vine, then she call 'em in the pot.

So she just keep the creeters out till they nigh 'bout broke down, and they ask Brer Rabbit, can't he help 'em? Brer Rabbit scratch he head, but he don't say nothin', 'cause I tell you, when Ole Brer Rabbit tell what he gwine do, then you just well know that just what he ain' gwine do, 'case he's a man what don't tell what he mind set on.

So he don't make no promise, but he study constant how he gwine kill Ole Mammy Witch Wise. He know all 'bout how the old woman slip her skin every night, and all the folks done try all the plans to keep her out till the rooster crow in the morning, 'cause every witch, what's out the skin when the roosters crow, can't never get in the skin no mo'; but they never get the best of the Ole Witch Wise, and she rising five hundred years old. Brer Rabbit he go off hisself, and set in the sun on the sand bed and rum'nate.

And you may be sure, when you see the old man set all to hisself on the sand bed, he mind just working. Well, sir, that night, he go in the garden and take a good turn of peppers, and tote them up to Ole Mammy Witch Wise house, and just he 'spect, there he find her skin in the porch, just where she slip it off to go on her tricks, and what you 'spect he do? Well, sir, he just mash them peppers to a mush, and rub 'em all inside the Ole Witch Wise skin, and then he set hisself under the porch for to watch.

Just 'fore crowing time, sure 'nough, there come the ole woman, sailing along in a hurry, 'cause she know she ain't got long, but when she go for to put on her skin, it certainly do bite her, and she say, "Skinnie, skinnie, don't you know me, skinnie?" But it bite more same than before, and while she fooling with it, sure 'nough the rooster done crow, and the ole woman just fall over in a fit. And in the morning Brer Rabbit notify the animals, and they gravel a place and burn her. And the people, they find out how Brer Rabbit get the best of the Mammy Witch Wise, and then they tell the white folks, and that why nigh 'bout all the rich white folks totes a rabbit foot in their pocket, 'cause it keeps off all the bad luck, and it do that, sure's yo' born.

## MR. DEER'S MY RIDING HORSE

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Johnston, Mrs. William Preston. "Two Negro Folktales." *Journal of American Folklore* 9 (1896): 195–196.

**Date:** 1896

**Original Source:** Louisiana

**National Origin:** African American

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The following tale of rabbit's feigning illness to humiliate a gullible romantic rival enjoys wide distribution throughout the South. In some

versions, fox or another animal rather than deer becomes rabbit's steed and, thus, the butt of his joke. In fact, the plot is labeled as "Rabbit Rides Fox A-Courting" in AT 72. The tale is not exclusive to African American communities. Extensive borrowing occurs between the various European-descended and Native American ethnic groups inhabiting the region. In all versions, however, rabbit exploits a personality trait, such as deer's kind heart, to defeat a romantic rival and, in the process, humiliates him.

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Well, once upon a time, when Mr. Rabbit was young and frisky, he went a courting Miss Fox, who lived way far back in the thick woods. Mr. Fox an' his family was very skeery, an' they very seldom come outer the wood 'cept for a little walk in the clearin' near the big house, sometimes when the moon shine bright; so they did n' know many people 'sides Mr. Rabbit and Mr. Deer.

Mr. Deer he had his eyes set on Miss Fox, too. But he didn't suspicion Mr. Rabbit was a lookin' that way, but kept' on being jus' as friendly with Mr. Rabbit as he ever been.

One day Mr. Rabbit call on Miss Fox, and wile they was talkin', Miss Fox she tells him what a fine gentle-man she thinks Mr. Deer is. Mr. Rabbit jes threw back his head and he laugh and he laugh.

"What you laughing 'bout?" Miss Fox says; and Mr. Rabbit he jes laugh on an' won't tell her, an' Miss Fox she jes kept' on pestering Mr. Rabbit to tell her what he's laughing 'bout, an' at las' Mr. Rabbit stop laughing an' say, "Miss Fox, you bear me witness I didn't want to tell you, but you jes made me. Miss Fox, you call Mr. Deer a fine gentleman; Miss Fox, Mr. Deer is my riding horse!"

Miss Fox she nearly fell over in a fainting' fit, and she say she don't believe it, and she will not till Mr. Rabbit give her the proof.

An' Mr. Rabbit he says, "Will you believe it if you sees me riding pass you' door?" and Miss Fox says she will, and she won't have nothing' to do with Mr. Deer if the story is true. Now, Mr. Rabbit is been fixing up a plan for some time to git Mr. Deer outer his way; so he says good evening' to Miss Fox, and clips it off to Mr. Deer's house, and Mr. Rabbit he so friendly with Mr. Deer he don't suspect' nothing'. Presently Mr. Rabbit jes fall over double in his chair and groan and moan, and Mr. Deer he says, "What's the matter, Mr. Rabbit, is you sick?" But Mr. Rabbit he jes groan; then Mr. Rabbit fall off the cheer and roll on the floor, and Mr. Deer says, "What ails you, Mr. Rabbit, is you sick?" And Mr. Rabbit he jes groans out, "Oh, Mr. Deer, I'm dying; take me home, take me home."

An' Mr. Deer he's mighty kindhearted, and he says, "Get up on my back, and I'll tote you home"; but Mr. Rabbit says, "Oh, Mr. Deer, I'm so sick, I can't set on your back 'less you put a saddle on." So Mr. Deer put on a saddle.

Mr. Rabbit says, "can't steady myself 'less you put my feets in the stirrups." So he put his feets in the stirrups.

"Oh, Mr. Deer, I can't hold on 'less you put on a bridle." So he put on a bridle.

"Oh, Mr. Deer, I don't feel all right 'less I had a whip in my hand." So Mr. Deer puts the whip in his hand.

"Now I'm ready, Mr. Deer," says Mr. Rabbit, "but go mighty easy, for I'm likely to die any minute. Please take the shortcut through the wood, Mr. Deer, so I kin get home soon."

So Mr. Deer took the short cut, an' forgot that it took him pass Miss Fox's house. Jes as he 'membered it, an' was 'bout to turn back, Mr. Rabbit, who had slipped a pair of spurs on unbeknownst to him, stuck 'em into his sides, and at the same time laid the whip on so that po' Mr. Deer was crazy with the pain, and ran as fas' as his legs could carry him right by where Miss Fox was standin' on the gallery, and Mr. Rabbit a standin' up in his stirrups and hollerin', "Didn't I tell you Mr. Deer was my riding horse!"

But after a while Miss Fox she found out 'bout Mr. Rabbit's trick on Mr. Deer, and she wouldn't have nothing' more to do with him.

## WHEN BRER RABBIT SAW BRER DOG'S MOUTH SO BRER DOG CAN WHISTLE

**Tradition Bearer:** Unknown

**Source:** Backus, Emma M., and Ethel Hatton Leitner. "Negro Tales from Georgia." *Journal of American Folklore* 25 (1912): 125–126.

**Date:** 1912

**Original Source:** Georgia

**National Origin:** African American

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The behavior of Brer Rabbit in the following tale is more representative of his usual nature in the African American tradition than was his altruism in "Why the People Tote a Rabbit Foot in Their Pocket." Brer Rabbit, despite "know[ing] in his own mind Brer Dog ain' going to whistle" saws Brer Dog's mouth anyway. As in many of his escapades, **trickster's** motivations are simply to stir up trouble. Typical as well is the fact that both Brer Rabbit and the butt of his trick, Brer Dog, suffer injuries that mark them and set up their social relationship from that day forward.

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**I**n the ole times, when Brer Dog a-roaming through the woods, he come up with Brer Rabbit, Brer Dog do. Brer Rabbit he set on the sand just a-whistling, and a-picking of the banjo.

Now, in them times Brer Rabbit was a master-hand with the banjo. These here hard times 'pears like Brer Rabbit done forget how to whistle, and you don' hear him pick the banjo no more; but in the ole times Brer Rabbit he whistle and frolic, and frolic and whistle, from morning til night.

Well, Brer Dog he mighty envious of Brer Rabbit, 'cause Brer Dog he can't whistle, and he can't sing, Brer Dog can't. Brer Dog he think he give anything in reason if he could whistle like Brer Rabbit, so Brer Dog he beg Brer Rabbit to learn hisself to whistle.

Now, Brer Dog he called the most reliable man in the county; and he have some standing, Brer Dog do; and he have right smart of sense, Brer Dog have; but bless you, Sir, Brer Dog he can't conjure 'longside that Ole Brer Rabbit, that he can't.

Well, when Brer Dog beg Brer Rabbit will he learn hisself to whistle, Brer Rabbit he say, "Brer Dog, your mouth ain't shape for whistling." Brer Rabbit he say, "Name of goodness, Brer Dog, how come you studying 'bout whistling with that mouth? Now, Brer Dog, you just watch my mouth and try yourself"; and Brer Rabbit he just corner up his mouth and whistle to beat all.

Brer Dog he try his best to corner up his mouth like Brer Rabbit; but he can't do it, Brer Dog can't. But the more Brer Dog watch Brer Rabbit whistle, the more envious Brer Dog get to whistle hisself.

Now, Brer Dog he know how Brer Rabbit are a doctor; so Brer Dog he ask Brer Rabbit can he fix his mouth so he can whistle?

Brer Rabbit, he 'low as how he might fix Brer Dog's mouth so he can whistle just tolerable, but Brer Rabbit he 'low how he have to saw the corners of Brer Dog's mouth right smart; and he 'low, Brer Rabbit do, how "it be mighty worrisome for Brer Dog."

Now, Brer Dog, he that envious to whistle like Brer Rabbit, Brer Dog he 'clare he let Brer Rabbit saw his mouth.

Brer Rabbit he say as how he don' want deceive Brer Dog; and he say, Brer Rabbit do, as how he ain' gwine promise to make Brer Dog whistle more same as hisself, but he say he "make Brer Dog whistle tolerable."

So Brer Rabbit he get his saw, and he saw a slit in the corners Brer Dog's mouth. It nateraly just nigh 'bout kill Ole Brer Dog; but Brer Dog he are a thorough-going man, and what Brer Dog say he going to do, he going to do, he sure is.

So Brer Dog he just hold hisself together, and let Brer Rabbit saw his mouth.

Now, Brer Rabbit he know in his own mind Brer Dog ain' going to whistle sure 'nough, but Brer Rabbit he don' know just what Brer Dog going to say; so when Brer Rabbit get through a-sawing of Brer Dog's mouth, Brer Rabbit he say, "Now try if you can whistle!" Brer Dog he open his mouth, and he try to whistle; and he say, "Bow, wow, wow!" Brer Dog do say that for a fact.

Well, when Brer Rabbit hear Brer Dog whistle that there way, Brer Rabbit he that scared he just turn and fly for home; but Brer Dog he that mad, when

he hears hisself whistle that there way, he say he going to finish Ole Brer Rabbit: so Brer Dog he put out after Brer Rabbit just a-hollering, “Bow wow, bow wow, bow wow!”

Now, in them times, Brer Rabbit he have a long bushy tail. Brer Rabbit he mighty proud of his tail in the ole times.

Well, Brer Rabbit he do his best, and he just burn the wind through the woods; but Brer Dog he just going on the jump, “Bow wow, bow wow!”

Presently Brer Dog he see Brer Rabbit, and he think he got him; and Brer Dog he open his mouth and jump for Brer Rabbit, and Brer Dog he just bite Brer Rabbit’s fine tail plum off.

That how come Brer Rabbit have such little no-count tail these here times; and Brer Dog he that mad with ole Brer Rabbit ‘cause he saw his mouth, when he run Brer Rabbit through the woods, he still holler, “Bow wow, bow wow!” and you take noticement how, when Brer Rabbit hear Brer Dog say that, Brer Rabbit he just pick up his foots and fly, ‘cause Brer Rabbit done remember how he done saw Brer Dog’s mouth.

## HOW BRER FOX DREAM HE EAT BRER POSSUM

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Backus, Emma M., and Ethel Hatton Leitner. “Negro Tales from Georgia.” *Journal of American Folklore* 25 (1912): 132–133.

**Date:** 1912

**Original Source:** Georgia

**National Origin:** African American

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This narrative pairs two traditional adversaries, Brer Fox (the clever) and Brer Rabbit (the tricky), in an uneasy alliance. While the tale does deal with the origins of Brer Possum’s hairless tail, the major focus is on the fragile nature of the social bonds between members of the community. Brer Rabbit, as usual, is ruled by his appetites, and Brer Fox is betrayed by a “fatal” flaw. Given the number of loopholes in the social contract, vigilance must be the order of the day. Trust may be betrayed by self-interest, and even the power of the law is no match for the guile of the **trickster**.

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**I**n the old times Brer ‘Possum he have a long, wide, bushy tail like Brer Fox. Well, one day Brer Rabbit and Brer Fox get a mighty honein’ to set er tooth in some fresh meat, and they both start off for to find some, and directly they find Brer ‘Possum up a black gum tree. Now, in them times Brer Rabbit he

can climb well as any other of the creatures, 'case he has sharp claws like a cat; and he don't set down to nobody on climbing, Brer Rabbit don't. So when they find Brer 'Possum way up in the top of the gum tree, Brer Rabbit he jest climb up after Brer 'Possum, Brer Rabbit do; and jest before he reach him, Brer 'Possum he wind his tail on the limb, an' hang wid he head down, an' swing hisself out.

Brer Rabbit he standing on the limb; an' he reach out, and he grab Brer 'Possum's tail nigh the stump, Brer Rabbit do; and Brer 'Possum he swing hisself out, and try to reach another limb with he hand; and every time Brer 'Possum swing out, Brer Rabbit's hand slip a little on Brer 'Possum's tail; and next time Brer 'Possum swing and reach out, Brer Rabbit he hand slip a little more, til Brer Rabbit he done skin the whole of Brer 'Possum's tail; an' Brer 'Possum fall to the ground, where Brer Fox done wait for him, and Brer Fox done caught him and kill him; but since that day Brer 'Possum he never have no hair on his tail. Then Brer Rabbit he come down, Brer Rabbit did, and they study how's der bestest and soonest way to cook Brer 'Possum, 'cause dey both jes a-droolin' for some fresh meat.

Brer Fox he say "he take Brer 'Possum home and cook him," and he invite Brer Rabbit to come and dine with him. Brer Rabbit agrees to that, so Brer Fox he takes Brer 'Possum home and he fly round to beat all, Brer Fox do; and he gets some nice fat bacon and yams, and he just cooks dat 'Possum up fine and brown.

Then Brer Fox he get mighty tired, and he say, "I 'clare, I plum too tired out to eat. I don't know if I better eat that 'Possum now, and go to sleep and dream about him, or whether I better go to sleep and dream about him first, and then wake up and eat him"; and he lay down on the bed to study a minute, and first thing Brer Fox knowed he fast asleep.

Directly here come Brer Rabbit, he knock on the door, but he ain't get no answer; but he smell dat 'Possum, and the bacon and the yams, and the sage, and he most 'stracted [distracted] to set he tooth in it. He crack the door softly, and he find Brer Fox fast asleep on the bed, an' the nice dinner all smoking hot on the table.

Brer Rabbit he just draw up and set to, Brer Rabbit do. He eat one hind-leg; and it so fine, he say to hisself he bound to try a fore-leg, and then Brer Rabbit 'low [allows] he bound to try the other hind-leg.

Well, sir, dat old man Rabbit he set there and eat til the lastest mouthful of that 'Possum done gone. Then he just turn to wonderin', Brer Rabbit did, what Brer Fox gwine to say when he done wake up and find the bestest bits of that 'Possum gone.

Brer Rabbit he find hisself in a right delicate situation, and was disturbed, Brer Rabbit was; but he say to hisself he gwine fool Brer Fox; and Brer Rabbit he take all the bones, and he put them on the floor in a row round Brer Fox's head; and he take the marrow-grease, and he rub it softly on the whiskers round



Brer Fox's mouth; then he go out softly and close the door, and put he eye to the key-hole.

Directly Brer Fox he yawn and stretch hisself and wake up; and course his mind turn to that 'Possum, and he rise up; and shorely he most powerful astonished when he see the dish empty, and the bones all 'bout hisself on the floor.

Directly here come Brer Rabbit's knock. Brer Fox say, "Come in!" and Brer Rabbit say, "Brer Fox, I come for my share of that 'Possum." Brer Fox say, "Fore de Lord, Brer Rabbit, where that 'Possum gone?" and he fling he hand at the bones on the floor.

Brer Rabbit he snap he eye, like he most mighty got a way with [upset]; and he say, "Brer Fox, I heard the creatures tell heap a powerful hard tales on yourself, but I 'clare, I never think you treat a friend dis here way."

Then Brer Fox he swear and kiss the book [swear on the Bible] he ain't set a tooth in that 'Possum. Then Brer Rabbit he look most mighty puzzled; and at last he say, "Brer Fox, I tell you what you done done, you just eat the lastest mouthful of that 'Possum in your sleep." Brer Fox he rare and charge, and swear he ain't "even got the taste of 'Possum in he mouth."

Then Brer Rabbit he take Brer Fox to the glass, and make Brer Fox look at hisself; and he say, Brer Rabbit did, "Brer Fox, how come all that fresh marrow-grease on your whiskers?" and Brer Fox he look mighty set down on; and he say, "Well, all I 'low dat the most unsatisfying 'Possum I ever set a tooth in."

## TROUBLE (RABBIT LOSES HIS TAIL)

**Tradition Bearer:** Ella Anderson

**Source:** Bacon, A. M., and E. C. Parsons. "Folk-Lore from Elizabeth City County, Virginia." *Journal of American Folklore* 35 (1922): 272.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Virginia

**National Origin:** African American

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The plot of this tale apparently arises from Brer Turkey's taking offense at Brer Rabbit's pointing out turkey's red eyes. Turning the tables on the **trickster**, turkey lures rabbit into trouble by a play on words.

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**T**he turkey and the rabbit were once going through an old field, and the rabbit asked the turkey what made his eyes so red. Brer Turkey told him it was trouble. Then Brer Rabbit asked him what trouble was.

Brer Turkey said, "Come with me into the field, and I will show you trouble." Brer Turkey made believe he was after water, but he was only setting the field a-fire in different places.

By and by Brer Rabbit heard the fire begin to roar. “Brer Turkey! Brer Turkey!” he cried, “how are you going to get out of this field?”

Brer Turkey said he was going to fly out.

“Take me with you, Brer Turkey!” said the rabbit.

But Brer Turkey said he could hardly get himself out.

Brer Rabbit ran through the fire, and that is how he lost his tail. The fire caught it and burned it off.

And Brer Rabbit has never had a tail since.

## WHEN BRER RABBIT HELP BRER TERRAPIN

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Backus, Emma M., and Ethel Hatton Leitner. “Negro Tales from Georgia.” *Journal of American Folklore* 25 (1912): 128–130.

**Date:** 1912

**Original Source:** Georgia

**National Origin:** African American

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Brer Rabbit, in this tale, relies both on his wits and on his reputation as a conjurer, a practitioner of hoodoo (traditional African-descended magical techniques used to influence events and persons or cure disease). This talent appears from time to time in the traditional narratives, and Brer Rabbit may be portrayed as a genuine hoodoo doctor or may simply take on this persona to carry out his schemes. Relying on his powers to terrorize his neighbors, Brer Wolf attempts to enlist rabbit’s aid in his plan to destroy Brer Terrapin. Instead, Brer Rabbit uses his deceptive abilities to put the fear of conjuration into wolf. The power of the left eye to enact supernatural work is an authentic touch added by the narrator.

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**I**n the old days Brer Wolf he have a mighty grudge against Brer Terrapin, Brer Wolf do; and one day Brer Wolf come up with old Brer Terrapin in the woods; and he say, Brer Wolf do, how he just going to make a end of Old Brer Terrapin.

But Brer Terrapin he just draw in his foots and shut the door; and he draw in his arms and shut the door; and then if the old man don’t bodaciously draw in his head and shut the door right in Brer Wolf’s face.

That make ole Brer Wolf mighty angry, sure it naturally do; but he bound he ain’t going to be outdone that way, and he study ‘bout how he going smash Brer Terrapin’s house in; but there aim’ no rock there, and he feared to leave

the ole man, 'cause he know directly he leave him the ole chap going open the doors of his house and tote hisself off.

Well, while Brer Wolf study 'bout it, here come Brer Rabbit; but he make like he don't see Brer Wolf, 'case they ain't the bestest of friends in them days, Brer Wolf and Brer Rabbit ain't, no, that they ain't.

But Brer Wolf he call out, he do, "O Brer Rabbit, Brer Rabbit, come here!"

So Brer Rabbit he draw up, and he see Old Brer Terrapin's house with the doors all shut; and he say, "Morning, Brer Terrapin!" but Brer Terrapin never crack his door; so Brer Wolf say, he do, "Brer Rabbit, you stay here and watch the ole man, while I go and fetch a rock to smash his house!" and Brer Wolf he take hisself off.

Directly Brer Wolf gone, ole Brer Terrapin he open his door and peek out. Now, Brer Rabbit and Brer Terrapin was the best friends in the ole time; and Brer Rabbit, he say, he do, "Now, Brer Terrapin, Brer Wolf done gone for to tote a rock to smash your house"; and Brer Terrapin say he going move on.

Then Brer Rabbit know if Brer Wolf come back and find he let Brer Terrapin make off with his house, Brer Wolf going fault hisself; and Brer Wolf are a strong man, and he are a bad man; and poor old Brer Rabbit he take his hindermost hand and he scratch his head, and clip off right smart. Brer Rabbit was a pert man them days.

Directly he come up with old Sis Cow, and he say, "Howdy, Sis Cow? Is you got a tick you could lend out to your friends?" and he take a tick and tote it back, and put it on the rock just where Brer Terrapin was.

Presently here come Brer Wolf back, totin' a big rock; and he see Brer Rabbit just tearing his hair and fanning his hands, and crying, "Oh, dear! oh, dear! I'se feared of my power, I'se feared of my power!" but Brer Wolf he say, "Where old man Terrapin gone with his house? I done told you to watch." But Brer Rabbit he only cry the more, and he say, "That what I done tell you, don't you see what my power done done? There all what left of poor ole Brer Terrapin right there." And Brer Rabbit he look that sorrowful-like, he near 'bout broke down, and he point to the cow-tick.

But Brer Wolf he done live on the plantation with Brer Rabbit many a day; and Brer Wolf he say, "Quit your fooling, ole man. You done turn Brer Terrapin loose, and I just going to use this here rock to smash your head." Then Brer Rabbit he make haste to make out to Brer Wolf how that little chap surely are all what's left of poor old Brer Terrapin.

And Brer Rabbit he make out how the power are in his left eye to make a big man perish away; and Brer Rabbit he 'low how he just happen to strike his left eye on his old friend Brer Terrapin, and directly he get smaller and smaller, 'til that all there be left of the poor old man. When Brer Rabbit say that, he turn and cut his left eye sharp at Brer Wolf, Brer Rabbit do.

Brer Wolf he just look once on the little tick, and he say, "Don' look at me, Brer Rabbit! Don' look at me!" and Brer Wolf he strike out, and he just burn the wind for the woods.

Then Brer Rabbit he clip it off down the road 'til he come up with old Brer Terrapin; and they strike a fire, and make a good pot of coffee, and talk it over.

## THE WATCHER TRICKED

**Tradition Bearer:** Josephine Johnson

**Source:** Bacon, A. M., and E. C. Parsons. "Folk-Lore from Elizabeth City County, Virginia." *Journal of American Folklore* 35 (1922): 262–264.

**Date:** ca. 1900

**Original Source:** Virginia

**National Origin:** African American

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After being deceived by rabbit's flattery, buzzard turns **trickster** by playing on fox's greed in this African American **variant** of "The Watcher Blinded" (AT 73).

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Once there was a fox and a buzzard who were good friends. They used to go hunting together. One day they took their guns and went a-hunting. They came to a tree where there was a holler in the tree. Ol' fox decided there was somethin' up the holler, a rabbit or somethin'.

So he got some dry wood and made a fire in the holler, and smoked it. He smoked and smoked it, and nothin' came down. But he was sure there was somethin' up there. So he tol' the turkey-buzzard to stay and watch the holler, and see that nothin' came down, while he went back home to get an axe to cut the tree down. The buzzard promised that he'd do so. The fox went home to get an axe, and the buzzard set down by the tree to watch the holler.

While the fox had been talkin' to the buzzard, the rabbit had been thinkin' of some way to come down the holler. So after de fox left, Rabbit said to de buzzard, "Mr. Buzzard, they tell me you have silver eyes and a gold bill."

An' the buzzard said, "Well, so I have."

The rabbit said, "Look up yonder an' let me see them!"

An' the buzzard was very glad to show his gold bill and silver eyes. So he poked his head in the holler and looked up at the rabbit. The rabbit raked up a handful of trash and threw in his eyes. The buzzard went off to get some water to wash his eyes; and while he was gone, the rabbit came down.

The buzzard came back and sat down by de holler and waited for the fox. Fox came and cut down the tree, and didn' see the rabbit run or anything. So he ask, "Mr. Buzzard, where is dat rabbit?"

And de buzzard said, "He was up dere de las' time I see him."

So de fox decided to split de holler open. He split it, and still didn' see any rabbit; an' he ask again, "Mr. Buzzard, where is de rabbit?"

Buzzard said, "He was up dere de las' time I saw him." Den de fox got angry wid de buzzard, and ran at him with his axe to kill him. And de buzzard ran and ran so fast, dat he split his dress wide open, and he took de two sides of his dress and commence to fly, used dem for wings. So you see de buzzard's been flyin' ever since.

Buzzard was angry wid de fox, and wanted to get even with him: so one day he came flyin' over de fox, singin',

Way down yonder, whey I come from,  
 Dey t'row away meat,  
 Dey t'row away bread.  
 Everyt'ing good dey t'row away.

And de fox say, "What's that, Mr. Buzzard? Sing dat again."  
 And de buzzard sang it:

Way down yonder, whey I come from,  
 Dey t'row away meat,  
 Dey t'row away bread.  
 Everyt'ing good dey t'row away.

Fox asked de buzzard, "Mr. Buzzard, could you take me down there?"

Buzzard say, "Yes, jump up on my back."

Fox got on de buzzard back. Buzzard went flyin' 'round. He went way up in de air. When he'd gotten high enough to kill the fox, he turned from one side to the other. Every time he turned, de fox would run to de other side, and de buzzard saw he couldn' turn him off in dat way. So he turned over upside down, and Fox fell to de ground and was killed.

## 'COON IN THE BOX

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Fauset, Arthur Huff. "Negro Folk Tales from the South. (Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana)." *Journal of American Folklore* 40 (1927): 265–266.

**Date:** 1925

**Original Source:** Mississippi

**National Origin:** African American

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In this classic example of the John and Master cycle, Jack uses his repertoire of eavesdropping, wit, and even sham fortune-telling to advance and maintain his position with Master. When at last he believes his subterfuge has been found out, he significantly saves the day by his use of a

racist and derogatory term for African American. Thus, from weakness and apparent denigration yet another advantage emerges. The tale is commonly found as an episode of “Dr. Know-All” (AT 1641). The specific **motif** upon which this tale is built is “What Is in the Dish: Poor Crab” (*Motif* N688); in the tale from which the motif was originally drawn, the sham fortune-teller’s surname is “Crab.”

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**W**hite man had a slave; his name was Jack. This slave let on he know everything. Wasn’t a thing he didn’t let on he knew. Every night this man would talk to his wife. He’d say, “Y’know Jack, he’s a smart slave, smartest slave I ever knew.” One night he was talkin’ to his wife, and Jack he was eavesdroppin’. Man says, “Y’know, wife, the slaves are about done in de bottoms, I think I’ll send em down to de new lands.”

So nex’ day he goes to Jack an’ says, “Oh, Jack.”

Jack says, “Yassir, master.”

“What’s on fo’ t’day.”

Jack says, “Well de slaves done pretty good in de bottoms, t’morrer y’ goin’ send us to de new lands.”

So de master said to his wife, “Y’know, dat’s a smart slave. I asked him today what I was gonna do, an’ he tol’ me jus’ what I tol’ you las’ night. Said slaves done so good in de bottoms gonna send ‘em to de new lands.”

So nex’ mornin’ Master said to Jack, “Say, Jack, hitch up fifteen or sixteen wagons, I’m gonna send ‘em to de grocery.”

So Jack said, “Yassir, master, I know ‘xactly what you want.”

So de man said to his wife, “You know dat slave’s a fortune teller.” So dey goes to town, an’ in town de master meets another plantation owner. So dis man had a barrel an’ dere was a coon in dat barrel.

So Jack’s master said, “Say, I bet you I kin tell you ‘xactly what’s in dat barrel.”

De other man says, “Whut you bet?”

So de master says, “Le’s bet my plantation ‘gainst yours.”

So de other plantation owner says, “All right, my plantation ‘gainst yours. Now whut’s in de barrel?”

So de master says to Jack, “Come here, Jack.”

Jack says, “Whut you want, master?”

Master says, “Y’got t’ tell me whut’s in dis man’s barrel?”

Jack says, “I got t’ tell you whut’s in dis here barrel?”

De master says, “Yes, or you’re a dead man.”

So Jack commenced scratchin’ his head. He says. “Off it right now, cause he’s wool gatherin’.”

So he couldn’t guess whut was in de barrel. He says to his master, “Send to town an’ git me twelve deck o’ cards.” Dey got him de cards. He tore open a deck. He wanted to whisper. He tear open another deck. He wanted to whisper.

Den he says, “Aha, master, git me another twelve decks.” So he wanted to whisper. He tore open one deck after de other.

Den he say, “Well, oh, sen’ git me twelve mo’.” So he looked through eleven decks, den he fell back against a tree an said, “Well, oh master,” an’ he shook his head, “y’ caught de coon [derogatory term for African American] at las’.”

De master won de bet an’ he said to de other plantation owner, “I tol’ you he could do it, I tol’ you he could do it.”

Ol’ Jack he ups an’ says, “I could ha’ tell you when I fust cooked up here, but I only wanted to have some fun. I know dat was a raccoon in dat barrel.”

## YOUR HORSE STAYS OUTSIDE

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Fauset, Arthur Huff. “Negro Folk Tales from the South. (Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana).” *Journal of American Folklore* 40 (1927): 274–275.

**Date:** 1925

**Original Source:** Mississippi

**National Origin:** African American

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This protest tale comments on the social conditions begun under the plantation system and continuing into the post–War Between the States Jim Crow era by projecting racism into the afterlife. As the plot of the tale runs, even the staunch abolitionist Horace Greeley (1811–1872), who in his time had been founding editor of the *New York Tribune*, congressman, and U.S. presidential candidate, could not desegregate heaven. Choosing to disguise Brother Abraham Jasper as Greeley’s horse offers additional commentary on the status of African Americans as perceived by the narrator.

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Ol’ Brother Abraham Jasper he died. Well, he went to heaven as they say. When he got there they wouldn’t admit him. Old Salt [Saint] Peter wouldn’t let him in.

Ol’ Abraham said, “Well, things ain’t here like I thought they was. I’m goin’ back.” So he met Ol’ Brother Horace Greeley goin’ to the same place he comin’ from.

Greeley said to him, “Well, hello Brother Jasper, where you been?”

Brother Jasper said, “I just been to heaven.”

“Well, what you comin’ back for?”

Brother Jasper said, “Well, ol’ Brother Salt Peter wouldn’t let me in.”

Brother Horace Greeley said, “Well now, that’s too bad. Now I’m gonna work a plan to git you in. Well now, you just let me get on your back an’ when I get there I’ll let on you’re my horse an’ we’ll both get inside the gates.”

So Brother Horace Greeley rode on Brother Jasper's back. When they got to the gates of [Heaven] Salt Peter said, "Whoa there, who's there?"  
"Brother Horace Greeley."  
Ol' Salt Peter said, "Is you ridin' or walkin'?"  
Brother Horace Greeley said, "Ridin' on a horse."  
Ol' Salt Peter said, "Hitch your horse outside an' come on in."

## HOW COME PIGS CAN SEE THE WIND

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Backus, Emma M. "Animal Tales from North Carolina." *Journal of American Folklore* 11 (1898): 285–286.

**Date:** 1898

**Original Source:** North Carolina

**National Origin:** African American

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This tale is reminiscent of the well-known "Three Little Pigs and the Big Bad Wolf," which was popular in the late nineteenth century. In fact, Joel Chandler Harris included a wolf and pig tale in his *Nights with Uncle Remus* published in 1883. Unlike either Chandler's version or the tales of the Big Bad Wolf familiar to American children, this becomes an origin narrative. Brer Wolf calls on Satan for help, and the encounter ends badly for Sis Pig. The collector provided no contextual information nor commentary along with the folktale, but several features of the tale invite further speculation. Among them are the following: Brer Wolf claims that he is "the master," leading to Sis Pig's surrendering four of her five offspring. This reflects the bondsperson's plight. The action casts light on the master's character as well. Brer Wolf enlists Satan's aid only to find himself frightened out of his wits by his pact. Similar pacts throughout African American tradition elicit similar consequences. Perhaps the best known is the **legend** of blues musician Robert Johnson (1911–1938) selling his soul to the devil at the crossroads.

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**D**id you done hear how come that old Sis Pig can see the wind? Well, to be sure, ain't you never hear that? Well, don't you take noticement, many and many a time, how unrestful, and 'stracted like, the pigs is, when the wind blows, and how they squeal, and run this here way and that here way, like they's 'stracted? Well, sir, all dat gwine on is along of the fact that they can see the wind.

One time the old sow, she have five little pigs—four black and one white one.



Now old Brer Wolf, he have a mighty good mouth for pig meat, and he go every night and walk round and round Miss Pig's house, but Sis Pig, she have the door lock fast.

One night, he dress up just like he was a man, and he put a tall hat on he head, and shoes on he foots; he take a sack of corn, and he walk hard, and make a mighty fuss on the brick walk, right up to the door, and he knock loud on the door in a great haste, and Sis Pig, she say, "Who there?" and Brer Wolf say up, loud and powerful, Brer Wolf did, "Quit your fooling, old woman, I is the master, come for to put my mark on the new pigs; turn 'em loose here lively."

And old Sis Pig, she mighty skeered, but she feared not to turn 'em out; so she crack the door, and turn out the four black pigs, but the little white pig, he am her eyeballs, the little white pig was, and when he turn come, she just shut the door and hold it fast.

And Brer Wolf, he put down the corn, and just pick up the four little pigs and tote 'em off home; but when they done gone, he mouth hone for the little pig, but Sis Pig, she keep him mighty close. One night Brer Wolf was wandering up and down the woods, and he meet up with old Satan, and he ask Brer Wolf, old Satan did, can he help him, and Brer Wolf he just tell him what on he mind, and old Satan told him to lead on to Miss Pig's house, and he help him out.

So Brer Wolf he lead on, and directly there Sis Pig's house, and old Satan, he 'gin to puff and blow, and puff and blow, till Brer Wolf he that skeered, Brer Wolf is, that he hair fairly stand on end; and Miss Pig she done hear the mighty wind, and the house a-cracking, and they hear her inside down on her knees, just calling on God A'mighty for mercy; but old Satan, he puff and blow, and puff and blow, and the house crack and tremble, and he say, old Satan did, "You hear this here mighty wind, Sis Pig, but if you look this here way you can see it."

And Sis Pig, she that skeered, she crack the door and look out, and there she see old Satan's breath, like red smoke, blowing on the house, and from that day the pigs can see the wind, and it look red, the wind look red, sir. How we know that? I tell you how we know that, sir: if anybody miss a pig and take the milk, then they can see the wind, and they done tell it was red.

## HOW BRER RABBIT BRING DUST OUT OF THE ROCK

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Backus, Emma M. "Tales of the Rabbit from Georgia Negroes." *Journal of American Folklore* 12 (1899): 113–114.

**Date:** 1899

**Original Source:** Georgia

**National Origin:** African American

Brer Rabbit's trick of seeming to strike dust from a rock despite the failure of other stronger competitors is reminiscent of the European and European American Jack Tales in which Jack uses similar slight of hand to appear to squeeze milk from a stone (AT 1060). By doing so, Jack intimidates giants and ogres. Unlike the folktale Jack, however, Brer Rabbit uses his deception to exploit yet another in a long line of reluctant fathers-in-law, shrugging off his ploy as just one of "his court-ing tricks." As Brer Rabbit once again in his guise of **trickster** subverts a competition designed to take him out of the running, the social mes-sage is again the triumph of brain over brawn and the flexibility of rules.

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**M**r. Fox, he have a mighty handsome daughter, and all the chaps was flying round her to beat all. Brer Coon, Brer Wolf, Brer Rabbit, and Brer Possum was a courting of her constant, and they all ask Brer Fox for he daughter.

Now the gal, she favor Brer Rabbit in her mind, but she don't let on who her favor is, but just snap her eyes on 'em all.

Now Ole Brer Rabbit, he ain't so mighty handsome, and he ain't no proud-ful man, that's sure, but somehow it 'pears like he do have a mighty taking way with the gals.

Well, when they all done ask Ole Man Fox for his daughter, he ask the gal, do she want Brer Wolf? And she toss her head and 'low Brer Wolf too bodaciously self-ish; she say, "Brer Wolf's wife never get a bite of chicken breast while she live."

Then the Ole man, he ask her how she like Brer Possum? and she just giggle and 'low "Brer Possum mighty ornery leetle Ole man, and he 'longs to a low family anyhow."

And Ole Man Fox, he 'low, "Dat's so for a fact," and he sound her affec-tions for Brer Coon, but she make out Brer Coon pass all endurance. Then the Ole man he tell her Brer Rabbit done ask for her too, and she make out like she mighty took 'back, and 'low she don't want none of that lot.

Then Ole Brer Fox, he say that the gal was too much for him; but he tell the chaps to bring up the big stone hammer, and they can all try their strength on the big step rock what they use for a horse block, and the one what can pound dust out of the rock shall have the gal.

Then Brer Rabbit, he feel mighty set down on, 'cause he know all the chaps can swing the stone hammer to beat hisself, and he go off sorrowful like and set on the sand bank. He set a while and look east, and then he turn and set a while and look west, but may be you don't know, sir, Brer Rabbit sense never come to hisself 'cepting when he look north. When it just come to hisself what he goin' to do, he jump up and clip it off home, and he hunt up the slippers and

he fill them with ashes, and Lord bless your soul, the ole chap know just what them slippers do 'bout the dust out of the rock.

Well, the next morning they was all there soon. Ole Brer Rabbit, the last one, come limping up like he mighty lame, and being so, he the last one on the land, 'cause he have last chance.

Now Brer Wolf, he take the big hammer and he fetch it down hard, and Brer Wolf mighty strong man in them days, but he ain't fetch no dust. Then Brer Coon and Brer Possum, they try, but Ole Man Fox he say, he don't see no dust, and Miss Fox she behind the window curtain and giggle, and Ole Man Fox he curl the lip and he say, "Brer Rabbit, it you turn now." Brer Wolf he look on mighty scornful, and Brer Rabbit have just all he can do to fetch up the big hammer; it so hard he just have to stand on tiptoe in he slippers, and when the hammer come down, he heels come down "Sish," and the dust fly so they can't see the ole chap for the dust.

But Ole Brer Rabbit, he don't count that nothing but just one of his court-ing tricks.

## JACK AND THE BEAN-POLE

**Tradition Bearer:** Mary Smith

**Source:** Parsons, Elsie Clews. "Tales from Maryland and Pennsylvania." *Journal of American Folklore* 30 (1917): 212–213.

**Date:** 1917

**Original Source:** Maryland

**National Origin:** African American

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This **ordinary folktale** is an African American **variant** of the well-known European tale "Jack and the Beanstalk" (AT 328). The narrative shows localization and modernization by disguising Jack as a newsboy during one of his visits to the giant's castle, locating the castle on a hill-top rather than in the sky, and substituting a beanpole for a beanstalk. Jack, in this version, is shown to be reclaiming family property rather than stealing from the giant.

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Jack an' his mother lived together, an' they had planted some beans. And it seemed that one bean had strayed off from the rest, an' it grew up right alongside of the house.

Their house was right below a hill, and Jack had always wondered what was on top of the hill. So one day Jack climbed a bean-pole to get up to the top of the hill. So, when he had got to the top, he saw a palace, an' he went to this place to see who lived there.

So, when he had got there, he found it was a giant's castle, but the giant wasn't at home. But his wife was. Jack was tired and hungry. So he asked the lady to take him in and give him something to eat. So she did so. But she told him not to let her husband catch him there. So, while Jack was eating, the giant came to the door.

She told Jack to hide, an' Jack hid in the chest behind the door. So the giant came in. He said,

Fe, fi, fo, fum,  
I smell the blood of an Englishmun.

He said,

Be he alive or be he dead,  
Fe, fi, fo, fum!

But his wife told him that he didn't, that it was only some mutton that she was cooking. So the giant sat down to eat his supper; and after he had finished eating, he called to his wife, and told her to bring him the wonder-box, which he was supposed to have taken from Jack's father before Jack's father died. So, while the giant was sitting there looking in the box, he fell asleep.

An' Jack slipped out of the chest behind the door, an' took the wonder-box home to his mother. So it wasn't very long till Jack made up his mind to make another trip back to the castle of the giant. So, when Jack went back this time, he tried to put on like another poor little boy that was half starved. So he begged entrance at the door of the castle from the wife.

And she didn't want to have him in, and she told him about the boy that had took the wonder-box from her husband. So he begged so hard that she left him in, an' she gave him some bread and milk to eat. And again, while Jack was eating, the giant came.

And as he came in the door, he said,

Fe, fi, fo, fum,  
I smell the blood of an Englishmun.

He said,

Be he alive or be he dead,  
Fe, fi, fo, fum!

And Jack jumped in the salt-cellar.

His wife said, "No, there hasn't been any one here today." She says, "I'm only roastin' some pork for your supper." So, after he ate his supper, the giant

sent for his golden hen that lay the golden egg. So his wife went and brought it for him. And while the giant was playing with the egg that the hen had laid, he fell fast asleep.

An' Jack carried off the hen and the egg down the bean-stalk to where his mother lived. But Jack still thought that he wanted to visit the castle again.

So this time, when he went up the bean-stalk to the giant's castle, he was in the appearance of a newsboy selling papers. So, while the wife went to get the money to buy a paper, the giant appeared, and Jack hid in the closet. And the giant repeated again,

Fe, fi, fo, fum,  
I smell the blood of an Englishmun.

He said,

Be he alive or be he dead,  
Fe, fi, fo, fum!

So the wife said, "No, there hasn't been any one here today." And after the giant had ate his supper, he called for his harp, the only thing that he had left, an' this was a magic harp. So it commenced to play, an' it played so sweetly that the giant fell fast asleep and commenced to snore.

And as the harp stopped playing, Jack came out of the closet, took the harp, and started to the door. But the harp began to play, and it woke the giant up. An' the giant followed Jack out of the door, an' Jack run as fast as he could down the bean-stalk, an' the giant started to follow. But as the giant reached the top, Jack cut down the bean-stalk with an axe; an' as the giant stepped on, he fell down an' broke his neck.

An' Jack and his mother always lived happy afterward with the property of the father which the giant had stolen an' Jack had restored again.

## TABLECLOTH, DONKEY, AND CLUB

**Tradition Bearer:** Helen Seeny

**Source:** Parsons, Elsie Clews. "Tales from Maryland and Pennsylvania." *Journal of American Folklore* 30 (1917): 210–212.

**Date:** 1917

**Original Source:** Maryland

**National Origin:** African American

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This African American **variant** of "The Table, the Ass, and the Stick" (AT 563) contains the classic **motifs** of the Old World versions of this

ordinary folktale. The final beating at the end is a touch of poetic justice.

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Once upon a time there lived a woman an' a boy in a house together, Jack an' his mother. An' Jack's father was dead. So Jack's mother planted some barley. An' she told Jack to get the barley. Jack was lazy, an' he didn't want to gather it. So one day she whipped him with a broomstick, an' made him go to gather it.

An' Jack made up his mind then that he would go an' gather the barley. So when he went to gather the barley, the wind had blown it away. There was an oak tree standin' in the field where the barley had been, so Jack picked up a club an' commenced to beat on the tree.

So there came along a little old man while Jack was beatin' on the tree. An' he said to Jack, "Jack, my son, what are you doin'?"

An' he said, "I'm beatin' the wind for blowing my barley away." So the little man reached in his pocket, an' he took out something that looked to be a handkerchief to Jack. An' instead of being a handkerchief, it was a tablecloth.

An' so the old man said, "Spread, tablecloth, spread!" An' so it spread, and there was a lot of all different kinds of food on it. So the old man said to Jack, "Take this home, an' it will pay your mother for the barley."

But instead of going home, Jack went to a halfway house to play, an' he stayed there all night. An' he said to the people when he went to bed, "Do not tell this tablecloth to spread."

But as soon as he was in bed, they told the tablecloth to spread. So in place of Jack's tablecloth they put their own, an' kept Jack's.

So the next mornin' Jack got up overjoyed, an' took the tablecloth an' ran home. So he says to his mother, "Mommer, I have something to pay for all your good barley, even though the wind has blown it away." He says, "just tell this tablecloth to spread." An' they told the tablecloth to spread, an', instead of spreading, it lay still.

So his mother whipped him an' sent him out again. And he went down the field an' beat the same oak tree. And the little old man came along again, an' he said, "Jack, my son, what are you doing today?"

So he says, "Didn't the tablecloth repay your mother for the barley?"

An' Jack said, "No, when I told it to spread, it lay still on the table." So by this time there came a donkey up.

So the little old man he said, "Tell this donkey to shake." An' Jack told the donkey to shake. An' he shook a pack of gold out of one foot, and a pack of silver out of the other. But, instead of going home this night, he went back to the halfway house again; but he cautioned them to be sure not to tell the donkey to shake.

But it wasn't long before he had gone to bed but they went to the stable and told the donkey to shake. And when they found out that he shook a pack

of gold out of one foot, an' a pack of silver out of the other, they put their donkey in place of his.

So the next mornin' he got up an' rode the donkey home to his mother; an' he said to her, "Now, this time, mother, I really have got something that will pay you for your barley." He says, "Let's tell this donkey to shake." But the donkey stood still.

So the old lady beat him an' sent him away again. So this time, while he was beatin' on the tree, the little old man came along again. So he says, "Jack, my son, what are you doin' this mornin'?"

Jack says, "I'm still beatin' the wind for blowing my barley away." So this time the little old man gave Jack a club. An' he told Jack whatever he wanted the club to beat, to tell it, "Beat, Club, beat!"

So Jack went to the halfway house again with the club. So he said to de people before he went to bed, "Be sure and don't tell this club to beat." So Jack went up-stairs, but he didn't go to bed this time; an' wasn't long till he heard the old man say, "Beat, Club, beat!" an' the club commenced to beat on the man. And the old man stood it as long as he could, an' the woman told it to beat her. So they couldn't stand it no longer, so they called for Jack.

When Jack came down, he asked them what was the matter. And the man said he had told the club to beat, an' it beat on him. So Jack says, "Give me my donkey an' tablecloth, and I'll stop the club from beatin'." So, to keep from gettin' beat any more, they give Jack his donkey and tablecloth.

So Jack took the donkey an' the tablecloth an' the club, all three, home to his mother. So Jack says, "Mother, I am quite sure this time I have more than enough to pay you for all the barley you have planted." So he says, "Tell this tablecloth to spread." So he says, "Tell this donkey to shake." An' then he says, "Tell this club to beat." An' it beat her.

And he says, "That's the way it felt when you beat me." So, after it beat her a while, he told it to stop. An' after the club had stopped beatin', they lived happy together always after, by the use of the tablecloth, club, an' donkey.

## THE BRIDE OF THE EVIL ONE

**Tradition Bearer:** An African American gardener known as "Old William"

**Source:** Cooke, Elizabeth Johnston. "English Folk-Tales in America. The Bride of the Evil One." *Journal of American Folklore* 12 (1899): 126–130.

**Date:** 1899

**Original Source:** Louisiana

**National Origin:** African American

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This tale of the demon lover who comes to claim the rich, beautiful, and heretofore inaccessible Maritta warns of the dangers of avarice. This

narrative plot is distributed cross-culturally. Moreover, the plot crosses generic boundaries; “The Demon Lover” (also “James Harris” and “The House Carpenter”) presents the plot in the form of a British ballad. The **motifs** of the closing test of the devil’s questions and the Obstacle Flight enjoy a similar popularity. Localization of what is undoubtedly an old tale is seen in Satan’s breakfast of buckwheat cakes and his spending his days in his blacksmith shop overseeing “his hands” at work.

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**I**n former times there lived, on a great plantation far out in the country, the richest and most beautiful lady in the world. Her name was Maritta, and she was beloved by all who knew her, especially so by her parents, with whom she dwelt.

She was so rich that one could not count her wealth in many days; and her home was a palace, filled with rare things from all quarters of the globe. Rich hangings of damask and tapestry adorned the walls, and massive and wonderfully carved furniture filled the rooms. Instead of gilt, as is usual in splendid mansions, the mirrors and pictures were framed in gold, silver, and even precious stones. Then, the dining-table was a wonder to behold—glittering with costly glass and golden service. The lady Maritta always ate from a jeweled platter with a golden spoon; and her rooms were filled with wondrous vases, containing delicious spices and rare perfumes of many kinds.

Half the brave and daring fine gentlemen of her country had sought her hand in marriage; but her parents always declared that each was not rich enough. So loath were her parents to give her up, that they finally said she should never marry unless she could view her suitor ten thousand miles down the road.

Now, as roads in general are not straight for so great a distance, to say nothing of one’s eyesight, the poor lady was quite in despair, and had almost decided to remain a spinster.

At last the Evil One, seeing the covetousness of this old couple, procured for himself an equipage of great magnificence, and went a-wooing. His coach was made of beaten gold, so ablaze with precious stones that the sun seemed mean in comparison with it. Maritta beheld it thirty thousand miles off, and all the household were called out to view it; for such a wonder had never been seen in that part of the world. But so great was the Evil One’s power for conjuring that he was a very short time in arriving. He drove up to the door with so grand a dash and clatter and style that Maritta thought she had never beheld as princely a personage. When he had alighted most gracefully, uncovering [removing his hat] and bowing to the mother and father, he knelt at the feet of Maritta, kissed her hand, and turning to her astonished parents, asked the hand of their daughter in marriage. So pleased were they all with his appearance that the wedding was hastened that very day. After the marriage compact was



completed Maritta bade adieu to her proud parents; and tripping lightly into his coach, they drove away with great effect.

Then they journeyed and journeyed, and every fine house or plantation which they approached, Maritta would exclaim, "Is that your home, my dear?"

"No, darling," he would reply with a knowing smile, "my house is another cut to [different from] that." Still they journeyed: and just as Maritta was beginning to feel *very* weary they approached a great hill, from which was issuing a cloud of black smoke, and she could perceive an enormous hole in the side of the hill, which appeared like the entrance to a tunnel. The horses were now prancing and chafing at the bits in a most terrifying manner; and Maritta thought she saw flames coming from out their nostrils. just as she was catching her breath to ask the meaning of it all, the coach and party plunged suddenly into the mouth of the yawning crater, and they sank down, down into that place which is called Torment. The poor trembling lady went into a swoon, and knew nothing more until she awoke in the House of Satan. But she did not yet know that it was the Evil One whom she had married, nor that, worse still, he was already a married man when she had made his acquaintance. Neither did she know that the frightful old crone was his other wife. Satan's manner had also undergone a decided change; and he, who had been so charming a lover, was now a blustering, insolent master. Lifting his voice until it shook the house, as when it thunders, he stormed around, beating the old hag, killing her uncanny black cat, and raising a tumult generally. Then, ordering the hag to cook him some buck-wheat cakes for breakfast, he stamped out of the house, towards his blacksmith shop, to see how his hands were doing their work. While the wretched young wife sat in her parlor, looking very mournful and lovely, wiping her eyes and feeling greatly mystified, the old hag was turning her cakes on the griddle and growing more and more jealous of this beautiful new wife who was to take her place. Finally she left the cakes and came and stood by Maritta. "My child," quoth she, "my dear daughter, have you married that man?"

"Yes, dame," replied the pretty Maritta.

"Well, my child," said she, "you have married nothing but the Devil." At this the wretched young wife uttered a scream and would have swooned again, except that the hag grasped her by the arm, and putting a rough horny hand over Maritta's mouth, said in a low and surly voice, near her ear, "Hist! Should he hear you, he will kill us both! Only do my bidding, and keep a quiet tongue, and I will show you how to make your escape."

At this Maritta sat up quite straight, and said in trembling tones, "Good dame, prithee tell me, and I will obey, and when I am free, I will send you five millions of dollars."

But the forlorn hag only shook her head, replying, "Money I ask not, for it is of no use to such as I; but listen well."

Then seating herself on the floor at the feet of Maritta, her black hair hanging in tangles about her sharp ugly face, like so many serpents, she continued in

this wise, “He has two roosters who are his spies, and you must give them a bushel of corn to pacify them—but I shall steal the corn for you. He also has two oxen; one is as swift of foot as the wind can blow; the other can only travel half as fast. You will have to choose the last, as the swift one is too well guarded for us to reach him. The slower one is tethered just out-side the door. Come!” she cried to Maritta, who would have held back, “a faint heart will only dwell in Torment.”

At this thought the poor Maritta roused herself, and summoned all her strength. Her hair had now fallen loose and she was all in tears. But she mounted quickly, looking over her shoulder, to see if he was coming even then. “But dame,” cried she, “will he not overtake me, if his ox is so much more fleet of foot than mine?”

“Hold your slippery tongue,” replied the hag, and mark my words. Here is a reticule [a drawstring bag] to hang at your side; this is a brickbat which I put in the bottom, and on that I place a turkey egg and a goose egg. When you feel the hot steam coming near you, drop the brickbat—for he will soon return, and missing you, will start on your chase, mounted on the ox. As he approaches near, you will feel the heat of his breath like hot steam. When you drop the brickbat a wall will spring up from the earth to the sky; and the Devil cannot pass it until he tears down every brick, and throws it out of sight. When you feel the hot steam again, drop the turkey egg, and there will come a river; and when he reaches this river he cannot cross over until his ox drinks all the water. Do the same with the goose egg, and a river will again flow behind you, thus giving you more time in which to reach home. Now off with you, and Devil take you, if you don’t hold on tight and keep up your spirits. But, hark ye, if he catches you, I will poison you when you come back. At this terrible threat the lovely Maritta was so frightened that she forgot to thank the old hag or say good-bye. In the twinkling of an eye the weird-looking creature had raised her mighty arm, and gurgling out a frightful laugh, she lashed the ox with a huge whip.

Away he sped, verily as fleet as the wind, with the beautiful lady clinging on, her arms wound around his neck, and her soft face buried in his shaggy hair. On-ward they floated, above the earth, it seemed to Maritta, over hills and plains, through brake and swamp. Just as the lady began to rejoice at being set free, for it seemed a kind ox, and, after all, it was not so *very* hard to hold on, as she glided along, she heard a piercing shriek behind her; and suddenly a burning hot steam seemed to envelop her. Thinking of the brickbat, in an instant she snatched it from the reticule—almost breaking the eggs in her haste—and flung it behind her, nearly suffocated with the heat. Then she turned to look and lo! a great dark wall shut the awful sight from her gaze.

Onward, onward they sped, as she urged the ox by kind words, stroking his great neck with her delicate white hands. After they had traversed a great distance, Maritta began to think of home and the loved ones, when her reveries were broken by a gaunt black hand clutching at her hair over the back of the ox; and again she felt the intense heat. Too terrified to put her hand in the

reticule, she gave it a shake, and the turkey egg fell to the ground. On the instant water was flowing all about her, cooling the air and quite reviving her. Then a harsh voice fell upon her ear, crying, "Drink, drink, I tell you; mighty hard on you, but you must drink!"

Soon the river was left far behind, and again Maritta aroused herself as she began to notice many familiar landmarks, which told that she was nearing home. After urging the ox on at a great rate for many more miles, she dropped the goose egg, in order to give herself ample time, although as yet she had not again felt the approach of her fiendish husband.

At length the welcome sight of her own broad fields greeted her anxious and weary eyes; and soon her dear home arose upon the horizon. With a few more strides the wonderful ox halted at her own very door, and she fell from his back more dead than alive. For some moments she was unable to rise and embrace her alarmed parents, who had seen her approach.

They had only had time to retire into the house, when Satan rode up to the steps. Throwing himself from the ox, he banged for admittance, in a vastly different manner from that of his first visit. But the father confronted him, and he had to content himself with talking to Maritta over her father's shoulders, while the poor lady was cowering in a corner of the room clinging to her mother. However, the touch of loving parental arms soon reassured her, and she demanded of Satan what he wished further. "I have," replied his Satanic majesty, "three questions to propound to you; and if not properly answered, I shall take you by force again to my realms." Then placing his feet wide apart, with head thrown back, one arm akimbo on his hip, and snapping the fingers of his other hand, he sang in an impudent, swaggering manner:

What is whiter than any snow?  
 What is whiter than any snow?  
 Who fell in the colley well?

The gentle Maritta lifted her soft eyes, and raising her sweet voice sang in a pure and tender strain:

Heaven is whiter than any snow,  
 Heaven is whiter than any snow,  
 Who fell in the colley well?

"Yes, ma'am," replied Satan, rather taken aback. "That's right." Then he continued:

What is deeper than any well?  
 What is deeper than any well?  
 Who fell in the colley well?

Maritta replied in the same strain:

Hell is deeper than any well,  
Hell is deeper than any well,  
Who fell in the colley well?

Again the Evil One took up his strain:

What is greener than any grass?  
What is greener than any grass?  
Who fell in the colley well?

Maritta lifted her voice a third time:

Poison is greener than any grass,  
Who fell in the colley well?

Greatly confounded at her answers, the Evil One stamped his feet in such a manner that smoke and sparks flew upward, and an odor of sulfur filled the room. Then turning on his heels he cried to the mother that he had left a note under the doorsteps with the Devil's own riddle on it.

A thousand or more acres of green corn grew about the house; and the Devil, pulling it all up by the roots, carried it in his hands, tore the roof off the mansion, and raising a fearful storm, disappeared in it. When the storm had abated, the mountains around about were all leveled to the ground. After the panic caused by his wonderful conjuring had subsided, the mother bethought herself of the note, and when found it read as follows:

Nine little white blocks into a pen,  
One little red block rolled over them.

None could guess it save Maritta, who said it meant the teeth and tongue.

## **TRAPPING A HAG**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** "Beliefs of Southern Negroes Concerning Hags." *Journal of American Folklore* 7 (1894): 66-67.

**Date:** 1894

**Original Source:** Virginia

**National Origin:** African American

“Hag-craft” refers to a belief in the “night hag,” an individual who can travel in body or spirit to torment a victim at night. The “hag experience” has been established to be a cross-cultural psycho-physiological phenomenon. Folklorist David Hufford describes it as being associated with four common symptoms: (1) awakening, (2) hearing or seeing something come into the room and approach the bed, (3) being pressed on the chest and strangled, and (4) the inability to move or cry out. The hag experience is represented in John Henry Fuseli’s painting “The Nightmare.” The **legend** below functions as a **belief tale**.

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**T**here is another way by which suspicions of hag-craft may be proved or disproved. A neighbor comes to see you whom you suspect. Would you be certain in regard to the matter, give your visitor a seat near the fire, and then, when she is not looking, steal quietly up behind her and stick a fork into the floor under her chair. By this means you have pinned her hag-spirit to the floor, and the old woman cannot or will not withdraw her bodily presence until the fork is withdrawn.

This story told by a young woman of my acquaintance illustrates this method of identifying a hag. She remembers how, when she was a little girl, her mother was greatly troubled by the nightly visitation of one of these tormentors. She finally fixed her suspicion upon a neighbor, and told her children that she believed old Aunt So-and-So was at the bottom of all her troubles. Accordingly the children, with the desire of verifying their mother’s suspicions, took council together and arrived at a conclusion.

The next time old aunty called, she found a nice comfortable chair awaiting her close by the fire, and an urgent invitation to sit down in it. As soon as she became absorbed in conversation, one of the children stole up behind her and stuck a steel fork into the floor under the chair. Aunty had only run in for a few minutes, but she spent the morning. The day moved on, and was near its end, but still aunty sat in the chair by the fire, never offering to stir. She was the hag, and her spirit was pinned down to the floor by that three-tined steel fork.

At last the mother, who had been making signs to the children that they must take that fork out, took them aside and told them that, if the fork was not removed at once, they should get a whipping that they would long remember. Under this threat the child who had stuck the fork into the floor came up again behind the chair and drew it out, and the old aunty rose and politely withdrew, leaving behind her a certainty where before there had been suspicion.

## SOL LOCKHEART'S CALL

**Tradition Bearer:** Sol Lockheart

**Source:** Steiner, Roland. "Sol Lockheart's Call." *Journal of American Folklore* 48 (1900): 67–70.

**Date:** 1900

**Original Source:** Georgia

**National Origin:** African American

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The following **personal experience narrative** is classified in Protestant religions as "testimony," which is reporting one's religious experience as a means of affirming one's faith or of converting others to belief. In this case, Sol Lockheart, a licensed (as distinct from a fully ordained) minister recounts his call to the Christian ministry, an occupation that he pursued part time while taking care of stock for collector Roland Steiner. His call, during the course of which he is struck blind and receives a vision from Christ, is reminiscent of many elements of the apostle Paul's call to preach while on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:1–9). Lockheart's notion of man's being influenced by both a good and bad conscience suggests the concept of hoodoo (see "When Brer Rabbit Help Brer Terrapin," page 180). However, Sol Lockheart rejects the belief in conjuring and hoodoo, although he is reported in Steiner's gloss of this narrative to be a traditional healer who uses magical-religious techniques for his cures.

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**W**hen a man starts to pray, he has a conscience to tell him when and where; then he has at the same time a conscience to tell him not to go and pray. The first is a good spirit, the last is a bad spirit. Maybe you may be lying in bed at midnight, eating breakfast or dinner, or between meals. The good spirit may say, "Go in the swamp to pray," night or day. If you follow the good one, you will receive good; if the bad one, you will get nothing.

I have to work out and find the difference between the two spirits. I felt sometimes like obeying the good spirit and sometimes the bad, and I continued to live to obey it better, and was one morning, just at daylight, called out by it into a gully; and when I got there and sat down, I lost my sight, and I heard a voice at my head saying, "When a child learns to read it don't forget for seventy-five or eighty years; write and send your mistress word and give her thanks for teaching your lips to pray, and tell her to get right, if she ain't right"; and then there rose a dead head before me, with rotten teeth; the head seemed all torn up, a terrible sight; the sight made me sick and blind for three days.

A woman in the presence of me said, "Give me a pipe of tobacco"; another one said, "You don't use tobacco, just use at it"; [that is, "you don't use very

much tobacco"] a voice said, "Go and set you out a tobacco plant, and let it grow to about one and a half feet, and there is a little worm on the plant." And he showed me the plant, a pretty green plant, and I never saw as pretty a tobacco plant, "the worm eats it and lives on it. Methodists live by the power of God, the Baptists live off of grace; go and tell all the Methodists they are wrong."

Three days after that I was in the field plowing, a sunshiny morning; there came a west wind as a fire and lifted me up, and showed me a ladder from the northwest, that passed right along by me, about two miles from me; the voice told me to go to it and be baptized. I saw the church, and in it twelve people, and in the pulpit a colored man preaching. I could see half his body; the twelve people were in front of him, and I saw myself sitting behind him in the pulpit, and by that spirit and that sign I was showed I was called to preach. The end of the ladder at the church was light and bright; the end away from the church ran up into the sky and was dark; if it had a been bright I would have seen into heaven.

I told my experience in April eleven years ago, and was baptized the third Sunday in May. As my experience I told the three deacons and our minister what I had seen and heard. When they carried me to the water I lost my sight again, got into the water about waist deep; my breath left me; a voice spoke at my right ear, "Brother Lockheart, I baptize you." I was sick all the time from the time I saw the head till I was baptized.

Tuesday night, after I was baptized, I fell from my chair dead, and when I fell back a cloud passed over me darker than any black night, and from that I got well; that night was the best night's rest I ever had.

Two days after that I was plowing in the field, turned my mule round and sat on my plow-stock; a voice spoke in midday, "What makes me Black?" The skin and hair shows it; if you look upon a hill and see two black men standing, you say there stands two Blacks; if you see two white men, you say there stands two white men; that is to show the difference between the two, skin and hair. I saw the master and servant walk out one day; the master got snake-bit, but by the help of God he got well, and he found the servant, the black man, knew the snake was there before it bit him, but would not tell him. The master would never like the servant no more for not telling him.

The servant wants the master to tell him the terror that is in death and hell, but he won't tell him on account of the snake. Now you can see clearly to pull the mote out of your brother's eye.

Two days after that I saw the heavens open and a white cloud come out about the size of a man's hand; it spread to the size of a tablecloth, closed to the size of a man's hand again, then again spread out to the size of a tablecloth and then closed out of sight, like a door closing in the heavens: then the next day, early in the morning, I saw the spirit of God, like a bird, like a rain-crow in shape, but the color of a dove: it had wide wings; as it passed by on the right side, it burnt inside of me like a flame of fire, and run me nearly crazy for about five minutes, and then I was all right again. About a week after that I was

walking along from the field, when the horn blew for dinner. I walked right up to a coffin on two little benches; it was painted a dark red, and on each side were silver handles, and when I first saw it I was badly frightened and stopped and looked in it, till when I got quiet, it was empty, but lined, with a pillow at the head. When I got over my fear a voice spoke at the head of the coffin and said, "Your body shall lie in that and rest in the shade," and then, as soon as the voice ceased speaking, the coffin disappeared, and then I began preaching.

About a year after I was called, I went on a journey preaching. I walked all the way for about forty miles. I walked, for the commandment says you must not use your critter on the Sabbath day. When I was coming home, I felt great pain, as if some one was driving nails in me. It was nine o'clock Saturday morning. Sunday morning about the same time, I saw in the road before me the likeness of a man, clothed in a long white gown; he turned my mind round, just like a wheel turning round. The next day, at the same time, I saw the same spirit again, who said to me, "You have a purple gown made like mine." The spirit looked like a young white man, clean-faced; his hair was kinder straw-colored, and hung down to his shoulders. For three days he kept after me till I had one made, and on a Friday I felt something in my shoes. I couldn't keep them on, until Saturday evening, and then a voice spoke and said, "Take off those shoes and go to Cermonia church tomorrow barefoot and preach." I now preach like the Apostles, with my purple gown on and barefoot, at my own church, Mt. Pleasant, near Grovetown, Georgia.

One night I prayed to the Lord to let me visit Heaven, and then fell into a deep sleep, and then I began a journey up in the sky. I soon came to a fine building, and it was paled round with white palings. I walked up in front of the gate; the gate was shut. I looked through the gate, and saw a white man standing in the door of the house. The house was built round, of white stone, and the house was full of windows, as high as I could see. I could not see to the top of the house. All the windows were full of little children. I didn't see any grown folks there I expect, what I see and know in this world, they are powerful scarce up there in Heaven.

## POSSESSED OF TWO SPIRITS

**Tradition Bearer:** Braziel Robinson

**Source:** Steiner, Roland. "Braziel Robinson Possessed of Two Spirits." *Journal of American Folklore* 13 (1900): 226–228.

**Date:** 1900

**Original Source:** Georgia

**National Origin:** African American

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In terms of structure, "Possessed of Two Spirits" is best classified as a **personal experience narrative**. It is a first-person account of an individual



experience. In terms of function, this account serves as a **belief tale** by virtue of exemplifying and reinforcing the narrator's belief in the powers of conjuration (supernatural manipulation) possessed by root doctors (spiritual practitioners from African American tradition). The overall system mastered by conjure men or root doctors has been labeled hoodoo, and these experts are often referred to as "two-headed doctors" in tribute to their cognizance of both the natural and supernatural world. The present narrative contains references to both culturally specific beliefs (the power of graveyard dirt, sometimes called "goofer dust," to affect the living) and more universal folk beliefs (the powers of second sight conferred by being "born with the caul," a delivery in which the birth sac is draped over the newborn's face). Typically, the more tightly structured of Robinson's narratives (such as his being conjured in May 1898) are framed by affirmations and descriptions of belief in the supernatural.

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“I am not a preacher, but a member of the church, but I can make a few remarks in church, I have a seat in conference, I can see spirits, I have two spirits, one that prowls around, and one that stays in my body. The reason I have two spirits is because I was born with a double caul. People can see spirits if they are born with one caul, but nobody can have two spirits unless they are born with a double caul, very few people have two spirits. I was walking along and met a strange spirit, and then I heard a stick crack behind me and turned round and heard my prowling spirit tell the strange spirit it was me, not to bother me, and then the strange spirit went away and left me alone. My two spirits are good spirits, and have power over evil spirits, and unless my mind is evil, can keep me from harm. If my mind is evil my two spirits try to win me, if I won't listen to them, then they leave me and make room for evil spirits and then I'm lost forever, mine have never left me, and they won't if I can help it, as I shall try to keep in the path.”

Here he took the quid of tobacco out of his mouth, and rolling it in his hand for a few minutes, resumed:

“Spirits are around about all the time, dogs and horses can see them as well as people, they don't walk on the ground, I see them all the time, but I never speak to one unless he speaks to me first, I just walk along as if I saw nothing, you must never speak first to a spirit. When he speaks to me and I speak back I always cross myself, and if it is a good spirit, it tells me something to help me, if it is a bad spirit, it disappears, it can't stand the cross. Sometimes two or more spirits are together, but they are either all good, or all bad spirits, they don't mix like people on earth, good and bad together.

“Good spirits have more power than bad spirits, but they can't help the evil spirits from doing us harm. We were all born to have trouble, and only God can

protect us. Sometimes the good spirits let the evil spirits try to make you fall, but I won't listen to the evil spirits.

"When a person sees a spirit, he can tell whether it is a good spirit or a bad spirit by the color, good spirits are always white, and bad spirits are always black. When a person sees a bad spirit, it sometimes looks like a black man with no head, and then changes into a black cat, dog, or hog, or cow, sometimes the cow has only one horn and it stands out between the eyes. I never saw them change into a black bird; a man told me he saw one in the shape of a black owl; but I have seen good spirits change into white doves, but never saw one in shape of a cat, have seen them in the shape of men and children, some with wings and some without, then I have seen them look like a mist or a small white cloud. When a person is sick and meets good spirits near enough to feel the air from their bodies, or wings, he generally gets well. Any one can feel a spirit passing by, though only a few can see it. I've seen a great many together at one time, but that was generally about dusk. I never saw them flying two or three along together. Good and bad spirits fly, but a bad spirit can't fly away up high in the air, he is obleeged [obliged] to stay close to the ground. If a person follows a bad spirit, it will lead him into all kinds of bad places, in ditches, briers. A bad spirit is obleeged to stay in the body where it was born, all the time. If one has two spirits, the one outside wanders about, it is not always with you. If it is near and sees any danger, it comes and tells the spirit inside of you, so it can keep you from harm. Sometimes it can't, for the danger is greater than any spirit can ward off, then one's got to look higher.

"I've heard spirits talk to themselves, they talk in a whisper like, some-times you can tell what they're saying, and sometimes you can't. I don't think the spirit in the body has to suffer for the sins of the body it is in, as it is always telling you to do right. I can't tell, some things are hidden from us.

"People born with a caul generally live to be old. The caul is always buried in a graveyard.

"Children born with a caul talk sooner than other children, and have lot more sense.

"I was conjured in May 1898, while hoeing cotton, I took off my shoes and hoed two rows, then I felt strange, my feet begun to swell, and then my legs, and then, I couldn't walk. I had to stop and go home. Just as I stepped in the house, I felt the terriblest pain in my jints [joints], I sat down and thought, and then looked in my shoes, I found some yaller [yellow] dirt, and knew it was graveyard dirt, then I knew I was conjured, I then hunted about to find if there was any conjure in the house and found a bag under my door-step. I opened the bag and found, some small roots about an inch long, some black hair, a piece of snake skin, and some graveyard dirt, dark-yaller, right off some coffin. I took the bag and dug a hole in the public road in front of my house, and buried it with the dirt out of my shoes, and throwed some red pepper all around the house. I didn't get any better, and went and saw a root-doctor, who told me he could

take off the conjure, he gave me a cup of tea to drink and biled [boiled]up something and put it in a jug to wash my feet and legs with, but it ain't done me much good, he ain't got enough power, I am gwine [going] to see one in Augusta, who has great power, and can tell me who conjured me. They say root-doctors have power over spirits, who will tell them who does the conjuring; they generally [sic] uses yerbs [herbs] gathered on the changes of the moon, and must be got at night. People git conjur[e] from the root-doctors and one root-doctor often works against another, the one that has the most power does the work.

“People gits most conjured by giving them snake’s heads, lizards, and scorpions, dried and beat up into powder and putting it in the food or water they drink, and then they gits full of the varmints; I saw a root-doctor cut out of a man’s leg a lizard and a grasshopper, and then he got well. Some conjur ain’t to kill, but to make a person sick or make him have pain, and then conjur is put on the ground in the path where the person to be conjured goes, it is put down on a young moon, a growing moon, so the conjur will rise up and grow, so the person stepping over it will git conjured. Sometimes they roll it up in a ball and tie it to a string and hang it from a limb, so the person to be conjured, coming by, touches the ball, and the work’s done, and he gits conjured in the part that strikes the ball, the ball is small and tied by a thread so a person can’t see it. There are many ways to conjure, I knew a man that was conjured by putting graveyard dirt under his house in small piles and it almost killed him, and his wife. The dirt made holes in the ground, for it will always go back as deep as you got it, it goes down to where it naturally belongs.

“Only root-doctors can git the graveyard dirt, they know what kind to git and when, the hants [haunts, that is, ghosts] won’t let everybody git it, they must git it thro’ some kind of spell, for the graveyard dirt works trouble ‘til it gits back inter [into] the ground, and then wears’ off. It must git down to the same depth it was took from, that is as deep as the coffin lid was from the surface of the ground.”

## JACK-O'-MY-LANTERN

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Newell, William Wells. “The Ignus Fatuus, Its Character and Legendary Origin.” *Journal of American Folklore* 17 (1904): 39–41.

**Date:** 1904

**Original Source:** Maryland

**National Origin:** African American

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Ignus Fatuus (literally, “foolish fire”) has been identified as foxfire, swamp gas, will-o-the-wisp, the spirits of the dead, and in the **legend**

below, “Jack-O’-My-Lantern.” William Wells Newell, citing W. Wirt Sikes, describes the hideous swamp “goblin” as being preternaturally strong and swift though no taller than five feet, covered with hair, and able to leap long distances. Other commentators differ on the apparitions’ exact attributes, but in all cases the Jack-O’-My-Lantern is associated with the devil and out to harm any mortal crossing its path. In this narrative, he even surpasses the devil himself in deceit and guile.

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Once there was a man name Jack. He was a mighty wicked man, an’ treat he wife an’ children like a dog. He did n’ do nothing’ but drink from morning til night, an’ it wasn’t no use to say nothing’ at all to him ‘cause he was just as ambitious as a mad dog. Well sir, he drink an’ he drink til whiskey couldn’t make him drunk; but at last it burn him up inside; an’ then the Devil come for him. When Jack see the Devil, he was so scared he couldn’t do anymore than drop in the floor.

Then he beg the Devil to let him off just a little while, but the Devil say, “Naw Jack, I ain’t going’ wait no longer; my wife, Abbie Sheens, is expecting you.”

So the Devil start off pretty brisk’ an’ Jack was obliged to follow, till they come to a grog shop.

Mr. Devil,” said Jack, “don’ you’ wan’ a drink?”

“Well,” said the Devil, “I believe I does, but I ain’t got no small change; we don’t keep no change down there.”

“Tell you what you do, Mr. Devil,” said Jack. “I got one ten cent in my pocket; you change yourself into another ten cent, an’ we can get two drinks, an’ then you can change yourself back again.”

So the Devil change hissself into a ten cent, an’ Jack pick him up, but instead of going in the grog shop, Jack clap the ten cent in he pocket-book that he hadn’t took out of he pocket before, ‘cause he didn’t want the Devil to see that the clasp was in the shape of a cross. He shut it tight, an’ there he had the Devil, an’ it wasn’t no use for him to struggle, ‘cause he couldn’t get by that cross. Well sir, first he swear and threaten Jack with what he was going’ to do to him, an’ then he begun to beg, but Jack just turn round an’ start to go home.

Then the Devil say, “Jack, of you’ll lemme out o’ here, I’ll let you’ off for a whole year, I will, for truth. Lemme go Jack, ‘cause Abbie Sheens is too lazy to put the brush on the fire, an’ it’ll all go out of I ain’t there for’ long, to tend to it.”

Then Jack say to hissself, “I have a great mind to let him go, ‘cause in a whole year I kin repent and get religion an’ get shed of him that there way.”

Then he say, “Mr. Devil, I’ll let you out if you declare for gracious you won’t come after me for twelve month.”

Then the Devil promise before Jack undo the clasp, an' by the time Jack got he pocket-book open he was gone. Then Jack say to hisself, "Well, now I going' to repent an' get religion sure; but it ain't no use being' in no hurry; the last' six month will be plenty o' time. Where that ten cent? Here 'tis. I going get me a drink."

When the six month was gone, Jack allowed one month would be time enough to repent, and when the last month come, Jack say he going have one more spree, an' then he would have a week or ten days left an' that was plenty o' time, 'cause he done heard o' folks repenting on their death bed. Then he went on a spree for' sure, an' when the last' week come, Jack had the delirium tremblin's, an' the first thing he knowed there was the Devil at the door, an' Jack had to get out of he bed and go 'long with him. After a while there pas a tree full o' great big red apples.

"Don' you' wan' some apples, Mr. Devil?" said Jack.

"You can get some if you want them," said the Devil, an' he stop an' look up in the tree.

"How you expect a man with delirium tremblin's to climb a tree?" said Jack. "You catch hold the bough, an' I'll push you up in the crotch, an' then you' kin get all you' wants."

So Jack push him in the crotch, an' the Devil begin to feel the apples to get a ripe one. While he was doing' that, Jack whip he knife out of he pocket, an' cut a cross in the bark of the tree, just unther the Devil, an' the Devil holler, "Tzip! Something nurr but me then. What are you doing' down there, Jack? I going' cut you' heart out."

But he couldn't get down while that cross was there, an' Jack just sat down on the grass, an' watch him raging an' swearing an' cussing. Jack kept him there all night tell 'twas close to day, an' then the Devil change he tune, an' he say, "Jack, lemme get down here an' I'll give you another year."

"Give me nothing'!" said Jack, an' stretch hisself out on the grass.

After a while, 'bout sun up, the Devil say, "Jack, cut dis thing off here an' lemme get down, an' I'll give you ten year."

"Naw siree," said Jack, "I won' let you get down less you declare for' gracious that you won't never come after me no more."

When the Devil find Jack was hard as a rock, he agreed, an' declared for gracious that he wouldn't' never come for Jack again, an' Jack cut the cross off the tree, and the Devil left without a word.

After that Jack never thought no more about repenting, 'cause he wasn't afraid of the Devil, an' he didn't want to go where there wasn't no whiskey. Then he live until he body wore out, an' he was obliged to die.

First he went to the gate o' heaven, but the angel just shake he head. Then he went' to the gate o' Hell, but when word come that Jack was there, the Devil holler to the imps. "Shut the do' an' don' let that man come in

here; he done treat me scandalous. Tell him to go 'long back where he come from."

Then Jack say, "How I going' find my way back in the dark? Give me a lantern." Then the Devil take a chunk out of the fire, an' say, "Here, take this, and don't you never come back here no mo'." Then Jack take the chunk o' fire an' start back, but when he come to a marsh, he done got lost, an' he ain't never find he way out since.

# CAJUN

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## THE WINE, THE FARM, THE PRINCESS AND THE TARBABY

**Tradition Bearer:** Aneus Guerin

**Source:** Claudel, Calvin. "Louisiana Tales of Jean Sot and Boqui and Lapin." *Southern Folklore Quarterly* 8 (1944): 288–291.

**Date:** 1931

**Original Source:** Louisiana

**National Origin:** Cajun

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Cajuns are the descendents of Europeans of French ancestry who were exiled from Acadia (now Nova Scotia, Canada) by the British, who began a systematic program of deportation in 1755. Although the exiles found homes as far away as the Caribbean, the largest and historically most identifiable Cajun population settled in what was then the Louisiana Territory, where they preserved tales from European tradition, adapted those of their neighbors, and developed their own that summed up their perceptions of themselves and others. The Cajun cycle of Lapin and Bouqui tales casts Lapin (French, "rabbit") in his common role of **trickster** and Bouqui (derived from Wolof "hyena" as noted on page xiv) as Lapin's foil and the butt of all his jokes. The Lapin and Bouqui cycle in general and "The Wine, the Farm, the Princess and the Tarbaby" in particular show the influence of African American tradition. Cross-cultural borrowing and adaptation to the southern environment are striking in these tales. In addition, this tale, composed of several narratives that are capable of standing alone, should be compared to other trickster narratives in this collection, especially "How Brer Rabbit Practice Medicine" (page 168) and "Brother Rabbit an' Brother Tar-Baby" (page 414).

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One day Comrade Lapin was working with Comrade Bouqui on a farm. They were cropping together that year, and they had arranged to divide the crop equally at the end of the year. It was very hot that day, and Comrade Lapin wanted to fool Comrade Bouqui in some way or other.

“What do you say if we buy a jug of wine today?” suggested Lapin.

“Fine!” agreed Bouqui. “You will go get it yourself.”

Comrade Lapin went to fetch the wine. When he returned, he put it in a ditch where there was shade. He went to work again, but did not try to keep up with Bouqui. He took his time, cheating on his comrade. Bouqui was working fast to get finished, and Lapin was far behind. Suddenly Lapin exclaimed:

“Ooh!”

“What’s the matter?” requested Bouqui.

“There’s someone calling me,” explained Lapin.

“Go see who it is,” suggested Bouqui.

Lapin left, went toward the jug and took a drink. When he returned, Bouqui asked him why he had stayed so long.

“I was called for a christening,” explained Lapin.

“Is that so?” questioned Bouqui. “What did you name the baby?”

“I named him First-One,” continued Lapin.

They started working, and soon Comrade Lapin was called again. He went to take another big drink. When he returned, he told Bouqui it was another christening and he had called the baby Second-One.

Next he went to perform a third christening and named this baby Third-One. This time he finished drinking all the wine, turning the jug over before he returned to his work.

“Ah now!” exclaimed Bouqui when it was time to quit, “let’s go drink us some wine now.”

They went to the jug and saw it was turned over. There was not a drop of wine left in the jug.

“Too bad!” declared Lapin. “Our wine is all lost.”

Bouqui was sad, disappointed and tired. Comrade Lapin felt good as he returned to his cabin.

A little while after that Bouqui and Lapin went into the field to see their potatoes. There was a good crop. The potato plants were big and full of flowers. They stayed there a long time, talking and admiring their labor.

“It’s almost time to dig our potatoes,” said Lapin “How are we going to divide our crop? Do you want to take the roots, and I’ll take the plant?”

“Oh no!” replied Bouqui, “myself I want the pretty plant.”

“As you wish,” agreed Lapin.

When they took in the potato crop, Bouqui brought all the pretty plants into his storeroom. He had nothing at all. Lapin took the roots, and he had food for the whole year.



Later on it was time to harvest the crop of corn. Bouqui made up his mind that Lapin would not fool him on the corn. He said he wanted the roots this time, and Lapin told him to choose as he wanted again. Bouqui took the roots, taking them to his storeroom, and he had nothing. Lapin took the stalks, and he had a lot to eat for the whole year.

During the winter Bouqui went to ask Lapin for something to eat. Lapin refused him. Bouqui almost died from hunger that year, and he decided not to work on shares with Comrade Lapin anymore.

Comrade Bouqui was very dissatisfied, but he was to be still more unhappy yet before he would be done with Lapin.

They were courting the same girl, a princess. She was a pretty girl, and she liked Lapin better. Bouqui was jealous, and he wanted to know whether he or Lapin would marry the girl.

“I’ll tell you what we’ll do,” suggested Comrade Bouqui to Lapin one day. “We’ll have a race. We’ll leave here together tomorrow morning. He who gets at the girl’s place first will marry her.”

“Fine!” agreed Lapin. “We shall run a race.”

As they had planned, the following morning they started the race. Comrade Lapin beat him by a long distance. When Bouqui got there, he asked Lapin to give him another chance.

“What do you want to do this time, Comrade Bouqui?” asked Lapin.

“Let’s see,” thought Bouqui, scratching his head. “Oh yes! let’s boil a big pot of water, and he who jumps over it wins the girl. Do you want to try that?”

“As for me, I’ll do whatever you want,” replied Lapin.

They boiled some water until it was boiling over. They placed it in the yard by the house, and it was decided that Lapin should jump first. Lapin started running to make his jump; but when he got up to the big pot, fear seized him and he did not jump.

“It’s high, yes!” exclaimed Lapin.

He tried again. This time he jumped it.

“It’s your turn now, Bouqui,” said Lapin.

Bouqui started running. When he jumped, he fell into the middle of the pot. The water was so hot, he was cooked before he could count to four.

After that Bouqui’s family had a grudge against Lapin. They blamed Lapin for the death of their son, Bouqui; and they watched for the chance to pay him back in the same way.

Comrade Lapin would come to steal water from their well every night. Now old man Bouqui knew it was Lapin who was stealing his water. When Lapin came for water that night, he saw a little tar baby. He could not make out who it was. He walked all around it, looking closely. Finally he got up enough courage to talk to it.

“Get away from that well!” cried Lapin.

But it did not act as if it heard. Lapin advanced more closely, crying out:

“Go away! Go away, before I hit you a blow with my foot.” But it did not pay any attention at all. Comrade Lapin struck a blow with his foot, and his foot stayed stuck.

“Let my foot go!” cried Lapin. “Let me go, or I’ll strike you with my other foot.”

As he struck, the other foot stayed stuck, too. Lapin struck with his other two, and they stayed stuck, too. Then he struck with his head, his body, all staying stuck on the tar baby. Lapin was well caught.

The following morning old Bouqui found Lapin in his trap. “Now I have you!” exclaimed he. “I will go kill you, and I think I’ll burn you.”

“Burn me if you will!” cried Lapin, “but I beg of you not to throw me into the briars behind the fence there. That would be too mean a death.”

“I am going to give you the worst death I know,” added old man Bouqui, “and it’s into the briars you go.”

He went off with Lapin, to throw him into the briars. When he got by the fence, he threw him over. Lapin fell into the middle of the briar patch. Old Bouqui looked through a crack to see him die, but Lapin only laughed at him. Bouqui realized his mistake, but too late.

“You threw me exactly into my home here,” shouted back Lapin, running quickly toward his place.

“He’s a bad fellow, yes, that Lapin!” exclaimed old Bouqui to himself, turning homeward very regretful.

## **THE SACK OF PEAS AND THE MULE**

**Tradition Bearer:** Aneus Guerin

**Source:** Claudel, Calvin. “Louisiana Tales of Jean Sot and Boqui and Lapin.” *Southern Folklore Quarterly* 8 (1944): 292–294.

**Date:** 1931

**Original Source:** Louisiana

**National Origin:** Cajun

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In the following narrative, Lapin takes advantage of Bouqui’s appetite to acquire a free mule by indirect means. Obviously considering Bouqui easier prey than the farmer who owns the mule he covets, Lapin manipulates his victim into trading his beautiful wife for the mule and a sack of peas to start a vegetable farm. Much of the tale hangs on Bouqui’s poor powers of observation. He does not appreciate how beautiful his wife is until he has initiated the trade and alienated her. He is unable to recognize the dearly bought mule after its tail has been bobbed, and at last, he is deceived into seeing a drowning mule in a bundle of floating hair.

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One day Bouqui went to visit Lapin. While at the dinner table Bouqui noticed what fine vegetables Lapin's wife served—squash, pumpkin and fine celery salad.

"What fine food you have, Lapin!" remarked Bouqui. "I wish I had such wonderful vegetables for my household."

"I raise them on my farm," replied Lapin. "Why don't you start a vegetable farm yourself and farm the way I do?"

"That's a good idea," ventured Bouqui. "But I have no mule or seed to start such a farm."

After they had all eaten a while, Lapin said to Bouqui:

"I know just the thing for you, Bouqui. A farmer nearby has a mule and a sack of peas. You can probably make a bargain with him to get them. You can use the peas to start a crop."

"But what can I offer him, Lapin?" questioned Bouqui. "I have no money. My wife is all I've got."

"I'll tell you what," proposed Lapin. "Trade your wife for his mule and the peas.... I'm sure he'll accept. I'll talk to him and fix it up for you.... Tomorrow I'll come to see you."

After Bouqui had returned home, he pondered over Lapin's proposition. Finally he said to his wife, who was indeed very pretty:

"My wife, I have been thinking about swapping you for a mule and a sack of peas. We can't live in this poverty. So I really need a mule more than I need you."

Next day Bouqui heard Lapin knock at the door.

"I have brought the mule and sack of peas," explained Lapin. All you have to do now is get your wife over to the farmer's place. He has agreed to the bargain."

At first Bouqui was reluctant, for he had noticed how his wife was pretty, and he really wanted to keep her. However, his wife came up just then with her clothes all bundled and packed ready to leave and said:

"No, Bouqui, I shall go.... You were stupid enough to want to trade me for a mule and a sack of peas. So I'm going to leave you now for the farmer.... Good-bye."

This settled the bargain. Bouqui's wife left, carrying her bundle. Bouqui kept the mule and the sack of peas, and Lapin went home.

Now it happened that Lapin really wanted the mule for himself. So he began to devise a trick to get the mule away from Bouqui. That night he went to Bouqui's barn, unlocked the door and started to lead the mule to his own place. While on his way home, he clipped off the end of the mule's tail and threw it into a pond nearby, where there was a very deep hole. Next day Bouqui came to Lapin's house and knocked at the door.

"Lapin," began Bouqui, "someone must have stolen my mule. Have you seen him?"

“Why no,” replied Lapin.

Just then Bouqui noticed his mule in Lapin’s barn, and he exclaimed, “That looks very much like my mule!”

“Of course not,” added Lapin. “That mule has a bobbed tail. Your mule has a long tail.”

That’s true enough,” answered Bouqui, shaking his head, however, in a puzzled fashion.

I’ll go help you to look for your mule, Bouqui,” offered Lapin, feigning sympathy. So the two started off together. Finally Lapin reached the pond and exclaimed, “There! Your mule slipped into the deep hole of the pond. I see his tail sticking out of the water.”

Lapin walked out over the water on a fallen tree to the place where the piece of tail was floating. He reached down and pulled and pulled on the tail, making out as if he was trying to pull up the mule on the other end of the tail. Finally he flew backwards out of the water, holding the tail in his hands.

You see, Bouqui,” explained Lapin. “Your mule fell in here and drowned. I pulled so hard, his tail came off.... It’s no use; he is lost under the water.”

“Yes, that’s too bad,” replied Bouqui, as he left with a look of despair.

## ON HORSEBACK

**Tradition Bearer:** Aneus Guerin

**Source:** Claudel, Calvin. “Louisiana Tales of Jean Sot and Boqui and Lapin.” *Southern Folklore Quarterly* 8 (1944): 294–295.

**Date:** 1931

**Original Source:** Louisiana

**National Origin:** Cajun

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Lapin chooses to humiliate Bouqui in front of some female friends. This tale is similar to “Mr. Deer’s My Riding Horse” (page 173). Unlike rabbit’s motive of eliminating a romantic competitor, Lapin demonstrates no motive beyond the **trickster’s** standard desire to stir up trouble.

---

**O**ne day Comrade Lapin and Comrade Bouqui planned to go see some girls together. Bouqui was to come to meet Lapin at his house at four o’clock Sunday afternoon, and they would go together. At four o’clock Bouqui arrived.

“Well now, let’s go,” he called to Lapin.

“I don’t think I can go,” replied Lapin. “I was coming down my steps yesterday, and I fell down. I really believe I broke my foot, because I can’t walk.”

“Can’t you walk just a little bit?” asked Bouqui very disappointedly.

“The only way I can go with you is if you carry me,” suggested Lapin.

“I’ll carry you until to the big-gate,” agreed Bouqui. “But I’ll put you down there, and you will have to walk the rest of the way, because the girls will laugh at me if they see that you ride me like a horse.”

Lapin put on a pair of spurs and mounted Bouqui. When they got to the big-gate, Lapin got down but could not make a single step, his foot hurt him so much.

“I can’t make it,” complained Lapin. “If you want me to go all the way, you will be obliged to carry me a little farther.”

“Oh well! get upon my back again,” agreed Bouqui.

Bouqui did not want to leave his friend there and would do any-thing to help him. When they passed the house, the girls were all upon the gallery. See Lapin seated upon Bouqui, they wanted to laugh, but they did not laugh, because they did not want to hurt Bouqui’s feelings.

Poor Bouqui placed himself next to the steps, and Lapin bounded upon the gallery, completely well. Lapin then turned toward the girls, saying, “Didn’t I always tell you Bouqui was my horse!”

The girls could no longer withhold themselves. They almost burst with laughter at Bouqui, right in front of him. He was so ashamed he was all miserable. So he excused himself right away and left.

## JEAN SOT AND THE COWHIDE

**Tradition Bearer:** Jack Vidrine

**Source:** Claudel, Calvin. “Louisiana Tales of Jean Sot and Bouqui and Lapin.” *Southern Folklore Quarterly* 8 (1944): 297–298.

**Date:** 1944

**Original Source:** Louisiana

**National Origin:** Cajun

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In the opening episode of this Cajun comic tale, Jean Sot (French, “John the Fool”) kills the family’s cow. In another episode, the misinterpretation of his mother’s instructions leading to this act would seem a willful attempt to misconstrue. In the case of Jean Sot, however, such behavior is consistent with the **stock character**. In a later episode in the tale, and due to a misinterpretation of Jean’s words by a group of robbers, he turns folly to fortune. The following tale (“Numskull Talks to Himself and Frightens Robbers Away,” 1653F) and **motifs** from it are found throughout the South.

---

Foolish John and his mother lived by the bayou in Louisiana and they spoke French. He was such a foolish lad he misunderstood everything he was told.

“Foolish John, go get the cow by the bayou and drive her into the lot,” said his mother.

In the French they spoke, “to drive” can also mean “to push.” So Foolish John went to fetch the wheelbarrow and rolled it out to where the cow was pasturing. He placed her into the wheelbarrow and rolled her home. When he reached home, he was panting and sweating like a horse.

“What in the world are you doing, Foolish John?” questioned his mother.

“Well, Mama, you told me to push the cow here, and that’s what I’m doing.”

“Fool! will you ever learn anything!” exclaimed the exasperated woman. “Now take that cow out of there and go milk her.”

As with many words that have double meanings, “to milk” also meant “to shoot.”

While his mother was busy inside, Foolish John went to get the gun and shot the cow. When he appeared inside without the milk, his mother became worried.

“Foolish John, where is the milk for supper?” she asked.

“Why, Mama, I thought you meant for me to shoot the cow with a gun.... That’s what I did,” replied the lad.

“Ah, foolish son!” she cried, “killing our only cow.... Now you must go skin her and sell the hide so we can buy food, because we don’t have milk.... Hurry now!”

Foolish John fetched the big butcher knife, strung the cow up to a tree by her hind legs and skinned her—head, feet and everything. He put the hide over his head and set out for town. As he walked under the hide, he looked like a strange beast.

It was getting dark and growing cold, for it was almost winter. He reached a tree that was losing its leaves. The tree groaned and shivered as the cold wind whistled through its limbs.

“That poor tree must be cold,” remarked Foolish John to himself. “I’ll cover it with this hide to keep it warm.”

He began climbing the tree with the cowhide still on his head. When he was up in the top ready to place the hide over the tree, a band of seven men suddenly came and sat down in a circle under the tree. They were robbers with a huge sack of money. The chief began to divide the money.

“This is for me.... That’s for you,” counted the chief as he placed each robber’s share before him.

Every time he said this, Foolish John would pluck a hair from his cowhide and cry, “And one hair for me-eee!”

“Listen, listen, the Old Devil!” would exclaim one of the robbers, and the chief would start to divide again. The dividing and counting continued far into

the night, and each time the chief would say, “This is for me.... That’s for you,” Foolish John would add while plucking out hair, “And one hair for me-eee!”

Finally when they had all the money spread out, and Foolish John had picked his cowhide clean, he suddenly lost his grip on the limb he was holding and crashed to the ground right into the middle of the circle of thieves. When they beheld this strange apparition with horns, they all took to their heels and fled. Foolish John gathered up the money, placed the hide over the tree and went back home.

“Well, how much did you get for the hide?” inquired his mother.

“I collected a dollar for every hair on the hide,” answered Foolish John, laying down the heavy sack load of money.

“Foolish John!” exclaimed the mother with joy, “sometimes I think you are not so foolish!”

## JEAN SOT FEEDS COWS NEEDLES

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Ray, Marie. “Jean Sotte Stories.” *Journal of American Folklore* 21 (1908): 364.

**Date:** 1908

**Original Source:** Louisiana

**National Origin:** Cajun

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The following narrative (a **variant** of “Stupid Stories Depending on a Pun,” AT 1345) casts Jean Sot in the **numskull** role once again. In this case, his linguistic misinterpretation has no saving grace.

---

Jean Sot’s old mother was in despair over the stupidity of her boy, but thought she would try him again, hoping he would do better. So calling him, and giving him some money, she said, “My son, I want a paper of needles, and you must go down the road to the village and buy me one, but do not lose it on the way.”

Jean Sot promised to be careful and went off in high glee, for he liked to go on errands to the village. He knew just where to go; and, having counted out the money to the old dame who gave him the needles, he started down the lane which led to his home. He had not gone far when he met a number of cows, who, when they saw him, lifted their heads and cried, “A-moo, a-moo!” and turned into a barnyard. Jean Sotte, thinking they were calling him, followed; and when they continued to cry “A-moo!” he said, “Well, if it is the needles (a pun on French *aiguille*, “needle”) you want, here they are!” and he sprinkled them all over the straw they were eating.

Then he went home; and when the old woman asked where the needles were she had sent him for, he said, "Mother, I obeyed you: I did not lose them, but, when the cows cried so for them, I was obliged to give them to them on their hay."

## JEAN SOT KILLS THE DUCK

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Ray, Marie. "Jean Sotte Stories." *Journal of American Folklore* 21 (1908): 364–365.

**Date:** 1908

**Original Source:** Louisiana

**National Origin:** Cajun

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Jean Sot commonly reveals his stupidity when justifying the logic that motivates his unconventional actions. In this narrative, however, he attempts to conceal a minor crime by committing and then confessing to a worse one.

---

There was an old woman who had two sons—one so simple that he received the name of Jean Sotte, and the other so bright and intelligent that he was known as Jean Esprit.

One day the old woman said to Jean Sotte, "My son, I am old and stiff, but you are young and active and can go on my errands; so go into the store-room and bring me a bottle of wine you will find there."

Jean Sotte went to the storeroom, and, having found the bottle, he thought he would take out the cork and make sure it was wine; and when he had smelled it, he thought he would taste it to be sure it was all right; but the wine was so good and old, he soon felt very merry, and continued to drink until the bottle was quite empty.

Now, in a corner of the room an old duck had made her nest in some straw; and when Jean Sotte began capering around, she cried out, "Quack, quack!" and flapped her wings, which so frightened him that he caught her by the neck, and wrung her head off, and seated himself on her eggs.

The old woman, having waited some time for Jean Sotte's return, determined to see what was keeping him. What was her surprise, on hobbling to the store-room, to find her old duck dead and Jean Sotte sitting on her nest. "Silly boy!" she said, "why have you killed my duck, why are you sitting on the nest, and where is the bottle of wine you were to bring me?"

"Mother," said Jean Sotte, rolling his head and looking very sleepy, "I drank the wine; and when the old duck saw me, she cried out, and I knew she would



tell you, so I killed her to keep her from telling; and, now she is dead, you will never know!”

## TI JEAN CANNOT TELL A LIE

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Personal communication

**Date:** 2000

**Original Source:** Louisiana

**National Origin:** Cajun

---

Ti Jean (French, “Little John”) is a **trickster** figure found throughout French-descended traditions in the Americas. Unlike many such figures, this character has successfully survived into contemporary joke repertoires. Compare this character with Boudreaux in the following narrative, “Boudreaux and the Cottonmouth.”

---

**E**arly one morning, Ti Jean was walking along the bank of Bayou behind his house. All of a sudden, he noticed that the family outhouse, located right on the bank, was sliding into the bayou. he decided to help it out and picked up a big tree limb and hit the outhouse til it.

Later, when Ti Jean got home his papa met him at the door and said, “Ti Jean, did you knock that outhouse into the bayou?”

“Papa,” the boy answered, “like George Washington, I cannot tell a lie. I did it.”

“Ti Jean, come with me to the woodshed. You are going to get the whipping of your life!”

Ti Jean looked up at his father and said, “Papa, when George Washington told his papa that he had chopped down the cherry tree, his papa didn’t give him a whipping.”

“*Mais no* (French, “But no”), Ti Jean, but George Washington’s papa wasn’t in that cherry tree when he cut it down, either.”

## BOUDREAUX AND THE COTTONMOUTH

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Personal communication

**Date:** 1985

**Original Source:** Louisiana

**National Origin:** Cajun

The **stock character** of “Cajun” in jokes, as folklorist Barry Jean Ancelet has pointed out, can speak neither English nor French, is incapable of being educated, and is rural and stubborn. Boudreaux is far and away the supreme stock Cajun character who can be a wily **trickster** or an impregnable **numskull**. In contemporary intragroup narratives, however, Boudreaux’s foolishness is intended to attack the stereotype rather than the stereotyped.

---

**B**oudreaux tell this story ‘bout when he been fishin’ down at da bayou one night and he done run outta bait. He got ready bout to leave when he seen a big snake with a frog in his mouth, so he decide to steal dat frog from de snake.

Dat snake, he be a cotton mouth water moccasin, so he have to be real careful not to git bit. He sneak up behind dat snake and grab him round da neck. Dat snake squirm and twist tryin’ to git loose from Boudreaux. and he don’t let go of dat frog. No.

Now, Boudreaux need dat frog, so reach into his back pocket and pull out a little bottle of whiskey he keep in there. Den he pour a little bit o’ dat whiskey in da corner o’ dat snake’s mouth just to make him relax a little bit.

Da snake swallow down dat whiskey and turn loose of dat frog. Boudreaux take da frog outta da snake’s mouth and let da cottonmouth loose and he swim away slow and happy. Den, he put the frog on his hood and goes back to fishin’.

In a few minutes, Boudreaux hear a splashing down in the water by him and feel somethin’ bumpin’ against his leg. He look down, and what you t’ink he see?

It dat water moccasin an’ he lookin’ up at Boudreaux and got another frog in his mouth.

## CAJUN COCKFIGHT

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Personal communication

**Date:** 2001

**Original Source:** Louisiana

**National Origin:** Cajun

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The following joke connects two regional stereotypes: (1) the Aggies, students and graduates of Texas A&M University who are commonly cast in the **numskull** role in the South and southwestern regions; and (2) the Cajuns, who (as noted in the introduction to “Boudreaux and

the Cottonmouth,” page 219) have been similarly stereotyped. In this contemporary **trickster** tale, however, the Aggies, the Cajun bettors, and (who one can assume) a Cajun detective turn the tables on detractors with the aid of the Mafia.

---

The Louisiana State Police received reports of illegal cock fights being held in the area around Lafayette, and duly dispatched the infamous Detective Desormeaux to investigate. Desormeaux reported to his sergeant the next morning.

“Dey is tree main groups in dis cock fightin’,” Desormeaux began.

“Good work Desormeaux! Who are they?” the sergeant asked.

Desormeaux replied confidently, “De Aggies, de Cajuns, and de Mafia.”

Puzzled, the sergeant asked, “How did you find that out in one night?”

“Well,” said Desormeaux, “I went down and done seed dat cock fight, I knowed de Aggies was involved when a duck was entered in de fight.”

The sergeant nodded. “Ok, I’ll buy that, but what about the others?”

Desormeaux intoned knowingly, “Well, I knowed de Cajuns was involved when somebody bet on de duck.”

“Ah,” sighed the sergeant. “And how did you deduce that the Mafia was involved?”

“De duck won.”



***Regional***



# APPALACHIAN

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## PHOEBE WARD, WITCH

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Cross, Tom Peete. "Folk-Lore from the Southern States." *Journal of American Folklore* 22 (1909): 254–255.

**Date:** 1909

**Original Source:** North Carolina

**National Origin:** Anglo American

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The fear of the night hag (the witch who comes in the night) is a terror that crosses cultures and regional boundaries. The following **legend cycle** alludes to many of the widely held beliefs about this supernatural figure, including the need for her to remove her skin, the ability to slip through tiny openings, and ways of repelling attacks.

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**T**he early years of Phoebe Ward, witch, are shrouded in mystery. It is known that she was a woman of bad morals. No one seemed to know anything of her past. She was an old, old woman when this account begins.

Phoebe Ward had no fixed home. She lived here and there, first at one place and then at another in Northampton County, North Carolina. She stayed in a hut or any shelter whatsoever that was granted her.

She made her living by begging from place to place. Most people were afraid to refuse her, lest she should apply her witchcraft to them. When she found a house at which people were particularly kind to her, there she stopped and abused their kindness. Hence the people resorted to a number of methods to keep her away. For instance, when they saw her coming, they would stick pins point-up into the chair-bottoms, and then offer her one of these chairs. It is said that she could always tell when the chair was thus fixed, and would never sit in

it. Also, they would throw red pepper into the fire, and Phoebe would leave as soon as she smelled it burning.

Among her arts it is said that she could ride persons at night (the same as nightmares), that she could ride horses at night, and that when the mane was tangled in the morning it was because the witch had made stirrups of the plaits. She was said to be able to go through key-holes, and to be able to make a horse jump across a river as if it were a ditch. She was credited with possessing a sort of grease which she could apply, and then slip out of her skin and go out on her night rambles, and on her return get back again. It is said that once she was making a little bull jump across the river, and as she said, "Through thick, through thin; way over in the hagerleen," the animal rose and started. When he was about half way over, she said, "That was a damn'd good jump," and down the bull came into the river. (The witch is not to speak while she is crossing.)

To keep the witch away people nailed horse-shoes with the toe up over the stable-doors. To keep her from riding persons at night, they hung up sieves over the door. The witch would have to go through all the meshes before she could enter, and by the time she could get through, it would be day, and she would be caught.

Phoebe came near meeting a tragic death before her allotted time was out. One night several men of the neighborhood gathered around a brandy-barrel. As the liquor flowed, their spirits rose, and they were on the lookout for some fun.

They went over to where Phoebe was staying and found her asleep. Thinking she was dead, they shrouded her, and proceeded to hold the wake. They were soon back at their demijohns, and while they were standing in one corner of the room drinking, there came a cracked, weak voice from the other corner, where the supposed corpse was lying out, "Give me a little; it's mighty cold out here."

They all fled but one, Uncle Bennie, and he was too drunk to move. When things became quiet and Phoebe repeated her request, he said, "Hush, you damn'd b-h, I'm goin' to bury you in the mornin'."

The others were afraid to return that night, but did so the next morning, and found Bennie and Phoebe sitting before the fire, contented, warm, and drinking brandy.

After this Phoebe lived several years, making her livelihood by begging. Her last days were as mysterious as her early life had been.

## THE WITCH AND THE BOILER

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Porter, J. Hampden. "Notes on the Folk-Lore of the Mountain Whites of the Alleghanies." *Journal of American Folklore* 7 (1894): 116–117.

**Date:** 1894

**Original Source:** Tennessee

**National Origin:** Anglo American



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The legend of “The Witch and the Boiler” illustrates common practices attributed to witches and to those who attempt to combat their negative influences. One of the means of revenge pursued by the witch in this narrative is “dancing” on the chest of the victim of her supernatural assault. In the literature on supernatural assault, this is termed being ridden (attacked) by a “night hag” or simply “hagging.” These attacks are accompanied by paralysis and a feeling of an oppressive weight bearing down on the chest of the victim. The principles of “sympathetic magic” (the concept that phenomena can be made to influence each other at a distance by means of the proper magical rituals) are seen in the measures taken by the witch doctor, who used the organs of a sheep who was killed by supernatural assault to affect the agent of that attack. At the root of this diagnosis and cure is the principle of contagion: objects that have once been in contact continue to influence each other.

---

**A**n animal killed by witchcraft should be burnt, partly because that is the best and most effectual way of destroying things that are infected, and also for the reason that in more than one way this may be made to affect the witch; she can be fascinated or punished. One of the parties implicated related the effects of fire in the case of a Tennessean sorceress who had done much harm.

An incredulous and stupid person, such as exists in every community, borrowed a boiler from her and refused to return it. Then she came every night and danced on him till he nearly fainted. There was no doubt about this, because she permitted herself to be seen. Each day, also, one of his sheep reared up, gave two or three jumps, and fell dead.

At length the “witch doctor” was called in, and he, being a pious man and a member of the church, advised his patient to try the effect of honesty and give back the boiler. This he did, but the witch laughed at him, and things went on as before. It was now evident that her machinations were prompted by malice, and not resorted to from a sense of justice, so the doctor directed him to eviscerate the next sheep that died, to do this alone, and in perfect silence. Moreover, on no account to lend or give away any article, however trifling its value, until the effect of his charm had been fully tried. Having taken out the lungs and heart, they were to be carried home, the kitchen cleared, and these organs laid upon a bed of live embers. While procuring them, the witch’s granddaughter, “a right smart shoot of a girl, training for a witch herself,” saw what he was doing as she passed through his field, and, anticipating the result, ran home, saying that her “Granny” would shortly be ill.

Such was indeed the case, for no sooner had the sheep’s vitals been placed upon the coals than her shrieks alarmed the neighborhood. A crowd gathered

that seems to have had some inkling of what was going on, for a committee of women inspected the sufferer by force, and found her breast completely charred. The spell was broken before fatal consequences ensued, and from that time the persecutions and losses which had persisted so long came to an end.

## THE MYSTERIOUS DEER

**Tradition Bearer:** A. S. Wiltse

**Source:** Wiltse, Henry M. "In the Southern Field of Folk-Lore." *Journal of American Folklore* 13 (1900): 211.

**Date:** 1900

**Original Source:** Tennessee

**National Origin:** Anglo American

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The following **legend** operates as a **belief tale** intended to substantiate the existence of a white deer that displayed an uncanny ability to avoid death, the scream of a human being, and the ability to exact supernatural revenge on a hunter who had wounded it.

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There is quite a prevalent belief among mountaineers in the existence of a mysterious deer, of which they stand in no inconsiderable awe. I have heard of a hunter in upper East Tennessee, who claims to have shot at this deer, or one of these deer, under a misapprehension. The bullet came back and lodged in his own leg, and he shows the scar in apparent confidence that the evidence is conclusive.

Dr. A. S. Wiltse, who has for many years practiced his profession in the Cumberland Mountains, and who takes a deep interest in the mountain people and their peculiarities, writes me this version of the deer myth, secured from a celebrated hunter named Jackson Howard. The language of the original relater is reproduced as nearly as practicable:

"El Moore is a good hunter, and a splendid good shot, too. But he gat into a streak o' mighty ornery luck one time jes' on account of one of them thar white deer. He tole me all about hit with 'is own lips, an' El is a mighty truthful man.

"He said he war out a' huntin' one mornin', an' he come onter a white deer, an' hit war not more 'n fifteen er twenty feet from him.

"He fired at hit, but never touch a hair. That deer jes' stood still until he'd a-wasted seven or eight shots on hit. Then hit run off, an' he tried his gun on a spot in a tree, an' the bullet went straight to their mark.

"He got his dander up then, an' laid for that white deer, an' he wasted a powerful lot more ammunition on hit, until fin'ly 'e plugged hit in the shoulder.

“But he was mighty sorry for that, right then an’ for a long time afterwards. He said hit made the sorrowfulest noise ‘at he ever heard in all of his life. An’ from that day twelvemonth hit war impossible for El ter kill any kind of deer whatsomever. He could kill other kinds of varmints all right enough, but kill a deer he couldn’t.”

## LUCKY JACK

**Tradition Bearer:** R. M. Ward

**Source:** Chase, Richard, and Kathryn Chase. “Lucky Jack.” *Southern Folklore Quarterly* 3 (1939): 21–24.

**Date:** 1939

**Original Source:** North Carolina

**National Origin:** European American

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The Appalachian region encompasses West Virginia, large areas of North and South Carolina, Kentucky, Tennessee and Virginia, and portions of Alabama, Georgia, and Mississippi. Although the area has been home to Native Americans and African Americans as well as those of European descent, the tale corpus that is often thought of as characteristically Appalachian comes from the British Isles. Specifically, the European ethnic makeup of the region is historically northern English and Scottish Irish. Jack is the quintessential folk hero, **trickster**, and everyman of the Appalachian folktale tradition. The plots of the following narratives follow the typical structure of European tales in which the protagonist begins in a miserable condition, but through effort and in many cases luck is elevated in status at the end. In the “Jack tales,” the **formulaic** ending closes with Jack rich.

---

[P]eople] said one time there was a man named Jack. He’uz a tol’able poor boy, but he kindly thought he’d hunt him up some girl for a wife. There was a farmer lived way back in the mountains had two awful pretty girls, and they said the boys was crazy about ‘em. This farmer though, he was wealthy and he didn’t want the boys to come around there, so he fixed up a way to get shed [rid] of ‘em. He put out an adver-tizement that any boy wanted one of his girls would have to catch a wild rabbit and put it in a ring and make it stay there thirty minutes. That was his proposition. They’d have to bring a wild rabbit and he’d make a ring ten foot across; then they’d put the rabbit in there and if it stayed thirty minutes they could have one of the girls. But if the rabbit failed to stay there, he’d kill them.

Well, not many went to try but some did and the old man cut their heads off. Directly it got so the boys quit goin' down there. That suited the old man because it kept the girls from bein' bothered. But then a boy'uld get so struck on one he'd venture, and get his head cut off. Finally it got so nobody 'uld go.

Well, Jack was studyin' out how he could get one of them girls. His mother told him he'd better not go, but Jack he said, "I'll jest have to try."

So his mother put him tip a little snack of dinner, and Jack caught him a rabbit, and then got fitted up and started out.

About twelve o'clock in the wilderness Jack met up with an old man. This old man looked like he was about a hundred years old, had a long grey beard and was walkin' with a walkin' cane, said,

"How we do, Jack."

"How d'e do, daddy."

Jack looked at him, said, "I don't believe I know ye."

"Well," says the old man, "I know you, and I know right where you've started. You goin' up there to get killed."

"I might now," says Jack.

"Are you familiar with what you got to do to get one of them girls?"

"Tol'able familiar," says Jack.

"Don't you think you jest as well start on back home?"

"O no," says Jack, "I never turn back. I'm goin' on down there."

"Well," says the old man, "I could help you if you got any faith in me." Says, "How's your faith, Jack?"

Jack said his faith was pretty good, said, "I'd sure be glad for you to help me."

"Well, if you come up the road a piece with me, I'll test you out and we'll see whe'er you got faith or no."

So they went on, and the old man said, "Now Jack, you take my cane here and go up yonder in the woods a ways till you come to a very flush spring. Then you take my cane and stir in that spring till the water turns to wine. And when it turns to wine, I'll come up there with something to help you."

So Jack took the cane and went on to where there'uz a very bold spring comin' out of the ground. Jack's faith was weak when he started, but he 'lowed he'd have to keep on tryin'. He stirred right on and on and it looked pretty soon like the water was turnin' jest a little bit red, so Jack's faith got stronger and stronger and the water got redder and redder.

Well, when the water turned right red the old man come back, says, "Well Jack, you shore got real faith." Says, "Now, Jack, you get out your lunch and we'll eat a little and jest try some of that and see whe'er it tastes like wine or not."

So they did, and that water 'uz jest as good as any wine. Then the old man says to Jack, says, "Now, Jack, I've made you a drill. You take it and set it in the middle of that ring and a rabbit'll stay in there till it dies, it don't differ how wild he is."

He gave Jack a drill shaved out of a stick. It was eight-square like a steel drill and about a foot long.

So Jack went on down to the farmer's house, and when he got there he hollered the old man out and said he'd come to try for one of the girls. The man said for Jack to come around in the yard, and then he marked out a ring, says to Jack, "Now you put your rabbit right down in this ring and if it stays there thirty minutes you can kill me and take whichever girl you want and take all the money I got, and if it don't stay in the ring thirty minutes I'll kill you."

So Jack went and stuck that drill down in the middle of the ring and turned his rabbit loose. Now that rabbit jest took out around that drill and went around and around and around.

The man watched it a while, saw it wouldn't leave, and directly he got up and went in the house. Says to the girls and his old woman, says, "Its my opinion that rabbit is stayin' in there on account of that drill Jack stuck down in the middle of the ring." Says, "One of you run out there and see can't you buy that drill off Jack."

So the oldest girl she went out and says to Jack, "What'll you take for that drill, Jack?"

Jack says "I don't know as I'd want to sell it right now."

"I'll give you a thousand dollars for it."

"No," says Jack, "I'll not sell it."

So she went back and told her daddy she couldn't make no trade. Then he sent his youngest girl out.

She says to Jack, says, "Jack, I'd like awful well to buy that drill."

"Well," says Jack, "You can have it after thirty minutes is up."

"No," she says, "I want it now. I'll give you two thousand dollars for it."

"No," says Jack, "You wait till thirty minutes is out, and then we'll trade."

So she saw she couldn't do no good and she went on back in the house. Then the old man said to his old lady, says, "You go." So she went out.

Says, "Jack, I'd shure like to trade you out of that drill. You can have one of the girls, and I'll give you three thousand dollars and everything on the place."

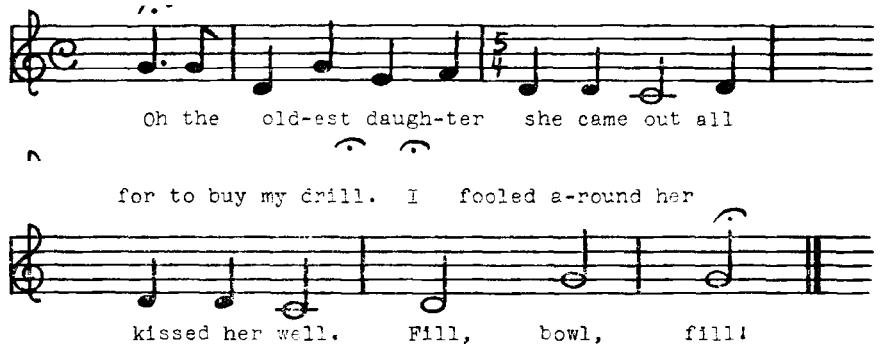
"No," says Jack, "Not till thirty minutes is out."

So the old lady went on back, says, "I can't do a thing with him. He won't even talk about selling."

Then the old man says, "Well, I guess that thirty minutes is about out. I reckon I'll have to go on out and let Jack kill me."

He started out, picked tip a big bowl off the table, took that to Jack, says, "Jack, it looks like your rabbit's goin' to stay in there, and you might as well kill me. But before you do, I wish you'd sing this bowl full for me."

"All right," says Jack, "I'll try." And he sang this song (recorded by John Powell at Marion, Virginia, August 1936).



“Is it full?”

“No,” says the old man, “Only one drop.”

“Oh the youngest daughter she came out. All for to buy my drill. I fooled around her, kissed her well. Fill, bowl, fill!”

“Is it full yet?”

“Jest two drops.”

“Oh the old lady she came out All for to buy my drill. I fooled around her, Ki—”

“Stop, Jack! It’s full and runnin’ over. Jes’ cut my head off.”

So Jack cut off the old man’s head and married the youngest girl, and as far as I know Jack’s plumb rich yet.

## THE LION AND THE UNICORN

**Tradition Bearer:** Monroe Ward and Miles Ward

**Source:** Chase, Richard. “The Lion and the Unicorn.” *Southern Folklore Quarterly* 1 (1937): 16–19.

**Date:** 1937

**Original Source:** Beech Creek, North Carolina

**National Origin:** European American

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As in many **variants** of the well-known European **märchen** (“The Brave Tailor,” AT 1640) on which “The Lion and the Unicorn” is modeled, this Jack tale is built around the unlikely hero’s inadvertent successes in defeating wild animals. His conquests are based not on hunting skill nor on cleverness, but rather on lucky accidents. Beyond luck, Jack’s primary attribute in the tale is audacity in asserting his prowess. The invariable conclusion of this tale, and the others of the **cycle**, is that Jack ends up rich.

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Jack started out one time to try his fortune. Told his mother he couldn't do any good there at home. So he went traveling about over the country, and was going past a saw mill 'side the road, picked up a little thin piece of plank looked rather nice. He laid down under a tree to rest a while and got to shaving on that plank till finally he'd made him a paddle. He didn't know what he'd do with it, just carried it along. He struck out directly through a pasture field, come to where a bunch of flies had lit down on a cow-pile. So Jack cut loose with his paddle and come down on 'em, then he looked to see how many he'd killed. Well, he went on down the road and come to a blacksmith shop. Jack went in and got the blacksmith to make him some big letters for his belt, said:

Strong Man Jack  
Killed Seven at a Whack.

So Jack put that around him and went on. Pretty soon here come the King riding on his horse, says, "Hello, Jack. What's all that writing you got around you?" So the King read it, says to Jack,

"You must be a pretty brave fellow."

"Not so awful. I can do some things."

"Well, if you're up to that sign on your belt, I got a job for you. How'd you like to take a chance on killing a wild boar? There's one over on the side of the mountain yonder been killing lots of sheep. I'll pay you a thousand dollars if you kill it. All my men are scared of it."

"Well," says Jack, "I'll try."

Jack got the King to pay him five hundred down, and then the King says, "Come on, Jack, I'll go with you and show you what mountain it uses on."

So Jack says, "If I can find it, King, I'll sure kill it."

Jack knew if the King's men were scared of it, it must be awful dangerous. The King took him over in the mountain a right smart piece, got to looking around kind of nervous, stopped his horse directly, says "Now, Jack, you'll have to go on up in the mountain and find it. I got important business back home."

Then he turned his horse around and just lit out. Jack said he'd wait a little while and then he'd slip out before that wild boar smelled him. He'd got five hundred dollars, and he didn't want to get mixed up with no wild hog. But when he started back to the road, he heard it breaking brush up the mountain, making an awful racket, then he saw it coming. So Jack took out across the field, him and the boar, whippety cut! whippety cut! and the wild hog just a-gaining. Well, Jack saw an old waste-house with no roof on it, standing down the field a ways, so he made for it, run in the door, and scrambled up the wall. The old hog was right on him and got a piece out of Jack's coat tail, Then he stood there with his forefeet up on the wall, looking for Jack. Well, Jack climb down the outside and run around and pushed the door to and propped it with some timbers. Then he went on back to the King's house.

“Well, Jack, did you have any luck?”

“No, I couldn’t find no wild hog. I hunted all over that mountain, didn’t see nothing.”

“Why, Jack, that wild boar just makes for anybody goes up there, time he smells ‘em.”

“Well, a little old boar shoat come bristling up to me, kept follering me around, I kicked it over several times, but the blame thing got playful and jerked a piece out of my coat tail. Made me a little mad then so I took it by the tail and ear, throwed it in an old waste house up there and barred him in. You can go up and look if you want to.”

When the King rode up there and saw it was that boar, he like to beat his horse to death getting back. Then he blowed his horn and fifty or sixty men come up. They took a lot of Winchester rifles and went up to that old waste-house; but they was so scared that they wouldn’t go close enough to get a shoot at it. Jack said he wasn’t scared so he went down with a rifle and poked it in there and shot two or three times. That old hog commenced tearing around inside and tore the house plumb down. He give one kick, knocked the chimney down and one of the rocks took him between the eyes and he keeled over dead. So the men skinned it out, and it made two wagon loads of meat. The King paid Jack the rest of the thousand dollars, said he had another job for him. Jack asked him what it was.

“They say there’s a unicorn using back here on another mountain, doing a lot of damage to people’s live stock. It’s a lot more dangerous than that boar, but a brave feller like you, Jack, ought not to have any trouble killing it. I’ll pay you another thousand dollars, too.”

Well, Jack couldn’t back out of it, but before he said he would try it he got the King to pay him five hundred down. When the King took Jack up there and left him, Jack watched him out of sight, then he says, “I’ll just get out of here now. I’m not going to fool around and get killed. I got my money, I’ll just go another way.”

But Jack hadn’t got out of the woods when he heard unicorn a-coming. So he started running around in among them trees as hard as he could go. He looked back and saw that horn making a lunge for the middle of his back so he grabbed hold of a little white oak and swung around behind it. The unicorn swerved at him, but he hit that oak and stove his horn plumb through it. And when Jack saw it come through, he took some nails out of his overall pocket, grabbed him up a rock, and wedged the horn in tight. Then he went on back to the King.

“What luck you have this time, Jack?”

“Why, King, I didn’t see no unicorn.”

“Now that’s a curious thing to me. Nobody else ever went in there but what that unicorn come right after ‘em.”

“Well, some kind of little old yearling bull, didn’t have but one horn, come down there bawling and pawing the ground. Follered me around so close it kind of aggravated me finally. So I took it by the tail and stove its horn through a



tree. I reckon it's still fastened up where I left it. You can go up there and see if you want to."

So Jack took the King where it was, and when he saw it he whirled his horse and got back in a hurry. The men got their rifles but they were too scared to go close enough to get a shoot at it. So Jack went up to the unicorn, took a switch and hit it, says,

"See, men, there's not a bit of harm in him."

The men finally shot it and when it fell it tore that tree plumb up by the roots. Then they skinned it and brought back the hide. The King paid Jack the other five hundred and Jack was just about to leave when the King called him, says,

"Jack, they've just brought in word that a lion has come over the mountain and been using around a settlement over there killing every-thing it comes across, cattle and horses, and they say it's done killed several men tried to go after it. I told them about you, Jack, and they made me promise to send you."

"Well, King, that sounds like the dangerest thing of all." "I'll pay you nother thousand dollars for it, Jack."

"I don't know as I favor working any more right now, King. I said I'd be back home tonight and they'll be looking for me in. Besides I'm tired out with all that running around I done already."

"Come on now, Jack, I'll pay you two thousand."

"Well, I don't know. I'll have to study on it a while." "Here's a thousand dollars right now, son. I'd sure like to get shed of that lion."

"I'll do it then, I reckon."

So the King took Jack up behind him on his horse and they rode over to where they said the lion was. Then the King said he'd not venture any further, so Jack slipped off the horse, and the King says to him,

"When it smells you, Jack, you'll sure hear from it," and then he put out like a streak.

Well, Jack said he had three thousand dollars and he'd go a different direction and get back home. But before he'd started hardly, that old lion smelt him and commenced roaring up in the woods, roared so he jarred the mountain.

"Lordy me!" says Jack, "I'm a goner this time."

He didn't waste no time running, he made for the closest scaly bark sapling and skinned up it like a squirrel. The old lion jumped up on the tree a time or two and then prowled around looking up at Jack. Then the lion commenced gnawing on the tree and Jack was just about scared to death. He got it gnawed about half through, when he quit and laid down and went to sleep right against the foot of the tree. Well, Jack had heard that lions were hard to wake up, so he thought he'd better take a chance and try to slip down and get away before it woke up again. He got down about halfway all right, but he was looking so hard at the lion's eyes that he didn't see when he set his foot on a prickly snag. Well, that snag broke with him and he went scooting down and landed right straddle of the lion's back.

Well, the old lion started in roaring and jumping and humping around but Jack just held on. And directly the lion got to running and he was so scared he didn't know that he was headed right for town. All the people come out shouting and hollering and the King's men started in to shooting at it till finally they tumbled it up. When they done that Jack picked himself up out of the dirt and come over where the King was, says,

"Look a-here, King, I'm mad."

"Why, how come, Jack?"

"These men have done killed your lion."

"My lion? What you mean, son?"

"Why, King, I'd a-not had him killed for three thousand dollars; I was just riding him down here to get him broke in for you a ridey horse."

So the King went over to where his men were and raised a rumpus with 'em, says,

"Why, I'd a-felt big riding that lion around. Now you men will have to pay Jack three thousand dollars for killing that lion."

So Jack went home with six thousand dollars in his pocket, and the last time I was down there he was still rich.

## JACK AND THE FIRE DRAGAMAN

**Tradition Bearer:** Monroe Ward and Miles Ward

**Source:** Chase, Richard. "Jack and the Fire Dragaman." *Southern Folklore Quarterly* 5 (1941): 151–155.

**Date:** 1941

**Original Source:** North Carolina

**National Origin:** European American

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Although the following narrative with its relatively complex plot, monstrous antagonist, and descent into a magical realm resembles the European **märchen**, its setting, characters, and occupations are localized to the rural southern highlands of the United States. Featuring the exploits of a clever hero Jack, who is often the youngest of three brothers, the tale is one of a widely distributed **cycle** derived from European models. Jack, unlike his brothers, offers hospitality to the ogre, and this may be the reason for his successes in the tale.

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**W**ell, hit's said that one time Jack and his two brothers, Will and Tom, wuz a-layin' around home: wuzn't none of 'em doin' no good, so their daddy decided he'd set 'em to work. He had him a track of land out

in a wilderness of a place back up on the mountain. Told the boys they could go up there and work it. Said he'd give it to 'em. it wuz a right far ways from where anybody lived at, so they fixed 'en, up a wagon load of rations and stuff for housekeepin' and pulled out.

There wuzn't no house up there, so they cut poles and notched 'em up a shack. They had to go to work in a hurry to git out any crop and they set right in to clearin' 'em a newground. They decided one boy'd have to stay to the house till twelve and do the cookin'.

First day Tom and Jack left Will there. Will went to fixin' around and got dinner ready, went out and blowed the horn to call Tom and Jack, looked down the holler and seed a giant a-comin'. Had him a pipe about four foot long, and his long old blue beard drug the ground. When Will seed the old giant wuz headed right for the house, he run and got behind the door, pulled it back on him and scrouged back ag'inst the wall jest a-shakin' like a leaf. Old Bluebeard come on in the house, threwed the cloth back off the dishes, eat ever' bite on the table and sopped the plates. Went to the fire and lit his pipe; the smoke jest come a-bilin' out. Then he went on back down the holler.

Tom and Jack come on in directly, says, "Why in the world ain't ye got us no dinner, Will?"

"Law me!" says Will, "If you'd 'a seed what I seed, you'd a not thought about no dinner. Old Fire Dragaman come up here, eat ever' bite on the table, and sopped the plates."

Tom and Jack laughed right smart at Will. Will says, "You'uns needn't to laugh. Hit'll be your turn tomor', Tom."

So they fixed up what vittles they could and they all went back to work in the new ground.

Next day Tom got dinner, went out and blowed the horn. There come old Fire Dragaman.

"Law me!" says Tom, "Where'll I git?"

He run and scrambled under the bed. Old Fire Dragaman come on in, eat ever'thing on the table, sopped the plates, and licked out all the pots. Lit his old pipe and pulled out down the holler, the blot, smoke jest a-bilin' like smoke comin' out a chimley. Hit'uz a sight to look at. Will and Jack come in, says, "Where's dinner at?"

"Dinner, the nation! Old Fire Dragaman come back up here. Law me! Hit'uz the beatenist thing I ever seed!"

Will says, "Where wuz you at, Tom?"

"Well I'll just tell ye," says Tom, "I'uz down under the bed."

Jack laughed, and Will and Tom says, "You jest wait about laughin', Jack. Hit'll be your time tomorr'."

Next day Will and Tom went to the newground. They got to laughin' about where Jack'd hide at when old Fire Dragaman come, Jack fixed up ever'thing for

dinner, went out about twelve and blowed the horn. Looked down the wilder-ness, seed old Fire Dragaman a-comin'.

Jack went on back in the house, started puttin' stuff on the table. Never paid no attention to old Bluebeard, jest went right on a-fixin' dinner. Old Fire Dragaman come on in. Jack 'uz scoopin' up a mess of beans out the pot, says, "Why hello, daddy."

"Howdy, son."

"Come on in, daddy. Git you a chair. Dinner's about ready; jest stay and eat with us."

"No I thank ye. I couldn't stay."

"Hit's on the table. Come on set down." "No. I jest stopped to light my pipe."

"Come on, daddy. Let's eat."

"No, much obliged. I got no time."

Old Fire Dragaman went to git him a coal of fire, got the biggest chunk in the fireplace, stuck it down in his old pipe and started on back. Jack took out and follered him with all the smoke a-bilin' out; watched where he went to, seed him go down a big straight hole in the ground.

Will and Tom come on to the house, seed Jack wuz gone. Will says, "I reckon that's the last of Jack. I bet ye a dollar old Fire Dragaman's done took him off and eat him. Dinner's still on the table."

So they set down and went to eatin'. Jack come on in directly. Will and Tom says, "Whare'n the world ye been, Jack? We allowed old Fire Dragaman had done eat ye up."

"I been watchin' where old Fire Dragaman went to."

"How come dinner still on the table?"

"I tried my best to git him to eat," says Jack; "He jest lit his old pipe and went on back. I follered him, seed him go in a big hole out yonder."

"You right sure ye ain't lyin', Jack?"

"Why no," says Jack. "You boys come with me and you kin see the place where he went in at. Let's us git a rope and basket so we kin go in that hole and see what's down there."

So they got 'em a big basket made out of splits, and gathered up a long rope they'd done made out of hickory bark, and Jack took 'em on down to old Fire Dragaman's den.

"Will, you the oldest," says Jack. "We'll let you go down first. If you see any danger, you shake the rope and we'll pull ye back up."

Will got in the basket, says, "You recollect now; whenever I shake that rope, you'uns pull me out in a hurry."

So they let him down. Directly the rope shook; they jerked the basket back out, says, "What'd ye see, Will?"

"Seed a big house."

Then they slapped Tom in the basket and let him down; rope shook; they hauled him up. "What'd ye see, Tom?"

“Seed a house and the barn.”

Then they got Jack in the basket, let him down. Jack got down on top of the house, let the basket slip down over the eaves, and right on down in the yard. Jack got out, went and knocked on the door. The prettiest girl Jack ever had seed come out. He started right in to courtin’ her, says, “I’m goin’ to git you out of here.”

She says, “I got another sister in the next room yonder, prettier’n me. You git her out, too.”

So Jack went on in the next room. That second girl wuz a heap prettier’n the first, and Jack went to talkin’ to her and wuz a-courtin’ right on. Said he’d git her out of that place.

She says, “I got another sister in the next room, prettier’n me. Don’t ye want to git her out, too?”

So he went on in. Time Jack seed that ‘un he knowed she ‘uz the prettiest girl ever lived, so he started in right off talkin’ courtin’ talk to her; plumb forgot about them other two. That girl said to Jack, says “Old Fire Dragaman’ll be back here any minute now. Time he finds you here he’ll start spittin’ balls of fire.”

So she went and opened up an old chest, took out a big sword and a box of ointment, says, “If one of them balls of fire hits ye, Jack, you rub on a little of this medicine right quick, and this here swords the only thing kin hurt old Fire Dragaman. You watch out nosy and kill him if ye kin.”

Well, old Bluebeard come in the door directly, seed Jack, and coin. commenced spittin’ balls of fire around in there, some of ‘em big as pumpkins. Jack he’uz jest a-dodgin’ around tryin’ to git at the old giant with that sword. Once in a while one of them fireballs would glance him but Jack rubbed on that ointment and it didn’t even make a blister. Fin’lly Jack clipped him with that sword, took his head clean off.

Then Jack made that girl promise she’d marry him. So she took a red ribbon and got Jack to plait it in her hair. Then she give Jack a wishin’ ring. He put it on his finger and they went on out and got them other two girls.

They wuz awful pleased. Told Jack they’uz such little bits of children when old Bluebeard ketched ‘em they barely could recollect when they first come down there.

Well, Jack put the first one in the basket and shook the rope. Will and Tom hauled her up, and when they seed her they commenced fightin’ right off to see which one would marry her. She told ‘em, says, “I got another sister down there.”

“Is she prettier’n you?” says Will. She says to him, says, “I ain’t sayin’.”

Will and Tom chunked the basket down in a hurry. Jack put the next girl in, shook the rope. Time Will and Tom seed her they both asked her to marry, and went to knockin’ and beatin’ one another over gittin’ her. She stopped ‘em, says, “We got one more sister down there.”

“Is she prettier’n you?” says Will.

She says to him, says, “You kin see for yourself.”

So they slammed the basket down, jerked that last girl out. “Law me!” says Will, “This here’s the one I’m a-goin’ to marry.”

“Oh no you ain’t!” Tom says; “you’ll marry me, won’t ye now?” “No,” says the girl, “I’ve done promised to marry Jack.”

“Blame Jack,” says Will, “he kin jest stay in there,” and he took the basket and rope, throwed ‘em down the hole.

“There ain’t nothin’ much to eat down there,” says the girl; “He’ll starve to death.”

“That’s jest what we want him to do,” says Will, and they took them girls on back up to the house.

Well, Jack eat ever’thing he could find down there, but in about three days he seed the rations wuz runnin’ awful low. Then he scrapped up ever’thing there wuz left and he wuz plumb out of vittles didn’t know what he would do.

In about a week Jack had commenced to git awful pore. Happened he looked at his hand, turned that ring to see how much he’d fell off, says, “I wish I wuz back home setting’ in my mother’s chimley corner smokin’ my old chunky pipe.” And next thing, there he wuz.

Jack’s mother asked him how come he wuzn’t up at the new ground. Jack told her that wuz jest where he wuz started.

When Jack got up there, Will and Tom wuz still a-fightin’ over that youngest girl. Jack come on in the house and seed she still had that red ribbon in her hair, and she come over to him, says, “Oh Jack!”

So Jack got the youngest and Tom got the next ‘un, and that throwed Will to take the oldest.

And the last time I’uz down there they’d done built ‘em three pole cabins and they wuz all doin’ pretty well.

## **JACK’S HUNTING TRIP**

**Tradition Bearer:** R. M. Ward and M. A. Ward

**Source:** Chase, Richard. “Jack’s Hunting Trip.” *Southern Folklore Quarterly* 2 (1938): 145–148.

**Date:** 1938

**Original Source:** Beech Creek, North Carolina

**National Origin:** European American

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The following tale is a **variant** of the widely distributed “The Lucky Shot” (AT 1890). The story often takes the form of a **tall tale** performed in the guise of a **personal experience narrative**.

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Jack was shure a fool for luck. They say the luckiest time he ever had, though, was one time when he went hunting. His daddy had an old flint-lock rifle hanging up over the fire-board, so Jack took that down and inspected it a little, said he thought it would do all right. Then he found the powder horn and some bullets. He put on his old baggy overalls, poured the bullets in one pocket, picked up his old ragged hat and took out up the river.

He went a long ways, but he didn't see a thing all day long till he'd come back down the river and pretty near home again and the sun just about an hour high.

Well, he looked up ahead of him in the woods and he saw a deer standing under an oak tree, biggest buck deer he'd ever seen, and right over that deer was a whole flock of wild turkeys sitting on a limb. They were in a straight row pointing right Jack's way. Jack didn't know what to do. If he shot the deer all them turkeys would fly off and he figured if he shot down that row of fowls he'd likely kill three or four of 'em with one shot. He liked wild turkey meat the best in the world but lie hated not to bring that big deer home. So he took out his knife and cut the ramrod in two. Then lie put in a double charge of powder and one bullet, then he put that half-a-ramrod in and put the other bullet in on top of it. He drew down on the deer and when he lammed loose on him he jerked the gun up so the bottom bullet would hit the turkeys. Well, he got the deer and the other bullet hit the limb them turkeys was sitting on, split it open and when it clamped back, it clamped down on their toes and held 'em fast. Such a squawking and flopping you never heard.

Well, Jack saw he had them, so he went over to look at his deer, and he was a full grown buck and had horns on him reached about six feet from tip to tip. Jack started to walk around him when he saw something kicking in the bushes on the other side. He looked and found him a big, fat rabbit. That bullet had gone plumb through the deer and hit a rabbit was sitting in the weeds. Then Jack saw where the bullet had glanced from the rabbit and stopped in a holler tree. There was something sticky oozing out the hole, so Jack stuck his finger in it and tasted it. Well, sir, it was sourwood honey. That tree was packed full of wild honey right up to the top.

Then Jack he looked up at all them turkeys fluttering and clucking and he 'lowed he'd have to cut the limb off. So he cloomb up and started cutting it down with his pocket knife. But soon as he'd cut that limb through and tools hold on it, them turkeys commenced flying off all together, and when Jack grabbed on with both hands, they carried him right with 'em, clean over the tops of the trees. Jack was mighty near scared to death. Well, directly the turkeys got to flying a little lower down and Jack saw they were heading to fly right over an old stumpy tree was sticking up out of the woods. So Jack figured if they'd fly low enough he'd drop off on top of that stumpy tree.

They kept on straight and was flying pretty low, so Jack let go for that stumpy tree but when he drapped instead of lighting on top of the tree, it was

holler, and Jack lit right in the mouth of the holler and drapped clean to the bottom. When he got up and quit staggering around, he heard something whimpering. Then he felt something like a big puppy come out from the side and rub up against his leg. Then two more come out sort of grunting around and tumbling over his feet. His eyes got used to how dark it was down there finally and he saw it was three young grizzly bears.

“Lord!” says Jack, “I’m into it now! The old bear’ll be coming down in here directly and she’ll eat me shure!”

He couldn’t figure no way in the world to get out. He tried to climb up the holler but he couldn’t catch no hold. He just kept slipping back and aggravating them young grizzlies till they got to yapping at him and biting his shins. So Jack quit trying to get out that way and tried to tame them bear cubs down a little. They ca’med down finally and then Jack picked up a sharp piece of dead root was lying down there and started trying to dig out one side when something cut the light out from above him all of a sudden like and Jack heard the old grizzly bear scrouging down the holler.

“Now what’ll I do?” says Jack. Well, he knew the old bear couldn’t turn around in the holler and he knew she had to come down backwards, so when she got close enough Jack seized hold on her tail and commenced gouging her with that sharp stick. The old bear just scrambled back up the holler and Jack swung on and kept on gouging her. When they got out at the top Jack shoved her off right quick and the old bear fell to the ground and broke her neck.

So Jack cloomb down the outside and started on home to get the axe and to fetch somebody to help him bring home all his game and all that honey, and to help catch them young bears. He went to the river, moved along till all to once he saw a bunch of wild ducks swimming on near the side of a bend where it was pretty deep. Jack just had to have them ducks, so he studied a while how he’d try to get ‘em without no gun nor nothing, then he crope up and slipped in the pool, and kept on easing in till he was clean under the water. Then he swum around under the ducks, pulled a long piece of stout cord out of his overall pocket, and right easy-like so’s not to scare ‘em, he tied all their feet together. He wasn’t aiming to let them ducks fly away with him like the turkeys done, so he dove on down to the bottom and tied the loose end to a big sycamore root. Then he popped out of the water right in amongst ‘em. They started in quacking and flopping to rise off the river but that rope would pull every one of ‘em slap back in the water. They kept on rising and jerking back till they got so tangled up in that rope they was all in one bundle. So Jack started wading out then and he’d been down under the water so long a lot of fish had got all tangled up inside his old baggy overalls. Jack kicked his legs till he’d shuck ‘em all out and when he’d strung ‘em up they weighed about thirty pounds. He slung the string of fish across his shoulder, picked up that passel of ducks and started for home once more. He kept looking for them turkeys but he reckoned they’d flown



clean out of the county by that time, so he thought he'd might as well give up on ever finding them again.

When he got home he got the axe and he made his two brothers, Will and Tom, come to help him. They didn't believe Jack had done all that. They took the big wagon and two mules, and two big barrels for the honey. Will and Tom laughed at Jack all the way going, but Jack knew he'd be the one laughing on the way back. Well, when they got there and tried to load the deer on, it was so heavy that they had to cut some poles and roll the carcass up onto the wagon bed. Jack picked up the rabbit and stuck it under the wagon seat. Then they cut the bee tree, and when they'd filled both barrels with that fine sourwood honey the tree was still half full, so they had to leave it to fetch the next day. Then they took the poles and went after the bear. The bear weighed even more than the deer but they finally got it loaded. Then Jack cut a hole in the bear-holler and Will and Tom caught the young 'uns. They made some rope halters and let the young bears walk along behind the wagon.

When they got out in the road again and had gone along a piece, they heard some wild turkeys a-squawking and there was Jack's flock still fastened on that limb and it tangled up on a telephone wire where they'd tried to light down again. Jack hit 'em all in the head with a long pole to stunt 'em so they wouldn't fly off again, then he knocked the limb loose and flung 'em on the wagon.

So they cured up the bear and the deer and had enough meat to last all winter. Jack's mother cooked up a big dinner of all the ducks and turkeys and invited all the neighbors. Jack sent word to the king to come too, and before he left he got to liking them young bear cubs so well he paid Jack a thousand dollars apiece for 'em and took 'em home to pet up for his children. Jack didn't sell none of that honey, though. He got his mother a lot of quart jars and she canned it all. Jack was mighty partial to honey and for the next two years him and his folks had honey to eat with their biscuits every time they sat down to the table.

# PENNSYLVANIA GERMAN

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## CURES OF A MARYLAND WITCH

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Wrenshall, Letitia Humphreys. "Incantations and Popular Healing in Maryland and Pennsylvania." *Journal of American Folklore* 15 (1902): 268–271.

**Date:** 1901

**Original Source:** Maryland

**National Origin:** German American

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The "Pennsylvania Dutch" are descendants of German-speaking immigrants who came to Pennsylvania from various parts of southwest Germany, Alsace, and Switzerland. Although, as early as the seventeenth century, these immigrants began to settle heavily in Pennsylvania, "Pennsylvania German" culture found a home in other colonies as well, including Delaware, Maryland, and New York. Pow-wow doctors in this tradition are magical-religious healers using incantations, holy words, and holy actions to heal both animals and humans. Folklorist Letitia Humphreys Wrenshall's account of the **personal experience narratives** of a Maryland "witch" clearly identifies her **resource person** as operating within this folk tradition. Two of the more obscure diseases mentioned in the narrative are Botts, an ailment in horses caused by the larvae of the botfly, and Erysipelas, a skin infection generally caused by group A streptococci.

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Last autumn I had the opportunity of making personal observations amongst the people living in the mountain valleys of western Maryland and Pennsylvania, and especially as to their ways of affording relief in

many bodily ailments. It is most interesting to see the entire faith of the country patients in their sometimes called witch doctors, and the quiet acquiescence of some of the town folks in these practices. In Pennsylvania the practice is called "powwow"; in Maryland it is spoken of as "trying for it," and there is no doubt that the Maryland incantations are borrowed from the German; indeed, positive proof of this is found in South Mountain, the home of magic (of this species) in Maryland.

Among the women of the region patchwork is their sole indulgence. I was so fortunate as to obtain from a most accomplished weaver of quilt pieces and spells much information upon "trying for it" and some of her "words."

She was a gentle, quiet-spoken woman, living in her own thick-walled stone house, very comfortably surrounded, and supplied by all that was yielded from a well-cared-for place of several acres. She practiced her faith, and to her it was truly a faith.

I asked her if she made any effort to place her will in submission and supplication [to God] when she "tried for it." She looked at me in surprise, and said very seriously, "If I didn't do that, I couldn't cure. That's the way I do it." She then complained, almost to tears, that some people thought she did it in other ways, and said she was a witch, and nothing hurt her as bad as that.

She had perfect faith in her powers and her formulas, and told me instance after instance where she had "tried for it," and accomplished the cure. A few typical ones I will give you. Mostly her cases were for "livergrowded children" I asked her to tell me the meaning of this term. She explained, "when they are cross and peaky, and don't grow, just cry all the time."

"A wheal in the eye [inflamed eye]" was another, also all kinds of hemorrhage. "Botts in horses," I asked.

"Oh, yes, often cured them and burns and cuts of all kinds." She could always blow the fire out. The practice of treating burns by words, blowing, and movements of the hands, is very general in the mountains, and I have always been able to trace it to German origin.

Words often used are these, "Clear out, brand, but never in. Be thou cold or hot, thou must cease to burn. May God guard thy blood, thy flesh, thy marrow, and thy bones, and every artery, great and small. They all shall be guarded and protected in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost."

Erysipelas can be cured by taking a red hot brand from the fire, and passing it three times over the person's face, saying the words. This ordeal by fire was not fancied by some of the patients, so my witch told me; she sometimes put coals on a shovel, and waved it over the face, saying:

Three holy men went out walking,  
They did bless the heat and the burning,  
They blessed that it might not increase,

They blessed that it might quickly cease,  
And guard against inflammation and mortification  
In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

My witch was especially proud of her ability to stop hemorrhages, and here comes in the absent treatment. She said it was not necessary for her to see the patients; they might be far away. Only the first name must be known and pronounced exactly, also the side of the body from which the blood came, the right or left side; this was essential. She always stopped it.

Not long before I talked with her, she had been called between midnight and morning to go to a young man some miles away, who was bleeding severely. He had had a number of teeth extracted, and when the messenger left was “pretty near dead”; nothing stopped the blood. She asked for the necessary information (his name, and which side of the mouth was bleeding), then told the messenger to go back; she would “try for it.” When he reached home, the bleeding had stopped, and when she inquired the time of relief, found it was just after she had said her words. Two formulas for stopping bleeding are:

On Christ’s grave grows three roses;  
The first is kind,  
The second is valued among rulers,  
The third stops blood.  
Stop, blood, thou must, and, wound, thou must heal,  
In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

Another charm: As soon as cut, say, “Blessed wound, blessed hour, blessed be the day on which Christ was born. In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.”

After my second or third visit to the gentle witch, who was pretty, rosy, and plump, she told me how she had learnt to “try for it.” When as a child she had been adopted by an aunt who had married a “German man,” and he had taught her how to use the words, how to speak them, how to move her hands (much value is attached to the movements of the hands), and, dying, bequeathed her his precious book. She showed me the book, which had been translated from the German in 1820. The preface stated that the translator had put it into English greatly against his wife’s wish, but he was old, he had no one to leave his book to, and he did not wish his wonderful knowledge to die with him, and accordingly translated it into English, which was generally spoken about him.

My witch would not part with her book. No, she must leave it to her daughter. She could not sell it; money could not buy it. If she had no daughter, she would give it to me, but could not sell it. I might study it all I wanted, but she could not part with it.

## GHOST LEGENDS OF THE BLUE MOUNTAINS

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Newell, William Wells. "Ghost Legends of the Blue Mountains in Pennsylvania." *Journal of American Folklore* 11 (1898): 76–78.

**Date:** 1897

**Original Source:** Henning, D. C. "Tales of the Blue Mountains in Pennsylvania." *Miners' Journal*. Pottsdam, PA, March 26, 1897.

**National Origin:** German American

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Folklorist William Wells Newell notes that "In 1755 the colonial authorities established as many as forty forts and blockhouses along the Blue Mountains, from the Susquehanna to the Delaware" (77). Newell contends that during the latter part of the nineteenth century these forts served as the catalyst for tales of "fairies" and other supernatural beings.

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### Return of Siegfried

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The following **legend**, a folk version of Washington Irving's "Rip Van Winkle," attests to the vitality of a belief in mountain spirits within the German American community of the Blue Mountain region well into the nineteenth century.

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A youth of the name of Siegfried, having paid a visit to his promised bride, rather singularly called Chriemhilt, crossed the mountains during a thunder-storm and disappeared. Sixty-five years, a month, and a fortnight later the bride, now grown to an old woman and still unmarried, received a visit from this lover, who appeared on horseback, still wearing the costume habitual in the time when he had been lost to knowledge.

This interview took place, according to the tale, in the presence of children. The old woman afterwards explained that she had been accosted by her lover, who was under the impression that he had remained only a few hours in the mountains with the spirits, whose splendid palaces and golden streets he described, and who were able to pass at will and in a moment from one end of the mountains to the other. The woman refused to accompany him, and one of the spirits of the mountain appeared, who claimed the suitor as his captive.

At the prayer of Chriemhilt, however, he consented that after her death the prisoner should be released, and reunion effected in heaven. Such is the folk-tale, obtained from the relation of one of the children present at the advent of the suitor, and who in after days narrated the incident.

## Paul Heym, the Wizard of Lebanon

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Although shape-shifting is usually associated with witchcraft, Paul Heym would be labeled a pow-wow doctor in the Pennsylvania German community. Pow-wowing (or *braucherei*) is a benign folk medical tradition that involves cures using, among other devices, charms such as the one included at the end of the following brief account.

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A certain Paul Heym, living near Lebanon about 1755, was supposed to possess the ability of trans-forming himself into various shapes. When hard pressed by Indian pursuers, he escaped by changing himself into a stump, and under the form of a wildcat was able to visit an Indian council and overhear the plans formed; from an arrow the beast received a wound in a paw, which after-ward appeared on the arm of the wizard.

When he left his house, Heym was in the habit of protecting it by a charm, written on a piece of paper, and regarded as also a protection against lightning. The words are preserved:

In Namen Gottes geh' ich aus;  
Der Vater wahr' mir dieses Haus;  
Der Sohn mit seiner Lieb dabei  
Dies Haus bewahr' in aller Treu;  
Und Heil'ger Geist, lass nicht heran,  
Ein Sach das dies Haus schaden kann.

## WOLF OF THE GREENWOOD

**Tradition Bearer:** Mrs. William Buell

**Source:** Gardner, Emelyn E. "Folk-Lore from Schoharie County New York." *Journal of American Folklore* 27 (1914): 311–314.

**Date:** 1914

**Original Source:** New York

**National Origin:** German American

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"The Wolf of the Greenwood" is an **ordinary folktale** that incorporates some of the traditional **motifs** associated with "The Girl as Helper in the Hero's Flight" (AT 313). **Variants** of this narrative are found throughout Europe and the United States.

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Once upon a time there lived a woman who had three daughters who were old enough to marry, but no one came to marry them. The woman owned a witch chair, which had the power to charm any one who sat in it into loving one of the daughters. One day a fine young man came and sat in the chair, and the mother told him that he might have the choice of her daughters for his wife. After looking at them all to see which was the prettiest, he chose the youngest.

A short time after they were married, another young woman who had loved the young man invited him to her home high up on one of the Rocky Mountains. He went; and while he was there, the young woman, who was a witch, put a spell upon him which changed him into a wolf. Every day he was to roam the greenwood; but when night came, he could return to his own home in human form. So the poor young wife never saw her husband except at night, for every morning in the form of a wolf he ran away to the greenwood and spent the day.

After about a year a little baby girl was born to them; and after another year there came another babe to make them happy. This made the witch woman on the mountain so jealous, that she sent down her dog, which went to the baby lying in its cradle, and licked its little cheek so hard that it licked out one of the baby's eyes.

The mother took good care that the dog did not get at her children again, until the third baby came. Soon after that, one day the eldest disappeared; and all the mother knew was, that she saw the same dog which had licked out the second child's eye, disappearing up the road.

She did not know that the dog took the child to one of its father's brothers and left it there. As the brother had no children of his own, he was very glad to take the one which the dog left. In the same manner another was taken to another uncle, who was also childless.

The poor mother was almost distracted, for now the witch woman did not allow the husband to return to his home at all. The mother watched the third child as carefully as ever she could; but at last the dog managed to steal that, too, and carried her to still another childless uncle.

When the mother had lost both her babies and her husband, she felt that she must set out and see if she could not find them. She did not go far, before she came to the house of the brother-in-law who had taken the first child. The witch woman had put her under a spell, so that she did not know her own babe or her brother-in-law. Nor did they know her. When she told the man of her loss, he was so sorry for her that he gave her an accordion for company.

But she could not bear to go home and stay alone, so she went on until she came to the house of the second brother-in-law. Here the same things happened as had happened at the house of the first brother; and when she left him, he gave her a beautiful golden comb.

Still she could not bear to go home, but continued on her way until she came to the house of the third brother-in-law. To him she told her story, and also that her husband was kept upon a high icy mountain which she was not

able to climb because it was so slippery. Wishing to help her, this brother-in-law, just as she was going away, told her to go to the nearest blacksmith, whom he ordered to shoe the woman with some sharp iron shoes, which would enable her to climb the mountain where the witch woman lived.

When the blacksmith had her shod, she started up the mountain, and, owing to the fine shoes he had made her, soon reached the home of the witch woman, and saw her own husband working about, felling trees and chopping wood to keep the witch woman comfortable, for it was very cold on the mountain. When the witch woman saw the wonderful shoes which had enabled the woman to climb so well, she asked her how much she would take for them. The woman replied that if she would let her pass the night with the wood-chopper, she would give her the shoes. The witch woman agreed to that; but when night came, before the wood-chopper went to bed, the witch gave him a draught which made him sleep soundly until the witch willed for him to awaken.

The wife, thinking that if she could get her husband by himself she could win him back, waited until she thought that the witch would not hear. Then she said, "O wolf of the greenwood! why won't you turn to me? Three poor little babes have I borne to thee."

But the witch had sealed his ears; so that, although the wife said three times, "O wolf of the greenwood! why won't you turn to me? Three poor little babes have I borne to thee," her husband did not hear her.

In the morning the witch saw her combing her hair with a beautiful comb, and asked her what she would take for it. The wife replied that she would exchange it for another night with the wood-chopper. The witch agreed to this. But again she gave the man a draught, so that he paid no heed when his wife said, "O wolf of the greenwood! why don't you turn to me? Three poor little babes have I borne to thee." In the morning, before he came out from the power of the draught, the witch came and took him away.

In the afternoon the witch heard the wife playing beautiful music on her accordion, and asked her how much she would take for it. The wife made the same reply as before; and the witch agreed, thinking that she would give the man the sleeping-draught the same as before.

Before night came on, however, the wife escaped the watchful eyes of the witch, and ran into the wood to her husband. She did not tell him who she was, but gave him a sponge, and told him when the witch gave him the draught that night to pretend to take it, but really to pour it into the sponge. The witch watched him so carefully that he had to pretend to get choked. Then, when the witch went for water to help him, he poured the draught into the sponge; and when she returned, he pretended that he had swallowed it.

That night the wife told her husband all that had happened to her; so in the morning, when the witch came into the room where they were, the husband fell upon her and killed her. Then he and his wife went down the mountain and



got their children, after which they returned to the witch's house, and lived happily ever after.

## GRANNY STEEL

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Hoffman, W. J. "Folklore of the Pennsylvania Germans III." *Journal of American Folklore* 2 (1889): 192–193.

**Date:** 1889

**Original Source:** Pennsylvania

**National Origin:** German American

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The **legend** of "Granny Steel" describes of a benign haunting. Granny Steel's spirit is bound to the spot of death by an untimely death, but unlike many revenants, she does not seek restitution for a wrong committed by the living. The elimination of supernatural visitors by reversals, in this case counting backward, is a widely held traditional concept.

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**W**hen Granny Steel was dead, there was a silver quarter [of a dollar] found in her wind-pipe, and it was said that she had undoubtedly been strangled by it. Anyhow, her ghost used to go about the house at all hours of the night. They used to hear it go up and down stairs, the doors opened and closed of their own accord, and in various ways it made itself very uncanny to those who dwelt in the house; for all that they knew there was no danger to be apprehended, inasmuch as old Granny had been a good old soul.

One of the members of a family who once lived there was a half-witted girl, who imagined that it would be well to go to a fortune-teller about this ghost. The fortune-teller told her to go home, to close all the doors in the house except one, and to sit in the dark to await the arrival of the ghost. The instant that it began to ascend the stairs she should count the number of steps. Then, when the ghost had finished its wanderings up-stairs, and was about to come down, she was to follow it, coming down backward, and to count aloud the number of steps taken by the ghost in ascending.

This the girl did, from first to last; and since that time the ghost of old Granny Steel has not been heard.

## JAKE STRAUSS

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Hoffman, W. J. "Folklore of the Pennsylvania Germans III." *Journal of American Folklore* 2 (1889): 193–194.

Date: 1889

Original Source: Pennsylvania

National Origin: German American

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In spite of Jake Strauss' apprehensions, there is no real evidence of witchcraft in the following narrative. The fright Jake Straus suffers is likely due to his superstitious nature fed by a guilty conscience. Although this is presented as a **local legend**, this **anecdote** featuring a local character most closely resembles "Clothing Caught in a Graveyard" (AT 1676B).

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**J**ake Strauss had the name of being very superstitious, and he also believed in witches.

Late one night, as he was returning toward home from courting, and he had a considerable distance to go, he thought that by going across the fields he might reach home before the old folks had risen in the morning. One of the fields through which he had to pass was overgrown with brambles and vines, and he had not gone far when the vines made him fall down. Then he instantly thought that the witches had caused this, and that he could appease them by giving them a little tobacco; so he threw down a piece and began to run. He did not proceed far before falling again, and as he arose he again threw down a piece of tobacco to keep off the witches.

In the beginning Jake was well provided with plug tobacco, of the variety called horse-leg, but by the time he had crossed that field and paid the witches he had nothing left. Still he considered himself fortunate in not sustaining greater injury than the loss of his tobacco and a lacerated skin.

Jake used to have great times in telling of his misfortunes through the witches. Everything that he possessed, his cattle, chickens, and ducks, were bewitched, and at last he could no longer raise any ducks at all. Through the spells put upon them by witches, these became so lean that they could no longer pull the blades of grass, through sheer weakness. Then it occurred to him that perhaps the grass might be bewitched, because some of his ducks in attempting to pull up blades of grass pulled themselves out of their skins; then he had the trouble to place them near the fire until a new skin and feathers grew upon the bodies. This was too much for Jake, so he gave up raising ducks.

## **LAZY MARIA**

**Tradition Bearer:** Mrs. William Buell

**Source:** Gardner, Emelyn E. "Folk-Lore from Schoharie County New York." *Journal of American Folklore* 27 (1914): 307–310.

Date: 1914

Original Source: New York

National Origin: German American

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According to folklorist Emelyn Gardner, the tradition bearer comes from a family known for traditional arts such as divination and supernatural healing as well as storytelling. This **ordinary folktale** embodies the familiar quest images, **formulaic** elements, contrasts between siblings, and supernatural encounters that mark this **genre**. The most familiar version of this tale is the Grimms' "Mother Holle" (AT 480).

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Once upon a time there lived a man with three daughters, who, as he thought, were old enough to look out for themselves. So he called them to him, and said, "It is time to go out in the world and seek your fortune. I'll start the oldest first. Go and see what luck you have in the world!"

So the oldest girl took her bundle of clothes tied up in a big kerchief, and away she went. After a while, just as she was beginning to feel hungry, she saw standing right near her a cow. The cow said, "Milk me, milk me, or my bag will bust! Milk me, milk me, or my bag will bust!"

No sooner had the cow said this, and the girl was wishing for something to milk the cow into, than she espied right near the cow an oven. From it came a voice, which said, "Take me out or I'll burn up! Take me out or I'll burn up!"

The girl looked inside the oven to see what was talking, and there was a fine loaf of bread. She took it out, dug the center out of it, and filled the hollow with milk from the cow, then had a meal of bread and milk. She said, "The old man sent me out, and I must be doing well."

After she had eaten all the bread and milk she wanted, she went on her way. Pretty soon she came to an apple tree full of apples. "Shake me, shake me, or my limbs will break! Shake me, shake me, or my limbs will break!" said the apple tree.

So the girl shook the tree until her lap was full of apples. When she had eaten all the apples she wanted, she put some in her kerchief and went on her way. Towards dusk she came to a fine-looking mansion, and she thought she would inquire if they (the occupants) wanted anybody to work for them. Seeing a man standing in front of the house, she called out, "Halloo!"

"Halloo!" answered the man, who liked the girl's looks.

"Do you want a girl to work for you?" asked the girl.

"I think we do need one," answered the man; "but my master isn't home tonight, so you had better stay all night. Which door would you like to enter? One is a gold door: if you go in through it, you will be covered from head to foot

with gold. The other is a tar door: if you go in through it, you will be covered with tar.”

“Oh, I don’t mind!” replied the girl. “I had just as soon be covered with tar as with gold.”

“You are so humble, you deserve to go through the golden door.”

“I don’t care,” repeated the girl.

Thereupon the man led her through the golden door; and the gold clung to her nose, her fingers, her ears, to every part of her, until she was completely covered with gold. When she was well inside the house, the man said, “We have two places where we put those who come here. Will you sleep under the ladder with the cats and dogs, or will you sleep in the high bed with all your gold and glitter?”

“I’d just as soon crawl under the ladder with the cats and dogs as to sleep in the high bed.”

“Being as you are so humble, I’ll put you in the high bed with all your gold and glitter.”

When she reached the room where the high bed was, she saw that everything was of gold. The gold from everything she touched stuck to her, even the golden sheets; and in the morning, with the golden sheets clinging fast to her, she thought she was rich enough to go home. So home she went.

When the family saw her coming, her father said, “What! Is that lazy whelp coming back? I’ll get the horse-whip and whip her to death!”

The girl, however, as soon as she came near enough to make herself heard, cried out, “O father! I’m rich, rich!”

And sure enough, the father had never seen so much gold in his life as he now saw on his daughter. As soon as he touched her, the gold fell off from her to the ground. The father ordered the girl to tell where she had been. When he heard the story, he decided to send the second daughter to try her luck in the same way.

The second daughter had precisely the same experiences as her sister, and she too returned home “rich, rich!”

Then the father said, “Now for Lazy Maria! She’s never been good for anything yet. Let’s see what she can do!” To her he said, “Even if you are our baby, you must go.”

So Lazy Maria took her bundle on her shoulder and started. Soon she came to the cow, which said, “Milk me, milk me, or my bag will bust! Milk me, milk me, or my bag will bust!”

“Go along, you old bitch! I don’t care if it does,” replied the girl.

Then the voice from within the oven cried out, “Take me out or I’ll burn up! Take me out or I’ll burn up!”

“Burn up, then! I won’t touch you. I won’t work when I’m all tired out,” complained the girl, and went on her way. When she came to the apple tree, it cried, “Shake me, shake me, or my limbs will break! Shake me, shake me, or my limbs will break!”

“Let your limbs break, then! I sha’n’t shake you,” said the girl, and went on. When she came to the mansion, the man on guard told her of the two doors, and asked her through which she wanted to enter. “I want to go through the golden door,” said the girl.

“All right!” and the man pushed her through the tar door. The tar stuck to her hair, filled her eyes, and covered her from head to foot.”

“Oh, my father will kill me!” she cried.

“Where will you sleep, under the ladder with the cats, or in the high bed?” asked the man.

” In the high bed, tar and all,” at once decided the girl.

“All right! Creep under the ladder.” And the man pushed her among the cats and dogs. “You must be more humble,” said he, “if you would get on in the world.”

The next morning the poor girl, all covered with tar as she was, started for home. When the family saw her coming, they rushed out to see the gold; but when they discovered that she was covered with tar instead of gold, they cried, “Let’s whip her!”

“Oh, no!” said her father. “Let’s scrub the tar off!” but, scrub as they would, they couldn’t get it off, because, you see, it had been put on by a witch. They scraped and scraped until they scraped the hair off her head, and the skin off her fingers and toes. At last they scraped off one of her warts, and there lay the witch. At that all the tar fell off, and Lazy Maria was free once more. But while her two sisters were rich and could go and come as they liked, Lazy Maria always had to stay at home, poor.

## **THE SECRET ROOM**

**Tradition Bearer:** Mrs. William Buell

**Source:** Gardner, Emelyn E. “Folk-Lore from Schoharie County New York.” *Journal of American Folklore* 27 (1914): 310–311.

**Date:** 1914

**Original Source:** New York

**National Origin:** German American

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The following **ordinary folktale** is unusual if only for the fact that justice is not done at the end of the tale. Perhaps the female protagonist is not held culpable because she is bewitched. The **motif** of the animal spouse itself, however, is not uncommon.

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Once upon a time there lived a mother with three daughters, whose duty it was to guard the cabbage-patch in front of the cottage in which they lived. One day they were all sitting in the sun, spinning, when they

saw a Bull in the cabbage-patch. "Take your distaff and run, child, run!" said the mother to the eldest daughter. So the girl took her distaff and ran. The Bull ran and she ran, and she ran and the Bull ran, until they came to a great house standing on the edge of a wood.

There the Bull gave her a large bunch of keys, and told her that she could go anywhere in the house she liked except one room. He showed her the key to this room, and told her that she must not unlock the door to which it belonged. Then the Bull went away and left her. The girl took the keys and roamed from one beautiful room to another, until she had seen all except the forbidden room. This she wanted to see more than she had any of the others. At last her curiosity became so great that she opened the door and went inside. What was her horror to discover that the room was full of headless bodies hung on all sides. Quickly she locked the door and ran downstairs. But she had some blood on the key, on her hand, and on her shoes.

As she was trying the best she knew how to get the blood off, along came a big black Cat, which said to her, "Mew, mew, mew! Give me a dish of bread and milk, and I will tell you how to get the blood off your shoes."

"Go away, you old black thing! I am not going to bother with you."

So the Cat went away, and pretty soon the Bull came. "Let me see your keys!" said he. "How came the blood on this one?" Then he asked to see her hands and her shoes. When he saw blood on them too, he knew that she had disobeyed him; so, as he had done with all the others who had disobeyed him, he cut her head off and hung her body up with the others in the forbidden room.

The next day, when the mother and her two remaining daughters again sat spinning in the sun, they again saw the Bull in the cabbage-patch. The mother sent the second daughter just as she had sent the first, and exactly the same things happened to her.

The third day the mother and the youngest daughter sat spinning in the sun, when the mother looked up and saw the Bull a third time in the cabbage-patch. "Take your distaff and run, child, run!" cried the mother.

So the youngest daughter ran, and the Bull ran. The Bull ran and she ran until they came to the great house on the edge of the wood. There the Bull gave her a bunch of keys, and told her that she might open every door in the house except the one whose key he showed her. Then the Bull went away. The youngest daughter did just as her sisters had done, and went into all the rooms except the forbidden one. She kept wondering what could be in there, until her curiosity became so great that she unlocked the door and went in. She, too, was so horrified that she quickly shut the door and ran downstairs, but with the tell-tale blood on the key, on her hand, and on her shoes.

To her came the big black Cat, who said, "Mew, mew, mew! Give me a dish of bread and milk, and I will tell you how to get the blood off your shoes." Instead of telling the Cat to go away, as her sisters had done, she went and got

some bread and milk for him. When the Cat had finished eating, he said, "If you will go into the attic, you will find there a sickle. Take it, rub it on the key, on your hand, and on your shoes, while you say, 'Blood, be gone! Blood, be gone!'"

The girl went to the attic, found the sickle, and did with it as the Cat had told her to do, saying, "Blood, be gone! blood, be gone!" Even as she spoke the last word, the blood-stains disappeared.

Then the girl went downstairs, where she found the Bull waiting for her. "Let me see your keys," he said, "and your hands and your shoes!"

When he saw that she had no blood-stains upon her, he suddenly changed from a bull into a beautiful prince. "I was bewitched," he said, "by a girl who loved me, but whom I wouldn't marry because I didn't love her. I killed many a girl when I was a bull; but now we will have the bodies taken care of, and then we will be married." So they buried the bodies, and then were married and lived happily ever after.

# SOUTHWEST

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## RANGE LIFE IN TEXAS

**Tradition Bearer:** Jack Robert Grigsby

**Source:** Angermiller, Florence. *Interview of Jack Robert Grigsby*. *American Life Histories: Manuscripts from the Federal Writers' Project, 1936–1940*. Manuscript Division, Library of Congress. *American Memory*. Library of Congress, Washington, DC. <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/wpaintro/wpahome.html> (October 12, 2005).

**Date:** 1938

**Original Source:** Texas

**National Origin:** Anglo American

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Most of the historical accounts that find their way into print chronicle significant turning points in political careers, national crises, and major encounters between political systems. The autobiography that follows includes a **personal experience narrative** about the notorious Billy the Kid, William H. Bonney (ca. 1859–1881), and passing references to lesser known, but no less deadly, gunmen Bill (William Preston) Longley (1851–1878) and George Gladden (a central figure in what came to be known as the Mason County [Texas] War). The Mason County War, also known as the Hoodoo War, took place in the decade after the Civil War. More important, however, the following are the vivid memories of a fairly average man caught up in the turmoil of Reconstruction and the changes brought by the turn of the twentieth century. This is a life that many lived in the Southwest region, but few have passed along to the twenty-first century.

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I was born in Tyler, Texas, August 26, 1854, coming to this country in November, 1870. I was about sixteen years old when I came here. I was raised an orphan. I don't ever remember seeing my mother, and my father died



when I was six or seven years old. After that I lived first one place and another till I came out here.

I started work on a ranch when I first got to this country, working for Will Pruitt. I just lived in the woods, for there were very few people here at that time. I worked for Mr. Pruitt about six years, just working for my board and clothes, and it wasn't many clothes either.

I went part of the way up the trail to Oklahoma, twice with stuff for Will Pruitt. But he would always turn me back at Red River. He knew that I had a half brother living on up in Oklahoma and I always thought he did this so I wouldn't find my brother and stay with him, for he wanted me to work for him. I would come all the way back from Red River alone. Sometimes I would meet up with herds on the way and sometimes I would ride all the way back without seeing anyone.

I have had all kinds of ups and downs in the cattle business. Once we took a bunch of cattle to the old Woodhull ranch out south of Spofford. Part of the herd belonged to Mr. Furness. He had come up here and bought them up, and we got twenty-five cents a head for all we delivered, and furnished ourselves. But we had to pay for all we lost. One night we had camped about where Cline is now and had put the herd in a corner of a pasture for the night. We were herding them too, but along in the night something scared them and they run through all three of those wire fences. As we would turn them from one string they would go into another. But we only lost two. One broke it's shoulder and one got away. It was a steer that belonged to old Man Vogel and three years later Millard Parkerson caught him and sold him for old Man Vogel. But the one that got its shoulder broke didn't cost us anything for it belonged to one of the boys in the bunch.

Our boss wanted to get there with the cattle looking good. So after we crossed Turkey Creek, we heard the train coming and he asked us to take the cattle a mile or so away from the track so the train wouldn't stampede 'em. Well, we all had cattle in the outfit and we made it up to hold them right to the track. So we took our slickers from behind our saddles and whipped the herd right up to the track. We had to do some riding for about two miles, for those cattle really did run. But we stayed with 'em. The boss sure got red but it didn't do him any good.

The next day we got to the ranch and was going down on a creek to camp, and one of the boys roped the pack horseman and he went to pitching and scattered skilletts, frying pans, coffee pots and all our grub everywhere. But we got everything back but our grub. So we went up to the house and told Mr. Furness what had happened. He told us to come on up to the house and stay. So we helped him brand out his cattle, and he give us enough grub to get back home.

Yes, we always used a pack horse to carry our grub for we worked in this rough country and there were no roads, so we had no use for a chuck wagon. Except one time when we made a trip up on the divide above Leakey. Well,

there was no road and the wagon broke down. We had gotten ahead with the herd, so some of the boys went back to see what was wrong and to get some corn from the wagon to feed the horses. The man saw a light out across the country and came back and told us it was Indians. So we had to get out and round up the horses. We built a brush pen to put them in and guarded them all night. The next morning we had gotten breakfast and started to eat. But it was always the custom then, when the cowboys were eating, for someone to keep watch for Indians.

Well, one of the boys got up to look and saw a big bunch of men coming. He says, "Boys, here they come!" But it turned out to be soldiers and they had seen us and thought we were Indians. So the boss got up and hollered at them to wait and the officer in charge come on up to the camp. We had killed a beef the evening before, so we gave them part of that and they gave us about twenty-five pounds of coffee.

One time Joe Pan Pelt came to work with our outfit down here about Rio Frio. Well, we always turned all the horses loose at night except one or two we kept to ride after the others next morning. We never cared what we kept up to ride—just anything, no matter how they were. The boys always took it turn about going after the horses in the morning, so it came Joe's time to get the horses. It was a cold, frosty morning and he said he didn't want to get on the horse. But I told him yes, he must go. So he got on the horse and he began pitching and finally turned a somersault with him. He got up and said he couldn't ride the horse again. But I told him we had those horses there to ride and if he didn't ride him I couldn't keep him for I couldn't afford to keep a hand that could not ride the horses. So he got on him again and that time he rode him.

Joe Collins used to come out in this country and buy fat cattle and take them to New Orleans and ship them from there. I have seen him ride into cow camp with a morral (nose bag) full of gold and go off and leave it there maybe all night and no one ever bothered it. I guess if someone had taken it he would have just been killed and that would have been all there would have been to it. There wasn't any court. Uvalde was the nearest post-office.

Old Man Schwartz used to come to the cow camps with his hack peddling dry goods and lots of times he would stay all night. He always went prepared to camp, for them days you couldn't always make it to a house for the night. But he would always sell something to the cowboys, such as gloves and if they didn't have the money they got them just the same. And I don't believe those cowboys ever beat him out of a quarter. He was sure a fine old man. I thought a lot of him.

When I first commenced work for myself I had some awful mean horses. I traded for the meanest ones I could get, so the boys wouldn't ride 'em when I was gone. I had one I only rode every three days. Well, he was so mean I would have to tie him to a tree and beat him up before I could get a bridle on him, for he sure would fight.

I broke a horse down here once for Mart Pruitt. He finally traded him to Calvin Bowles. The horse was getting tender-footed so I met Calvin one day and told him his horse needed shoeing. He said yes, but he was too mean to shoe. But the old blacksmith in Leakey come out and said he could handle him. Well, they brought the horse down and the old blacksmith fooled around him a little while and finally dropped the rope. I said, "Don't do that; he'll run off." He told me to just let him alone he would handle him. So he went in and got his nails and hammer and horseshoes and put the shoes on him and the horse never moved. I don't know what he did to the horse for after that he was just as mean to kick anyone else as he ever was.

Yes, times are quite different now to what they used to be. I remember when Old Man Hanson come in here and taken up a preemption of a hundred and sixty acres. Hatten Elms come along and wanted to trade him out of it. Elms asked him what he would take for it and he said, "Two cows and calves," which meant about eight dollars for a cow and calf. Well, they traded for about a week, and then Elms backed out. So you can imagine about what land was worth then.

Once the Indians come into the country and was stealing horses. Well, we heard of them and the settlers got together and took their trail down here about Rio Frio. We followed them on across the Seco to the Sabinal Canyon and on to Frio Town, down by Old Man Westfall's ranch, which was a big cow ranch. And when we crossed the Frio near where Loma Vista is now, we had run out of food and were sure hungry. We hadn't had anything to eat for several days but a little coffee. There didn't seem to be any stock in that country then. But we finally met a Mexican sheep herder with a herd of sheep and asked him for one. He said we would have to go see the boss. We didn't have time to fool around hunting the boss. So Joe Van-Pelt jumped off his horse and shot at a big old mutton and killed two. We took them on down to a little creek and cooked them and the eighteen of us ate every bit of those two sheep.

The Indians killed nineteen people before they reached the Rio Grande. Well, we went on for a day or two without overtaking them and some of the men got discouraged and kept dropping out till there was only five of us left. We had appointed Henry Patterson as captain. So he decided it was best to go back to Uvalde and wire Lieutenant Bullis for help so he met us here with his Seminole Indian soldiers and we took up the trail again and followed it on to the Rio Grande. But they had already gone across. We could see men riding back and forth and we were satisfied it was these Indians, but we were not allowed to go after them.

They killed one man by the name of Byrd and about five of his men who was herding sheep for him. Mr. Byrd was in his buggy when the Indians overtaken him and after they killed him, they taken everything he had in the buggy and his buggy harness. They cut the leather harness up in little pieces and scattered it along the way. Of course it was of no value to them. But we found it as

we followed the trail. They had also gone by the Mount Woodward ranch and killed two or three men there. We didn't see anyone as we passed the ranch. We wasn't bothered about seeing people—we was just following that Indian trail.

Another time we followed a bunch of Indians over on Dry Frio. They had killed a man by the name of Terry and captured his two children a little boy and a little girl. The girl's name was Mattie and the boy's name was Joe. But Joe had fought them so hard they knocked him in the head and left him for dead, right before his little sister's eyes. But he didn't die. Well, we rode all night that night till daylight. At daylight we took up the trail again and overtaken them just before noon. They didn't offer to fight for it was raining and their bow strings were wet. They couldn't shoot and that gave us the best of them.

One old Indian was off ahead of the others and they were crossing a creek when we begin to shoot at them. We followed them on into a shin-oak thicket. After awhile we come into a little opening and just as we got to this opening we saw the little girl. It looked like she had just been kicked off of the horse by the old Indian she was riding behind. She had an Indian blanket wrapped around her and when she saw us she started to run. But we told her to wait, we wouldn't hurt her, so she sat down on the blanket and waited.

We went on after the Indians, still shooting at them every chance we got. Finally we got so close to the old Indian that had dropped the little girl that we could see him kick his horse every jump trying to make him go faster. Anyway, he had a bed tick around him and we found that full of bullet holes and bloody. I don't know if we killed any or not but there was plenty of blood along the trail. He ran on till he got to a ridge and when he went over this ridge and into another thicket, we was close enough to see he carried a long lance in his hand. None of us wanted him bad enough to go in there after him, for you know they can throw those old lances through you.

We got the little girl and started back home. On the way back we found a lot of stuff the Indians had lost, such as goat hides and one buffalo robe. It was cold and everything was wet. So we picked them up and took them to camp and used them for bedding. Just before night someone said, "Do you suppose these things have lice?" But we slept on them just the same. Yes, we got plenty lice.

When we got back to Old Man Shores' where we were in cow camp, we took a big wash pot, got off down on the river and cleaned up. We boiled all our clothes and tied the buffalo robe in the river for about three days. Jim Avant took the little girl on to his home, but he had to stay in camp with the rest till he got rid of those lice. Mrs. Avant took the little girl and combed and washed the lice out of her hair, and washed the paint off of her face that the Indians had put on it. And she put clean clothes on her.

Every family in the whole country wanted the little girl, but she didn't want to stay with any of them. She wanted to stay with us men who had rescued her from the Indians. When they did take her back to her mother, she went with a herd of fat cattle that Pruitt was taking to San Antonio. When they got to San

Antonio, she wouldn't get on the stage coach to go home unless one of the cowboys went along, so one of them got on the coach up with the driver and put the little girl back inside with the mail. There was a little window in the top where she could see the cowboy sitting up on top. Well, when they got down the road a piece, they picked up another passenger so the cowboy slipped off and this man took his place. The little girl didn't know the difference. But I never saw her after that.

I knew Billy the Kid. He stayed in camp with us down here about Hackberry once for about a week. He rode into camp one day and his horse was rode down. He told us his name was Word and he wanted to stay a few days. I told him all right. So he stayed on and helped us round up cattle till one day he got into a fight with a Negro we had working with the outfit. Billy cut the Negro across the side of the face and down the back with a long butcher knife. The Negro finally run. And when he stopped, I walked over to where he was and he said, "Mr. Jack, please don't let him hurt me any more!" About that time Billy came up and said, "Oh, shut your damn mouth. I have already done all to you that I want to." Billy stood there and wiped the blood off of the knife with his hands and looked at the cut on the man as unconcerned as if he hadn't done a thing. But he left after that. He was afraid the officers would hear of this and would get him for other things he was wanted for.

When he left camp he went on up to Bill Patterson's ranch and got a job going up the trail to Kansas that spring. They said he stayed with them part of the way back home, but stopped one day away out on the prairie and took his bed but turned his horse a-loose. So they left him right there without a horse. They said they guessed he didn't want to get any closer to Texas.

I knew several other desperados. Among them was Bill Longley, George Gladden, John Beard and Lew Sawyers. They all come through this one winter at different times. They didn't do any kind of work while they was here but they took in all the dances.

There was one man, a desperado, come in to this country one time. I can't remember his name right now. Anyway he stayed over on the West Prong a lot. I don't know what he had done, no telling what. Anyway, while he was staying up on the West Prong, he shot a Mexican one day just to try out his gun. The Mexican was about two-hundred and fifty yards away and as he stooped over to dig a hole this man shot him in the hip. I met the man about a mile down the road just after it had happened but he didn't say a word about what he had done. Well, the (Texas) Rangers come in and got after him and caught him away from home without a horse. But he got away from them and Old Man Lyman Smith helped him get out of the country by exchanging clothes with him so he would be disguised and wouldn't get caught. Those fellows were very peaceful and nice unless trouble come up.

I was married to Miss Jennie Horton in January 1888. We were married right up the river here about a half-mile in my wife's parent's home. We walked

on down here after the wedding and have been here ever since. But I had to give a dance at Leakey in the court house that night to keep the boys from shivareeing us. We had a big supper and danced till about four o'clock, then it came up a big, snow storm and we had to go home to keep from freezing. It was one of the biggest snow storms I ever saw in this country. I guess me getting married caused it.

## HISTORY OF A BUFFALO HUNTER

**Tradition Bearer:** Manuel Jesus Vasques

**Source:** Tejada, Simeon. *Interview of Manuel Jesus Vasques. American Life Histories: Manuscripts from the Federal Writers' Project, 1936–1940.* Manuscript Division, Library of Congress. *American Memory.* Library of Congress, Washington, DC. <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/wpaintro/wpahome.html> (October 12, 2005).

**Date:** 1939

**Original Source:** New Mexico

**National Origin:** Mexican American

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The passing of the great bison (buffalo) herds on the Plains has been incorporated into every American school child's history text. The image of the white hide hunters and their Sharps rifles has transcended life into pop culture via media from the "dime novel" to the Hollywood feature film. The reality of this life has not survived into contemporary times. Manuel Jesus Vasques—hunting with a lance from horseback, making his patron a wealthy man while "never holding a single penny in his hand"—intimately knew the reality of life as a buffalo hunter and horse trader. His account is contained in the following **personal experience narrative**.

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**D**on Manuel Jesus Vasques was born in the settlement of Chamisal, Taos County, New Mexico on the 31st day of January of the year 1856. He himself does not know how he came to live at the home of Don Juan Policarpio Romero of the village of Penasco but at the age of eight he was herdboy for a flock of goats belonging to Don Juan Policarpio Romero and continued as such until he married Rosario Fresquez of Penasco.

After he was married he practiced carpentry, making coffins for the dead, during the great smallpox plague of the year 1875. There were days in which four or five deaths occurred and Don Manuel could not make coffins enough to supply the demand and there was no other carpenter in Penasco. Some of the dead were placed on poles and dragged to the cemetery by burros.

While the epidemic raged Don Manuel continued making coffins and when it had subsided in Penasco, Don Juan Policarpio sent him to Ocate, Chacon and Santa Clara, now known as Wagon Mound, to make coffins at those places.

In the year 1877 Don Policarpio sent Don Manuel Jesus Vasques in company with other men to the plains on a buffalo hunt. He left Penasco with a Navajo Indian called Juan Jesus Romero, whom Don Policarpio Romero had raised. Alvino Ortega and Jesus Maria Ortega of the settlement of El Llano de San Juan (Plains of Saint John) as well as some thirty other men went with them on the buffalo hunt. They took with them fifteen ox drawn carts, the oxen's horns were tied securely to the yokes with straps of ox-hide. This group of men met in Penasco on the 15th of November, 1877 before setting out on the hunt.

They set the same day for Mora, there they were joined by more men and more carts, from there they went to Ocate and there also, they were joined by more men and more carts. From this place they traveled as far as the Colorado river which they crossed below what is now the town of Springer in Colfax County. At that time there was not a single house there, or at least they saw none, nor did they see any footprints and there was no trail of any kind.

They were traveling towards the state of Oklahoma and reached Chico, also in Colfax County, New Mexico. At this place they camped for a few days in order to rest their oxen. A meeting was called with the object of placing some one of them at the head of the expedition; votes were cast and Don Alvino Ortega of the Llano de San Juan received a majority of votes and was given the title of "Comandante," Commander.

From this time on nothing was done except at the express command of Don Alvino Ortega, he ordered the oxen to be yoked, he gave the order to make camp, to water the animals, he also ordered mounted men to ride ahead to scout for signs of Indians who might cause them trouble, and to reconnoiter ahead for water for since there was no road over the prairies it was quite possible and dangerous that at any moment they might suddenly come upon a deep canon or swollen stream which they would not be able to cross. These scouts would ride ahead of the caravan, returning to the cam each night.

They passed close to the site of the city of Clayton by way of a spring called El Ojo del Cibolo (Buffalo Spring) and continued across Texas to enter Oklahoma at a point called Punta de Agua (Waterhole). It took them a month to reach buffalo country. At a point called Pilares a buffalo bull was killed which furnished them meat for a few days.

From Pilares the expedition traveled for three or four days more until it reached a river called Rio de las Nutrias (Beaver River). They camped a short ways down the stream and began hunting buffaloes.

The hunt continued until they had killed enough buffaloes to fill fifty carts with the meat. Only the meat which could be cut into large strips was used, that is, the hind quarters, the hump. The buffalo fat was saved also.

The hunt was conducted on horseback and lances were the weapons used. The commander would order the men to form a line placing the hunters mounted on the swifter horses at each end so that when they advanced on a herd of buffalo the ends of the line would lead the rest in an encircling movement of the beasts.

When the men were formed in line and before they launched themselves on the buffalo the Commander would ask that they all pray together and ask the Almighty God for strength in the impending hunt. When the Commander was heard to say, "Ave Maria Purissima" (Hail Holy Mary) the line would move forward as one man the end men on their swifter horses outdistancing the rest so as to encircle the herd which was to be attacked.

Some of the men designated as skimmers followed the hunt driving burros before them. These men skinned the fat cows only for the dead animals were so plentiful that they would ignore the bulls and lean cows.

They would pack the buffalo meat into camp where they would cut it into convenient sized strips after which they would slice it very thin and hang it up to dry on poles. The "*cecina*" or jerked meat was prepared in the following manner; long strips were cut from the carcasses, for this, men expert at the job were selected. After the meat had cooled it was spread on hides and tramped on until it was drained of blood and then as we have already stated the *cecinas* were hung on poles to dry in the sun. After it had dried they would stack it up like cordwood, each pile containing enough meat to load three or four carts.

As soon as the Commander thought that sufficient meat had been prepared to fill all of the ox-carts he would give orders to cease killing buffaloes. He then would assign three or four carts to each pile of meat and he himself would divide the meat according to the different kinds, larger pieces, meat from the hump and the tallow; the smaller pieces were anybody's property in any quantity desired.

In loading the meat the same method was used as in loading fodder, some would load the meat on the cart while the owner of the cart would trample it down so as to get as much of a load on the cart as he possibly could and all that the oxen would be able to haul home.

After the carts were loaded a party of ten Plains Indians of the Kiowa tribe suddenly rode into camp. The Indians asked for something to eat and their request was complied with, after they had eaten some of the party thought it would be a good idea to kill the Indians arguing that they were only ten in number and could be safely dispatched whereas if they were allowed to leave they might apprise others of their tribe and return in larger numbers to kill the members of the hunting party and steal the meat. Don Manuel Jesus Vasques opposed this plan. The Indians were ordered out of camp. They retired a short distance but followed the homeward bound caravan for a long distance. The following morning on orders of the Commander the long trek home was begun in earnest.

At the crossing of the Nutrias river the ox-cart belonging to the only American in the party, became stuck in midstream. This American lived in Ocate.



After all the rest of the ox-carts had safely crossed the river, all of the party helped in extricating the American's cart from the river and onto dry land. The actual hunting of the buffaloes lasted one month, the trip to and from the hunting grounds required a month's travel each so that the whole trip lasted three months. It took three months of that winter for the entire trip.

This expedition was free of any dispute or fight of any kind, whatever Don Manuel ordered was executed and the whole expedition got along very agreeably.

When Don Manuel Jesus Vasquez returned to Penasco preparations were being made for another expedition to the country of the Comanches and Cayguas (Kiowas) towards Kansas. Don Manuel Jesus Vasques went on this trip also. The object of this trip was the buying of horses from the Apaches and Kiowas.

On this trip burros loaded with bread were taken along. The bread was a certain kind of bread called Comanche bread. This bread was made of wheat flour but without yeast so that the bread was as hard or harder than a rock; and was traded to the Indians for horses. The Indians were Kiowas and Comanches. A "trinca" of bread was given for each horse. A "trinca" was half a sack of bread or in other words a sack of bread for a pair of horses. At this time the Indians already were receiving some aid from the government and they would feed those who went to trade with them, they had plenty of coffee and sugar. Twenty men went on this trading expedition and they brought fifteen horses back to Penasco with them.

The most of the men who went on this expedition worked for wages, small wages however, no one of them ever made more than 50¢ a day. Yet Don Juan Policarpio Romero never paid Don Manuel Jesus Vasques a single cent for his labors, as shepherd for his flock of goats nor for the making of coffins, nor for his services as a buffalo hunter or horse trader with the Indians, but he did keep Don Manuel and his family. While his patron lived Don Manuel never held one single penny in his hand.

Don Manuel Jesus Vasques who is alive today at the age of 83 says that he never recollects having seen the inside of a school house, but that his patron taught him how to sign his name. Don Juan Policarpio left or designated Don Manuel as one of his heirs and the sons of Don Juan Policarpio Romero gave him four goats and asked him to sign a paper which attested that he had received his share of the inheritance, and he not knowing how to read signed. The Probate Judge at Taos called him before him and asked Don Manuel if he was content and satisfied and upon his answering that he was, he signed the paper or document.

## THE ADAMS DIGGINGS

**Tradition Bearer:** E. V. Batchler

**Source:** *Interview of E. V. Batchler. American Life Histories: Manuscripts from the Federal Writers' Project, 1936-1940.* Manuscript Division, Library of Congress. *American*

Memory. Library of Congress, Washington, DC. <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/wpaintro/wpahome.html> (October 12, 2005).

**Date:** 1938

**Original Source:** New Mexico

**National Origin:** European American

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The following is one of the many **legends** of lost treasures and goldmines that circulated throughout the Southwest. Many were lured by the tales, but virtually all came away disappointed.

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Since I came to New Mexico, eighteen years ago, I have heard stories of the wealth of the famous, old, lost Adams Diggings Mine. I have heard at least a dozen different stories and each succeeding story made the mine richer both in actual gold value and romantic interest. As is often the way with lost mines of this type, it all depends on who you listen to, whether the mine gets richer or not. It always seemed strange to me that nearly every old-timer will swear that he knows more about a fabulously rich, lost mine than any other old prospector. He will try to discredit other prospectors who have searched for the mine and in an effort to tell something “bigger”, magnify its riches by many times what others have estimated it at. In reality, none of them know or have the slightest idea as to the value of the lost mine, because it has never been found.

The current story based on a story from the *El Paso Herald* is that a bunch of men, among them Edward Adams, who purportedly found the mine that was later named for him, organized an expedition to go to California. Their probably starting place was Magdalena. They traveled in a northwesterly direction, until somewhere between Magdalena and old Fort San Rafael, they camped on a little stream.

One of the men noticed gold in the stream and excitedly revealed his discovery to the rest. Adams, who knew a little more about mining than his companions, decided that the gold washed into the stream from a rich outcropping above the camp. Taking his partner, a man by the name of Davidson with him, he left camp and traveled up the canyon about a mile to try to discover the “mother lode”. A little while after they had disappeared around a bend in the creek, the expedition was attacked by Apaches, and as they caught the encampment totally unprepared, the Indians massacred every man in camp.

Adams and Davidson heard the firing, and guessed its cause, took to the cover of the bushes on the nearby hillside. After hiding for several hours, the two men cautiously made their way over the hill and saw that the Apaches had left, secure in the belief that they had killed all the men of the expedition, and had taken all the mules and horses with them.

After burying all the dead, Adams and Davidson knocked a few pieces of gold-bearing ore off an outcropping of quartz that they believed to be the “mother lode”. They then purported made their way to Fort San Rafael, where they said they asked for aid to go back and find the gold and were refused by the officer in charge.

They then made their way afoot and after perilous hardships and a great deal of suffering, came into the little town of Reserve, in what is now Catron County. It is said that they showed the ore to several of the natives, and then after borrowing some money on the strength of the richness of the ore, bought horses and went to Pima, Arizona, where Adams had friends whom he thought had enough money to properly outfit an expedition to return to the place where he had found the gold.

The expedition was organized, and traveled from Pima to Alma and thence to the immediate locality where Adams was supposed to have found the gold. But through some freak of nature of loss or direction, they could not find the gold, or even the place where the men had been massacred. Perhaps it was because Adams and Davidson both were notoriously poor in remembering directions. Many expeditions have been organized since then, but to this day, the Adams Diggings remains as much a mystery as when Adams first told of it.

Now I am going to tell a story that is almost completely at variance with the story printed by the *El Paso Herald*. It is a first-hand story from the lips of Bob Lewis, pioneer, old-time prospector, cowboy and for the better part of his manhood, a frontier peace officer and a personal friend of Edward Adams. Bob is a big man, well over six-feet and weighing in the vicinity of two-hundred pounds. He always have a jovial greeting and manner, and has the map of Ireland printed all over his face. Big, rough and burly, he has been the bane of many crooks and lawbreaker in his County. He lives in Magdalena. He has been over nearly every section of the southwestern corner of the State of New Mexico, and knows its rugged terrain as well or better than nearly any other man. He is renowned for his lack of fear, and truthfulness. That is why I believe his account of the Adams Diggings far more than any of the others I have heard. Here is the story in his own words:

“Sure I knowed old Adams. I knowed him before he left Magdalena, and after he came back. Never was a bigger old liar. He’d tell a lie when the truth would fit better. He was used to braggin’ and stretchin’ the truth. He was drinkin’ man too. I knowed him to stay drunk six months out of the year, and then go on and throw a big drunk the rest of the year.”

It was in the early part of August, 1864, when Adams and about seven other men organized a trappin’ expedition and started up in the northwestern part of the state to trap beaver. They started early and intended to get their camp set up before cold weather came. They camped on a little stream not far from old Fort San Fafael, which is now Fort Wingate and has been moved a few miles from the old site of Fort San Rafael.

Now I don't know this for certain, but I believe from events which I will try to explain later, that just about dark, a caravan from California stopped and threw camp with Adams party. They had stopped at Fort Wingate two days before and had told the commanding officer that they were transporting between sixty and eighty thousand dollars in placer gold from California to some of the Eastern states. I know that they were never seen after the time Adams party was wiped out by the Indians, so I believe that they camped with Adams party and met the same fate.

I know from Adams personal character, that he was not above ambushing such a caravan. I did not know Davidson, but as he was Adams sidekick, I believe he threw in with Adams and the two of 'em made plans to hijack the California outfit and steal their gold.

An encampment like that, in those days, usually got us an hour or two before daylight, in order to make an early start. It is said that Adams and Davidson made an excuse to go and gather some wood, as wood had been scarce the evening before and they had not been able to obtain a sufficient supply. I believe that Adams and Davidson absented themselves from camp, so they could go down country a few miles and find a suitable place for waylaying the California outfit.

While they were gone, and it must have been just as good daylight came, because that is the time when Indians usually attack, a big bunch of Apaches attacked the camp. So complete must have been the surprise, that the white men could not have had a very good chance to grab their guns and defend themselves. Every man in that camp was killed, scalped and their bodies mutilated, and all their provisions, horses and mules stolen by the Apaches.

When Adams and Davidson returned to camp, they must have congratulated themselves on the luck that had caused them to absent themselves from camp. Rummaging around among the supplies, Adams must have found the gold the California outfit had been carrying. As proof of this, I later saw a handful of this gold that Adams had save when he buried the rest and it was a quality entirely foreign to that part of New Mexico and identical with some I had seen from California Diggins. The pellets were about the size of a pinhead, up to as big as a pinto bean, and I knew that nobody ever found that kind of gold in the parts of New Mexico I have prospected over.

After burying the gold in what they considered a safe place, the two made their way afoot, supposedly, to Fort San Rafael, where they said they reported the massacre to the authorities in charge and petitioned aid from the commanding officer to go back and help them relocate a mine they had found and to view the remains of the Indian attack.

I do not believe this last part, because many years later, I happened to be in Evans, in March 1890, where Adams, who had been drinkin' pretty heavy, related a story of how he had gone to Fort San Rafael, on a certain day (he mentioned the exact date, which I can not now remember) in August, 1864, and petitioned the commanding officer for aid to return to give decent burial to

the massacred party and offer him and Davidson, protection while they tried to relocate a rich gold mine.

There happened to be an old, retired Army officer in the saloon who had listened intently to Adams story. This man was Captain Sanborn, who was considered a heavy drinker. However, he did not appear to be drunk at this particular time, and he answered Adams:

“Sir, since the latter part of your speech concerns me, and it is most damaging to my character, I now take it upon myself to refute your statements and call you a contemptible, damned liar. I happened to be the commanding officer of Fort San Rafael at the time of which you are talking. I recall the day of which you speak very clearly and to my knowledge you never set foot in that Fort in your life. It could never be said truthfully that Cap Sanborn ever refused aid to anybody within a weeks ride of my post who needed it.”

“Who’s a damn liar?” bellowed Adams. “Yuh better eat them words Cap, or me an’ you are agoin’ to tangle right here an’ now. Bigod! I don’t like army officers anyway, so I might as well wipe up th’ floor with one of ‘em right now.” Saying which, he started for Sanborn.

Cap Sanborn ran behind the lunch counter and grabbed a big butcher knife and jumped over the counter. Adams ran out the front door and Sanborn chased him for a couple of blocks shouting that Adams was the dirtiest liar that ever lived. He could not catch Adams, and returned to the saloon, where he again told everybody in hearing distance that Adams had not ever been to Fort San Rafael.

From the above incident I drew the conclusion that Adams and Davidson never went to Fort San Rafael at all, but passed a considerable distance to the south in an effort to avoid it. They limped into the little town of Reserve, sore-footed and half-starved.

It was in Reserve that Adams showed a couple of pieces of ore in quartz form that was exceedingly rich, and stated that it was from the mine he had found before the Indians had massacred his party. He made no mention of the California expedition.

I later saw the same samples Adams had shown in Reserve and recalled that Adams had showed me one of the samples before he left Magdalena in 1864. He had told me then that he had given an Indian some whiskey for the samples and had promised him more if he would show him where he got the samples. If Adams story he told in Reserve about these samples had been true, there would indeed have been a substantial claim to his having found a rich mine. But to my knowledge, no ore of similar quality has ever been found, and the Indian who gave the samples to Adams must be long since dead and the place he found the samples will probably never be found.

Adams didn’t dare show any of the gold at that time he had stolen and buried. Therefore he and Davidson separated, Adams going to Pima, Arizona to obtain money and supplies from friends to outfit an expedition to later come

back and salvage the gold. Davidson went on a supposed visit to see some relatives in Louisiana.

Adams was successful in his attempt to raise an expedition, and he sent for Davidson who returned from Louisiana and the expedition met him in Alma, a little town just south of Reserve. They could not find any gold, and Adams later made several solitary trips in search of it, but never had any luck.

Several expeditions have been organized and sent forth in an effort to find the Adams Diggings, but all have met with defeat. It was in 1818 that I decided to see if I couldn't find the bodies of the men who were massacred in Adams party. Adams had told me that they had camped about fifteen miles north of three peaks that rose up from the plain and were a considerable distance from any other mountains. I got to thinkin' and the only three peaks I knew of between Gallup and Magdalena, were the Tres Montosas, which are only about fifteen miles west of Magdalena. Figuring about fifteen or twenty miles north of there, I went to North Lake. A few miles north of North Lake, I found the bodies of five men, all buried in one hole. I could find no clue to any gold from anything in the vicinity, so I came back to town and reported the finding of the bodies. It is my belief that the bodies I found were the remains of part of Adams expedition, but of course I can't prove this. But there is one thing I do know. That is that an old fellow I know, found about twenty thousand dollars buried about five miles north of North Lake, and only a few miles from the place I discovered there bodies. This mans name is Jose Maria Jaramillo, and this what he told me. But when I asked him if the twenty thousand was in gold dust, he would not tell me.

That's the way a lot of there old, "rich-nice' stories get started," finished old Bob. "I've heard that the definition of a miner is a damn liar with a hole in the ground. And a prospector is a damn liar without anything but a dang good imagination. You can talk to most of 'em, and dang near ever' one of 'em tells you about some rich prospect they struck. But they're always broke and beggin' a grubstake. If their mines was half as rich as their imaginations, they could take a handpick, and a gold pan and make more money in a month than most bank presidents could by wearin' out a half a dozen fountains pens. It's true that sometimes a prospector does hit it rich, but when he does, he generally don't talk and brag on it, but gets busy and gets some capital interested and starts workin' it. That's my story of the Adams Diggings. It is one of the richest mines in the world in the mind of a danged old liar like I knowed Ed Adams to be, and in the minds of a bunch of old, dream-crazy prospectors who ain't got no more sense than to believe in it."

## **VICTORIO'S RAID**

**Tradition Bearer:** Maurice Coates

**Source:** Totty, Francis. *Interview of Maurice Coates. American Life Histories: Manuscripts from the Federal Writers' Project, 1936–1940.* Manuscript Division, Library of

Congress. *American Memory*. Library of Congress, Washington, DC. <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/wpaintro/wpahome.html> (October 12, 2005).

**Date:** 1938

**Original Source:** New Mexico

**National Origin:** European American

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Victorio's War, which lasted from 1879–1880, was waged against the European Americans who moved into the Southwest after the Civil War. The war followed repeatedly broken promises to provide a reservation to his Warm Springs Apache in New Mexico Territory. Ultimately, Victorio led his band throughout the New Mexico and Arizona Territories waging guerilla warfare, terrorizing residents, and fleeing across the border into Mexico to evade the U.S. Army forces sent to subdue him. In Mexico, Victorio and the remainder of his band, by then numbering fewer than eighty, were penned in and killed in 1880. At its greatest strength, his band numbered fewer than two hundred. The following **legend** is important both for its account of one of the events in this campaign and for the clash of cultures the narrator's words reveal.

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**I**n 1878 Jim Keller, Maurice Coates, John Roberts, W. H. Beavers, Robert Stubblefield and Morris Smith and family left Prescott Arizona for the Frisco Valley, where they settled.

Late in May of 1879 we were out in the field plowing when a roving band of Apaches, five in number, fired upon us, we made a rush for the house and after getting our guns we crossed the Frisco river up into the Cedars, we were at the present site of Glenwood when we saw the Indians coming. Deming was going on down the valley to warn the settlers and Houston, Beaver, Keller and I hid, after staking out a horse as a decoy.

We fired on the Indians when they came in sight for they had made for the horse as they were all afoot. Deming came back as he was afraid that the Indians were heavily armed and he was taking too much of a risk to continue on down the valley. We fired too low and broke three of the warriors' legs, one of the warriors had been left on the hill to watch, and the others when we fired ran up the hill to escape.

We camped for the night and the next morning took the trail of the Indian that we had injured that went over the hill we saw an Indian up in the hill covered with a blanket Mr. Foster thinking that the warrior was dead lifted up the blanket and was surprised to find that the man had been asleep. Mr. Foster raised his gun to shoot. The Indian began to beg for his life, but Foster was so disgusted with the raids of the Indians that he pulled the trigger and blowed the Indian's head off.

Terrible was a son-in-law of Victorio and was killed by us during the fight, we soon heard that Victorio was on the warpath as he was going to revenge the death of his son-in-law.

During the month of April, 1880, there were many rumors that Victorio was out. Steve, a sub-chief of the Apaches, was up in the hills, was up in the White Rocks country camping for Indians on the warpath. Steve was on a hunting trip when Victorio arrived on the scene and tried to get him to throw in with him to attack the settlers in the territory. Victorio became angry with Steve because he wouldn't attack the whites, and attacked the sub-chief. Three of Victorio's warriors were killed and Steve left the region.

On April the 28th Victorio made his presence known by appearing at the location of the Conney Mine killing two men. The rest of the party hid out and brought the news into the camp that the Indians had attacked and killed two of their group. Jim Cooney and Jack Chick went to give the alarm while another group went Clairmont to give the alarm. George Doyle and John Lambert remained on the grounds. The tribe soon took over the mining camp and burned the cabins. Around noon one of the braves took a mirror and tied it around his neck. The squaws were soon fighting for a chance to get a glimpse of their dirty features in the mirror.

When Chick and Conney arrived with the news that Bright man and one other had been killed, we began at once to get out and round up the live stock. We spent the entire night on the range hunting the stock.

Conney and Chick went to the Meader ranch to carry the news, and Mr. Meader made the remark that, "Well we have the garden planted and I don't think the Indians are going to bother us." Mrs. Meader remarked that she believed the report and started at once to mold bullets. Conney desired to return to camp, and Mrs. Meader begged him to not leave, but he insisted that he was going and it was not long until the horses of Chick and Conney returned without riders.

When the horses were seen without their riders the alarm was sent out at once. Mr. Elliot rushed over to the Meader ranch and gave the alarm. The Meader family started at once for the Roberts Ranch. On the way over the Indians fired upon the family and as the wagon was between the house and the Indians there wasn't much that the people in the cabin could do to help the family. Agnes Meader Snyder had an arrow shot through her bonnet as near as the Indians came to hitting any of the members of the family. Mrs. Meader had the people to fill of the barrels and tubs with water before the water was cut off, and it was only a short time after the vessels were filled that the ditch was cut.

Five of we men decided to go behind the house and shoot at the Indians. They were out there only a short time when they were fired upon. We made a run for the house. I lost my belt of cartridges and pistol.

There was a horse picketed some forty feet from the house. An Indian tried to get the horse. When he raised up to cut the rope, he was surprised with a shot



from Jim Keller's gun. Some time later when it was decided safe to go out to where the Indian was it was found that he had on the gun that had been lost earlier in the day. The body of the Indian was removed during the night from where it was laying.

Wilcox raised up to look over the barricade and was shot through the heart. The only member of the party to be killed after the fight started.

A rescue party was sent from Silver City to the aid of the besieged, but as the Indians left the morning after the fight and were not to be found.

## ELFEGO BACA

**Tradition Bearer:** Elfego Baca

**Source:** Smith, Janet. *Interview of Elfego Baca. American Life Histories: Manuscripts from the Federal Writers' Project, 1936–1940.* Manuscript Division, Library of Congress. *American Memory.* Library of Congress, Washington, DC. <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/wpaintro/wpahome.html> (October 12, 2005).

**Date:** 1936

**Original Source:** New Mexico

**National Origin:** Mexican American

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Elfego Baca (1865–1945) was a lawman, gunfighter, lawyer, and politician at various points in his life. The Frisco Affair that is mentioned in passing refers to an incident that took place in Frisco, New Mexico, when Baca was nineteen years old. Baca was deputized by the local deputy sheriff to arrest a gang of cowboys who had turned murderous. The ensuing events included a gunfight, an arrest, and the death of one of the men whose horse fell on top of him during the excitement. The arrested cowboy was fined for disorderly conduct, and later, Baca was compelled to hold off a reputed eighty cowboys from a refuge in a shack for thirty-six hours. He survived by lying flat on the dirt floor that had been dug to below ground level. From this legendary event, his reputation grew for the next sixty years. In 1958, Disney Studios made a film of his life.

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“I never wanted to kill anybody,” Elfego Baca told me, “but if a man had it in his mind to kill me, I made it my business to get him first.”

Elfego Baca belongs to the six-shooter epoch of American history. Those were the days when hard-shooting Texas cowboys invaded the territory of New Mexico, driving their herds of longhorns over the sheep ranges of the New Mexicans, for whom they had little liking or respect. Differences were settled

quickly, with few words and a gun. Those were the days of Billy the Kid, with whom Elfege, at the age of seventeen, made a tour of the gambling joints in Old Albuquerque. In the words of Kyle Crichton, who wrote Elfege Baca's biography, "the life of Elfege Baca makes Billy the Kid look like a piker." Harvey Ferguson calls him "a knight-errant from the romantic point of view if ever the six-shooter West produced one.

And yet Mr. Baca is not a man who lives in his past. "I wonder what I can tell you," he said when I asked him for pioneer stories. "I don't remember so much about those things now. Why don't you read the book Mr. Crichton wrote about me?"

He searched about his desk and brought out two newspaper clippings of letters he had written recently to the *Albuquerque Journal* on local politics. The newspaper had deleted two of the more outspoken paragraphs. Mr. Baca was annoyed.

I tried to draw Mr. Baca away from present day politics to stories of his unusual past, but he does not talk readily about himself, although he seemed anxious to help me. Elfege Baca is a kindly courteous gentleman who is concerned to see that his visitor has the coolest spot in the room.

He brought out books and articles that had been written about him, but he did not seem inclined to reminiscing and answered my questions briefly. "Crichton tells about that in his book" or "Yes, I knew Billy the Kid."

Finally I asked him at random if he knew anything about the famous old Manzano Gang which I had frequently seen mentioned in connection with Torrance County.

He replied that he broke up that gang when he was Sheriff of Socorro County.

"There were ten of them," he said, "and I got nine. The only reason I didn't get the other one was that he got over the border and was shot before I got to him. They used to go to a place near Belen and empty the freight cars of grain and one thing and another. Finally they killed a man at La Jolla. Contreros was his name. A very rich man with lots of money in his house, all gold. I got them for that. They were all convicted and sent to the Pen."

Mr. Baca settled back in his chair and made some remark about the late Senator Cutting whose photograph stood on his desk.

I persisted about the Manzano Gang. "I wish you'd tell me more about that gang. How you got them, and the whole story."

"Well," he said, "after that man Contreros was shot, they called me up at my office in Socorro and told me that he was dying. I promised to get the murderers in forty-eight hours. That was my rule. Never any longer than forty-eight hours."

Mr. Baca suspected certain men, but when a telephone call to Albuquerque established the fact that they had been in that city at the time of the killing, his next thought was of the Manzano Gang.

Accompanied by two men, he started out on horseback in the direction of La Jolla.

Just as the sun was rising; they came to the ranch of Lazaro Cordova. They rode into the stable and found Cordova's son-in-law, Prancasio Saiz already busy with his horse.

"Good morning," said Elfego, "what are you doing with your horse so early in the morning?"

Saiz replied that he was merely brushing him down a little.

Mr. Baca walked over and placed his hand on the saddle. It was wet inside. The saddle blanket was steaming. He looked more closely at the horse. At first sight it had appeared to be a pinto, white with brown spots. Mr. Baca thought he remembered that Saiz rode a white horse. "What happened to that horse?" he asked.

The man replied that the boys had had the horse out the day before and had painted the spots on him with a kind of berry that makes reddish-brown spots. "Just for a joke," he added.

"Where's your father-in-law?" asked Mr. Baca.

Saiz said that his father-in-law had gone the day before to a fiesta at La Jolla and had not returned.

"I understand you're a pretty good shot," said Sheriff Baca. "You'd better come along, and help me round up some men I'm after for the killing of Contreros in La Jolla." Saiz said that he had work to do on the ranch, but at the insistence of Mr. Baca, he saddled his horse and rode out with the three men.

"About as far as from here to the station," went on Mr. Baca, "was a graveyard where the gang was supposed to camp out. I rode over to it and found where they had lunched the day before. There were sardine cans and cracker boxes and one thing and another. Then I found where one of them had had a call to nature. I told one of my men to put it in a can. Saiz didn't know about this, and in a little while he went over behind some mesquite bushes and had a call to nature. After he came back I sent my man over, and by God it was the same stuff—the same beans and red chili seeds! So I put Saiz under arrest and sent him back to the jail at Socorro with one of my deputies, although he kept saying he couldn't see what I was arresting him for."

Mr. Baca and his other deputy proceeded in the direction of La Jolla. Before long they saw a man on horseback coming toward them.

"He was running that horse like everything. When we met I saw that he was a Texan. Doc Something or other was his name. I can't remember now. But he was a pretty tough man."

"You a Sheriff?" he said to Mr. Baca.

"No," replied Mr. Baca, "no, I'm not a Sheriff. Don't have nothing to do with the law, in fact."

"You're pretty heavily armed," remarked the man suspiciously.

"I generally arm myself this way when I go for a trip in the country," answered Baca, displaying his field glasses. "I think it's safer."

"Well, if you want fresh horses, you can get them at my ranch, a piece down the road," said the Texan.

Mr. Baca figured that this was an attempt to throw him off the trail, so as soon as the Texan was out of sight, he struck out east over the mountains for Manzano. Just as he was entering the village he saw two of the gang coming down the hill afoot leading their horses. He placed them under arrest and sent them back to Socorro with his other deputy.

It was about two o'clock in the morning when Mr. Baca passed the Cordova ranch again on his way back. He roused Lazaro Cordova, who had returned from La Jolla by that time, and told him to dress and come with him to Socorro.

"The old man didn't want to come," said Mr. Baca, "and kept asking what you want with me anyhow?" I told him that he was under arrest, and on the way to Socorro I told him that unless he and his son-in-law came across with a complete statement about the whole gang, I would hang both of them, for I had the goods on them and knew all right that they were both in on the killing of Contreros. I put him in the same cell with his son-in-law, and told him it was up to him to bring Saiz around. They came through with the statement. I kept on catching the rest of the gang, until I had them all. All but the one who got himself shot before I caught up with him."

"If you ever go to Socorro you ask Billy Newcomb, the Sheriff down there now to show you the records. You might see the place on the way down where they buried a cowboy I shot. It's a little way off the main road though.

"That was a long time before I was a real Sheriff. In those days I was a self-made deputy. I had a badge I made for myself, and if they didn't believe I was a deputy, they'd better believe it, because I made 'em believe it."

"I had gone to Escondida a little way from Socorro to visit my uncle. A couple of Texas cowboys had been shooting up the town of Socorro. They hadn't hurt anybody that time. Only frightened some girls. That's the way they did in those days—ride through a town shooting at dogs and cats and if somebody happened to get in the way—powie!—too bad for him. The Sheriff came to Escondida after them. By that time they were making a couple of Mexicans dance, shooting up the ground around their feet. The Sheriff said to me 'Baca, if you want to help, come along, but there's going to be shooting.'"

"We rode after them and I shot one of them about three hundred yards away. The other got away—too many cottonwood trees in the way.

"Somebody asked me what that cowboy's name was. I said I didn't know. He wasn't able to tell me by the time I caught up with him."

I asked what the Sheriff's name was, and when Mr. Baca said it was Pete Simpson, I said, "The one you were electioneering for the time of the Frisco affair when you held off about 80 cowboys for over thirty-six hours." This is the one of Mr. Baca's exploits that has been most frequently written about.

“Hell, I wasn’t electioneering for him,” he said. “I don’t know where they got that idea. I couldn’t have made a speech to save my life. And I didn’t wear a Prince Albert coat either. They didn’t have such things in this country in those days.”

“Is it true that you ate dinner afterward with French and some other men who had been shooting at you, and talked the affair over,” I asked.

“I ate dinner with some men afterward but I don’t remember who they were now. I don’t think that man French was there at all, although he must have been in the neighborhood, as he seemed to know all about it. But I don’t remember him. Jim Cook was one that was shooting at me though. He was a pretty tough man, but he came near getting it.”

He showed me a photograph which Jim Cook had sent him recently. The picture showed an old man who still looks as though he could not be easily trifled with. It was inscribed “To Elfego Baca in memory of that day at Frisco.”

“Did you see the letter that Englishman wrote to Crichton?” He wanted to hang me. “Why don’t you hang that little Mexican so-and-so?” he asked. I said, “Why don’t you be the one to do it?” and pulled my guns, and wooo, he wasn’t so eager. You know I surrendered only on condition that I keep my guns. They placed six guards over me, but they rode twenty-five steps ahead of me all the way to Socorro.

“Those were great old days. Everything is very quiet now, isn’t it?” said Mr. Baca looking up. “I think I’ll run for something this fall, but I don’t know what yet.”

## THE GHOST PENITENTE

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Espinosa, Aurelio M. “New Mexican Spanish Folklore.” *Journal of American Folklore* 223 (1910): 397–398.

**Date:** 1910

**Original Source:** New Mexico

**National Origin:** Spanish American

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Los Hermanos Penitente, the Brotherhood of Penitents, are a religious society operating outside the boundaries of official Roman Catholicism. They demonstrate their piety by acts of self-flagellation, cross-bearing, and on Good Friday, the crucifixion of a member.

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**A** certain evening during holy week the Penitentes entered the church in Taos for the purpose of flogging themselves. After flogging themselves in the usual manner, they left the church. As they departed, however, they heard the floggings of a Penitente who seemed to have remained in the church.

The elder brother (*hermano mayor*) counted his Penitentes, and no one was missing. To the astonishment of the other Penitentes, the one in the church continued his flagellation, and they decided to return. No one dared to re-enter the church, however; and while they disputed in silence and made various conjectures as to what the presence of an unknown Penitente might mean, the floggings became harder and harder.

At last one of the Penitentes volunteered to enter alone; but, as he opened the door, he discovered that the one who was scourging himself mercilessly was high above in the choir, and it was necessary to obtain a lighted candle before venturing to ascend to the choir in the darkness. He procured a lighted candle and attempted to ascend. But, lo! he could not, for every time he reached the top of the stairs, the Penitente whom he plainly saw there, flogging himself, would approach and put out his candle.

After trying for several times, the brave Penitente gave up the attempt, and all decided to leave the unknown and mysterious stranger alone in the church. As they departed, they saw the mysterious Penitente leave the church and turn in an opposite direction. They again consulted one another, and decided to follow him. They did so; and, since the stranger walked slowly, scourging himself continuously and brutally, they were soon at a short distance from him.

The majority of the flagellants followed slowly behind; while the brave one, who had previously attempted to ascend to the choir, advanced to the side of the mysterious stranger and walked slowly by him. He did not cease scourging himself, though his body was visibly becoming very weak, and blood was flowing freely from his mutilated back. Thus the whole procession continued in the silence of the night, the stranger leading the Penitentes through abrupt paths and up a steep and high mountain.

At last, when all were nearly dead with fatigue, the mysterious Penitente suddenly disappeared, leaving his good companion and the other Penitentes in the greatest consternation. The Penitentes later explained that this was doubtless the soul of a dead Penitente who had not done his duty in life, a false Penitente, and God had sent him back to earth to scourge himself properly, before allowing him to enter heaven.

## CURANDERAS AND BRUJAS

**Tradition Bearer:** Maria Antonia

**Source:** Bourke, John G. "Popular Medicines, Customs and Superstitions of the Rio Grande." *Journal of American Folklore* 7 (1894): 142–143.

**Date:** ca. 1894

**Original Source:** Texas

**National Origin:** Mexican American

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John G. Bourke's comments on the following legends offer the cultural outsider's perspective on *brujeria* (Spanish, "witchcraft") and *curandismo* (Spanish, "curing") in the Southwest region. See "Witch Flights" (page 283) and "Witches Discovered" (page 284) for the insider's perspective on these traditions.

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**M**aria Antonia was emphatic in her expression of belief that there were lots of "brujas" (witches) around, who took delight in doing harm to you personally, or in spreading sickness among your cattle, blighting your crops, or ruining your fruit trees. Everybody believed in witches; there might be some fool "Americanos" who would say they did not, but she was sure that they were only talking for talk's sake.

Once there was a man down here (Rio Grande City, Texas) who owed a washerwoman five dollars and refused to pay her. Now this washerwoman was a witch, and she filled this man full of worms, but Maria Antonia was called in just in time and gave him a strong emetic and a strong purge, and then dosed him with a decoction of Yerba de Cancer, Yerba Gonzalez, and Guayuli, and expelled thirteen worms ("gusanos") with green heads and white bodies.

**Tradition Bearer:** Sam Stewart

**Source:** Bourke, John G. "Popular Medicines, Customs and Superstitions of the Rio Grande." *Journal of American Folklore* 7 (1894): 144–146.

**Date:** ca. 1894

**Original Source:** Texas

**National Origin:** Mexican American

The last punishment inflicted for witchcraft within the limits of the United States was that imposed by Judge Sam Stewart of Rio Grande City (Fort Ringgold), Texas, in 1886.

As nearly as I can arrange the story from my notes and my recollection of the judge's account, it was about like this: A young man of good Mexican family was slowly wasting away under the attack of a disease, the exact nature of which quite baffled the local medical talent. All the medicines on sale in the "Botica del Aguila" (Eagle Drug Store) had been sampled to no purpose, and the sick man's condition had become deplorable. The physicians, who disagreed in everything else, concurred upon the one point that he had but a few days longer to live. At this juncture, a friend suggested to the mother that she call in one of the numerous old hags, who, under the name of "curanderas," combine in equal portions a knowledge of kitchen botany, the black art, humbuggery pure and simple, and a familiarity with just enough prayers and litanies to give a specious varnish to the more objectionable features of their profession.

The “curandera” responded promptly, and made her diagnosis almost with a glance of the eye.

“Your son,” she said to the grief-stricken mother, “has neither consumption nor paralysis. The doctors can’t tell what ails him, but I can see it all, and with the power of God can soon make him well again.”

“What is the matter with him, then, my dear little friend?”

“Black Thomas cats. When I came into the room, the floor was a foot deep with Thomas cats which had jumped out of your son’s throat, but they became frightened when they saw me and scampered back again. I’ll soon get rid of them all.”

Her intentions may have been good, but she got rid of nothing. Her “remedies” produced no effect, and the patient kept on sinking.

Just then a rival “curandera” came up to the mother and said, “That woman is deceiving you. She don’t know what she’s talking about. Why your son never has been troubled by Thomas cats, but I can tell you at once what ails him.”

“Tell me, then, in the name of God.”

“It is bull-frogs. I can see them jumping over each other and running into and out from his mouth.”

To make a long story short, the first “curandera” would not give up the case, but insisted on holding on to what, in the language of today, would be called a decidedly soft snap, and the town, as is usual in such cases, taking up a quarrel in which it didn’t have the slightest interest, became divided into the two bitterly hostile factions of the “bull-froggers” and the “Thomas-catters.” The street became blocked with a crowd of partisans and excitement ran high. Judge Stewart surrounded the whole gang and had them run down to court, where he dismissed all but the ten “curanderas” (for there were ten altogether), who were loudly proclaiming their influence with witches.

“Have you ever seen any witches?” he asked of the first.

“Oh yes, indeed, many times. Why only last Wednesday, the witches picked me up at midnight and took me out on the Corpus Christi road, and up above the clouds, where they played *pelota* (football) with me, and when they got tired of that, they dropped me into a mesquite thicket, and here you see my clothes all torn to rags to prove that I am telling the truth.”

The next one said she could get into any house, no matter whether the doors were open or shut.

The third could tell where to find hidden money, and so on through the list.

The judge wasted no time on the culprits, but fined them all ten dollars apiece, and sentenced them to a month each in the county jail, and when they begged for clemency and told him that they were poor humble women, he brusquely replied, “That’s nothing. You can all get out through the keyholes, and you all know where to find buried money to pay your fines. That is all there is about it.”



## WITCH FLIGHTS

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** "Witchcraft in New Mexico." *Journal of American Folklore* 1 (1888): 167–168.

**Date:** 1888

**Original Source:** New Mexico

**National Origin:** Mexican American

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This series of **legends** gives the general outlines of *brujeria* (often translated as "witchcraft"), a practice that embodies elements of both indigenous and Christian belief. The *bruja* (female) or *brujo* (male) is generally considered to constitute the opposite end of the spectrum of Hispanic magical-religious practice from the *curandero* (male healer) or *curandera* (female).

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Every *paisano* in New Mexico can tell you the witches' strange habits, their marvelous powers, and their baleful deeds. They never injure the dumb animals, but woe to the human being who incurs their displeasure. Few, indeed, are bold enough to brave their wrath. If a witch asks for food, wood, clothing, or anything else, none dare say her nay. Nor dare any one eat what a witch proffers; for, if he does, some animal, alive and gnawing, will form in his stomach.

By day the witches wear their familiar human form; but at night, dressed in strange animal shapes, they fly abroad to hold witch meetings in the mountains, or to wreak their evil wills. In a dark night you may see them flying through the sky like so many balls of fire, and there are comparatively few Mexicans in the territory who have not seen this weird sight!

For these nocturnal sallies the witches wear their own bodies, but take the legs and eyes of a coyote or other animal, leaving their own at home. Juan Perea, a male witch, who died here in San Mateo some months ago, met with a strange misfortune in this wise: He had gone off with the eyes of a cat, and during his absence a dog knocked over the table and ate up Juan's own eyes; so the unfortunate witch had to wear cat's eyes all the rest of his life.

"Before they can fly, witches are obliged to cry out, 'Sin Dios, sin Santa Maria!' (Without God and without the Holy Virgin) whereupon they mount up into the air without difficulty. If you are on good terms with a witch you may persuade her to carry you on her back from here to New York in a second. She blindfolds you and enjoins strict silence. If you utter a word you find yourself alone in some vast wilderness, and if you cry, 'God, save me!' you fall from a fearful height to the ground, but are luckily never killed by the fall. There are several courageous people in the territory who have made journeys thus upon the backs of witches.

“Lorenzo Labadie, a man of prominence in New Mexico, once unknowingly hired a witch as nurse for his baby. He lived in Las Vegas. Some months afterward there was a ball at Puerta de Luna, a couple of hundred miles south, and friends of the family were astonished to see the nurse and baby there. ‘Where is Senor Labadie and his family?’ they asked. The nurse replied that they were at a house a few miles distant, but too tired to come to the ball. The friends went there next day and found the Labadies had not been there. Suspecting the nurse to be a witch, they wrote to Don Lorenzo, who only knew that the nurse and baby were in his house when he went to bed, and there also when he woke up. It being plain, therefore, to the most casual observer, that the woman was a witch, he promptly discharged her.”

## WITCHES DISCOVERED

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Espinosa, Aurelio M. “New Mexican Spanish Folklore.” *Journal of American Folklore* 223 (1910): 397–398.

**Date:** 1910

**Original Source:** New Mexico

**National Origin:** Spanish American

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In the Southwest region, witches were traditionally believed to take on the shapes of owls, foxes, and coyotes to work their evil deeds. As seen in other **belief tales**, the appearance of similar wounds on a human suspect after the wounding of a witch in animal form is a common method of discovering guilt.

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**I**n a certain village in northern New Mexico, which was considered a favorite rendezvous for witches, a certain house had been surrounded for various nights by owls and foxes (the fox is another animal whose form witches like to take). Fearing harm from witches, since the hooting of the owls and the howling of the foxes had become almost insufferable, men went out to meet them with bows and arrows. The owls and foxes disappeared in all directions, with the exception of one old fox, which had been wounded near the heart by an arrow. No one dared to approach the wounded fox, however; and the next morning it was discovered that an old lady, a witch, living near by, was in her death-bed, with an arrow-wound near the heart.

On another occasion a man was riding on a fast horse and saw a fox. He started in pursuit; and after a long chase, when the fox was very tired and was already dragging its tongue along the ground, a sudden transformation took place. At a sharp turn of the road the fox stopped, and the rider did the same.

To his amazement, he at once perceived a gray-haired woman sitting on a stone and panting in a terrible manner. Recognizing in her an old woman who was his neighbor, and whom he had suspected of being a witch, he went his way and troubled her no more.

The *bruja*s (generally women) are women who are wicked (*pautadas con el diablo*) and non-Christian. By confessing their sins to a priest, repenting, and abandoning their devilish ways, they may become good Christian women.

A certain witch desired to forsake her evil ways and save her soul, since those who die witches cannot expect salvation. She confessed to a priest, and gave him a large bundle in the shape of a ball, which consisted largely of old rags, and pins stuck into it, the source and cause of her evil powers.

The priest took the diabolical bundle and threw it into a fire, where, after bounding and rebounding for several minutes in an infernal manner, it was consumed, and the compact with the Devil ceased (*ya no estaba pautada con el diablo*).

## METEOR HELL! CICERO DONE IT

**Tradition Bearer:** Harry Reece

**Source:** Bowman, Earl. *Interview of Harry Reece. American Life Histories: Manuscripts from the Federal Writers' Project, 1936–1940*. Manuscript Division, Library of Congress. *American Memory*. Library of Congress, Washington, DC. <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/wpaintro/wpahome.html> (October 12, 2005).

**Date:** 1939

**Original Source:** Arizona

**National Origin:** European American

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As with the following narrative “Them Petrified Buzzards” (page 290), this **tall tale** is attributed to “Uncle” Steve Robertson and recounted by his nephew Harry Reece. Like “Them Petrified Buzzards,” “Meteor Hell! Cicero Done It” is atypical in its exaggerated focus on the rigors of the Arizona climate. The narrator further adopts a “persona” who lies with the greatest sincerity while cursing “some danged liars.” As is commonly the case with tall tales, this story abounds with pseudo-verifications as in the following: “if they don’t believe you, take ‘em out there an’ show them th’ Hole, its still there ain’t it? They can see for themselves th’ damned thing’s there—An’ that ought to be proof enough for anybody.”

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“**M**y Uncle Steve Robertson told me how the ‘Great Hole’ (which some people think was made by a meteor) happens to be out in the very middle of the vast, almost level Arizona desert. He told me about it one night when we were camped over in the Lost River country

where we had gone with a pack outfit, aiming ultimately to get up into the Stanley Basin part of the Sawtooth Mountains and perhaps get ourselves a mountain sheep or, if our luck was good, maybe a mountain goat.

“My Uncle Steve was such a great pioneer in the very Far West that there were few things indeed whether of natural, human or animal phenomenon of those early settler days which he could not tell about and that too with the greatest of sincerity.

“So, Uncle Steve told me about the ‘Big Hole.’”

“We had been out through the ‘lavas’ where there are many strange sink-holes, lava-pots, and other weird and ghostly formations in the volcanic desolation of that mighty interesting corner of Idaho. (I think that it has been made into a National Park by the Government and is now called “The Craters of The Moon). Anyhow, it’s fascinating and one kind of feels like he is ... on the desolate Moon when he is wandering around in the silence that is always there.

“After supper, both of us entirely full of Little Lost River trout, we were lying by the camp fire listening to the coyotes and just sort of thinking ... maybe about what we’d seen that day, so I mentioned to Uncle Steve that once down in Arizona I had come onto a Great Hole, several hundred feet deep and nearly a mile across from lip to lip, right out there in the flat desert and as far as I could see there wasn’t the slightest excuse for it being there.

“But some people, I told my Uncle Steve, had the idea that a big meteor had fallen there one time and caved in the earth and that probably that was why the hole was there.

“My Uncle Steve then told me just how it happened...”

“Yeah, I-Gawd, since you mention it, I remember that damned hole out there in Arizony,” my Uncle Steve exclaimed. “In fact, by gosh, Bob White and me was right there and practically saw it made.... But, Meteor, hell, Cicero done it. ‘twant no dammed meteor a-tall!

“But maybe, to be plumb reliable an’ truthful an’ not ‘xaggerate an’ stretch things like some danged liars does, Bob an’ me wasn’t on the ‘xact spot where th’ hole is when she was made, an’ maybe we didn’t ‘xactly see th’ cussed thing made, but I-Gawd we was as clost as anybody ought to be an’ we sure as hell *heard* her when she was made. They ain’t no doubtin’ that!

“An’ like I said, twasn’t no cussed ‘meteor’ that made it. ‘Cicero’ which was Bob’s and my goat done it an’ he done a hell of a good job when he done it.

“That was one thing I admired about ‘Cicero’. He was one of th’ thoroughest damned goats I ever seen an’ when he done anything ... whether it was eatin’, or buttin’ or, I-Gawd, even smellin’ he done it right or he didn’t do it a-tall.... Fer instance, if Cicero started to eatin’ anything he et it all ‘fore he’d quit, if he started to buttin’ anything he’d keep buttin’ the danged thing till he busted it or butted it out of his way, that’s all there was to it; an’ when it come to smellin’, well, hell there jest ain’t no describin’ how p’rsistent he was about that!

“But Cicero was a Papago Injun goat (to be plumb honest an’ truthful, Bob an’ me stole him from some Papago Injuns an’ thats how we come to have him in the’ first place) an’ that’s that way the Papago Injun goats is. They ain’t nothin’ they won’t undertake an’ when they undertake it, I-Gawd they finish it up.

“Bob an’ me’d never possessed a goat back in Arkansas an’ natcherally when him an’ me an’ Mam (she was Bob’s wife) went out to Arizony an’ we heard about th’ buttin’ power of them Papago Injun goats, Bob an’ me thought that by rights we ought to git ourselves one jest to see if all we’d heard about ‘em was th’ truth, besides we figgered that probably we’d need one some time.... ‘Cause we’d heard how powerful they was in an emergency when it come to buttin’. Why, I-Gawd all th’ freighters haulin’ ore from Bisbee an’ so forth always had a Papago Injun goat in their outfit so’s when they’d git stuck in th’ sand with a load of ore an’ their six or eight mule-team couldn’t budge it they’d jest take their Papago Goat back a ways an’ turn him loose an’ tell him to butt th’ hind end of their wagon an’ I-Gawd he’d butt her a couple of butts an’ away they’d go! What them six or eight mules couldn’t do, that danged Papago Injun goat could accomplish with jest a few brief butts....

“So, when Bob an’ me got a chance we stole Cicero an’ took him home. “Mam (Bob’s wife) wasn’t so hellish enthusiastic about Cicero when she first saw him.

“My Gawd,” Mam says when she saw Bob an’ me leadin’ Cicero up to the’ ranch, “what have you danged fools gone an’ brang home now? Ain’t there enough disagreeable features on this cussed desert out here in Arizony without you goin’ an’ gittin’ a doggone Papago Injun goat for a body to be dodgin’ an’ also smellin’ all th’ time? Jest when I’m gittin’ used to smellin’ Arizony skunks an’ Arizony vinagaroons an’ Arizony carrion when a steer or cow dies an’ the buzzards let it ripen too long before cleanin’ it up, I-Gawd you go an’ bring home a danged Papago Injun goat for me to also smell—When I married you, Bob White, I promised to ‘love, honor an’ obey’ but darned if I promised to smell Papago Injun goats for you! So, you can take him right back where you got him or take him out behind th’ corral an’ shoot him, I don’t give a dang which, before he butts th’ britches off of you an’ Steve Robertson an’ smells me out of house an’ home!

“But Bob he always had a soothin’ way with wimmen so he jest said, ‘Why, Mam, Steve an’ me thought Cicero would be a kind of surprise to you an’ we stole him jest so you could have somethin’ else to smell a while besides them other things an’ he’d be a sort of change for you—But now you go an’ scold us for bringin’ him home! You’ve plumb hurt our feelin’s Mam ‘cause we brung him home jest for you an’ now you go an’ ... an’ ... resent him! I-Gawd, you see, Steve,” Bob says, “that’s the way it is—A Man goes an’ does his damndest to do somethin’ for a woman like stealin’ a goat for her to smell or something an’ then she gives him hell for it! That’s th’ way wimmen is, they never appreciate nothin’ an’ I-Gawd I don’t blame you for shyin’ off from ‘em like you do Steve an’ never gittin’ married or nothin’....”

“Bob winked at me when he said it an’ ‘course I knowed he was jest ‘soft-talkin’ Mam but I-Gawd it worked an’ Mam repented and said, ‘Alright, dadgum you, Bob White—you know cussed well no woman can resist that, danged honey-tongue-of Yourn—If it hadn’t been for it I’d still be down in Arkansas enjoyin’ paw-paws an’ persimmons in Mam an’ Pap’s peaceful home down on th’ old Sac River! So, you an’ Steve Robertson can keep your cussed Papago Injun goat but I’m promising you one thing and that is that if he ever butts me once I’ll bust him twice! I’ll smell Him ... but I’ll be danged if I’ll be butted by him, that’s all there is to it, Bob White!”

“So, Bob an’ me kept Cicero an’ if we hadn’t there probably wouldn’t be that damned Big Hole out in th’ middle of that Arizony desert you mentioned a while ago....

“To start with, that danged hole wasn’t a hole but was Injun Head Butts ... one of them cussed mountains that sticks itself right up all alone as if it doesn’t want any other mountain neighbors close to it ... Sort of like Big Butte, over there th’ other side of Lost River Sinks, where we was today.

“An’ Injun Butte was practically solid rock to begin with ... jest a great big bump of rock stickin’ up out of the’ desert.... Then, I-Gawd, Cicero turned that damned Butte into a hole in th’ ground!

“Yeah, it wasn’t no danged ‘Meteor,’ Cicero done it.

“I-Gawd, I ought to know. Bob White an’ Mam an’ me an’ Cicero was there when it happened.... After it happened, well, Bob an’ Mam an’ me was still there but where th’ hell Cicero was ... that’s a mystery nobody ain’t ever solved yet an’ I don’t reckon they ever will!

“It happened th’ year before th’ big dry spell, th’ one I told you about, maybe you remember it, when it got so dry an’ hot that even th’ damned buzzards wheelin’ around up in th’ sky an’ practically everything else includin’ th’ cattle an’ the trees out in th’ forest jest up an’ petrified from th’ heat and th’ dryness....

“Well, Bob an’ Mam an’ me decided to take a trip up to North Arizony an’ see if maybe there wasn’t better grazin’ for our cattle up there than there was down along th’ Santa Cruz river in south Arizony where we’d started our cow-outfit when we come out from Arkansas, so we traveled up there.

“Natcherally, Cicero went along. Bob an’ me had trained him to go along with us wherever we went with a wagon-outfit so if we got stuck in the sand he could butt us out like th’ ore freighters had their Papago Injun goats do when they got stuck.

“So, we got up there to where there was a little spring ... Arsenic Springs they called it ‘cause th’ water would physic anybody worse than hell but it was all there was an’ they had to drink it anyhow ... about two miles from old Injun Head Butte an’ we camped there.

“Everything would a’been all right only there was a couple of prospectors already camped there who was figgerin’ on doin’ some prospectin’ on Injun Head

Butte 'cause a old Hopi Injun Chief had told 'em there was a lost gold mine somewhere on th' Butte.

"Them damned prospectors had a whole burro load of dynamite with them an' had spread it out in th' shade of a Joshua tree to sort of cool off and ... Well, to make a long story short, while Bob an' Mam an' me was gittin' our camp set an' not payin' much attention to Cicero th' damn fool found that dynamite an' 'fore he quit he'd et every last cussed stick of it!

"Th' first thing Bob an' me knowed about what had happened was when one of th' prospectors ... Dirty Shirt Smith was his name ... caught Cicero jest swallerin' th' last damned stick of dynamite they had, an' he come runnin' over to our camp yellin' 'Hey, your cussed doggone goat has et up all our dynamite every damned drop of it! Now, how th' hell is Solemn Johnson (that was th' other prospector's name) an' me goin' to do any balstin' to find that damned lost gold mine that old Injun Chief told us was on Injun Head Butte? How th' hell are we goin' to—You gotta pay us for that dynamite your goat et!"

"I ain't worryin' about payin' for your damned dynamite," Bob up an' told him. "What I'm worryin' about is that cussed goat runnin' loose around here with all that high explosive in him. If he ever gits th' idea that 'cause our wagon's standin' still we're stuck an' need buttin' out, or if he starts in to practicin'g buttin' like Papago Injun goats does, well, Gawd help us all, that's all I can say!"

Mam she got excited too an' says, "White, for Gawd's sakes, you an' Steve Robertson figger out some scheme to keep that goat from stirrin' around much till he either sweats all that dynamite out of his system or digests it or something. If he goes off anywheres clost to us there wont be nothin' but fragments of us left! For Gawd's sake tie him up or something but do it an far away from camp as possible—Maybe you'd ought to give him a dose of castor oil, that might help!" Mam says.

"Yeah," Bob says, "an' who th' hell would straddle him an' hold him while I'm givin' it to him ... an' take a chance of him goin' off while they're straddle of him?"

"Mam realized th' danger of it an' didn't insist on us givin' Cicero castor oil.

"So Bob an' took Cicero an' tied him to a Joshua tree about a hundred yards from camp an' everything seemed safe an' sound for th' time being.

"Mam, she quieted down an' after supper we all went to bed ... lettin' the white Arizony moonlight stream over th' desert calm an' serene like.

"Fore I went to bed I looked out where Cicero was tied an' he was layin' there peaceful an' quiet as if eatin' sixty or seventy sticks of dynamite was jest a incident an' didn't have no significance a-tall....

"Bout three o'clock in th' mornin' I reckon it was I waked up all of a sudden with a sort of p'resentiment—I think that's what you call it when you think somethin' terrible's about to happen—pressin' down on me. Anyhow, I felt it in my marrow that Gawd only knowed what might take place any minute....

"Natcherally, when I was a little a waker I remember about Cicero eatin' that dynamite an' the first thing I done was to peer out through th' moonlight

an' see if he was still tied to th' Joshua tree an' still keepin' still till th' dynamite was absorbed out of his system—

"I-Gawd, that's when I got a shock. Cicero was gone.

"He'd gnawed his rope in two an' escaped.

"Then I snuck over to where Bob was sleepin' an' shook him an' says, 'Bob, fer Gawd's sake wake up! Cicero's loose an' prowlin' around somewhere with all that dynamite in him an' Gawd only knows what's liable to happen!'"

Bob waked up and says, "My Gawd, Steve, don't wake Mam ... she's tired an' needs her rest (Bob was always like that, awful considerate of Mam) an' besides if she wakes up an' realizes Cicero's loose she'll raise hell an' I'm too dammed worried to have any woman raisin' hell with me at this time of night! But where th' hell do you reckon Cicero's gone to, Steve?"

"Danged if I know," I told Bob, "but th' chances is he's wanderin' around in th' moonlight huntin' something to practice buttin' on—Only, I-Gawd, I says, 'if he find it I hope to Gawd it's a good ways from camp!'"

"I-Gawd, so do I," Bob said. An' then it happened—

"Sounded jest exactly like th' world had come to a end.

"Th' long an' th' short of it was, th' next mornin' there wasn't no danged Injun Head Butte out there on th' Arizony desert. There was jest a hell of a big hole in th' ground where she had been.... Bob an' me knowed what had happened.

"Cicero had wandered around huntin' somethin' to practice butting on an' in that moonlight he'd saw Injun Head Butte.... She looked danged good an' solid so he thought he'd practice on her. An', natcherally, when he hit here with all that dynamite in him he jest went off. That's all there was to it.

"An' when he went off he jest ripped old Injun Head Butte out by th' roots ... an' there couldn't be nothin' left but jest a hole where she had been!

"So, that's the way it was—An' I don't give a dang what anybody says—even them cussed 'scientists' that thinks they know such a hell of a lot ... an' that that Big Hole out in Arizony was made by a meteor ... gits crazy ideas sometimes. They jost don't know th' inside story of them things like us Pioneers of th' Far West does, that's all.

"But th' next time anybody tells you that that hole was made by a 'meteor' jest tell them, 'Meteor hell, Cicero done it' ...

"An' I-Gawd, if they don't believe you, take 'em out there an' show them th' Hole, its still there ain't it? They can see for themselves th' damned thing's there—An' that ought to be proof enough for anybody...."

## **THEM PETRIFIED BUZZARDS**

**Tradition Bearer:** Harry Reece

**Source:** Bowman, Earl. *Interview of Harry Reece. American Life Histories: Manuscripts from the Federal Writers' Project, 1936–1940.* Manuscript Division, Library of Congress.



*American Memory*. Library of Congress, Washington, DC. <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/wpaintro/wpahome.html> (October 12, 2005).

**Date:** 1938

**Original Source:** Arizona

**National Origin:** European American

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This tale, attributed to Steve Robertson and recounted by his nephew Harry Reece, develops a typical **tall tale** theme in its exaggerated focus on the rigors of the Arizona climate. More than a playful attempt to enhance a regional reputation, a narrative of this sort, by implication, increases the stature of those who are able to survive the rigorous natural elements they describe—in the present case, a blistering summer whose heat petrifies buzzards in midair—and live to tell the tale. Therefore, it functions as tongue-in-cheek bragging. The repudiation of lies and liars that precedes and follows this tale is a typical way of **framing** such narratives. Moreover, Uncle Steve’s tale, in relying on the audience’s ignorance of the West, is typical of the tall tales included in explorers’ accounts of their exploits. See, for example, the literary contributions of Karl Friedrich Hieronymus Baron von Münchhausen, an eighteenth-century German aristocrat so noted for telling tall tales that his name became synonymous with the **genre**.

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**M**y Uncle Steve Robertson was a native of the State of Missouri or Arkansas; he was not certain which, because he said he was born so close to the line that sometimes he thought it was on one side and sometimes on the other.

He also said that one reason he didn’t remember which State it was, was because he started Out West when he was so young that it really didn’t matter whether he was born in Missouri or Arkansas; he was satisfied just to be born, and was willing to let it go at that.

Anyway, my Uncle Steve Robertson was a great pioneer in his day, before any government irrigation projects were built in the West, and he knew all about shooting bear and deer and fighting Indians, and settling in out-of-the-way places where people had to depend mostly on themselves and each other and there were not any electric lights or telephones or radios or WPAs or PWAs or AAAs or things like that to distract their attentions, and post offices were quite far apart indeed. So, people depended to a large extent upon themselves and not to any great extent to or on anything else.

My Uncle Steve’s idea of “Out West” was anywhere west of the east line of the Indian Territory (Uncle Steve never did get around to calling it “Oklahoma” because he said that did not seem natural!). He also thought that

“Out West” was bounded on the south by the Big Bend country of the Rio Grande and on the north by the last peak of the Bitterroot Mountains in Idaho and which leaned over into Canada. So, Uncle Steve had quite a large idea of what “Out West” really was, and he also had quite a lot of experience with it...

Naturally, also, my Uncle Steve Robertson accumulated a vast knowledge of and quite a few strange experiences during the many years he was a great “pioneer” of the far “out west” and which, I am sorry to say, quite a lot of people in New York, and especially around the Washington Square district, do not yet realize ever existed—or for that matter may still exist to some extent.

Also, my Uncle Steve used to say that the one damned thing he could not endure was ... “a danged double talkin’ liar ... one of them ‘rubber-tongued’ persons who ... could stretch the truth till she would crack, and keep on stretchin’ it, and still expect people to believe it.”

My Uncle Steve always began his “tall tales,” (for I am afraid that they were “tall” tales, and some of them very tall indeed!) with the preliminary statement that he “just couldn’t stand any damn person that ‘zagerates!”

When we were on a fishing trip one time he told me about how the petrified forests of Arizona happened to be petrified—and also about “the petrified buzzards” ... It was a hot and dry season and I had mentioned it because the water in the creek where we were fishing was almost all dried up, and that was Uncle Steve’s excuse to tell me about a really hot and dry season he once experienced in Arizona.

“It was back in ... now danged if I remember jest which year it was back in,” Uncle Steve said, “but anyhow it was the year that old Geronimo was loaded on the train at Bowie, Arizona, when the government sent him to Florida to keep him from butchering people in Arizona. Well, that was the year that it was in, and it shore-as-hell was a hot and dry year in Arizona.

“Bob White an’ me had a little cow outfit in partnership down close to the Mexican line, and we was gettin’ along pretty well. We’d took up some land ... about two sections ... and dug some wells and built some ditches so we could irrigate a little ground around the place. We had windmills to pump water out of the wells into a pond and the ditches, and our nine or ten hundred head of cattle had pretty good feed on the range. And outside of havin’ to shoot a few Apaches now and then, before the government got rid of them, we was doin’ fairly well and was contented enough, I reckon.”

At first, “Mam” White, that was Bob’s wife, was a little lonesome because there wasn’t no frogs to croak down by th’ pond or along th’ ditches at night. She said she plumb missed frogs a-croakin’ an’ if there was jest some frogs she could hear croak of a’ evenin’ she’d be about as happy as she used to be back in Slippery Elm County, Arkansas, where she was born, and her pa and ma still lived. Well, Bob was always sentimental and he fixed it for Mam. He sent back to Arkansas and had a few settin’s of frog eggs sent out to her. So, Mam set ‘em an’ they hatched out jest fine, and before long, when the sun went down behind

old Apache Peak of an' evenin', frogs was croakin' all over th' place and Mam was plumb happy.

Like I said, everything was goin' smooth an' pleasant and we was prosperous till it began to get hot and dry one summer ... hotter an' dryer, I-Gawd, than anybody'd ever knowed it to be in that part of Arizona before, an' the first thing me realized them damn pumps wasn't suckin' nothing out of them wells but hot air, and th' alfalfa was withered and Mam's marigolds she'd planted by the side of the house was all dead and dried up, too.

And in addition to that, them nine or ten hundred head of cattle Bob an' me had out there on th' range was staggerin' around, so cussed thirsty an' dried out, that when they'd walk their livers and hearts and lungs or whatever was loose inside of them would rattle against their hides like seeds shakin' around in a ripe gourd. Yeah, that's jest th' way they'd sound! And when one of them got tired walkin' around, hearin' hissself or herself as the case might be, rattlin' like a gourd that ain't got nothin' in it but some seeds, and finally laid down, well, danged if he or she or it didn't jest naturally petrify, plumb solid. That's when them poor buzzards got a awful shock.

They'd be wheelin' around, jest wheelin' around watchin' for a cow or a steer brute to topple over, and as soon as they'd see one topple, down they'd swoop thinkin' they'd make a meal on it, and when they'd try to take a bite out of that petrified carcass they'd bust their poor bills off, and there they was ... plumb helpless, so they'd topple over, too—and in a minute they'd be petrified themselves!

Well, the rest of them damn buzzards that hadn't come down and was still wheelin' 'round up there in the hell-blisterin' heat and dryness, would wonder what th' hell had happened to their brother buzzards, layin' down there all petrified beside them petrified cattle; they'd be scairt to come down, and jest keep on wheelin' and wheelin' and gettin' more and more bewildered till damned if they wouldn't petrify themselves up there in the sky without ever knowin' it—and that's the way it was.... Thousands and thousands, hell, millions of buzzards jest wheelin' and wheelin' around 'way up in that hot, sizzlin' Arizona atmosphere—and all so damned petrified they couldn't do nothin' but keep on wheelin' and wheelin' without ever makin' a sound or flappin' a doggone wing—Gawd, it was a gruesome sight!

Yeah, them damned buzzards—all petrified and everything jest wheelin' and wheelin' around up there in th' sky, was a terrible thing to look at, but, I-Gawd, bad off as they was they didn't suffer as much as them poor wild hydrophobia cats that got so dry that they couldn't even foam at th' mouth when they'd have hydrophobia fits ... That was one of the pitifullest sights I ever seen. A poor hydrophobia-cat tryin' to foam at th' mouth when he's havin' a fit, and not be able to do nothin' only spit out a little stream of dry, kind of chalky dust, instead of good rich foam like he'd naturally do! It sure as hell was pitiful to look at....

'But them hydrophobia-cats wasn't no worse off than all them poor ants jest crawlin' around on the sand under th' blazin' sun, without a drop to drink, jest

sweltherin' and dryin' up till eventually they'd be in such agony they'd double over an' bite themselves on their own belly-band, an' commit suicide an' perish in misery ... Gawd, I'll bet ten billion ants ... damn nice big red Arizona ants committed suicide on our ranch alone! It's a awful thing to see a poor damn ant so thirsty an' hot an' dried out that it doubles over an' gnaws its own belly-band in two ... It sure is.

Still, I reckon th' worst sufferin' was done by them miserable danged frogs; all them frogs Mam had hatched out from them settin's of frog eggs Bob had had sent out from Arkansas ... They got so dry, they jest kind of shriveled up and all wrinkled sort-of-like, well, like a prune that has been layin' out in th' sun too long. That's jest th' way their hides looked—jest shriveled up an' wrinkled like a prune, or worse. But th' worst of it was when they didn't have no water to waller in any more, and sort of soak 'em up; I-Gawd, when the sun would go down behind old Apache Peak an' them poor frogs would open their mouths and try to croak, like Mam loved to hear 'em do of an evenin', all th' poor damn things could do was jest sort of whistle.... It was terrible, th' most agonizin' and heart-wrenchin' thing anybody can imagine. Yes, sir, I-Gawd, if you ever saw a poor shriveled frog tryin' to croak, and not be able to get anything out but jest a measly little damn whistle, it's th, saddest thing you ever saw!

It sure was distressin'.... Them poor frogs gaspin' out little dinky whistles instead of good solid croaks, was what settled it. When it got that dry, Mam, Bob's wife, couldn't stand it no longer. She'd listen to them frogs tryin' to croak—and jest break down with grief. She jest couldn't stand it. So, finally, after all then buzzards was petrified and most of them ants had committed suicide and them hydrophobia cats “most plumb forgot how to foam at the mouth, and at last them helpless cussed frogs was whistlin' 'stead of croakin,” Mam said to me an' Bob one day, “We're goin' to move out of this cussed place, Bob White and Steve Robertson. When it gets so danged dry that even a buzzard petrifies and even a frog can't croak, I-Gawd, it's time to go somewhere else.” That's what Mam said. And Bob an' me always did believe in lettin' the women folks have their way, so, I-Gawd, we moved. An' damned if I know whether it ever did rain an' bust th' dry spell, or not. Maybe it did an' maybe it didn't. But while we was present it was *one hell of a dry spell* and I imagine if anybody went down there to that part of Arizona they could still see some of them petrified trees layin' around on the ground ('cause—while I didn't mention it before—even most of th' damn trees got to be petrified, too, before things was done with) an' I also imagine that anybody would probably see some of them poor petrified buzzards still wheelin' an' wheelin' and wheelin' around and around, 'way up there in the air ... never makin' a sound an' never flappin' a wing.... Jest petrified as hell, an' unable to do anything about it!

My Uncle Steve Robertson was a very great pioneer in his day, and no doubt had many wonderful and thrilling experiences in the very far Out West, and—as I said before—he was one of those sturdy old ex-Rebel soldiers who could not endure a danged liar an' despised any ornery man that 'xagerates. Perhaps that is why I loved him; he was my favorite Uncle ... the one with whom I liked best to go fishing, or on camping-out trips.

# **SOUTH AMERICA**



# AUROHUAC (COLOMBIAN ARAWAK)

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## TACH THE PROPHET

**Tradition Bearer:** Unknown

**Source:** Nicholas, Francis C. "The Aborigines of the Province of Santa Marta, Colombia." *American Anthropologist* 3 (1901): 641–644.

**Date:** ca. 1901

**Original Source:** Aurohuaca

**National Origin:** Native American

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The following narrative is set in the historical past as are **legends**. It focuses on a prophet around whom a cult has grown up; as such, it would qualify as a **myth**. The conclusion that should be drawn, therefore, is that traditional narrative often does not fit neatly into Western academic categories. Concerning the central figure of the narrative and the cult that developed around him, Francis C. Nicholas writes, "Among other strange beliefs they have a fixed faith in a prophet whom they call the Tach. They say that he came to them out of the sea and that he will return to make them a great people. In the latter part of December or early in January, according to the time of the new moon, they all assemble and dance in expectation of the coming of the Tach. Of their prophet they will say very little, but an Indian told the story to me, though it required urging from a Colombian who had heard it and wished that I should hear the story from the Indians themselves. His account, in brief, was as follows" (641–642).

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**L**ong ago, longer than the lives of the oldest *mamas* [leaders] and in the days of their fathers (fathers of the *mamas*), whose names had been forgotten, a stranger came up out of the sea. His skin was white, but he was not

pleasant to look upon because his hair had grown wrong and covered his face, and not his head where it should have been; and the people thought to kill him, but the *mamas* to whom he first had come, and who were wise, gave hospitality and kept him alive. His dark garment was girt about the waist and flowed below his knees.

When the people saw that no harm came, they were no more afraid, and saw that he had clear, kind eyes. They helped him and he lived among them; but he wanted little, and when the time came that they could hear his voice—that is, when he could speak their language—he taught them all things that were good, and the fathers who lived so long ago that their names are forgotten told their sons, who told it again that the story might be remembered.

This man was the Tach, and his teachings are these: That to worship the sun is right, that it is holy and quickens all life; that gold represents the sun on the earth and it is holy, and those who gather it must hide it and let no stranger look on it, in order that there should be much gold when he returned; and when he came again he promised to make them a great people. And he prophesied, saying that others with hair grown wrong and covering their faces would come, but they would be different and none could trust them, and he who bargained with them would carry away not enough and would give too much. To these strangers no gold should be shown, nor should they see the temple and holy gold (perhaps the golden images of the sun and the bird), because on the day in which they saw them they would carry all away and the sun would be angry and never shine on the mountains again.

And the Tach said, “Live at peace and shed no man’s blood, but cultivate the soil, have gardens, and eat plenty.” And he charged them to live only with their own people and take no strangers, not Indians nor white men with hair on their faces, into the tribe, but remain a people apart, yet hospitable. And if strangers came, to receive them with hospitality, for he came as a stranger and would so return, but that no stranger must stay too long in the land, for that would not be good. Then he taught them all the lore of sins, sickness, and death, and the healing charms of stones on which the sin could rest, and he went away to the sea but will return out of it again.

This is probably their conception of the teachings of a missionary priest who chanced among them and who, seeing gold, thought of the necessities of the church and what a great people the church could make of the Indians if it only had the money; but when they heard of a second coming, the Indians naturally thought that the priest spoke only of himself.



# AYMARA

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## THE CREATION

**Tradition Bearer:** Juan de Betanzos

**Source:** Bandelier, Adolph F. "Aboriginal Myths and Traditions Concerning the Island of Titicaca, Bolivia." *American Anthropologist* 6 (1904): 201–202.

**Date:** ca. 1551

**Original Source:** Aymara

**National Origin:** Native American

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The Aymara are a native South American ethnic group, indigenous to Bolivia and, to a lesser extent, Peru. Although they have retained their ethnic identity into the twenty-first century, the Aymara were subjugated by the Inca Empire. The following **myth** records the Aymara version of the arrival of the Inca creator and **culture hero** Viracocha. Compare this narrative to the Inca myth "Viracocha" (page 315).

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**I**n ancient times, they say, the country and province of Peru was dark, having neither light nor day. In those times there were certain people in it, which people had a certain chief who commanded them, and to whom they were subjected. Of the name of that people and of the chief who commanded them they have no recollection.

And in those times, when all was night in this land, they say that from a lagoon in this country of Peru, in the province called Collasuyo, came a chief whom they called Con Tici Viracocha, who, they say, had with him a certain number of people, which number they do not recollect. And after he had come out of this lagoon he went to a place near it, where today stands a village called Tiaguanaco, in this aforesaid province of the Collao; and when he and his

people were, there, they say that at once, and unexpectedly, he made the sun and the day, and ordered the sun to move in the course in which it now moves; and afterward, they say, he made the stars and the moon.

Of this Con Tici Viracocha they relate that he had appeared once before, and on that occasion he made the heavens and the earth, leaving them in darkness, and that when he made the people who lived in darkness as aforesaid, this people did some sort of wrong to this Viracocha, and as he was angered by it he turned to come out again, as the first time, and those first people and their chief he converted into stones, in punishment for the anger they had caused him.”

Then Viracocha made, at Tiahuanaco, men and women out of stones. His companions he told to scatter, and, pointing out to them the people he had created from the stones, said to them, “These shall be called so and so, and will come out of such a spring in such a province, and will settle in it and grow and multiply there and those will come out of such a cave and their name will be so and so, and they will settle in such a place; and as I have them here painted and carved out of stone, so they shall come forth from springs and rivers, caves and heights, in the provinces I have told you and named; and now you go in that direction (pointing to the rising sun) indicating to each one the line which he had to travel.

With himself he kept only two of his followers; the others started on their peregrination, in the direction assigned to them. Each one, as he came to the province designated, called out aloud. “So and so, come forth and settle in this deserted region, for so it is ordered by the Con Tici Viracocha who made the world.” Thereupon the people would come out of the places foretold by the Viracocha.

While these executed his commands in the direction of the east, the great Viracocha dispatched his two companions, one to the south and the other to the north, while he himself went to the northwest toward Cuzco [the center of the Inca Empire]. On his way he kept on peopling the country in the manner described, by creating men and women from rocks, springs, and rivers, and when he reached the site of Cuzco he caused to come forth a chief called by him Alcaviza, and also gave the place its name Cuzco. Con Tici Viracocha continued his journey as far as the coast of Ecuador, where his companions rejoined him. There they all began to walk together on the waters of the sea and disappeared.”

Alcaviza settled the site of Cuzco; and after that settlement had been made, a cavern opened at a nearby place called Pacaritambo, and out of this cave came four men with their women. One of the men was called Ayar Mango, afterward called Manco Capac. Two of the others had a rather strange fate—one being immured alive in a cave and the other becoming an idol. Manco Capac, however, settled at Cuzco with Alcaviza, and through his shrewdness became the first chief of the tribe and the founder of the Incas.

## MANCO CAPAC

**Tradition Bearer:** Anello Oliva

**Source:** Bandelier, Adolph F. "Aboriginal Myths and Traditions Concerning the Island of Titicaca, Bolivia." *American Anthropologist* 6 (1904): 221–222.

**Date:** Unavailable

**Original Source:** Aymara

**National Origin:** Native American

The following **legend** elaborates on Manco Capac who was introduced in the **myth** "The Creation" (page 299). This narrative offers a rational, as distinct from a supernatural, explanation for events in the life of the founders of the Inca Empire. "The Deluge," alluded to in the beginning of "Manco Capac," is described in further detail in "The Children of the Sun" (page 302). Lake Titicaca, which serves as a major point of orientation in this and other Aymara narratives, is located in the Andes on the border between Bolivia and Peru.

**A**fter the Deluge, the first people came to South America from parts unknown, landing somewhere on the coast of Venezuela. From there they gradually scattered over the whole continent, one band reaching the coast of Ecuador near Santa Elena. Several generations passed, many made voyages along the coast and some were shipwrecked.

At last one branch took up its abode on an island called Guayau, near the shores of Ecuador. On that island Manco Capac was born, and after the death of his father Atau, he resolved to leave his native place for a more favored clime. So he set out, in such craft as he had, with two hundred of his people, dividing them into three bands. Two of these were never heard from again, but he and his followers landed near Ica, on the Peruvian coast, thence struggled up the mountains, reaching at last the shore of Lake Titicaca.

There Manco separated from the others, leaving them with orders to divide after a certain time and to go in search of him, while he took the direction of Cuzco. He told his people, before leaving, that when any of the natives should ask them their purpose and destination, to reply that they were in quest of the son of the Sun. After this he departed, reaching at last a cave near the Cuzco valley, where he rested.

When the time had elapsed, his companions started in several groups in search of him. One of these crossed over to the Island of Titicaca, where they were surprised to find a rock, and in this rock a cave lined with gold, silver, and precious stones. Thereupon they sunk the craft in which they had reached the island, and agreed among themselves, if anybody from the surrounding country

should appear, to say that they had come out of the cave to look for the son of the Sun.

A few days after, on the day of the full moon, they saw some canoes approaching, and they forthwith retreated to the cavern. Those who came in the canoes, when they approached the cliff and perceived the strangers viewing the cave apparently with the greatest unconcern, were surprised. The strangers gave them to understand that they had just come out of the rock and were in quest of the son of the Sun. This filled the others with profound respect for the newcomers; they worshipped them and made offerings to the rock, sacrificing children, llamas, and ducks.

All together went back to the mainland, and shortly afterward learned that at Pacari Tampu, the son of the Sun, had come out of a cavern, called Capacocco, in great splendor, bedecked with gold, as brilliant in appearance as his father, and that with a sling he had hurled a stone with such force that the noise was heard for more than a league off, and the stone made in the rock a hole as large as a doorway.

At this news all the people of those regions went to see the miraculous being. Manco Capac received them as subjects. On this artifice he began to base his authority and the subsequent sway of the Inca tribe.

## **THE CHILDREN OF THE SUN**

**Tradition Bearer:** Cristoval de Molina

**Source:** Bandelier, Adolph F. "Aboriginal Myths and Traditions Concerning the Island of Titicaca, Bolivia." *American Anthropologist* 6 (1904): 209–210.

**Date:** ca. 1570

**Original Source:** Aymara

**National Origin:** Native American

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The following is a complete **myth** of origin. This narrative serves as a supernatural complement to the more mundane explanation for the emergence of Manco Capac from the underworld described in "Manco Capac" (page 301).

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**I**n the life of Manco Capac, who was the first Inca and from whom they began to be called Children of the Sun and to worship the Sun, they had a full account of the deluge. They say that all people and all created things perished in it, in as far as the water rose above all the highest mountains in the world. No living things survived except a man and a woman, who remained in a box, and when the waters subsided, the wind carried them to Huinaco, which

will be over seventy leagues from Cuzco, a little more or less. The creator of all things commanded them to remain there as Mitimas, and there in Tiahuanaco the creator began to raise up the people and nations that are in that region, making one of each nation of clay and painting the dresses that each one was to wear, those that were to wear their hair, with hair, and those that were to be shorn, with their hair cut; and to each nation was given the language that was to be spoken, and the songs to be sung, and the seeds and food they were to sow.

When the creator had finished painting and making the said nations and figures of clay, he gave life and soul to each one, men as well as women, and ordered that they pass under the earth. Thence each nation came forth up in the places to which he ordered them to go. Thus they say that some came out of caves, others issued from hills, others from fountains, others from the trunks of trees. From this cause, and owing to having come forth and commenced to multiply, from those places, and to raving had the beginning of their lineage in them, they made *huge* and places of worship of them in memory of the origin of their lineage which proceeded from theta. Thus each nation uses the dress with which they invest their *huacas*, and they say that the first that was born from that place were there turned into stones; others say the first of their lineage were turned into falcons, condors, and other animals and birds. Hence the *huaeas* they use and worship are in different shapes....

They say that the Creator was in Tiahuanaco and that there was his chief abode, hence the superb edifices—worthy of admiration, in that place. On these edifices were painted many dresses of Indians, and there were many stones in the shape of men and women who had been changed into those for not obeying the commands of the Creator. They say that it was dark, and that there he made the sun, the moon, and stars, and that he ordered the sun, moon, and stars to go to the Island of Titicaca, which is near at hand, and thence to rise to heaven.

They also declare that when the sun in the form of a man was ascending into heaven, very brilliant, it called to the Incas and to Manco Capac as their chief, and said, "Thou and thy descendants are to be Lords and are to subjugate many nations. Look upon me as thy father and thou shalt be my children and thou shalt worship me as thy father." And with these words it gave to Manco Capac for his insignia and arms the *suntur pauear* [a feathered staff] and the *champi* [mace-like weapon] and the other insignia that are used by the Incas like scepters. And at that point the sun and moon and stars were commanded to ascend to heaven and to fix themselves in their place, and they did so.

At the same instant Manco Ccapac and his brothers and sisters, by command of the Creator, descended under the earth and came out again at the cave of Paccari-Tambo, though they say that other nations also came out of the same cave, at the point where the sun rose on the first day, after the Creator had divided the night from the day. Thus it was that they were called Children of the Sun, and that the Sun was worshipped and revered as a father.

## TWO SONS OF THE CREATOR

**Tradition Bearer:** Cristoval de Molina

**Source:** Bandelier, Adolph F. "Aboriginal Myths and Traditions Concerning the Island of Titicaca, Bolivia." *American Anthropologist* 6 (1904): 210–211.

**Date:** ca. 1570

**Original Source:** Aymara

**National Origin:** Native American

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"Two Sons of the Creator" introduces a pair of **culture heroes** who are entrusted with naming species and instructing humans in plant lore and healing arts. Compare the two Viracochas in this **myth** to the central character in the Inca myth "Viracocha" (page 315).

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The Creator had two sons, the one called Vmaymana Viracocha and the other Tocapo Viracocha. Having completed the tribes and nations and assigned dresses and languages to them, the Creator sent the sun up to heaven, with the moon and stars each in its place. The Creator, who in the language of the Indians is called Pachayachi and Tecsiviracocha, which means the incomprehensible God, then went by the road of the mountains from Tiahuanaco, visiting and beholding all the nations and determining how they had begun to multiply and how to comply with his commands.

He found that some natives had rebelled and had not obeyed his commands; so he turned a large number of them into stones of the shape of men and women, with the same dress they had worn. These conversions into stone were made at the following places: Tiahuanaco, Pucara, and Yauxa; where they say he turned the *huata* called *Huarivilca* into stone, and in Pachacamac, and Cajamarca, and in other parts. (In truth there are great blocks of stone in those places, some of which are nearly the size of giants. They must have been made by human hands in very ancient times; and by reason of the loss of memory and the absence of writing, they invented this fable, saying that people had been turned into stones for their disobedience, by command of the Creator.) Also, in Pucara, which is forty leagues from the city of Cuzco, on the Collao road, fire came down from heaven and destroyed a great part of the people, while those who were taking to flight were turned into stones.

The Creator, who is said to be the father of Ymaymana Viracocha and Tocapo Viracocha, commanded that the elder Ymaymana Viracocha, in whose power all things were placed, should set out from the point and go by way of the mountains and forests through all the land, giving names to the large and small trees and to the flowers and fruits that they bear, and teaching the people which ones were good for food or for medicine and which should be avoided. He also

gave names to all the herbs and explained which had healing virtues and which were poisonous. The other son, Tocado Viracocha, which means "I the maker," was ordered to go by way of the plains, visiting the people and giving names to the rivers and trees, and instructions respecting the fruits and flowers. Thus they went on until they reached the sea, whence they ascended to heaven, after having accomplished all they had to do in this world.

# CAINGANG (KAINGANG)

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## THE DELUGE

**Tradition Bearer:** Arakxó

**Source:** Borba, Telemaco M. "Caingang Deluge Legend." *Journal of American Folklore* 18 (1905): 223–224.

**Date:** ca. 1905

**Original Source:** Caingang

**National Origin:** Native American

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The Caingang people are a nomadic Native American group indigenous to southern Brazil. The following **myth** was collected in the province of São Paulo. Beyond serving as a South American example of the widely distributed **motif** of the destruction of the world, this myth accounts for the origin of various native species and cultures as well as their behavior and physical attributes, the origins of song and dance, and sources of supernatural knowledge.

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**I**n times past there was a great flood which submerged all the land inhabited by our ancestors. Only the top of Mt. Crinjijnbé emerged from the waters. The Caingangs, Cayurucrés and Camés swam towards the mountain carrying in their mouths burning wood. The Cayurucrés and the Camés became tired and were drowned; their souls went to live in the center of the mountain. The Caingangs and a few Curutons (Ares) reached with difficulty the top of Crinjijnbé, where they remained, some on the ground, and others (by reason of lack of space) clinging to the branches of trees. There they passed several days without food, for the waters did not subside.



They expected, indeed, to die, when they heard the song of the *saracúra* birds, who came carrying earth in baskets and threw it into the waters, which slowly subsided. They cried out to the *saracúras* to make haste, and the birds did so, repeating their song and asking the geese to help them. In a short time they reached the top with the earth, so that the Caingangs who were on the ground could get away. Those, however, who clung to the branches of the trees were transformed into macaques and the Curutons into *bugios*. The *saracúras* did their work on the side where the sun rises, and thus our waters all run to the west and flow into the great Paraná. When the waters dried up, the Caingangs established themselves close to Crinjijinbés.

The Cayurucrés and Camés, whose souls had gone to dwell in the center of the mountain, began to open roads in the interior. After much labor they succeeded in getting out by two paths. In the Cayurucré opening broke forth a beautiful valley, very level and without stones, wherefore to this day they have kept their small feet. It was different with the Camés, whose path opened through stony ground, bruising their feet and causing them to swell in walking, hence, to this day, they have kept their feet large. In the path which they opened there was no water, and, being thirsty, they had to beg it from the Cayurucrés, who allowed them to drink what they needed. When they got out from the mountain, they ordered the Curutons to bring the baskets and gourds which they had left below, but the latter, through laziness, remained there and never joined the Caingangs again, for which reason, we, when we meet them, lay hold of them as our escaped slaves.

The night after leaving the mountain they kindled fire, and with ashes and coals made tigers [jaguars], and said to them, "Go, eat people and hunt." And the tigers went about roaring.

As they had no more coal to paint with, they could only make with ashes the tapirs (*oyoro*), to which they said, "Go, eat and hunt." But these had not come out with perfect ears, and, for that reason, did not hear the order, and asked again what they were to do. The Cayurucré, busy making other animals, said to them in an ill mood, "Go, eat leaves and twigs of trees." This time they heard, and that is the reason why tapirs eat only leaves, twigs of trees, and fruits.

The Cayurucré was making another animal. The teeth, tongue, and some nails were lacking, when it began to grow daylight. Since nothing in the way of making could be done in the daytime, he put into the animal's mouth, in haste, a fine rod, and said, "Since you have no teeth, live by eating ants." That is why the *tamandua*, or ant-eater, is an unfinished and imperfect animal. The next night they continued and made many animals, among them the bees. At the time these animals were made, the Cayurucré made also others to combat them, for example, the "American lion," venomous snakes, wasps, etc.

After these labors, they set out to join the Caingangs, but found that the tigers were bad and ate many people. In passing a deep river, they made a bridge of a tree trunk, and, when all had crossed, the Cayurucré said to one of the

Camés that, when the tigers were on the bridge, he was to push it off so that they would fall into the water and be killed. The Camé did so, but of the tigers some fell in the water and dived, and others leaped on the bank and clung there by their claws. The Came wanted to throw them back into the river, but, when the tigers roared and showed their teeth, he was seized with fright, and let them get away. This is why we have nowadays tigers on land and tigers in the water.

They reached a great plain, where they joined the Caingangs and considered how to marry the youths and maidens. First they married the Cayurucré to the Camés, (girls), and then, as there was a superfluity of men, they married these to the Caingangs (women). Hence the Cayuruces, Comes, and Caingangs are relatives and friends.

Then they wanted to have festivals, but knew neither how to sing nor how to dance. One day some Cayuruces, who were out hunting, saw, at the edge of a clearing in the wood, by the trunk of a great tree, a little clear spot. Against the trunk of the tree were some rods with leaves, and one of them had a gourd stuck on end. They departed and told the Cayurucré about it. He made up his mind to go there the next day and verify the matter. So he went to the clearing cautiously and hid near the trunk. After awhile the little rods began to move slowly from bottom to top and a feeble voice began to sing and the little gourd, with a cadenced movement, produced this sound: *Xii, xii, xii...* The Cayurucrés approached the trunk, when suddenly all song and movement of the rods ceased, but they continued on the same trunk. He withdrew, and returned the next day with several friends. They cautiously approached the same spot and saw and heard the same things as on the day before. After the first song a voice sang another song. They learned the song, approached the trunk, but saw only the rods. Then they brought them with them, made others like them, and prepared to have a great festival. On that day the Cayurucré opened his mouth and sang the songs which he had heard in the clearing, making with the rod with the gourd on it and with his body the movements he had seen. His companions imitated him, and this is why we learn to sing and dance without knowing who is the teacher.

After some time the Cayurucré met on the road an ant-eater and lifted his stick to kill him. The ant-eater began to dance and to sing the songs heard in the clearing. Then the Cayurucré knew that this was his dancing-teacher. The ant-eater asked for his stick, and after having danced with it, gave it back and said to him, "The child that your wife has within her womb is man, and let this be established between us, that when you or yours meet me and mine and give their sticks and would fain dance with them, it is a sign that your wives will give birth to male children. If they would leave without dancing, the children will be girls." The Cayurucré returned much pleased, and we, when we meet the ant-eater, always renew this experience, which almost always gives certain results. The ant-eater knows many other things we are ignorant of, and we think that they are the first people who through magic took on the form which they now have.

# CHILE

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## THE GOOD SERPENT

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Moore, T. H. "The Good Serpent. A Chilian [sic] Fairy Tale in Spanish, el Culebroncito, Literally Big Snake." *Journal of American Folklore* 1 (1883): 221–226.

**Date:** ca. 1883

**Original Source:** Spanish American

**National Origin:** Chile

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Chile extends along the Pacific coast of South America bordered by the Andes mountains on the north and Peru, Bolivia, and Argentina to the east. The following tale blends the European **ordinary folktale genre** with pre-Columbian elements. "The Snake Helper" (AT 533) is found elsewhere in Latin America, especially in the Caribbean. Although the tale more closely adheres to Spanish American than to Native American plot structures, it is likely that the figure of the "Good Snake" in the following narrative has been influenced by the benevolent deity and **culture hero** Viracocha, who is often associated with a serpent. The serpent in the indigenous cultures that served as one of the bases of contemporary Spanish-Chilean folklore was typically regarded as benevolent rather than malevolent.

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**T**hou must know to tell, and understand in order to know that there was a gentleman who had three children; two sons, and a daughter whose name was Mariquita. This one was precisely the darling of her father and brothers. One day when she was in the garden she found a little snake; she took it up and put it in her bosom. There she nursed it, and when it was bigger she

kept it inside a trunk. Every day she kept a plate of food, went to the trunk, opened it, and said to the snake, "Sister mine, Florita!"

The snake answered, "What wantest thou, sweetheart?" put out its head and ate the food. Her father noticed this. For whom should she hide away food? and set his servants to spy upon her. When they saw the serpent, that had grown ever so big, they were very frightened, and went running to the master to tell him that the food was for a very horrid animal. The gentleman went to see it, and indeed the sight of the serpent put one in a fright; he ordered a servant to go with it to a wooded height and to kill it. In vain the maiden begged him to leave it with her, since she had brought it up from a very little one, but her father was not willing, only he told the servant instead of killing it, to cast it alive into the wood. The maiden remained weeping very much for her snake, for she liked it as if it were a sister; so she passed many days very sorrowful.

One day her father had to send his two sons with a message to the king, who lived in a neighboring town. Being one day at the king's table, they were relating many things to him (for they were very well instructed in everything), and amongst others they said to him, "We have a very singular sister, for when she laughs she lets fall fine pearls; when she washes her hands, the water next day changes into a block of silver; and when she combs her hair, the hair that falls off becomes golden threads."

"Is this possible?" said the king.

"So possible is it," said the young men, "that we will lose our heads if it be not as we have said."

"Very well," said the king, "I am going to ask for your sister in marriage, and if what you have told me does not turn out true, I will order your heads to be cut off, as a punishment for having deceived me." Soon after he sent messengers to their father, asking him for Mariquita, to become the king's wife. Now, besides the gifts which her brothers had talked of, she was beautiful as the sun, and good.

Her father consented, highly pleased; and sent her to the king, accompanied by her nurse. The latter had a daughter named Estefania, and she and her daughter were very bad-hearted and envious. When they had traveled halfway, Mariquita fell asleep; so Estefania said to her mother, "Can you tell what I am thinking about?"

"What is it?" said she to her.

"That it would be a good thing if we were to put out Mariquita's eyes, and cast her off in this wooded height (now just then they were passing through a thickly wooded spot), and as the king does not know which is Mariquita, we will tell him that I am she, and I shall be married to him."

"Very well," said the old woman to her; so they did so, but seeing that the eyes were very beautiful, they put them in a glass to keep them.

The maiden passed a dreadful night in the wood, for that night it rained and thundered a great deal; she was half dead with pain and cold. The following

day there came a little old man to the wood with his little donkey, to get a load of firewood to take to sell in the town, and with the money to buy a bag of bran for his family, for he could not do any better for them. Instead of getting firewood he found the maiden, and moved by pity he took her to his house on his little donkey. The little old man had three bad-hearted daughters, who treated him very badly.

When they saw him coming without firewood and a woman in its stead they began to cry out, "Bad old man, what wilt thou give us to eat today? It will be this woman mayhap? She is coming to bring another mouth to the house that we may come to an end once for all by dying of hunger! Of what use is this blind wench who cannot gain her living?"

The little old man said to them, "Have patience, daughters; this poor creature was in the wood, and I have brought her out of pity. I am going quickly for the load of firewood, and you shall soon have your dinners. I will leave my share and will give it to her." But his daughters scolded him more and more, for that blind wench he would die of want, and then who was going to work for them? At last he managed to pacify them a little, went for the firewood, sold it, and brought them their food.

Meanwhile the daughters ill-treated Mariquita in all sorts of ways, until at last one of them more merciful than the others got them to leave her in peace.

The maiden said to this one, "Little sister, bring me a little water to wash my hands." She brought it to her in a broken earthen pot.

But the others cried out, "What a fine lady! She does not like to go and wash herself in the river!"

But the kind one said, "There now, don't you see that the poor little thing is blind, and might fall into the water?"

She washed her hands, and said, "Keep this water, little sister, till tomorrow."

The old man's daughter said, "But tomorrow I will bring thee fresh water."

Mariquita said, "But I want the same." At last the girl put it away among some shrubs, spilling a little on the ground.

The next day Mariquita said, "Little sister, bring me the water that I asked thee yesterday to keep for me."

She went to bring it, and found in its stead a block of silver, and silver on the ground where the water was spilt; and in bringing it the potsherd came to pieces from the weight of the silver. "What is this," said she, "that I have found instead of the water?"

Mariquita said, "This is silver; tell daddy to go to the town and sell it, for it is worth a great deal, and let him buy for you clothes and food."

The little old man did as Mariquita said; they bought it of him for a great deal of money; he bought plenty of clothes and plenty of food, and went home well pleased, for he had never even dreamed of so much riches.

Mariquita laughed heartily at the surprise of these people; and while she laughed, gathered in her lap the pearls that fell from her mouth. Then she said

to the little old man, "Take these, daddy, they are fine pearls; take them to the town and sell them, for they are worth a great deal. Buy more food and all that you need."

Meanwhile she asked the girls for a comb, to comb her hair. They brought her one; for since she had made them rich, they were so kind to her that they did not know what to make of her. She began to comb herself at the corner of the fireplace; and the girls to take care of her feet that she might warm them, put them so close to the fire that it almost burnt them.

She kept the hair that fell from her head, and the next day she had a handful of golden threads. "Take these, daddy," said she to the little old man, "and go to town and sell them, for they are threads of gold. Buy all you need; all that you get for them is for you." The little old man was well pleased, and brought much money to his daughters.

Meanwhile, Estefania had arrived at the king's palace. He received her with great kindness, and married her on the spot. On the morrow he made her wash her hands, and put away the water, but the next day it was nothing but water. He made her laugh, but not a single pearl fell from her mouth. He made her comb herself, and kept the fallen hair, but hair it was, and hair it remained. So he slapped his forehead, and said, "These young men have deceived me; I will order their heads to be cut off!"

He did so, and had their bodies embalmed to be sent to their father. Estefania went on living with the king, and the time was drawing nigh that she was about to have a baby, so that she was full of longings for everything she set eyes on.

One day that Mariquita was sitting in the sun, at the door of the little old man's hut, his daughters saw a big serpent that went towards Mariquita. "Ay!" they said, "come away from there! There is a big serpent, a very dreadful one, that is going to eat thee!"

She said to them, "He will not hurt me, only let him come!" The girls wanted to kill it, but Mariquita would not let them. The serpent came near to her, caressed her a great deal, and began to lick the sockets of her eyes, for it was the same which she had reared from a little snake. It said to Mariquita, "Thy foster sister Estefania will soon have a baby, and all that she sets eyes on she longs for. Send the little old man to the town, let him buy the most beautiful nosegay of flowers that he can find, and take it to sell at the king's palace."

The little old man did so, and when he passed by the palace, cried out, "Who buys nosegays?"

Estefania said to her mother, "I must have that nosegay!" Her mother asked the little old man what it was worth, and he told her that he sold it for eyes.

"Mother," said Estefania, "let us take out the eyes of the dog and give them to him."

The old man took them and went his way; but, before he got home with them the serpent said, "Eyes are coming, Mariquita, but they are not thine, thine will come later."

When the little old man arrived, the serpent said to him, "Throw them away, daddy, they are dog's eyes!"

The next day Mariquita told him to buy another nosegay finer still, and pass by the palace to sell it for eyes. Estefania came out, as on the day before, to buy it, and said to her mother, "Let us take out the cat's eyes, and give them to him."

They did so, and the little old man took them, but before he came home the serpent said, "Eyes are coming, Mariquita, but they are not thine, thine will come later"

So she said to the little old man, "Throw them away, daddy, they are cat's eyes."

The following day, they sent to buy a nosegay more beautiful than the others, with birds singing on the top of it, and the little old man went to the palace to sell it.

Estefania came out to buy it, and said to her mother, "Now we have no more eyes, what shall we do, for I must have the nosegay?"

Her mother said to her, "Dost thou not remember that we kept Mariquita's eyes in a glass; we will see if they are sweet yet."

Estefania said, "So long ago, they must be rotten." They went to look for them, and found them the same as when they had taken them out, so they gave them to him for the nosegay. Before the little old man got home, the serpent said, "Eyes are coming, Mariquita, and they are thine!"

So when he arrived she was well pleased, and said, "These, daddy, are really my eyes." She took them and gave them to the serpent. The serpent licked the sockets, put the eyes in again, and if beautiful they were before, much more beautiful were they afterwards.

The next day the serpent said, "Let us go to the palace. Take this bag of gold ounces, and as the king takes his afternoon nap with Estefania, and has his guards at the door, thou must throw a handful of ounces to the soldiers, and while they are busy in gathering them up, thou must cry at the door, 'Sister mine, Florita!' I will answer, 'What wilt thou, sweetheart?' Thou wilt say—

My servant Estefania  
In the king's arms asleep;  
Woe is me because of a faithless wretch.

Thou wilt fling another handful of ounces to the guards, and while they pick them up we will escape."

They did so one day, but the king, who had seen and heard all, gave orders to his guards to seize Mariquita and the serpent when they came again. But the guards, busied with picking up the ounces, took no notice of the king's orders. The third day, the king himself got behind the door to seize them, since he could not get his guards to do it, even though he threatened to cut their heads

off. When they came the third time, and said the same things, and were running away, the king took hold of Mariquita by her clothes and stopped her.

“What is this, maiden,” said he, “what wert thou saying?”

Therewith the serpent spoke up for her and said, “It is that the wife that your royal majesty has is not Mariquita. She is here; order her to do the wonders which her brothers spoke of.” She then told all that the two wicked women had done with Mariquita on the way to the palace.

The king, very wroth, took her indoors, made her wash her hands, kept the water, and the next day it had changed into a block of silver. He made her comb her hair, and the hair that fell off became golden threads. She laughed and fine pearls fell from her mouth.

The king acknowledged his mistake, and felt very sorry for having killed so unjustly the brothers; he married Mariquita, and ordained great royal feasts, and ordered Estefania and her mother to be broken on the wheel, quartered, afterwards to be burnt and their ashes cast to the winds.

After some time had passed, Mariquita had twin princes. Once when they were lying in the cradle, and their parents fondling them, the serpent came, and said, “Which should you like best; to see, your sons dead, or your brothers alive?”

They answered, “Our sons dead, since they are angels from heaven, and our brothers alive.” The serpent cut the infants’ throats, and led the parents to the place where the bodies of the two brothers lay embalmed, and they found them alive and well. The parents then felt very sorrowful, and went back to weep over their children; when they found them alive, and playing in the cradle.

The serpent said to them, “I have now done all that I can do for you. I have no more business here, for I am an angel sent by God, and I am going back to heaven. Farewell

The tale is finished.



# INCA

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## VIRACOCCHA

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Colum, Padraic. *Orpheus: Myths of the World*. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1930, 275–279.

**Date:** 1930

**Original Source:** Inca

**National Origin:** Native American

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The Inca Empire centered in Cuzco extended through the territory comprising the modern countries of Peru, Ecuador, Bolivia, Argentina, Chile, and Colombia. As such, it was the largest of the pre-Colombian cultures. To the Incas (and other indigenous cultures), Viracocha was the creator of the sun, moon, stars, human beings (see the Aymara tales “The Creation,” page 299, and “Two Sons of the Creator,” page 304), and civilization itself. Two symbols commonly associated with him are mentioned in the following **myth**: a golden staff and the chakana (a three-tiered cross). The staff is mentioned directly, while the chakana is mentioned by implication by the blessing of the condor, the puma, and the serpent—the creatures who represent the top, middle, and lower tiers of the cross, respectively. Viracocha commonly traveled among humans disguised as a beggar, a central **motif** of this myth.

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**I**n other days we who are of the race of the Incas worshipped the Sun; we held that he was the greatest and most benignant of all beings, and we named ourselves the children of the Sun. We had traditions that told of the pitiable ways that we and the rest of the human race lived in before the Sun, having had compassion upon us, decided to lead us towards better ways of

living.... Lo, now! Our Lord, the Sun, put his two children, a son and a daughter, in a boat upon Lake Titicaca. He told them they were to float upon the water until they came to where men lived. He put his golden staff into the hands of his son. He told him he was to lead men into a place where that staff, dropped upon the earth, sank deep down into it.

So the children of our Lord the Sun went upon the waters of Lake Titicaca. They came to where our fathers lived in those far days. Where we live now we see villages and cities; we see streams flowing down from the mountains, and being led this way and that way to water our crops and our trees; we see flocks of llamas feeding on good grass with their lambs—countless flocks. But in those days we lived where there were thickets and barren rocks; we had no llamas; we had no crops; we knew not how to make the waters flow this way and that way; we had no villages, no cities, no temples. We lived in clefts of the rocks and holes in the ground. The covering of our bodies was of bark or of leaves, or else we went naked in the day and without covering to put over us in the night. We ate roots that we pulled up out of the ground, or fought with the foxes for the dead things they were carrying away. No one bore rule amongst us, and we knew nothing of duty or kindness of one to another.

Out of their boat on Lake Titicaca came the children of our Lord to us. They brought us together; they had rule over us, and they showed us how to live as husband and wife and children, and how to know those who were leaders amongst us and how to obey those leaders. And having showed us these things they led us from the land they had found us in. And often did he who was the son of our Lord the Sun drop the golden staff upon the ground as we went on. Sometimes the staff sank a little way into the earth, sometimes it sank to half its length in the earth. We came to a place where the golden staff, dropped by him who was the son of our Lord the Sun, sank into the earth until only its top was to be seen. And there we stayed, or, rather, there our fathers stayed, for we are many generations from the men and women who came into this place with the two who were the children of the Sun.

They showed us how to sow crops in that rich ground, and how to lead water down from the hills to water the crops and the trees. They showed us how to tame the llamas, and how to herd them and tend them as tamed beasts. They showed us how to take the wool from them and weave the wool into garments for ourselves; also, they showed us how to dye our garments so that we went brightly clad in the light of the sun. They showed us how to work in gold and silver, and how to make vessels of clay, and how to put shapes and figures upon these vessels. They showed us how to build houses, and how to build villages, and cities, and temples. And they showed us, too, how to obey the rule of those who were left to rule over us, the Incas.

Then the two who were the son and daughter of the Sun left us. Before they went from us they told us that the Sun, their father, would adopt us as his children. And so we of the Inca race became the children of the Sun. They said to

us, too, "Our father, the Sun, does good to the whole world; he gives light that men may see and follow their pursuits; he makes men warm when they had been cold; he ripens their crops; he increases their flocks of llamas; he brings dew upon the ground. The Sun, our father, goes round the earth each day that he may know of man's necessities and help him to provide for them. Be like the Sun, then, far-seeing, regular in all your occupations. And bring the worship of the Sun amongst the tribes who live in darkness and ignorance."

And so these two, his son and daughter who were sent to us by the Sun, were seen no more by us. But we knew ourselves now as the children of the Sun. We subdued the tribes in his name, and brought the knowledge of his beneficence amongst them. We built a great temple to him. And the daughters of the Incas in hundreds served him as Virgins of the Sun.

Yes, but there were those amongst us who came to have other thoughts about Heaven and the ways of Heaven. "Does not the Sun go as another being directs him to go?" one of the Incas said to his councilors. "Is he not like an arrow shot onward by a man? Is he not like a llama tethered by the will of a man rather than like one who has freedom? Does he not let a little cloud obscure his splendor? Is it not plain that he may never take rest from his tasks?"

So men amongst us have said, and they who have said them have mentioned a name. Viracocha that name is. And then they would say words from rites that were known to the people of this land before the Incas came into it. They would say, "O conquering Viracocha! Thou gavest life and valor to men, saying, 'let this be a man,' and to women saying, 'let this be a woman.' Thou madest them and gavest them being! Watch over them that they may live in health and peace! Thou who art in the high heavens, and among the clouds of the tempest, grant this with long life, and accept this sacrifice, O Creator!" So those who were priests in the land before our fathers came into it prayed.

And they said that it was Viracocha who created the Sun, and created the Moon also. They said that at the beginning the Sun was not brighter than the Moon, and that in his jealousy he flung ashes upon the face of the Moon and dimmed the Moon's primal brightness. And they said that Viracocha could make great terraces of rock and clay rear themselves up with crops upon them, and that he could bring the water-courses to freshen terraces and gardens merely by striking with a hollow cane that he carried.

Now although Viracocha was so great, he obscured himself, and came back to live amongst the Gods in the guise of a beggar. None knew him for Viracocha, the Creator of all things. And he saw the Goddess Cavillaca as she sat amongst llama lambs under a lucma tree, weaving the wool of the white llama. He saw her and he approached her. He left a ripe fruit beside her. She ate the fruit and she became with child by him.

And when her child was born her parents and her friends said to her, "You must find out who is the father of this child. Let all who live near come to this

lucma tree, and let the child crawl amongst them. The man he crawls to and touches with his hand we will know is his father.”

So under the lucma tree Cavillaca sat, and her child was with her. All who lived near came to that place, and amongst them came Viracocha, still in his beggar’s dress. All came near to Cavillaca and her child. The child crawled where they stood. He came to Viracocha. He put his hand up and touched the man who was in the beggar’s garb.

Then was Cavillaca made ashamed before all the Gods. She snatched up her child and held him to her. She fled away from that place. She fled towards the ocean with her child. Viracocha put on his robes of splendor and hastened after her. And as he went he cried out, “O Goddess, turn; look back at me! See how splendid I am!” But the Goddess, without turning, fled with her child from before him.

Viracocha went seeking them. As he crossed the peaks he met a condor, and the condor flew with him, and consoled him. Viracocha blessed the condor, and gave him long life and the power to traverse the wilderness and go over the highest peaks; also he gave him the right to prey upon creatures. Afterwards he met a fox; but the fox derided him, telling him that his quest was vain. He cursed the fox, saying to him that he would have to hunt at night, and that men would slay him. He met a puma, and the puma went with him and consoled him. He blessed the puma, saying that he would receive honor from men. As he went down the other side of the mountain, he came upon parrots flying from the trees of their forest. And the parrots cried out words that were of ill-omen. He cursed the parrots, saying that they would never have honor from men. But he blessed the falcon that flew with him down to the sea.

And when he came to the sea he found that Cavillaca and her child had plunged themselves into the water and had been transformed into rocks. Then Viracocha in his grief remained beside the sea.

Now beside the sea there were two virgins who were Uрпиуасhас’s daughters. They were guarded by a serpent. Viracocha charmed the serpent with his wisdom, and the serpent permitted him to approach Uрпиуасhас’s daughters. One flew away and became a dove. But the other lived there with Viracocha. And this Virgin of the Sea showed Viracocha where her mother kept all the fishes of the world. They were in a pond and they could not go through the waters of the world. Viracocha broke down the walls of their pond, and let them go through the streams and the lakes and the sea. And thus he let men have fishes to eat.

He lived amongst men, and he taught them many arts. He it was, as the priests of those who were here before the Incas say, showed men how to bring streams of water to their crops, and taught them how to build terraces upon the mountains where crops would grow. He set up a great cross upon the mountain Caraway. And when the bird that cries out four times at dawn cried out, and the light came upon the cross he had set up, Viracocha went from amongst men.

He went down to the sea, and he walked across it towards the west. But he told those whom he had left behind that he would send messengers back who would protect them and give them renewed knowledge of all he had taught them. He left them, but men still remember the chants that those whom he left on the mountain, by the cross, cried out their longing:

“Oh, hear me! From the sky above, In which thou mayst be, From the sea beneath, In which thou mayst be, Creator of the world, Maker of all men; Lord of all Lords, My eyes fail me For longing to see thee; For the sole desire to know thee.”

## **THE SHEPHERD AND THE DAUGHTER OF THE SUN**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Markham, Sir Clements. *The Incas of Peru*. London: Smith Elder & Co., 1910, 408–415.

**Date:** 1910

**Original Source:** Inca

**National Origin:** Native American

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The Incas, as established in their **myth** “Viracocha” (page 315) and in the Aymara “The Children of the Sun” (page 302), regarded themselves as the children of the Sun deity. As a consequence of divine descent, the supreme Inca—the ruler of the empire—was considered the Sun incarnate. To serve the needs of the deity in human form and to minister to the celestial manifestation of the Sun, special religious orders were enfranchised. Among these religious classes were the Virgins (or Daughters of the Sun). The Virgins of the Sun were chosen at puberty to serve the ceremonial needs of the Sun-centered religion of the Inca and his subjects. They, for example, wove sacrificial cloths, ground the maize used for the principal solar festival of Inti Raimi, and preserved in their convents a portion of the fire generated each year during Inti Raimi. Chuqui-llantu was a Virgins of the Sun. In this role, she had access to the Inca (the Sun), and his family and was expected to carry out sacred duties upon which the lives of all his subjects depended. The dire consequences following her disobedience should be understood in the light of these facts. The **motif** of transformation into stones is common to this region (see, for example, “Viracocha,” page 315, and “Two Sons of the Creator,” page 304).

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**I**n the snow-clad cordillera above the valley of Yucay, called Pitu-siray, a shepherd watched the flock of white llamas intended for the Inca to sacrifice to the Sun. He was a native of Laris, named Acoya-napa, a very well

disposed and gentle youth. He strolled behind his flock, and presently began to play upon his flute very softly and sweetly, neither feeling anything of the amorous desires of youth, nor knowing anything of them.

He was carelessly playing his flute one day when two daughters of the Sun came to him. They could wander in all directions over the green meadows, and never failed to find one of their houses at night, where the guards and porters looked out that nothing came that could do them harm. Well, the two girls came to the place where the shepherd rested quite at his ease, and they asked him about his llamas.

The shepherd, who had not seen them until they spoke, was surprised, and fell on his knees, thinking that they were the embodiments of two out of the four crystalline fountains which were very famous in those parts. So he did not dare to answer them. They repeated their question about the flock, and told him not to be afraid, for they were children of the Sun, who was lord of all the land, and to give him confidence they took him by the arm. Then the shepherd stood up and kissed their hands.

After talking together for some time the shepherd said that it was time for him to collect his flock, and asked their permission. The elder princess, named Chuqui-llantu, had been struck by the grace and good disposition of the shepherd. She asked him his name and of what place he was a native. He replied that his home was at Laris and that his name was Acoya-napa. While he was speaking Chuqui-llantu cast her eyes upon a plate of silver which the shepherd wore over his forehead, and which shone and glittered very prettily. Looking closer she saw on it two figures, very subtly contrived, who were eating a heart. Chuqui-llantu asked the shepherd the name of that silver ornament, and he said it was called utusi. The princess returned it to the shepherd, and took leave of him, carrying well in her memory the name of the ornament and the figures, thinking with what delicacy they were drawn, almost seeming to her to be alive.

She talked about it with her sister until they came to their palace. On entering, the doorkeepers looked to see if they brought with them anything that would do harm, because it was often found that women had brought with them, hidden in their clothes, such things as fillets and necklaces. After having looked well, the porters let them pass, and they found the women of the Sun cooking and preparing food. Chuqui-llantu said that she was very tired with her walk, and that she did not want any supper. All the rest supped with her sister, who thought that Acoya-napa was not one who could cause inquietude. But Chuqui-llantu was unable to rest owing to the great love she felt for the shepherd Acoya-napa, and she regretted that she had not shown him what was in her breast. But at last she went to sleep.

In the palace there were many richly furnished apartments in which the women of the Sun dwelt. These virgins were brought from all the four provinces which were subject to the Inca, namely Chinchasuyu, Cuntisuyu, Antisuyu

and Colla-suyu. Within, there were four fountains which flowed towards the four provinces, and in which the women bathed, each in the fountain of the province where she was born. They named the fountains in this way. That of Chinchu-suyu was called Chuculla-puquio, that of Cunti-suyu was known as Ocoruro-puquio, Siclla-puquio was the fountain of Anti-suyu, and Llulucha-puquio of Colla-suyu. The most beautiful child of the Sun, Chuqui-llantu, was wrapped in profound sleep.

She had a dream. She thought she saw a bird flying from one tree to another, and singing very softly and sweetly. After having sung for some time, the bird came down and regarded the princess, saying that she should feel no sorrow, for all would be well. The princess said that she mourned for something for which there could be no remedy. The singing bird replied that it would find a remedy, and asked the princess to tell her the cause of her sorrow. At last Chuqui-llantu told the bird of the great love she felt for the shepherd boy named Acoya-mpa, who guarded the white flock. Her death seemed inevitable. She could have no cure but to go to him whom she so dearly loved, and if she did her father the Sun would order her to be killed.

The answer of the singing bird, by name checollo, was that she should arise and sit between the four fountains. There she was to sing what she had most in her memory. If the fountains repeated her words, she might then safely do what she wanted. Saying this the bird flew away, and the princess awoke. She was terrified. But she dressed very quickly and put herself between the four fountains. She began to repeat what she remembered to have seen of the two figures on the silver plate, singing, "Micuc isutu cuyuc utusi cucim." Presently all the fountains began to sing the same verse.

Seeing that all the fountains were very favorable, the princess went to repose for a little while, for all night she had been conversing with the checollo in her dream.

When the shepherd boy went to his home he called to mind the great beauty of Chuqui-llantu. She had aroused his love, but he was saddened by the thought that it must be love without hope. He took up his flute and played such heart-breaking music that it made him shed many tears, and he lamented, saying, "Ay! ay! ay! for the unlucky and sorrowful shepherd, abandoned and without hope, now approaching the day of your death, for there can be no remedy and no hope." Saying this, he also went to sleep.

The shepherd's mother lived in Laris some distance from where he tended his llamas, and she knew, by her power of divination, the cause of the extreme grief into which her son was plunged, and that he must die unless she took order for providing a remedy. So she set out for the mountains, and arrived at the shepherd's hut at sunrise. She looked in and saw her son almost moribund, with his face covered with tears.

She went in and awoke him. When he saw who it was he began to tell her the cause of his grief, and she did what she could to console him. She told him

not to be downhearted, because she would find a remedy within a few days. Saying this she departed and, going among the rocks, she gathered certain herbs which are believed to be cures for grief. Having collected a great quantity she began to cook them, and the cooking was not finished before the two princesses appeared at the entrance of the hut.

For Chuqui-llantu, when she was rested, had set out with her sister for a walk on the green slopes of the mountains, taking the direction of the hut. Her tender heart prevented her from going in any other direction. When they arrived they were tired, and sat down by the entrance. Seeing an old dame inside they saluted her, and asked her if she could give them anything to eat. The mother went down on her knees and said she had nothing but a dish of herbs. She brought it to them, and they began to eat with excellent appetites. Chuqui-llantu then walked round the hut without finding what she sought, for the shepherd's mother had made Acoya-napa lie down inside the hut, under a cloak. So the princess thought that he had gone after his flock.

Then she saw the cloak and told the mother that it was a very pretty cloak, asking where it came from. The old woman told her that it was a cloak which, in ancient times, belonged to a woman beloved by Pachacamac, a deity very celebrated in the valleys on the coast. She said it had come to her by inheritance; but the princess, with many endearments, begged for it until at last the mother consented. When Chuqui-llantu took it into her hands she liked it better than before and, after staying a short time longer in the hut, she took leave of the old woman, and walked along the meadows looking about in hopes of seeing him whom she longed for. (We do not treat further of the sister, as she now drops out of the story, but only of Chuqui-llantu.)

She was very sad and pensive when she could see no signs of her beloved shepherd on her way back to the palace. She was in great sorrow at not having seen him, and when, as was usual, the guards looked at what she brought, they saw nothing but the cloak. A splendid supper was provided, and when every one went to bed the princess took the cloak and placed it at her bedside. As soon as she was alone she began to weep, thinking of the shepherd. She fell asleep at last, but it was not long before the cloak was changed into the being it had been before. It began to call Chuqui-llantu by her own name. She was terribly frightened, got out of bed, and beheld the shepherd on his knees before her, shedding many tears. She was satisfied on seeing him, and inquired how he had got inside the palace. He replied that the cloak which she carried had arranged about that. Then Chuqui-llantu embraced him, and put her finely worked lipi mantles on him, and they slept together.

When they wanted to get up in the morning, the shepherd again became the cloak. As soon as the sun rose, the princess left the palace of her father with the cloak, and when she reached a ravine in the mountains, she found herself again with her beloved shepherd, who had been changed into himself. But one of the guards had followed them, and when he saw what had happened he gave



the alarm with loud shouts. The lovers fled into the mountains which are near the town of Calca. Being tired after a long journey, they climbed to the top of a rock and went to sleep. They heard a great noise in their sleep, so they arose. The princess took one shoe in her hand and kept the other on her foot. Then looking towards the town of Calca both were turned into stone. To this day the two statues may be seen between Calca and Huayllapampa.

# SURINAME MAROON

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## HOW MAN MADE WOMAN RESPECT HIM

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Penard, A. P., and T. E. Penard. "Surinam Folk-Tales." *Journal of American Folklore* 30 (1917): 244.

**Date:** ca. 1917

**Original Source:** Suriname Maroon

**National Origin:** African American

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Suriname (formerly Dutch Guiana) is located on the northeast coast of South America, bordered by the Atlantic Ocean to the north, Brazil to the south, French Guiana to the east, and Guyana on the west. The Maroons of Suriname from whom the following narratives were collected were slaves of African descent who escaped from the coastal plantations developed by the Dutch and found refuge in the tropical rainforests of the interior. The Maroons established communities (in Suriname and throughout the Western hemisphere) in resistance to the European slave system and many successfully preserved and adapted African arts and cultural practices in "the bush." The following tale shows African influence both by the use of the typical African and African American **trickster**, the anthropomorphic spider Anansi, and by its deliberately explanatory quality. The words "Er tin tin," are **formulaic** in this folk tradition and mean, essentially, "Once upon a time."

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**E**r tin tin, women had no respect for men. They were always scolding their husbands, and calling them all kinds of bad names, such as "Stupid," "Lazy," "Beast."

Anansi, too, was treated in this manner, and it humiliated him very much indeed. “I must put an end to this,” he muttered. “I’ll teach my wife better manners; I’ll make her respect me. *Mi sa sori hem fa watea de go na kokronoto bere*” [“I will show her how the water goes into the coconut’s belly,” Suriname creole, roughly, “I will teach her a lesson.”]

Anansi set to work and dug a deep well; and when it was deep enough, he called his wife, and asked her to bring him a ladder so that he could climb out. Scolding and jawing, as usual, she brought the ladder and set it in place. With spade in hand, Anansi climbed out of the pit; but, just as he reached the top of the ladder, he slyly dropped the spade into the pit, pretending that it was an accident.

“*Ke!*” [loosely, “My goodness!”] he exclaimed, turning to his wife, “I have just dropped the spade into the well, and I am so tired. *Tangi tangi*, (please) will you go down and get it for me?” His wife scolded him dreadfully, but she went down the ladder to fetch the spade. As she stooped to pick it up, Anansi quickly pulled up the ladder, and his wife was caught in the trap.

She began to rave and tear, called Anansi everything that was bad, and commanded him to lower the ladder; but Anansi paid no attention. He just smiled, and noted with satisfaction that the water was beginning to flow into the new well. And as the water rose, his wife scolded less and less, until it was on a level with her stomach. Then she asked her *dear* Anansi for the ladder, but Anansi paid no attention. When the water was up to her breast, she beseeched her good Boss (*Basi*) for the ladder; but Anansi paid no attention. When the water was up to her neck, she tearfully begged her beloved master to lower the ladder; then Anansi gave in. He lowered the ladder; and his wife, wet and shivering, meekly climbed out of the well.

But after that day she became very obedient and respectful; she never scolded her husband any more, and always addressed him as “*mi masra*” (“my master”). Other women followed her example and also became very obedient; and so to this day every woman respects her husband, and calls him “*Basi*,” or “*mi masra*.”

## ANANSI EATS MUTTON

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Penard, A. P., and T. E. Penard. “Surinam Folk-Tales.” *Journal of American Folklore* 30 (1917): 245–246.

**Date:** ca. 1917

**Original Source:** Surinam Maroon

**National Origin:** African American

Anansi is so prominent in the folktales of some African American regions that the tales are referred to generically as “Anansi ‘tory” (Anansi story). Most, but by no means all, of the tales feature this anthropomorphic spider in the central role as **trickster**, liar, thief, and scoundrel. His guile and ability to change form to serve his own ends are showcased in the following narrative. This tale plot is known throughout the African Caribbean. See, for example, “Nancy Fools His Wife” (page 407).

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**E**r *tin tin*, Anansi’s wife had a fine fat sheep that she herself had raised. Anansi often begged her to slaughter the sheep; but she steadily refused, and scolded him angrily for his greediness. “I will teach my wife not to be so stingy,” muttered Anansi one night as he went to bed.

Next morning he did not get up, but pretended to be very sick. He trembled and shook so, that his wife became alarmed, and asked him what ailed him and what she could do to relieve him.

“Ke!” replied Anansi weakly, “I don’t know what the matter is, but I feel awfully sick.” So he told his wife to consult with the *loekoeman* [traditional healer], whom she would find under the big *kankantri* [silk cotton tree, regarded as sacred] in the forest. His wife did not know the *loekoeman*, but she started out to find him. As she was going out, Anansi requested her to take the children with her. “They make such a terrible noise, that I shall go crazy,” he explained.

Well, as soon as his wife had departed, Anansi jumped out of bed and disguised himself as an old *loekoeman*. He pulled an old hat well over his eyes, and, hurrying over a short cut which he knew, reached the *kankantri* before his wife.

After a while his wife and children arrived, and greeted him politely with a *kosi* [curtsy], without seeing through the disguise. “Ke, mi papa,” spoke his wife, “*masra* Anansi is very sick. He has convulsions and terrible pains in his stomach, so he has sent me to you for some medicine to cure him.”

The *loekoeman* consulted with the spirits, shook his head thoughtfully, and said, “My good woman, your husband is a very good friend of mine; and so I will tell you a good medicine to cure him, and it will not cost you anything for the advice. My friend Anansi is very sick indeed; his spirit longs for mutton, and the poor man is slowly dying from this craving. You must serve him a nice fat sheep, nicely cooked, and he alone must eat it. You and the children must not even taste it, otherwise the *takroe sani* (‘evil thing’) that possesses him will surely kill him. Nothing else can save him.”

Anansi’s wife thanked the *loekoeman* and left. As soon as she was out of sight, Anansi hurried home over the short cut, removed his disguise, and jumped into bed, where he awaited the return of his wife and children.

In a short while they arrived, and told Anansi what the *loekoeman* had said. Anansi praised the *loekoeman*'s wisdom. He said that the advice was good, and he felt that the medicine would cure him.

With unwilling hands his wife and children prepared the sheep for Anansi in a most appetizing manner. Anansi ate so much mutton that he nearly burst, while his wife and children looked on with longing eyes. When he had swallowed the last mouthful, he smacked his lips, thanked his wife, and advised his children to follow their good mother's example and never to be stingy or greedy.

## JAUW'S DREAM

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Penard, A. P., and T. E. Penard. "Surinam Folk-Tales." *Journal of American Folklore* 30 (1917): 246–248.

**Date:** ca. 1917

**Original Source:** Surinam Maroon

**National Origin:** African American

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The following narrative of a prophetic dream and the workings of one man's "good spirit" is unlike the two previous Anansi 'ories in all its particulars except for the **formulaic** opening. The notion of the spirit helper in the guise of an animal may be a mark of the influence of the neighboring Native American cultures on the Maroon repertoire.

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**E**r *tin tin*, there were two friends, Jauw and Kwakoe, who thought very much of each other. Where any one saw Jauw, he would be sure to find Kwakoe; and where any one saw Kwakoe, he would be sure to find Jauw; they were inseparable. Even at night they went to bed together; and if one of them should fall asleep first, the other would lie quietly beside him until he, too, fell asleep.

Well, one night the two friends went to bed as usual, and it happened that Jauw fell asleep first. Kwakoe, who was lying with his face toward Jauw, was greatly surprised to see a mouse come out of Jauw's nose and noiselessly leave the hut. Kwakoe wanted to find out more about this wonderful animal, for he knew that it could not be an ordinary mouse; so he got up quickly and followed the little beast.

The mouse moved stealthily in the dark shadows, took the road, and entered the forest, through which it led the way to a giant *kankantri* whose trunk was completely hidden in a tangle of *boesitetei* [vines] that hung about it.

Cautiously the mouse looked around, and, swiftly climbing up one of the bush-ropes, disappeared between the clumps that grew thickly upon the branches of the big tree. But Kwakoe, from behind a near-by bush, had seen everything, and patiently he awaited the mouse's return.

Well, after a long time the mouse again made its appearance from among the mass of *boesi-nanasi*, came down the same bush-rope, and returned to the village by the same road. The strange little animal went straight to the hut of the two friends, entered cautiously, and ran quickly into Jauw's nose before Kwakoe, who had followed it, had a chance to grab it.

As soon as the mouse had vanished, Jauw awoke with a yawn, stretched himself lazily, and rubbed the sleep from his eyes, saying to his friend, "Kwakoe, man, I dreamed a wonderful dream, which I shall not soon forget. *Ka* [an exclamation of wonder or surprise] but a man's head can take him to strange places!" Kwakoe, curious to know if Jauw's dream could have any connection with what he had just seen, asked him to tell him about it; so Jauw proceeded to relate his dream.

"Well, then, friend Kwakoe, I dreamed that I quietly left the hut, followed the road a ways, and entered the forest. And I walked until I came to a big *kankantri* all covered with *boesi-tetei* and *boesi-nanasi*. I looked around to make sure that nobody was watching, and then I climbed up one of the bush-ropes. Hidden between the branches I discovered a great, big box, so big that I could easily enter it through the keyhole. And what do you think I found in the box, Kwakoe? It was full of gold money, just gold money, nothing else but gold money. *Baja*, ["friend" or "brother"] I was surprised. Happy to think that you and I would not have to work any more, I spent a long time counting the money. Then I crawled out of the box through the keyhole. I wanted to take the box back with me, but it was too heavy; so I decided to go home and get you to help me cut down the *kankantri*. I slid down the same bush-rope, and came home to tell you all about it. But you know how it is with dreams, Kwakoe. As soon as I entered the hut, I awoke. *Ka*, but a man's head can take him to strange places!"

Kwakoe, who had listened with great interest while Jauw related his dream, asked, "Do you think, friend Jauw, that you would recognize the *kankantri* if you should see it again?"

"Certainly I would," replied Jauw, "never before in my life have I seen such a big *kankantri*, or one so completely covered with *boesi-tetei* and *boesi-nanasi*. But why do you ask me that, Kwakoe?"

Thereupon Kwakoe told Jauw that it was his plan to search for the *kankantri*, and that Jauw would do better to get up and help grind the axes, so that they would have no difficulty in cutting down the tree which he thought they would have no trouble in finding. But Jauw, who knew nothing of the mouse in his own head, laughed at Kwakoe, saying that he had no desire to get up so early in the morning for the purpose of sharpening axes to cut down a *kankantri* he had

never really seen, and that he could not see how an intelligent man like Kwakoe could put so much faith in dreams.

Then Kwakoe told Jauw that he did not believe in dreams, either, but that this was no ordinary dream; and he related to Jauw his experience with the wonderful mouse. Jauw was amazed at what Kwakoe told him, but he was sure that Kwakoe would not tell him a lie; so he consented to go out and help sharpen the axes.

At daybreak the two friends entered the forest, and soon they came to the giant *kankantri* into which the mouse had climbed during the night. As soon as Jauw saw the big tree all covered with *boesi-tetei* and *boesi-nanasi*, he exclaimed, “Kwakoe, this is the *kankantri* I saw in my dream. It can be no other.”

Kwakoe and Jauw now went to work with their axes. It was not an easy matter to cut down such an enormous tree; but the thought of finding the treasure in its branches spurred them on, and at last the forest giant tottered and crashed down with a noise like thunder.

And, sure enough, from its branches fell a large box. As it struck the ground, it broke open from the force of its own weight, and the bright gold pieces which Jauw had seen in his dream scattered and rolled over the ground. The two friends, in their joy, embraced each other, and declared that the mouse which had come out of Jauw’s nose must have been his good spirit. “Ka!” exclaimed Kwakoe, it was a good thing for you that I did not catch the mouse when I tried, or you would be a dead man now.”

Kwakoe and Jauw gathered up their treasure and carried it safely home. They celebrated by giving a great feast, to which everybody in the village was invited. At the feast they made it known how they came into possession of the golden treasure. They spent their money so freely, that the gold coins soon spread over the whole world and became known to every one; for I must tell you that before Kwakoe and Jauw found their treasure, gold coins were not known to anyone on earth.

## **SNAKE AND HUNTER**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Penard, A. P., and T. E. Penard. “Surinam Folk-Tales.” *Journal of American Folklore* 30 (1917): 248–250.

**Date:** ca. 1917

**Original Source:** Surinam Maroon

**National Origin:** African American

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The following **animal tale** is a **variant** of “The Ungrateful Serpent Returned to Captivity” (AT 155A). In this tale, Anansi departs from his usual self-serving behavior to play the role of the sage judge. This

narrative adds a final episode to the usual plot in which the snake learns his lesson and repays the hunter for his kindness.

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*E*r tin tin, there was a big fire in the wood. All the trees were in flames, and nearly all the animals were burned to death. To escape the terrible heat, Snake lowered himself into a deep hole. The fire raged fiercely for a long time, but was at last extinguished by a heavy rain. When all the danger was past, Snake attempted to climb out of the hole, but, try as he would, he could not scale the steep sides. He begged every one who passed to help him; but nobody dared to give him assistance, for fear of his deadly bite.

Well, at last Hunter came along. He took pity on Snake and pulled him out. But as soon as Snake was free, he turned upon Hunter with the intention of biting him. "You must not bite me after my kind act," said Hunter, warding him off.

"And why shouldn't I bite you?" asked Snake.

"Because," explained Hunter, "you should not do harm to him who has shown you an act of kindness."

"But I am sure that everybody does," hissed Snake. "You know the saying, 'Buen no habi tangi.'" ["Good has no thanks."]

"Very well," proposed Hunter, "let us put the case before a competent judge!" Snake agreed, so together they started for the city.

On the way they met first Horse, next Ass, then Cow. To each of these Hunter and Snake told their story, and to each they put the question, "Ought any one to return Evil for Good?" Horse neighed, saying that he was usually whipped for his good services to man. Ass hee-hawed, saying that he was beaten with a stick for his good services to man. Cow bellowed that she expected to be slaughtered for her good services to man.

Snake then claimed that he had won the case, and lifted his head to strike Hunter; but Hunter said, "I don't agree yet; let us put the case before Anansi, who is very wise!" Snake agreed, and so they continued on their way.

Well, they came to the city where Anansi dwelled, and it so happened that they found him at home. They told Anansi how Snake had let himself down into a deep hole to escape the terrible fire that was raging in the wood; how he had begged everybody who passed for assistance; how Hunter had helped him out of the hole; and how Snake had then tried to bite Hunter. They also told Anansi how they had met Horse, Ass, and Cow, and how each of them had told them that "Tangi foe buen na kodja." ["Thanks for good is the cudgel."] And so they had come to Anansi, who was very wise, that he might settle the dispute fairly.

Anansi looked thoughtful, and, shaking his head, said, "My friends, I cannot say who is right until I have seen with my own eyes how everything happened. Let us go back to the exact spot."



Well, then all three walked back to the hole in the wood out of which Hunter had helped Snake, and Anansi asked them to act out everything just exactly as it had happened. So Snake slid down into the hole and began calling for assistance. Hunter pretended to be passing, and, turning to the hole, was about to help Snake out again, when Anansi stopped him, saying, "Wait, I will settle the dispute now. Hunter must not help Snake this time. Snake must try to get out without any assistance, so that he may learn to appreciate a kind act." Snake was obliged to remain in the hole, and he suffered much from hunger. At last, after many unsuccessful attempts, he managed to get out. But experience had been a good master, and Snake had learned his lesson well.

Well, it came to pass that some time later Hunter was caught poaching in the king's woods and was thrown into prison. Snake heard of it and made up his mind to help Hunter, so he hastened to the king's palace. Unobserved he approached the king. When he saw a good chance, he suddenly bit the king, and succeeded in making his escape before any one could catch him.

Then he made his way to the prison in which Hunter was confined, and found a way to enter it. He calmed Hunter's fears, and said, "A while ago you did me a favor, and now by experience I have learned to appreciate it. I come to aid you. Listen! I have just bitten the king, and he is very sick from the effects of the poison; in fact, he is on the point of dying. I bring you the only remedy for my deadly bite. It is known to me alone. Send word to the king that you can cure him, but that you will not do so unless he promises to give you his only daughter in marriage." So saying, Snake gave Hunter the remedy, consisting of three different kinds of leaves, and then he departed.

Hunter did as Snake advised him. He sent word saying that he could cure the king, and asked as reward his release from prison and the king's daughter in marriage. Fearing death, the king consented, and allowed Hunter to try the remedy. The king was quickly restored to health. Hunter married the princess, and the teller of this tale was present at the wedding.

# WARRAU

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## THE ADVENTURES OF KOROROMANNA

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Roth, Walter E. *An Inquiry into the Animism and Folk-Lore of the Guiana Indians*. Thirtieth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, 1908–1909. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1915, 126–129.

**Date:** ca. 1915

**Original Source:** Warrau

**National Origin:** Native American

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The Warrau (also known as the Guarauno) are a nomadic Native American culture indigenous to northeastern South America, residing primarily in Venezuela, Guyana, and Suriname. Hunting, fishing, and gathering provide their primary subsistence. The Warrau believed that Kororomanna was a supernatural who created male human beings. Women were created by the spirit Kuliminia. Kororomanna was said to have two wives: Uri-Kaddo (“a worker in darkness”) and Emeshi (the name refers to a large burrowing ant). Regarding the names, Walter Roth contends that “together, they are typical of the creation of all things out of the earth in the dark” (126). The following narrative gives a description of a typical encounter with bush spirits (Hebus). In the course of the tale, Kororomanna is revealed to be something of a **trickster** as well as a creator.

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**K**ororomanna went out hunting and shot a “baboon” (*Mycetes*), but as it was already late in the afternoon, in trying to make his way home he lost his way in the darkness. And there he had to make his *banab* [temporary shelter], and to lie down, with the baboon beside him. But where he lay was a

Hebu road; you can always distinguish a Spirit road from any other pathway in the forest because the Hebus occupying the trees that lie alongside it are always, especially at night, striking the branches and trunks, and so producing short sharp crackling noises.

It was not pleasant for poor Kororomanna, especially as the baboon's body was now beginning to swell with all the noxious humors inside; lest the Hebus should steal it from him, he was obliged to keep the carcass alongside and watch over it with a stick.

At last he fell asleep, but in the middle of the night the Hebus, what with the knocking on the trees, aroused him from his slumbers. Now that he was awake, he mimicked the Spirits, blow for blow, and as they struck the limb of a tree, Kororomanna would strike the belly of the baboon. But what with the air inside, each time he struck the animal, there came a resonant *Boom! Boom!* just like the beating of a drum.

The Hebu leader heard the curious sound, and became a bit frightened, "What can it be? When before I knocked a tree, it never made a noise like that." To make sure, however, he struck the tree hard again, and *Boom!* came once more from the carcass. Hebu was really frightened now, and began to search all around to find out where the extraordinary noise could possibly come from; at last he recognized the little manicole banab, and saw Kororomanna laughing. Indeed, the latter could not help laughing, considering that it was the first time he had heard such a funny sound come out of any animal.

Hebu then said to him, "Who are you? Show me your hand," to which Kororomanna replied, "I am Warrau, and here is my hand," but instead of putting out his own, he shoved forward one of the baboon's, and then held forward the animal's other hand, and finally both feet. Hebu was much puzzled and said he had never seen before a Warrau with so black a hand, and would not be satisfied until he saw the face. Kororomanna accordingly deceived him again and held out the monkey's, which caused Hebu to make the same remark about his face as he had done about his hands and feet.

The Spirit became more frightened than ever, but his curiosity exceeded his fear, because he next wanted to know where all that *Boom! Boom!* sound had come from. And when he learnt its source of origin (breaking wind), he regretted that he had not been made like ordinary mortals, he and all his family having no proper posteriors, but just a red spot. He thereupon begged Kororomanna to make for him a posterior which would allow of his producing a similar sound.

So with his bow Kororomanna split the Spirit's hind quarters, and completed the task by impaling him, but so rough was he in his methods, that the weapon transfixed the whole body even piercing the unfortunate Hebu's head. The Hebu cursed Kororomanna for having killed him, and threatened that the other Spirits would avenge his death; he then disappeared.

Our hero, becoming a bit anxious on his own account, and, recognizing by the gradually increasing hullabaloo in the trees that swarms of Hebus were

approaching the scene of the outrage, now climbed the manicole tree sheltering his banab, leaving the baboon's corpse inside. The Spirits then entered the banab, and believing the dead animal to be Kororomanna, began hitting it with their sticks, and with each blow, there came *Boom!* Our friend up the tree, whence he could watch their every movement, and their surprise at the acoustic results of the flogging, could not refrain from cracking a smile, which soon gave way to a hearty laugh.

The Spirits, unfortunately for him, heard it, and looking at the dead baboon, said, "This cannot be the person who is laughing at us." They looked all around, but could see nothing, until one of them stood on his head, and peeped up into the tree. And there, sure enough, he saw Kororomanna laughing at them. All the others then put themselves in the same posture around the tree, and had a good look at him. The question they next had to decide was how to catch him. This they concluded could most easily be managed by hewing down the tree.

They accordingly started with their axes on the trunk, but since the implements were but water-turtle shells, it was not long before they broke. They then sent for their knives, but as these were merely the seed-pods of the buari tree, they also soon broke. The Hebus then sent for a rope, but what they called a rope was really a snake. At any rate, as the serpent made its way farther and farther up the tree, and finally came within reach, Kororomanna cut its head off; the animal fell to the ground again, and the Hebus cried "Our rope has burst."

Another consultation was held, and it was decided that one of their number should climb the tree, seize the man, and throw him down, and that those below might be ready to receive him when dislodged, the Hebu was to shout out, when throwing him down, the following signal: *Tura-buna-sé mahara-ko na-kai*. The biggest of the Spirits being chosen to carry the project into execution, he started on his climb, but head downward of course, so as to be able to see where he was going.

Kororomanna, however, was on the alert, and, waiting for him, killed him in the same peculiar manner as that in which he had dispatched the other Spirit just a little while before; more than this, having heard them fix upon the preconcerted signal, he hurled the dead Spirit's body down with the cry of *Tura-buna-sé mahara-ko na-kai!* The Hebus below were quite prepared, and as soon as the body fell to the ground, clubbed it to pieces. Kororomanna then slipped down and helped in the dissolution.

"Wait a bit," he said to the Spirits; "I am just going in the bush, but will soon return." It was not very long, however, before the Spirits saw that they had been tricked, and yelled with rage on finding that they had really destroyed one of themselves; they hunted high and low for their man, but with approaching daylight were reluctantly compelled to give up the chase.

In the meantime, Kororomanna had no sooner got out of their sight than he started running at topmost speed, and finally found shelter in a hollow tree.

Here he discovered a woman (she was not old either), so he told her that he would remain with her till “the day cleaned” (that is, till dawn broke).

But she said, “No! No! My man is Snake and he will be back before the dawn. If he were to find you here, he would certainly kill you.” But her visitor was not to be frightened, and he stayed where he was.

True enough, before dawn, Snake came wending his way home, and as he crawled into the tree, he was heard to exclaim, “Hallo! I can smell someone.”

Kororomanna was indeed frightened now, and was at his wits’ end to know what to do. Just then dawn broke, and they heard a hummingbird. “That is my uncle,” said our hero. They then heard the doroquarra [another species of bird] “That also is an uncle of mine,” he added. He purposely told Snake all this to make him believe that, if he killed and swallowed his visitor, all the other hummingbirds and doroquarras would come and avenge his death.

But Snake said, “I am not afraid of either of your uncles, but will gobble them up.” Just then, a chicken-hawk (*Urubitinga*) flew along, which made Snake ask whether that also was an uncle of his.

“To be sure” was the reply, “and when I am dead, he also will come and search for me.” It was now Snake’s turn to be frightened, because Chicken-hawk used always to get the better of him; so he let Kororomanna go in peace, who ran out of that hollow tree pretty quick.

It was full daylight now, but this made little odds, because he had still lost his way, and knew not how to find the road home. After wandering on and on, he at last came across a track, recognizable by the footprints in it: following this up, he came upon a hollow tree that had fallen across the path, and inside the trunk he saw a baby. This being a Hebu’s child, he slaughtered it, but he had no sooner done so than he heard approaching footsteps, which caused him promptly to climb a neighboring tree and await developments.

These were not long in coming, for the mother soon put in her appearance; as soon as she recognized her dead infant, she was much angered, and, looking around, carefully examined the fresh tracks, and said, “This is the man who has killed my child.” Her next move was to dig up a bit of the soil marked by one of the fresh footprints, wrap it up in a leaf tied with bush-rope, and hang it on a branch while she went for firewood.

Directly her back was turned, Kororomanna slid down from his hiding place, undid the bundle, and threw away the contents, substituting a footprint of the Spirit woman. Then, tying up the parcel as before, he hung it where it had been left, and hid himself once more. When the woman returned with the firewood, she made a big fire, and threw the bundle into the flames, saying as she did so, “Curse the person whose footprint I now burn. May the owner fall into this fire also!” She thought that if she burnt the “foot-mark” so would the person’s shadow be drawn to the fire. But no one came, and she felt that her own shadow was being impelled. “Oh! It seems that I am hurting myself; the fire is drawing me near,” she exclaimed. Twice was she thus dragged toward it against her will,

and yet she succeeded in resisting. But on the third occasion she could not draw back; she fell in, and was burnt to ashes; she “roasted herself dead.”

Kororomanna was again free to travel, but which direction to follow was the puzzle; he had still lost his way home. All he could do was to walk more or less aimlessly on, passing creek after creek and back into the bush again, until he emerged on a beautiful, clean roadway. But no sooner had he put his foot on it, than it stuck there, just like a fish caught in a spring-trap. And this is exactly what the trap really was, save that it had been set by the Hebus.

He pulled and he tugged and he twisted, but try as he might, he could not get away. He fouled himself over completely, and then lay quite still, pretending to be dead. The flies gathered on him and these were followed by the worms, but he continued to lie quite still.

By and by two of the Spirits came along, and one of them said, “Hallo! I have luck today. My spring-trap has caught a fish at last,” but when he got closer, he added, “Oh! I have left it too long. It stinks.” However, they let loose their fish, as they thought it was, and carried it down to the riverside to wash and clean it.

After they had washed it, one of the Hebus said, “Let us slit its belly now, and remove the entrails,” but the other one remarked, “No, let us make a basket first, to put the flesh in.”

This was very fortunate for Kororomanna, who, seizing the opportunity while they went collecting strands to plait with, rolled down the river bank into the water and so made good his escape. But when he succeeded in landing on the other side, he was, in a sense, just as badly off as before, not knowing how to get home.

Kororomanna next came across a man’s skull lying on the ground, and what must he do but go and jerk his arrow into its eye-ball? Now this skull, Kwa-muhu, was a Hebu, who thereupon called out, “You must not do that. But now that you have injured me, you will have to carry me.”

So Kororomanna had to get a strip of bark and carry the skull wherever he went, and feed it too. If he shot bird or beast, he always had to give a bit to Kwa-muhu, with the result that the latter soon became gradually and inconveniently heavier, until one day he became so great a dead weight as to break the bark-strip support. The accident occurred not very far from a creek, and Kororomanna told Kwa-muhu to stay still while he went to look for a stronger strip of bark.

Of course this was only an excuse, because directly he had put the skull on the ground, he ran as fast as he could toward the creek, overtaking on the way a deer that was running in exactly the same direction, swam across, and rested himself on the opposite side. In the meantime Kwa-muhu, suspecting that he was about to be forsaken, ran after Kororomanna, and seeing but the deer in front of him, mistook it for his man and killed it just as it reached the water.

On examining the carcass, the Hebu exclaimed, when he got to its toes, “Well, that is indeed very strange. You have only two fingers”; and though he

reckoned again and again, he could make no more—"but the man I am after had five fingers, and a long nose. You must be somebody else."

Now Kororomanna, who was squatting just over on the opposite bank, heard all this, and burst out laughing. This enraged Kwa-muhu, who left the deer, and made a move as if to leap across the creek, but, having no legs, he could not jump properly, and hence fell into the water and was drowned. All the ants then came out of his skull.

Poor Kororomanna was still as badly off as before; he was unable to find his way home. But he bravely kept on his way and at last came upon an old man bailing water out of a pond. The latter was really a Hebu, whose name was Huta-Kurakura ("Red-back"). Huta-Kurakura, being anxious to get the fish, was bailing away at the water side as hard as he could go, but having no calabash had to make use of his purse [scrotum], which was very large. And while thus bending down, he was so preoccupied that he did not hear the footfall of Kororomanna coming up behind.

The latter, not knowing what sort of a creature it was, stuck him twice in the back with an arrow, but Huta-Kurakura, thinking it to be a cow-fly (*Tabanus*), just slapped the spot where he felt it. When, however, he found himself stuck a third time, he turned round and, seeing who it was, became so enraged that he seized the wanderer and hurled him into a piece of wood with such force that only his eye projected from out the timber.

Anxious to be freed from his unenviable position Kororomanna offered everything he could think of—crystals, rattles, paiwarri [cassava-based liquor], women, etc., but the Spirit wanted none of them. As a last chance, he offered tobacco, and this the Hebu eagerly accepted, the result being that they fast became good friends. They then both emptied the pond and collected a heap of fish, much too large for Kororomanna to carry home. So the Spirit in some peculiar way bound them all up into quite a small bundle, small enough for Kororomanna to carry in his hand.

Kororomanna now soon managed to find the right path home, because each and every animal that he met gave him news of his mother. One after the other, he met a rat with a potato, an acouri with cassava root, a labba with a yam, a deer with a cassava leaf, a kushi-ant with a similar leaf on its head, and a bush-cow (tapir) eating a pineapple.

And as he asked each in turn whence it had come, the animal said, "I have been to your mother, and have begged potato, cassava, yam, and other things from her."

When at length he reached home, and his wife and mother asked what he had brought, he told them a lot of fish, and they laughed right heartily at what they thought was his little joke. So he bade them open the parcel, and as they opened it, sure enough out came fish after fish, small and large, fish of all kinds, so many in fact that the house speedily became filled, and the occupants had to shift outside.

## KOMATARI, THE FIRST MEDICINE MAN

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Roth, Walter E. *An Inquiry into the Animism and Folk-Lore of the Guiana Indians*. Thirtieth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, 1908–1909. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1915, 336–341.

**Date:** ca. 1915

**Original Source:** Warrau

**National Origin:** Native American

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The following tale relates the origin of shamanism among the Warrau. Their shamans, as is the case in those other cultures in which this supernatural specialist exists, are both venerated and feared. Among the Warrau, in fact, even the bones of dead shamans are regarded as power-laden objects. Two important features of Warrau shamanism are emphasized in “Komatari, The First Medicine Man”: (1) the need for shamans to gain knowledge through their own communion with the spirits and (2) the central role played by tobacco. Tobacco juice is used as an intoxicant to induce the trances needed first to pass into trance and contact the Hebus (bush spirits) and later to bring on the state needed for some healing rituals. The **myth** of Komatari further rationalizes the fact that shamans’ efforts do not always succeed.

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**K**omatari wanted some tobacco, but as there was none about, he searched for it. He had heard of its growing on an island out at sea, so he went down to the shore, where he came across a house with a man inside. Approaching him, Komatari said, “I am poor, and want tobacco. I hear you have it growing on an island. Could you get me some plants?”

While thus engaged in conversation, the hummingbird came along, and said, “Hullo! What are you two talking about?”

“Tobacco: we want tobacco,” they replied.

“Oh, is that all?” the little bird said; “why, I’ll go and fetch some for you. I shall be making a start before the morning, and you can expect me back just as the sun begins to turn that way” pointing in a direction which would indicate about an hour after midday.

The hummingbird kept his word, and returned as promised, but when the house-master saw what he had brought back, he said, “Why, that is no tobacco leaf: it is only the tobacco flower,” and, turning to Komatari, he said, “I will go myself.” The house-master started next morning for the same island, telling Komatari to expect him back as soon as the hummingbird, that is, shortly after midday. But as a matter of fact, he never returned until the following morning.



The cause of the delay was that so many people were watching the tobacco that he had to wait for nightfall before he could steal the leaves.

However, giving Komatari some of the seed, he told him to go down to the waterside, where he would find his corial [dugout canoe], and if he looked inside he would see two or three tobacco leaves, which he might take. Komatari did as directed, but instead of two or three leaves he found the whole corial full of them. He helped himself to as many as would fill a quake [basket] and went home.

Before taking his departure, however, the house-master said, "I have a name, but will not mention it: when you know all about Piai [that is, 'Medicine'] you will be able to find it out for yourself."

At last Komatari reached home, and naturally all his friends came to pay him a visit, to get some of the tobacco; but he was shrewd, kept the tobacco under the roof [that is, hanging up to dry in the ordinary manner] in charge of the marabuntas [wasps], left home very early of a morning, and only returned late, so as not to be at home when anybody called.

But at last a visitor came and made a very long stay purposely. They thus met, Komatari gave him three leaves, and sent him away. Next day, another man paid him a visit, but Komatari had already left, and only marabuntas were there—many marabuntas, all of different kinds. The visitor went home, and, taking some fish with him, returned to Komatari's place and asked the marabuntas to let him have some tobacco, at the same time showing them his fish and saying, "Look! this is the payment." And so, while the marabuntas all swarmed down upon the fish, the man climbed up, got what tobacco he wanted, and cleared out.

When Komatari got home, he also got up under the roof where the tobacco was stored, but found much of it missing, so he placed what was left elsewhere, and drove away all the marabuntas except one particular kind, a black variety, the *oro* [yiseri of the Arawaks], which he made his watchmen.

Starting now on his field, he cut it day after day, and after burning it [clearing the stubble by setting it on fire], at last planted his tobacco. When he saw that it was beginning to thrive, he built a piai-house, and going round his field, looked out for a calabash tree; he found one full of gourds.

He took one, but on turning round, he saw a Hebu, who, after asking whether it belonged to him and getting "Yes" for an answer, said, "All right. So long as the calabash is yours, you may have the whole tree. I have a name, but will not tell it you. I want to see whether you learn the piai business well. If you do, you will be able to find it out for yourself."

On reaching home with the calabash, Komatari started cleaning it out. When cleaned, another Hebu came along and asked him what he intended doing with it, but Komatari would not tell him. You see this particular Hebu was the one who comes to kill people and so was afraid of the power of the *mar-aka* [rattle], which is made from this very calabash.

After scooping out and cleaning the calabash, Komatari went into the bush and, traveling along, came upon a creek with swiftly flowing water: it was here that he cut the timber from out of which he next shaped the handle for the rattle and cut the sticks to make his special fire with.

Returning home once more, he fastened the handle in the gourd, but was not satisfied with the result: the rattle did not look as it should. So he hung it up on the beam of his pi'ai-house, and went once more into the bush, where he again met the killing Hebu, who repeated his question as to what Komatari intended doing with the rattle, but, as before, the latter would not tell him.

Passing along, and hearing a noise as of many people talking, Komatari proceeded in the direction whence the sound came, and found a number of Hebus fastening various parrot feathers into cotton-twine. How pretty this ornament would look tied on his calabash left hanging up at home, was Komatari's first thought when he saw what they were doing. On asking, the ornament was given him.

The Hebu who gave it to him said, "I have a name, but I will not tell it to you. You can find it out for yourself, if you should ever become a good pi'ai-man." Komatari next asked him for another kind of cotton-plait, with feathers different from those on the one mentioned, to wear as a hat, but the Hebu said he had none, though he would get it at the next house.

So Komatari went to the next house, saw the Hebu house-master, asked for the cotton-plait for the hat, and in the same manner as before, this Hebu also said to him, "I have a name, but I will not tell it to you. You must find it out for yourself when you are a medicine-man."

Komatari went home now, and arranged the feathered cotton on top of the calabash, when who should put in an appearance again but the killing Hebu. When he again asked Komatari what he intended doing with the calabash, the latter refused to tell him, as before.

But Komatari was not satisfied even now, because when he shook the gourd it did not rattle. As yet it had no stones in it. So Komatari went into the bush again, and followed creek after creek, and at last came to a big river. There he met another Hebu, who got the proper stones that were wanted.

When he had given them to Komatari, he said, like the others, "I have a name, but I will not tell it to you. You must find it out for yourself when you are a medicine-man." Komatari again made his way home and put the stones into the calabash. Just as he was finishing the work the killing Hebu again appeared, asking him as before, what he intended doing with the calabash. The answer was, "This is to kill you with, and to prevent you killing other people," and as Komatari shook the calabash, which was now a finished maraka rattle, the Hebu began to tremble and stagger and almost fell, but he managed to pick himself up and get away just in the nick of time.

He ran to his Aijamo [head-man, chief] and said, "There is a man who has an object with which he nearly killed me and I must get my payment [that is, my revenge]. I am going back to kill him."

“All right!” said the Aijamo, “I will go with you.” So they went together, and brought sickness to a friend and neighbor of Komatari’s; for they were afraid of attacking Komatari himself. However, his sick friend sent for him. Komatari went, and played the maraka on him, and took out his sickness. So the killing Hebu made another man ill, but Komatari took the disease out of him also. The Hebu next afflicted a third victim, and again Komatari was victorious. But when he attacked a fourth one, Komatari was out hunting.

When he returned, the poor fellow was in a bad enough condition: so strong did the sickness come, that Komatari could not cure him—he had “stood too long.” The killing Hebu then explained to Komatari that it would always be thus: some patients he (Komatari) could save, and other patients he could not.

Of course Komatari had been able to find out the names of all the Hebus that had lent him assistance in the manufacture of his maraka, and it is to these different Hebus whom the present-day medicine-men are said to “sing” and call on when they cure the sick. For instance the name of the Hebu that procured the tobacco seeds for Komatari was Wau-uno “the white crane.”

## THE NIGHT OWL AND HIS BAT BROTHERS-IN-LAW

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Roth, Walter E. *An Inquiry into the Animism and Folk-Lore of the Guiana Indians*. Thirtieth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, 1908–1909. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1915, 276.

**Date:** ca. 1915

**Original Source:** Warrau

**National Origin:** Native American

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The following **myth** explains the origins of both natural and supernatural phenomena. In the natural category, the myth asserts that the vampire bat seeks revenge on humans and their domestic animals by sucking their blood, while in the realm of supernatural cause and effect, the myth establishes the cry of the night owl as a portent of death.

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**B**oku-boku, the Night-owl, married the bats’ sister, and often took his brothers with him at night to rob peoples’ houses. One night they came across a house where the people were drying fish on a babracote: just to frighten them, they all sang out, *boku! boku! boku!*—this made the occupants run out into the bush, and so gave the bats their opportunity for stealing the fish.

The trio played the same trick at many a settlement, until one day the owl told them he had to travel about for a while, and that during his absence they

must behave themselves, and stay indoors at night, as otherwise trouble would be sure to happen. But no sooner had Boku-boku turned his back, than the bats, unable to resist temptation, continued their evil courses.

They got to a place one night where the fish were being dried, but having no owl with them on this occasion, they could not shout *boku! boku! boku!* as loudly as they did before; hence, the people not being so frightened now, ran away only a little distance, just far enough to be able to watch everything and to see that it was only the bats who were stealing their food. But the bats, remaining undisturbed, thought they could now do what they liked with impunity, and hence returned again upon the following evening, when the people remained just as they were, some seated, some lying in their hammocks.

The bats still thought of course that nothing bad could happen them, and were laughing *chi! chi! chi!* for very joy. But the house master took out his bow and arrow, the latter tipped with a knob of wax, with which he shot one of them on the rump, stunning it.

The other bat, escaping into the forest, met Boku-boku, who had just returned from his travels, and to whom he narrated the circumstances of his brother's untimely death. Nothing daunted, the two returned to hunt that night, and on this occasion the noise of their voices, now that it included the owl's, created such a stir that the folk ran as before into the bush, while Boku-boku and his brother-in-law stole the fish. But lying on the babracote was the dead bat, which they took home with them, and there they soundly smacked him on the spot where he had been struck with the arrow: this brought him round, the fire not having withered him up beyond recovery, and he laughed *chi! chi! chi!* on awakening.

And although Boku-boku was prevented accompanying them the following evening, the two bats insisted on repeating their nocturnal excursion: as before, the folk were not frightened, and again one of the bats got shot in his posterior. Next night, the surviving bat returned with Boku-boku, and they found as before upon the babracote, the body of their relative: this they took away with them, but on this occasion, when they smacked the corpse, it never woke—it had been dried too much over the fire.

The surviving bat however continues to take his revenge upon people and sucks them and their fowls, as well as doing other damage, while the presence of Boku-boku, his brother-in-law, invariably means mischief: when heard at night, some one is surely about to sicken and die.

## **THE EXPLOITS OF KONEHO**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Roth, Walter E. *An Inquiry into the Animism and Folk-Lore of the Guiana Indians.*

Thirtieth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, 1908–1909. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1915, 275–278.

**Date:** ca. 1915

**Original Source:** Warrau

**National Origin:** Native American

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The following **cycle of animal tales** are modifications of African narratives; they were likely borrowed from Maroon sources (see Suriname Maroon, pages 324–331). Konehu (from Spanish, *conejo*, “rabbit”) is a widely spread **trickster** figure in the Western hemisphere, partly owing his origins to contact between African-descended and Native American cultures (see, for example, the Creek tales “Rabbit Gets a Turkey for Wildcat,” page 63, “Rabbit Steals Fire,” page 64, and “Rabbit Fools Alligator,” page 65). The fact that the Warrau label any rogue who uses guile and wit to get the better of his neighbors and overcome adversity “Konehu” attests to the vitality of these tales in the Warrau repertoire. The **motif** of concealing his murder of the jaguar cubs has precedents in the trickster tales of continental Africa (see, for example, “The Lion and the Jackal,” Volume 1, page 144).

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**T**here was once a celebrated Konehu, walking along the bush, when he met a female Tiger [jaguar]. The latter, who was hungry, wanted to go out hunting, but did not like to leave her three little cubs at home without anyone in charge of the place. So Konehu agreed to look after the youngsters while Tiger searched for game.

Things went on very well for some time, Tiger returning home each evening with meat which she shared with Konehu. But on a certain day, one of the cubs bit Konehu, so he killed it, threw the body away, and said nothing to the mother when she returned. In fact, Konehu as usual brought from out of the hollow log one cub after another for the mother to suckle, but on this occasion he brought out the same cub twice, and the mother was none the wiser.

Next day, another cub bit Konehu. So he killed it, threw the body away as before, and said nothing, but in the evening brought out the remaining cub three times to be fed, and its mother was none the wiser.

Next day, however, the surviving whelp bit Konehu. So he killed it, left its carcass close by the hollow log, and made tracks elsewhere. He knew that Tiger would follow him, so he traveled a long, long way before he rested. He next built a house on very high posts, posts too high for anyone to climb up, and then started making the roof which was just as high up again. Indeed, to get up all that way, he built a long ladder. And he started tying on the thatch.

In the meantime, Tiger, on her return home, found her one dead cub but no signs of the other two. There was also no Konehu. She therefore was vexed much, and determined to follow and kill him. She traveled night and day, and

went on and on until she came to the house which Konehu was building, and there she saw him on top thatching the roof. "Hullo!" she growls, "What are you doing up there? I am come to eat you."

But Konehu does not worry himself. He only says, "You had better look out for yourself, because there is a big sea coming. I am building this house to save myself. You had better join me. Come up the ladder." Tiger thereupon clammers up the ladder and gets close to Konehu who is tying on the thatch with the itir-iti strand. As soon as she got too uncomfortably close to him, he suddenly exclaimed, "Oh! What a pity! I have just dropped a piece of the tying strand. Wait up here a minute, while I go down and fetch it."

This was a lie, for directly he reached the ground, he removed the ladder, leaving Tiger helpless on the roof. Again Konehu made tracks and walked about. He walked so far that he got tired. He then sat down and started making a quake, an openwork basket. Now, what did Tiger do? When she found the ladder gone, she scrambled up and under the roof, over and among the beams and rafters, but she could not get down. At last, hunger compelled her to say, "I must live, or I must die." So she made a big jump and reached the ground safely.

She was vexed much, and determined upon following and killing Konehu. She traveled night and day, and went on and on until she reached the spot where Konehu was seated, busily occupied in making his quake. "Hullo!" she growls, "What are you doing? I am come to eat you." Konehu however remained quite cool and quiet. He stuck to his story about the big sea coming, and swore that he was making the quake so that when completed he could get inside and haul himself up to the top most branch of a big mora tree that was close by.

Silly Tiger then believed what he told her, and said she would like to get into the basket also. Konehu therefore took her measure and increased the size of the basket. When finished, he told her to get inside, but no sooner had she comfortably fixed herself, than he drew the sides of the quake together, and sewed them up. Tiger was now prisoner. Fixing a long vine-rope to the basket, Konehu threw it over the topmost branch of the mora tree, pulled on its free end, left his victim dangling in mid-air, and made tracks.

Tiger was now in a bad way, for the more she roared the more did all the other animals get frightened and run away. At last, one of the most inquisitive, a little monkey, wanting to know what all the noise was about, climbed down the vine-rope and opened the basket. No sooner had he done so, than out jumped Tiger and both fell to the ground, where the monkey's only reward was to be eaten.

Yes, Tiger was vexed much and determined upon following and killing Konehu. She wandered on and on, and at last met him upon the banks of a river. Directly he saw her coming he commenced looking down into the water very hard, as if he was examining something very carefully. "Hullo!" growled Tiger. "What are you looking at? I am come to eat you."

“Nonsense, woman,” says Konehu. “Look, look down there. Don’t you see that beautiful yellow stone [gold]? If you could only fetch it you would be a rich woman. You would have a new husband, and get new cubs.”

Now what he was pointing at in the water was only the reflection of the sun overhead. Tiger, however, being both silly and greedy, dived in, and quickly came up to the surface to breathe.

“Oh!” he tells her, “you must go down deeper.” So she jumps in again, and stays under much longer. When she again appears on the surface, Konehu reiterates “You haven’t gone deep enough.” And so the game goes on, she being fooled every time about not having stayed below long enough.

She makes a last effort to dive under a very long time, when Konehu takes the opportunity of making good his escape. Tiger now sees that she has been tricked. She is vexed much and is more than ever determined to follow and kill Konehu, who by this time knows what to expect.

So he travels far, far until he comes to a high hill on the top of which he balances a big rock, and at the bottom of which he digs a deep pit. By and by, Tiger comes along, and seeing Konehu on top of the hill, looks up at him and says, “Hullo! What are you doing up there? I am come to eat you.” But Konehu puts his arms around the rock, and says it is a large piece of meat, which he will throw down to her if she lies quietly in the pit. And the silly, greedy Tiger believes him again, does just what he tells her, and waits for the meat to come. Soon, bumpy, bumpy, down the hill comes the big rock, faster and faster it speeds, until falling on Tiger, it kills and buries her.

Konehu was a lazy man, and would not labor for his living. He was hungry. One fine morning he sat at the foot of a high overhanging cliff, waiting for some one to come along. By and by he saw a company of men approaching. They had been out hunting, and were bringing along a quantity of game.

Konehu then picked up a long wooden pole, and placing it against the side of the cliff after the manner of a brace, began pressing it into position just as the huntsmen came up. In reply to their inquiry as to why he was pressing so hard upon the pole, Konehu said, “Can’t you see that the mountain is falling over, and that if I don’t brace it up, it will come down and destroy all of us? Look up and see it moving! Come, take my place, and let me have a little rest. I have been shoving at it all the morning.”

The huntsmen accordingly gazed up the wall of the precipice, and seeing the clouds moving over the top of it, indeed thought that the cliff was about to fall. So dropping their quarry on the ground, they all together started pressing on the timber, and continued pressing, and pressed harder, until by the time the sun was about to sink, they were so exhausted that they could press no longer. They satisfied their conscience by saying that whether the cliff overwhelmed them or not, it would not be their fault. They therefore let go the timber and turned around to pick up all their game and provisions. But these had all disappeared. And so had Konehu!

On another occasion Konehu was again hungry, but the people all about knew what a tricky man he was, and refused to give him anything to eat, unless he paid or worked for it. He had nothing to give, so he had to work.

He asked for food at a certain house, and the house-master told him to pound some rice. He pounded away until late in the afternoon. The master came to see how much rice had been cleaned, but was astonished to find so small an amount resulting from the large quantity that had been handed over in the morning.

The master gave Konehu the same quantity to pound next day, and in the afternoon there was again a marked shortage, so he became very angry and sent Konehu away. That very night, Konehu cooked rice for supper. Instead of a solid heavy-wood pounder, he had used a hollow-bamboo one, and the more he pounded the rice with it, the quicker it became filled.

One day Konehu met a man carrying two quakes of yams. The yams looked just splendid, and Konehu, not having any of his own, determined on possessing himself of them. "Those are fine yams," he said, "what are you going to do with them?"

On learning that they were being taken up the river for sale at the next settlement, Konehu said that he knew of another settlement where such beautiful yams would fetch a far higher price, and that if they were handed over to his care he, Konehu, would negotiate the business to the better advantage just for friendship's sake. Once they were in his possession, however, Konehu said good-bye to the stranger, and brought them home for his wife to cook. All that he had said about selling them at a big price was a lie.

Soon after the very same man whom he had cheated came up to the house and threatened to kill him. But Konehu managed to talk "sweet-mouth" and soothed his anger by telling him that if he waited a while, he would give him some nice pepper-pot.

Going into that portion of the lodge which was screened off for the women-folk, he told his wife to shriek and scream as if he were killing her. She did what she was bid. Konehu brought out some pepper-pot, which he placed before the stranger.

The man tasted and was enchanted with it. "That is a fine pepper-pot. What did you make it from?" he says.

"Just out of my wife's breast," replied Konehu. "Didn't you hear her yell when I cut it off?" The foolish man went back to his own home, and seizing his wife, gashed her breast to pieces, but the result was that she bled to death, and he recognized only too late that he had again been tricked.

The way in which Konehu managed to get the advantage of everybody soon spread abroad. Among others, it reached the ear of a head-man at one of the settlements. This man had a big field and several wives: he was indeed a rich man. He prided himself on being very clever and knowing everything: he knew all about the history of his tribe, and by looking at a certain star he could tell



the proper time to visit the coast when the crabs were “on the march.” In fact, he knew he was shrewder than Konehu, and publicly said so.

Now, Konehu heard of this, and taking up a position on the path leading to this individual’s cassava field, waited for the owner to come along. As soon as he heard footsteps approaching, he loosed his bowels, and tearing a “cap” from off the shoot of a “trolley” palm, carefully placed it point upwards on the ground, over the dung, at the same time pressing his palms around the edge just as if there was some live animal underneath.

When a few feet distant, the owner saw Konehu in this extraordinary attitude, he asked him what he was doing. “I have just caught a bird here,” says Konehu, “and am afraid of it getting away. Do you happen to have a quack with you?”

Not suspecting any trickery, the man told him that if he liked to go round to his house, he could have the quack which he would find hanging up on one of the posts. So he puts down his bow, arrows, and pegall [basket], and Konehu shows him how to hold the trolley cap tightly down and prevent the wonderful bird escaping.

Konehu takes up the bow and arrows, marches off to the man’s dwelling, and makes himself quite at home with both the eatables and the women: indeed, he spends a gloriously happy time there. But as for the man watching over the wonderful bird, hour after hour passed and he finally felt so weary that he tipped up one edge of the trolley cap, and saw that he had indeed been outwitted by the very man he had boasted to despise.

The time at last arrived when mere mention of Konehu’s name made every-one spit. All had been fooled by him at some time or another, and now left him strictly to himself.

His wife went off with another man. Poor Konehu did not know how to clean the house, which became more and more dilapidated; he knew nothing about cooking, he had no cassava, and when he did manage to go out hunting with bow and arrow, he invariably met with poor success.

One day, however, he managed to shoot a fine big deer. He ate all of it except one leg, which he barbecued and slung up to one of the beams of his house. Next day, he again managed to secure some game, and so things went on, his luck, day after day, not only continuing but increasing.

More than this, every time he reached home in the afternoon, there he found the fire lighted, the pepper-pot already boiled, everything tidied up and cleaned, and yet not a soul was to be seen. He became curious. So instead of going hunting out back one morning, he hid himself behind a big tree whence he could observe everything taking place in the house without himself being seen. He waited and waited.

By and by he saw the deer leg change into a beautiful woman, and he then knew who it was that had been minding him so carefully. He rushed forward and held her fast. He wanted her to be his wife, but she resolutely declined, though she promised to remain and continue as his benefactress.

He therefore built another house, adjoining his, just for her especial use. After a time, she changed her mind about becoming his wife. She had only refused his offer before, because she was afraid he might tell his friends and relatives who she was—the offspring of a deer’s foot—the shame and disgrace of which she felt she could never face. The bargain was accordingly struck that so long as he held his tongue about her antecedents, she would remain with him as his spouse: if he betrayed her, she would punish him.

They were happy together for a long time, and everything prospered. Konehu’s luck in hunting and fishing, as well as his abundance of provisions, became now almost proverbial, but whenever questioned as to how he managed to secure such luck, and what *binas* [charms] he employed, he always remained silent. The neighbors’ envy and curiosity were not to be baffled by his silence. They said, “Let us ask Konehu to a *paiwarri*, and make him drunk. Then he will tell us!”

So they held a big feast, and they had many jars of drink, and Konehu, getting beastly intoxicated, told the whole story. When he woke next morning out of his debauchery, he turned his steps homeward: His astonishment was indeed great to find his old house, without any additions, just as dirty and untidy as in his grass-widower days—and, yes, there was the deer-leg still hanging on the cord.

In his anger he determined on eating the venison, but when he struck his knife in, all the blood gushed forth. This sobered him, and he left the house to become a wanderer. He may be here today, and gone tomorrow. Yes, indeed, there are so many Konehus [that is, rogues and vagabonds] wandering about the world now, that it is very difficult to recognize which one is our old friend.

# **MEXICO AND CENTRAL AMERICA**



# BRIBRI

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## HOW THE FIRST BRIBRI INDIANS WERE BORN

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** de Fábrega, H. Pittier. "Folklore of the Bribri and Brunka Indians in Costa Rica." *Journal of American Folklore* 16 (1903): 3–4.

**Date:** ca. 1903

**Original Source:** Bribri

**National Origin:** Native American

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The Bribri's traditional homeland was on the Caribbean coast of Costa Rica located in Central America between Nicaragua to the north and Panama to the south. This **myth** of human origin establishes the territorial rights of the Bribri and the neighboring Brurán, and explains features of the natural environment. The Arari River is one of the largest waterways in the ancestral territory of the Bribri. The Djiri is a tributary of the Arari, and Torok-hu lies opposite its mouth.

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In those far-away times, Sibû once thought what he could do to break up the seed of our kin, which he kept hidden without avail in a certain place. Then he made a bet with Jáburu, and they agreed that they would throw two cacao pods at each other, and that he should lose in whose hands the pod of cacao would break. And as Sibû did not want to lose again the seed of our kin, and let Jáburu have it, for that was the stake they were going to play for, he willed that he would choose for himself the green cacao, and give the ripe one to Jáburu. They were to throw four times.

Jáburu placed himself beyond the Arari, at the mouth of Djiri, while Sibû remained on the opposite side at Torok-hu. And Jáburu threw his pod twice, and

the next time it broke in his hands, so that he lost the wager. This happened at dawn, and the angry Jáburu then proceeded to warm his chocolate, and to have the monkey, his *bikd-kra* or servant, serve it hot to him. But he, in trying to be quick, kicked the pot, and upset the hot chocolate. And this is how the warm spring near Torok-hu was formed. And there, where the hot water now remains, Jáburu had his large pot, and since dawn came upon him, he had to abandon it.

Just at this time our kin were born in human form. And as our forefathers were lying down on the stone banks which are still found there, they saw the peccaries going by. They went after them, and thus it was that they discovered the way over the cordillera. They got to the other side, and there they found out that the hogs had turned into men like themselves. And these are the *Brurán* people [neighbors of the Bribri].

## THE TALE OF OUR DYING AWAY

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** de Fábrega, H. Pittier. "Folklore of the Bribri and Brunka Indians in Costa Rica." *Journal of American Folklore* 16 (1903): 4.

**Date:** ca. 1903

**Original Source:** Bribri

**National Origin:** Native American

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In addition to explaining features of the physical environment, such as the white spots near the top of a local mountain and behavioral taboos such as the avoidance of certain areas, the following **myth** sets the tone for an indigenous worldview. The animal world, like some of the deities in the Bribri pantheon, conspires against human beings and threatens their continued existence.

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Our forefathers told us that in far-away times, when we lived in other countries, the gods allowed us to be eaten by birds and animals. Once upon a time, when many of our people were playing on a plain, there came flying a mighty eagle, and he caught one of our kin and blood, and threw him into a large basket he was carrying. He carried him away to the top of the Kamuk, where he fell asleep, because he was very tired. At that time the eagle never thought of eating up our kinsman. On the morn, he flew again, carrying off his prey far away to the peak of Nëmósul, where he rested, without thinking yet of eating him.

Again he flew away, far away, and got to the ridge of Nëmóie, where he met with powerful jaguars. And he told them how he had brought the man.

One of the jaguars then proposed to him that they should eat the man together. The eagle consented, and they ate him. They ate him, and after that, the eagle flew up, high up to the top of Nēmóie. And this is the reason why we see white spots near the top of Nēmóie; they are the bones of our kinsman, and there it was that man was eaten for the first time by birds and animals, because the jaguar taught the eagle how to eat him.

Our forefathers also used to say that on the same ridge of Nēmóie there are stones shaped like jaguars. Whenever any one goes there, those stones become alive and true jaguars, because they are not stones at all, but bad spirits.

Such is the tale of our forefathers, and they also used to say, that once upon a time strange men became a prey to the jaguars, on that same ridge of Nēmóie. And this is why we are not permitted to live in these dangerous places.

## HOW JÁBURU ATE THE SEED OF OUR KIN

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** de Fábrega, H. Pittier. "Folklore of the Bribri and Brunka Indians in Costa Rica." *Journal of American Folklore* 16 (1903): 2–3.

**Date:** ca. 1903

**Original Source:** Bribri

**National Origin:** Native American

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The Bribri are a Native Central American culture who traditionally pursued an agricultural way of life on the coasts and in the mountains of Costa Rica. Their economic concerns with plant life are reflected in the incidents of the following **myth**. According to the research conducted by H. Pittier de Fábrega, the Bribri believed that "every man or animal was originally born from a seed like that of a plant. The seeds of the several races of man were kept in baskets which were entrusted by Sibû [their primary deity] to the keeping of the good deities. The evil ones, on the other hand, were constantly hunting for them" (2), as described in the following narrative.

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**S**urá, the good God, had gone to see his cornfield. While he was away, Jáburu, the evil One, came and ate the seed of our kin which the almighty Sibû had given Surd to take care of. When Surd re-turned home, Jáburu murdered him, and buried his corpse in a hole behind the house; on the grave he planted a cacao tree and a calabash tree.

Then, Sibû the almighty God, resolved also to kill Jáburu. Moving away, he went to Jaburu's house, and talked to him, "O Thou, uncle of mine, let us have our chocolate!"

But Jáburu replied, “I have no chocolate.”

“Do not lie so openly! I have seen thy cacao fruits hanging from the tree, as I was coming.”

“It is good,” answered Jáburu, and, turning to his wives, he said to them “Go and gather cacao, and bring also a calabash,” and then Jáburu spoke again to his wives, “Let Surá’s first crop be roasted for us to drink!” They then roasted and prepared the cacao, and scooped out the calabash to drink the chocolate from.

Then Sibû, the almighty God, willed—and whatever he wills has to be, “May the first cup come to me!” and as it so came to pass, he said, “My uncle, I present this cup to thee, so that thou drinkest!”

Jáburu swallowed the chocolate at once, with such delight that his throat resounded, *tshaaa!*

And he said, “My uncle! I have drunk Surá’s first fruit!” But just at this moment he began to swell, and he swelled and swelled until he blew up.

Then Sibû, the almighty God, picked up again the seed of our kin, which was in Jáburu’s body, and willed, “Let Surá wake up again!” And as it so happened, he gave him back the basket with the seed of our kin to keep.

## HOW SIBÛ KILLED SÓRKURA

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** de Fábrega, H. Pittier. “Folklore of the Bribri and Brunka Indians in Costa Rica.” *Journal of American Folklore* 16 (1903): 4–6.

**Date:** ca. 1903

**Original Source:** Bribri

**National Origin:** Native American

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de Fábrega notes, “Every time the Indians find in the woods leaves sprinkled with blood, or bones and excrement, the origin of which they cannot explain, they see in them Sórkura’s relics, and turn away with awe; also leaves having the appearance of being spotted with blood, such as frequently occur in certain groups of plants (Araceae, Begonia, Columnea, etc.), are considered to be of the same origin, and are signs of ill-omen for the undertaking they are engaged upon” (6).

The following Bribri **myth** focuses on the origin of these ill omens, but it exhibits many of the characteristics that appear in Native American myth cross-culturally. The most powerful supernatural figure in the narrative is a shape-shifter whose motives often seem capricious and driven by whim rather than reason. The pattern of fours that figures into the plot is common, also. The significance of the skunk’s choice of the



drum over the calabash lies in the fact that the calabash is a rattle used to control the cadence in ritual songs. Declining it in favor of the drum, an instrument of less importance, signifies the character's humility.

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Sórkura was in the habit of drinking the water of a spring in which the skunk used to ease his body. Sibû, the almighty God, thought it would be well that Sórkura should kill the skunk. And so it happened: Sórkura went to watch the skunk, killed it, and hung its dead body to dry on the fire, since it was a prophet of ill-omen.

Now, while Sórkura was in the woods, Sibû went to his house. Sibû went to Sórkura door, and spoke to the spider, "Art thou there, art thou there?"

And the spider answered, "Here I am, here I am."

Sibû also asked the dried skunk, "Art thou there and dry?"

And the dried skunk answered, "Here I am and dry!"

Sibû had brought with him a cotton apron. He blew on the skunk, and it breathed again; it stood on its hind legs like a man, and was ordered to fasten the apron upon his body. Sibû had brought, also, the Singer's Calabash, and he said to the skunk, "O thou, my uncle; thou shalt get the Calabash!"

The skunk replied, "Oh no, I prefer to have the Drum of the Helper!"

Then they played for a long time, until the music pervaded the wilderness. And Sórkura, alone in the woods, said to himself, "What is that resounding *tuit, tuu*, in my house?"

And he thought, "What is it that so resounds? No one would dare to go to my house to bewitch." Then he thought again that he would go and watch. He went home, and hid himself behind a wall, to wait and see.

Sibû came again to play with the skunk. But then Sórkura was waiting for him with his spears. He threw one of these, and Sibû evaded it, so that it stuck fast in a wooden pillar; he threw another, but Sibû warded it off with a pot; the third one fell into the fire, and the fourth went through the door. And then Sibû ran away so swiftly that Sórkura only could grasp the whistle, which remained in his hand. Sórkura's people went after Sibû to kill him, but he could not be found.

Four days passed by, and Sibû was not seen anywhere. When he went back to Sórkura's house, this time under the disguise of an old Sórkura, buried in far-away times, and now covered full with wounds and sores, he said, "I am told that your boys stole Sibû's whistle."

Sórkura answered, "How is it? Dost thou happen to be Sibû?"

Then Sibû spoke again, "Thou willest make fun of me, because I am so old and sore! I Sibû, the Almighty! Could Sibû be like myself?"

But Sórkura insisted, "No, thou mightst be Sibû."

And Sibû went on, "Was Sibû, the Whistle-Bearer, like myself?"

Sórkura went and took the whistle, which was hanging from the brim of a basket. He showed it to Sibû, and Sibû grasped it; but Sórkura did not loose the

string. Then Sibû spoke once more, and said, "The good gods manifest good virtues: what you have done is wrong! Let the string go."

But Sórkura said, "No."

Sibû then willed, "May he let me have the whistle! May he look back into the house!" And as this happened, Sibû ran away and ran on whistling all the while.

Meanwhile Sórkura thought he would go and set him an ambush on the path. He took four of his spears and his shield, hung his conch upon a string around his body, and said to his people, "I will go and kill Sibû; when you hear my conch resound, Sibû shall be dead. Then you are to warm up my cacao, as I will soon be back." He then went and waited for Sibû to pass by, and when Sibû came along, he threw one of his spears at him.

But Sibû had on the back of his head another ear, which warned him that some one was going to shoot at him. The spear fell noisily on his side. Sórkura made another throw, but without effect. And now Sibû took one of the spears in his hand, and threw it at Sórkura, who received it on his shield. Then Sibû willed, "I will kill Sórkura; may he look over his shield!" Then he took a new aim, and Sórkura was shot just in the middle of his face. And Sibû took the conch, and blew: *Tuit, tuu*, so that the woods resounded, and he cut Sórkura body into pieces with his knife, and made it into flesh, bones, blood, and bowels, which ever since have been things of ill-omen to us.

Sórkura's people waited long, and kept his chocolate warm for him; but he never came back. Sibû had killed Sórkura!

# MAYA

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## THE MAYA CREATION

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Spence, Lewis. *The Popol Vuh: The Mythic and Heroic Sagas of the Kichés of Central America*. London: David Nutt, 1908. 217–219.

**Date:** pre-1500 C.E.

**Original Source:** Maya

**National Origin:** Native American

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Over the course of approximately 3,000 years, the Maya developed a sophisticated, urban civilization that dominated an area extending from southern Mexico and the Yucatan Peninsula into the modern Central American nations of Belize, Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador. Contemporary Maya descendants of the classical civilization still reside throughout this area. The *Popol Vuh*, excerpts of which comprise the following narratives, is a collection of Guatemalan Mayan **myths** copied in the mid-sixteenth century from documents originally written during the post-Classical period (1000–1400 C.E.) using the Quiché writing system. The following creation myth details the wrath of the divine creator Hurakan at the neglect displayed by his first creations.

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Over a universe wrapped in the gloom of a dense and primeval night passed the god Hurakan, the mighty wind. He called out “earth,” and the solid land appeared. The chief gods took counsel; they were Hurakan, Gucumatz, the serpent covered with green feathers, and Xpiyacoc and Xmucane, the mother and father gods. As the result of their deliberations animals were created. But as yet man was not.

To supply the deficiency the divine beings resolved to create manikins carved out of wood. But these soon incurred the displeasure of the gods, who, irritated by their lack of reverence, resolved to destroy them. Then by the will of Hurakan, the Heart of Heaven, the waters were swollen, and a great flood came upon the manikins of wood. They were drowned and a thick resin fell from heaven. The bird Xecotcovach tore out their eyes; the bird Camulatz cut off their heads; the bird Cotzbalam devoured their flesh; the bird Tecumbalam broke their bones and sinews and ground them into powder.

Because they had not thought on Hurakan, therefore, the face of the earth grew dark, and a pouring rain commenced, raining by day and by night. Then all sorts of beings, great and small, gathered together to abuse the men to their faces. The very household utensils and animals jeered at them, their mill-stones, their plates, their cups, their dogs, their hens.

Said the dogs and hens, "Very badly have you treated us, and you have bitten us. Now we bite you in turn."

Said the mill-stones (metates used for grinding corn), "Very much were we tormented by you, and daily, daily, night and day, it was *squeak*, *screech*, *screech*, for your sake. Now you shall feel our strength, and we will grind your flesh and make meal of your bodies."

And the dogs upbraided the manikins because they had not been fed, and tore the unhappy images with their teeth.

And the cups and dishes said, "Pain and misery you gave us, smoking our tops and sides, cooking us over the fire burning and hurting us as if we had no feeling. Now it is your turn, and you shall burn."

Then ran the manikins hither and thither in despair. They climbed to the roofs of the houses, but the houses crumbled under their feet; they tried to mount to the tops of the trees, but the trees hurled them from them; they sought refuge in the caverns, but the caverns closed before them. Thus was accomplished the ruin of this race, destined to be overthrown. And it is said that their posterity are the little monkeys who live in the woods.

## VUKUB-CAKIX, THE GREAT MACAW

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Spence, Lewis. *The Myths of Mexico and Peru*. London: G. G. Harrap and Company, 1913. Internet Sacred Text Archive <http://www.sacred-texts.com/nam/mmp/mmp1.htm> (April 10, 2007).

**Date:** pre-1500 C.E.

**Original Source:** Maya

**National Origin:** Native American

In his vanity, the demon Vukub-Cakix considered himself the source of all light, the sun and the moon god. Their exploits in serving the will of the gods and cleansing the universe of destructive forces is typical of twin **culture heroes** of **myth**. So, too, is their use of guile rather than brawn in overcoming the superior forces of the demon and his titanic sons.

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**E**re the earth was quite recovered from the wrathful flood which had descended upon it, there lived a being orgulous and full of pride, called Vukub-Cakix (“Seven times-the-color-of-fire,” the Kiche name for the great macaw bird). His teeth were of emerald, and other parts of him shone with the brilliance of gold and silver. He boasted dreadfully, and his conduct so irritated the other gods that they resolved upon his destruction. His two sons, Zipacna and Cabrakan (Cockspur or Earth-heaper, and Earthquake), were earthquake-gods. These also were prideful and arrogant, and to cause their downfall the gods dispatched the heavenly twins Hun-Apu and Xbalanque to earth, with instructions to chastise the trio.

Vukub-Cakix prided himself upon his possession of the wonderful nanze tree, the tapal, bearing a fruit round, yellow, and aromatic, upon which he breakfasted every morning. One morning he mounted to its summit, whence he could best espy the choicest fruits, when he was surprised and infuriated to observe that two strangers had arrived there before him, and had almost denuded the tree of its produce. On seeing Vukub, Hun-Apu raised a blow-pipe to his mouth and blew a dart at the giant. It struck him on the mouth, and he fell from the top of the tree to the ground. Hun-Apu leapt down upon Vukub and grappled with him, but the giant in terrible anger seized the god by the arm and wrenched it from the body. He then returned to his house, where he was met by his wife, Chimalmat, who inquired for what reason he roared with pain. In reply he pointed to his mouth, and so full of anger was he against Hun-Apu that he took the arm he had wrenched from him and hung it over a blazing fire. He then threw himself down to bemoan his injuries, consoling himself, however, with the idea that he had avenged himself upon the disturbers of his peace.

Whilst Vukub-Cakix moaned and howled with the dreadful pain which he felt in his jaw and teeth (for the dart which had pierced him was probably poisoned) the arm of Hun-Apu hung over the fire, and was turned round and round and basted by Vukub’s spouse, Chimalmat. The sun-god rained bitter imprecations upon the interlopers who had penetrated to his paradise and had caused him such woe, and he gave vent to dire threats of what would happen if he succeeded in getting them into his power.

But Hun-Apu and Xbalanque were not minded that Vukub-Cakix should escape so easily, and the recovery of Hun-Apu's arm must be made at all hazards. So they went to consult two great and wise magicians, Xpiyacoc and Xmucane, in whom we see two of the original Kiche creative deities, who advised them to proceed with them in disguise to the dwelling of Vukub, if they wished to recover the lost arm. The old magicians resolved to disguise themselves as doctors, and dressed Hun-Apu and Xbalanque in other garments to represent their sons.

Shortly they arrived at the mansion of Vukub, and while still some way off they could hear his groans and cries. Presenting themselves at the door, they accosted him. They told him that they had heard some one crying out in pain, and that as famous doctors they considered it their duty to ask who was suffering.

Vukub appeared quite satisfied, but closely questioned the old wizards concerning the two young men who accompanied them.

"They are our sons," they replied.

"Good," said Vukub. "Do you think you will be able to cure me?"

"We have no doubt whatever upon that head," answered Xpiyacoc. "You have sustained very bad injuries to your mouth and eyes."

"The demons who shot me with an arrow from their, blow-pipe are the cause of my sufferings," said Vukub. "If you are able to cure me I shall reward you richly."

"Your Highness has many bad teeth, which must be removed," said the wily old magician. "Also the balls of your eyes appear to me to be diseased."

Vukub appeared highly alarmed, but the magicians speedily reassured him.

"It is necessary," said Xpiyacoc, "that we remove your teeth, but we will take care to replace them with grains of maize, which you will find much more agreeable in every way."

The unsuspecting giant agreed to the operation, and very quickly Xpiyacoc, with the help of Xmucane, removed his teeth of emerald, and replaced them by grains of white maize. A change quickly came over the Titan. His brilliancy speedily vanished, and when they removed the balls of his eyes he sank into insensibility and died.

All this time the wife of Vukub was turning Hun-Apu's arm over the fire, but Hun-Apu snatched the limb from above the brazier, and with the help of the magicians replaced it upon his shoulder. The discomfiture of Vukub was then complete. The party left his dwelling feeling that their mission had been accomplished.

But in reality it was only partially accomplished, because Vukub's two sons, Zipacna and Cabrakan, still remained to be dealt with. Zipacna was daily employed in heaping up mountains, while Cabrakan, his brother, shook them in earthquake. The vengeance of Hun-Apu and Xbalanque was first directed against Zipacna, and they conspired with a band of young men to bring about his death.

The young men, four hundred in number, pretended to be engaged in building a house. They cut down a large tree, which they made believe was to be the roof-tree of their dwelling, and waited in a part of the forest through which they knew Zipacna must pass. After a while they could hear the giant crashing through the trees. He came into sight, and when he saw them standing round the giant tree-trunk, which they could not lift, he seemed very much amused.

“What have you there, O little ones?” he said laughing.

“Only a tree, your Highness, which we have felled for the roof tree of a new house we are building.”

“Cannot you carry it?” asked the giant disdainfully.

“No, your Highness,” they made answer; “it is much too heavy to be lifted even by our united efforts.”

With a good-natured laugh the Titan stooped and lifted the great trunk upon his shoulder. Then, bidding them lead the way, he trudged through the forest, evidently not disconcerted in the least by his great burden. Now the young men, incited by Hun-Apu and Xbalanque, had dug a great ditch, which they pretended was to serve for the foundation of their new house. Into this they requested Zipacna to descend, and, scenting no mischief, the giant readily complied. On his reaching the bottom his treacherous acquaintances cast huge trunks of trees upon him, but on hearing them coming down he quickly took refuge in a small side tunnel which the youths had constructed to serve as a cellar beneath their house.

Imagining the giant to be killed, they began at once to express their delight by singing and dancing, and to lend color to his stratagem Zipacna dispatched several friendly ants to the surface with strands of hair, which the young men concluded had been taken from his dead body. Assured by the seeming proof of his death, the youths proceeded to build their house upon the tree-trunks which they imagined covered Zipacna’s body, and, producing a quantity of pulque [alcoholic beverage made from the fermented juice of the “century plant,” the agave], they began to make merry over the end of their enemy. For some hours their new dwelling rang with revelry.

All this time Zipacna, quietly hidden below, was listening to the hubbub and waiting his chance to revenge himself upon those who had entrapped him.

Suddenly arising in his giant might, he cast the house and all its inmates high in the air. The dwelling was utterly demolished, and the band of youths were hurled with such force into the sky that they remained there, and in the stars we call the Pleiades we can still discern them wearily waiting an opportunity to return to earth.

But Hun-Apu and Xbalanque, grieved that their comrades had so perished, resolved that Zipacna must not be permitted to escape so easily. He, carrying the mountains by night, sought his food by day on the shore of the river, where he wandered catching fish and crabs. The brothers made a large artificial crab, which they placed in a cavern at the bottom of a ravine. They then cunningly

undermined a huge mountain, and awaited events. Very soon they saw Zipacna wandering along the side of the river, and asked him where he was going.

“Oh, I am only seeking my daily food,” replied the giant.

“And what may that consist of?” asked the brothers.

“Only of fish and crabs,” replied Zipacna.

“Oh, there is a crab down yonder,” said the crafty brothers, pointing to the bottom of the ravine. “We espied it as we came along. Truly, it is a great crab, and will furnish you with a capital breakfast.”

“Splendid!” cried Zipacna, with glistening eyes. “I must have it at once,” and with one bound he leapt down to where the cunningly contrived crab lay in the cavern.

No sooner had he reached it than Hun-Apu and Xbalanque cast the mountain upon him; but so desperate were his efforts to get free that the brothers feared he might rid himself of the immense weight of earth under which he was buried, and to make sure of his fate they turned him into stone.

Thus at the foot of Mount Meahuan, near Vera Paz, perished the proud Mountain-Maker.

Now only the third of this family of boasters remained, and he was the most proud of any.

“I am the Overtuner of Mountains!” said he.

But Hun-Apu and Xbalanque had made up their minds that not one of the race of Vukub should be left alive.

At the moment when they were plotting the overthrow of Cabrakan he was occupied in moving mountains. He seized the mountains by their bases and, exerting his mighty strength, cast them into the air; and of the smaller mountains he took no account at all. While he was so employed he met the brothers, who greeted him cordially.

“Good day, Cabrakan,” said they. “What may you be doing?”

“Bah! nothing at all,” replied the giant. “Cannot you see that I am throwing the mountains about, which is my usual occupation? And who may you be that ask such stupid questions? What are your names?”

“We have no names,” replied they. “We are only hunters, and here we have our blow-pipes, with which we shoot the birds that live in these mountains. So you see that we do not require names, as we meet no one.”

Cabrakan looked at the brothers disdainfully, and was about to depart when they said to him, “Stay; we should like to behold these mountain-throwing feats of yours.”

This aroused the pride of Cabrakan.

“Well, since you wish it,” said he, “I will show you how I can move a really great mountain. Now, choose the one you would like to see me destroy, and before you are aware of it I shall have reduced it to dust.”

Hun-Apu looked around him, and espying a great peak pointed toward it. “Do you think you could overthrow that mountain?” he asked.



“Without the least difficulty,” replied Cabrakan, with a great laugh. “Let us go toward it.”

“But first you must eat,” said Hun-Apu. “You have had no food since morning, and so great a feat can hardly be accomplished fasting.”

The giant smacked his lips. “You are right” he said, with a hungry look. Cabrakan was one of those people who are always hungry. “But what have you to give me?”

“We have nothing with us,” said Hun-Apu.

“Umph!” growled Cabrakan, “you are a pretty fellow. You ask me what I will have to eat, and then tell me you have nothing,” and in his anger he seized one of the smaller mountains and threw it into the sea, so that the waves splashed up to the sky.

“Come,” said Hun-Apu, “don’t get angry. We have our blow-pipes with us, and will shoot a bird for your dinner.”

On hearing this Cabrakan grew somewhat quieter. “Why did you not say so at first?” he growled. “But be quick, because I am hungry.”

Just at that moment a large bird passed overhead, and Hun-Apu and Xbalanque raised their blow-pipes to their mouths. The darts sped swiftly upward, and both of them struck the bird, which came tumbling down through the air, falling at the feet of Cabrakan.

“Wonderful, wonderful!” cried the giant. “You are clever fellows indeed, and, seizing the dead bird, he was going to eat it raw when Hun-Apu stopped him.”

“Wait a moment,” said he. “It will be much nicer when cooked,” and, rubbing two sticks together, he ordered Xbalanque to gather some dry wood, so that a fire was soon blazing. The bird was then suspended over the fire, and in a short time a savory odor mounted to the nostrils of the giant, who stood watching the cooking with hungry eyes and watering lips. Before placing the bird over the fire to cook, however, Hun-Apu had smeared its feathers with a thick coating of mud. The Indians in some parts of Central America still do this, so that when the mud dries with the heat of the fire the feathers will come off with it, leaving the flesh of the bird quite ready to eat. But Hun-Apu had done this with a purpose. The mud that he spread on the feathers was that of a poisoned earth, called *tizate*, the elements of which sank deeply into the flesh of the bird.

When the savory mess was cooked, he handed it to Cabrakan, who speedily devoured it. “Now” said Hun-Apu, “let us go toward that great mountain and see if you can lift it as you boast.”

But already Cabrakan began to feel strange pangs. “What is this?” said he, passing his hand across his brow. “I do not seem to see the mountain you mean.”

“Nonsense,” said Hun-Apu. “Yonder it is, see, to the east there.”

“My eyes seem dim this morning,” replied the giant.

“No, it is not that,” said Hun-Apu. “You have boasted that you could lift this mountain, and now you are afraid to try.”

“I tell you,” said Cabrakan, “that I have difficulty in seeing. Will you lead me to the mountain?”

“Certainly,” said Hun-Apu, giving him his hand, and with several strides they were at the foot of the eminence.

“Now,” said Hun-Apu, “see what you can do, boaster.”

Cabrakan gazed stupidly at the great mass in front of him. His knees shook together so that the sound was like the beating of a war-drum, and the sweat poured from his forehead and ran in a little stream down the side of the mountain.

“Come,” cried Hun-Apu derisively, “are you going to lift the mountain or not?”

“He cannot,” sneered Xbalanque. “I knew he could not.”

Cabrakan shook himself into a final effort to regain his senses, but all to no purpose. The poison rushed through his blood, and with a groan he fell dead before the brothers.

Thus perished the last of the earth-giants of Guatemala, whom Hun-Apu and Xbalanque had been sent to destroy.

## THE CALABASH TREE

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Hartman, C. V. “The Story of the Calabash-Tree in the *Popol Vuh*.” *Journal of American Folklore* 20 (1907): 148–150.

**Date:** pre-1500 C.E.

**Original Source:** Maya

**National Origin:** Native American

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“The Calabash Tree” is the prequel to “Vukub-Cakix, the Great Macaw” (page 358). Hun-hun-ahpu and Vucub-hun-ahpu are divine athletes who excelled at *juego de pelota* (Spanish, “ball game”) a ritualized pre-Columbian game. Lured to Xibalba by an invitation to a ball game, they were killed and dismembered by Hun-came and Vucub-came (Vukub-Cakix or Vucub-Caquix). The sons of Hun-hun-ahpu, the hero twins Hun-Apu and Xbalanqu, subsequently avenged their father after their miraculous birth from spittle. C. V. Hartman contends that the birth from spittle is a widely distributed **motif** in Native American **myth**.

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**T**he two brother wizards Hun-hun-ahpu and Vucub-hun-ahpu were condemned to death by the rulers of the nether world, Hun-came and Vucub-came, on their visiting them, inasmuch as they did not succeed in passing through the ordeals to which they were subjected....

“That is sufficient,” said Hun-came and Vucub-came, “now your days are accomplished! Ye shall die the death! Ye shall cease to exist! Ye shall be rent in pieces and your countenances shall be hid here in this place!”

They were, therefore, hewn in pieces and buried on the spot whereupon the ashes were wont to be cast. But ere that took place, the head of Hun-hun-ahpu was severed from his body and placed, by order of Hun-came and Vucub-came, between the two main branches of a dry tree by the wayside.

Thereupon the tree began to blossom and bear fruit, and the fruit thereof is what we now call “jicaras.” Hun-came and Vucub-came were mightily astonished at the wonder that had taken place. Round fruits were to be seen all along the branches, and shortly it was impossible to distinguish Hun-hun-aphu’s head from the other fruits on the tree. It took the shape of a calabash. All those who dwelt in the nether regions went out to behold the marvel. The tree was very highly esteemed and prized, for in a moment of time, on their depositing the head of Hun-hun-aphu in the fork of the tree, it had received life, and they said among themselves, “Do not pluck the fruit of the tree! Do not walk beneath this tree!” Such was the determination of all those who dwell in the nether regions. Now a young girl heard the story of the miracle that had happened. We are now about to narrate how it was that she went to the spot where the tree stood.

Herein is narrated an account of a young virgin, the daughter of a great lord of the name of Cuchumaquic.

A young girl, the daughter of a great lord, Cuchumaquic by name, and of a woman of the name of Xequic (blood), heard, her father speak about the marvelous tree. Astonished at what she had heard she exclaimed, “Why should I not go down to see the tree they are talking about; for, in truth, what they relate is very strange and delightful.”

She went there straightway alone and went up to the foot of the tree, which was just opposite the place where the ash-heap lay. On seeing it she exclaimed in astonishment, “What beautiful fruits, and how very fruitful the tree is! I surely shall not die, shall not perish, if I take one of these fruits.”

Then the skull fixed between the branches spoke and said, “What do you want? These round things are only bones of the dead, but perchance you desire them nevertheless.”

“Yes,” answered the girl, “I should like to have one of those fruits.”

“Stretch out your right hand,” said the skull.

“Gladly,” said the girl, stretching up her right hand towards the skull. The skull thereupon spat right in the middle of her hand. The girl immediately drew back her hand and looked into it, without, however, observing a single trace of the spittle of the skull.

“I have given you a sign,” said the skull, “in my spittle and slaver; this head of mine will never speak any more, for it is only bone; there is no flesh left here. The same shall be the fate of all mighty men whoever they may be.... They are only honored for the sake of their flesh, and when they die human beings are

terrified at the skull, and its progeny is as spittle and slaver. But if they be children of a wise and clever man, the being of the wise man is not terminated but passes to the sons and daughters he has engendered. My being has now passed into you. Rise from the realms of the dead to the earth, in order that you may not die.”

So spoke the head of Hun-hun-ahpu. That was the word of wisdom and the message of Huracan, of Chipacaculha and Raxacaculha, and in accordance with their orders it was done. Then the young girl returned to her home, after hearing many words of counsel and messages.

In a short time she was conscious of being with child as a result of what was only spittle. The children who were born were Hun-hun-ahpu and Xbalanque. Six months afterwards the girl’s father became aware of her being with child, and she was severely reprimanded by him.

Then assembled in the council-chamber Hun-came, Vucub-came, and Cuchumaquic. The last named said, “My daughter is with child by reason of her dishonorable ways of life.” So spoke Cuchumaquic, when he stepped forward before his masters.

“That is sufficient,” they replied; “subject her to cross-examination, that she may confess and we may hear what she has to say in her defense.”

“Good, noble lords,” he replied, and thereupon at once asked his daughter, “Whose is the child thou hast in thy womb?”

She replied, “I am not with child, O my father! No man hath ever approached unto me.”

“Thou hast brought dishonor upon thyself,” was the father’s answer. “Come hither now and carry her away to be sacrificed, and then bring me her heart in a calabash.” This command was given to the owls, who were four in number.

They went straightway and brought a calabash, carried away the girl, taking with them a sharp knife to cut her asunder with.

The girl then said to those who had been sent, “Kill me not, for I have not done any wrong, for the fetus I have in my womb came there of itself; what happened was this: I went out to divert myself by beholding the marvel that had taken place with regard to Hun-hun-aphu’s head on the ash-heap; do not therefore put me to death!”

The messengers replied, “Well, then, what are we to take with us in the calabash instead of your heart? Did not our masters order that it was to be placed in this calabash? We would gladly set you at liberty.”

“Good,” said she. “This heart does not belong to them ... it shall not be burnt in their sight; put in the calabash the fruit of this tree,” said the girl, and the sap of the tree was red. The sap was tapped into the calabash, and at once it coagulated and formed a round ball. And the hardened sap was placed in the calabash instead of the heart, and in color it was red as blood ... and this tree is called “granapalo colorado” or the blood tree.

# MEXICO

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## TALE OF THE RABBIT

**Tradition Bearer:** Unknown

**Source:** Boas, Franz. "Notes on Mexican Folklore." *Journal of American Folklore* 25 (1912): 204–210.

**Date:** ca. 1912

**Original Source:** Mexico

**National Origin:** Mexican

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Mexico, south of the United States and north of Guatemala, was the birthplace of several of the most advanced cultures in the Western hemisphere (see, for example, the Maya tales, pages 357–366, and the Nahuatl tales, pages 393–401). With the Spanish conquest in the 1500s, European influence extended into the traditional folktale repertoire. The "Tale of the Rabbit," actually a tale **cycle**, attests to this European and Native American blending. Franz Boas notes that "The people of Pochutla [the village in which he collected the following tale cycle] today speak Spanish, and their folk-lore is based largely on Spanish sources" (204). An important position among the folktales is held by the "Rabbit and Coyote" tales, which are known from Mexico City eastward to the Gulf Coast, and southward to Central America. The following **ordinary tale** contains a number of traditional **tale types**. Among them are "Tarbaby and Rabbit" (AT 175), "The Wolf Dives into the Water for Reflected Cheese" (AT 34), "Holding up the Rock" (AT 1530), and "Hello, house!: Cave Call" (AT 66A).

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**T**here was a woman who had a *chile*-garden; and every day she went to watch it, because the Rabbit ate much of it. One day she went, and on the road met an *arriera* [a species of ant], and asked her if she did not

know how to prevent the Rabbit from eating the *chile*. The *arriera* replied that she did not know, and that she should ask her sister the *barendera* [a species of ant], who came behind. She met the *barendera*, and asked her. Then she said that she should make four little monkeys of wax, and that she should nail them up in the opening in the wall where the Rabbit entered, two on each side, and that she should go the next day to see if the Rabbit had fallen into the trap.

She placed the four little monkeys of wax; and the Rabbit arrived, and said to them, "See here, monkey of wax? If you do not let me pass, I'll box your ears"; and he boxed his ears, and his little hand stuck fast.

He said again, "Look here, little monkey of wax! If you don't let me pass, I have another hand, and I'll box your ears again; and he boxed his ears, and the other little hand stuck fast.

He said again, "Look here, little monkey of wax! If you do not let go of my little hands, I'll kick you"; and he kicked him, and his little foot stuck fast.

He said again, "Look here, little monkey of wax! If you don't let go of my hands and of my foot, I'll kick you again. I have another little foot."

They were talking thus when the good little daughter arrived, and said to him, "Ah, it must be you who eats *my chile*. Now you'll pay it to me." She put him in a net which she was carrying, and took him to her house.

When she arrived, she hung him up in the middle of the house, and said, "What shall I do with you?" She thought she would throw boiling water over him; but the lady had no water, and went to fetch it and left the door locked.

The Rabbit was still hanging in the net; but since the house stood by the roadside, it so happened that a Coyote passed by, and the Rabbit, as soon as he saw the Coyote, began to talk, to speak, and said, "How can they want to marry me by force—me, who is so small, and I do not want to marry!"

Then the Coyote drew near, and asked him what he was saying; and Rabbit spoke to him, (asking him) if he (the Coyote) would not place himself in that net, for he himself was caught in the net because they wanted to marry him to a pretty girl, and he did not want to marry. Then the Coyote said to him that he accepted what the Rabbit proposed. The Coyote placed himself in the net, and the Rabbit escaped.

When the dear old woman found the Coyote, she said to him, "Ah, how did the Rabbit turn into a Coyote!" [She] put the pot of water over the fire, and, when it was boiling, she threw it over the Coyote. The Coyote was burnt, but only his backside was burnt. Then the Coyote left, rolling himself on the road, but the Rabbit was on a pitahaya ("dragon fruit" that grows on a variety of cactus) plantation.

When the Coyote passed by, the Rabbit said to him, "Good-day, Uncle Coyote!" and then the Coyote turned to see who spoke to him, and the Coyote said, "Why did you deceive me?"

And the Rabbit replied, "Because they did not find me, they punished you; but really I was about to marry a girl."

Then he said to him, "Better let us eat *pitahayas*," and threw one down from above. He said to him, "Shut your eyes and open your mouth!" He threw one down, and then another one. The two were clean; but the third one he did not clean, but threw it down with all the spines on it. The Coyote rolled about, and the Rabbit went away.

He saw the Coyote pass by, and said to him, "Coyote, burnt backsides!"

The Coyote said, "What do you say to me?" and the Rabbit replied, "I say to you, that you shall come and help me rock my little sister, who is crying, and my mother is not here." [Rabbit had put a wasps' nest in the cradle and covered it with a blanket. The buzzing of the insects was the sound that Rabbit identified as crying].

The Coyote did not reply to this. "You owe me much. You deceived me, saying that I was going to marry, and then you threw me a *pitakaya* with spines, and now I'll take revenge for what you have done to me."

He said to him, "But I do not know you, and have never seen you. Maybe those are others, perhaps my brothers."

And the Coyote said to him, "Then you have brothers?"

"Certainly," he said to him. "Man alive, who knows which one that may be!"

"And you, what are you doing here?"

"My mother has been away a long time to get *tortillas* to eat, and left me here rocking this little girl. Now I wish that you would stay here in my place, while I go to look for her, that she may come." The Coyote stayed there.

When the Rabbit left, he said to him, "If you see that my sister does not stop crying, box her ears and leave her."

The Coyote did so. He got tired of rocking the cradle, and the noise did not stop. He boxed her ears with vigor, and out came a swarm of wasps, who gave the Coyote a good dose [of stinging] and flew away.

The Coyote followed the road, and said to himself, "Where shall I find the Rabbit?" He walked along the road.

The Rabbit spoke to him, and said, "Coyote, burnt backsides?" and the Coyote asked him what he was saying.

The Rabbit said to him that he was asking him to help him pull out a cheese that was there. The Rabbit was in a pond, and the moon was shining and was seen in the water, and this was the cheese which the Rabbit said he was pulling out. The Rabbit left the Coyote there, saying that he was going to rest for a while, because he was very tired. The Coyote began to pull at the cheese; but since he could never do it, he got tired and went on his way.

After that he walked along the road, when the Rabbit spoke to him, and said, "Good-day, Uncle Coyote!"

The Coyote said to him, "Now you won't escape me, for you have deceived me much."

"No," said the Rabbit to him, "it is not I. Since the world has existed I have been placed here in this place, with this stone in my hand"; for the Rabbit, as

soon as he had seen the Coyote, put a large stone into his hand, and said that he had been left right there supporting that stone, for, if he let go of it, the world would be lost.

The Coyote believed him; and the Rabbit said to him, "Sir, will you not help me a little while with this stone, for I am very tired?"

The Coyote took the stone. The Rabbit said to him, "Uncle Coyote, sir? Don't let go of the stone, else the world will be lost."

The Rabbit went away, saying to the Coyote that he would soon return; but the Rabbit did not come back. He went on; and the Coyote, who was tired, let the stone down gradually, and looked at the sky to see if it was coming down. But when he looked and saw that it was not so, he let the stone down until he put it down on the ground.

He left it and went, and said, "Whenever I find the Rabbit, I must kill him, because he has fooled me too much."

The Rabbit placed himself by the wayside, among the reeds. When the Coyote passed by, the Rabbit held a guitar, which, as soon as he saw the Coyote, he began to play, and said, "Good-day, Uncle Coyote!"

The Coyote said to him, "Come down, that we may talk together!"

"No, Uncle Coyote! Indeed, sir, you are much annoyed with me."

The Coyote said to him, "You have deceived me much, and therefore I am annoyed."

"No, Uncle Coyote," he said to him, "I am the best one of all, and, sir, don't be annoyed with me. I know well what has happened, but I did not do those things. My brother, he is a very bad one, it is he who has done all these things. But now he is about to marry, and I am waiting for them. They have been delayed a very long time. Who knows what they are doing! I should like to go and look for them if you would stay here and play the guitar; I'll give you a sign, sir, when the bridal couple are coming. I'll fire some rockets, so that you may know it, sir; and then you must play more strongly, so that they can dance when they come."

The Coyote did so. The Rabbit went. After a little while the Rabbit came and set fire to the reeds. The Coyote, believing that the bridal couple were coming, continued to play and began to dance. Before he knew it, he was in the midst of the flames. He could not escape; and the poor Coyote was burnt, and died.

The Rabbit came to look, and mourned the death of the Coyote, and said to himself, "Poor Uncle Coyote! Now he is dead, indeed, and where shall I go now?"

The Rabbit went to the bank of a river. He could not cross the river, and began to say, "Whoever takes me across may eat me."

He was saying thus, when the Alligator came, and said to him, "I'll take you across."

"Well!" said the Rabbit. He climbed up on the back of the Alligator.

When he came near the other bank, the Alligator said to him, "Now I am going to eat you."



“And don’t you feel any pity,” replied the Rabbit, “to eat such a little fatty as myself?” The Alligator said, “What shall we do?”

“Let us go nearer the bank,” replied the Rabbit, “that you may eat me easily, sir.” Already they were on the bank. The Rabbit said to the Alligator, “Does it not seem to you, sir, that there are some large leaves there? I’ll fetch them; and then I shall throw myself down, that you may not lose anything.”

The Alligator agreed. The Rabbit went, and never came back.

On the other side there were old stubbles; and the Rabbit found only a little piece of field, and thought, “I’ll sell much corn, and to whom shall I sell it? I’ll sell one bushel to Aunt Cockroach, another one to Aunt Hen, one to Uncle Dog, one to Uncle Lion, and one to Uncle Hunter.”

The time came when the corn was to be delivered. The Rabbit had a little ranch; and when he went out to take a walk, he used to lock the door of the ranch. Since, however, he had fooled the Alligator and owed him his life, the Alligator informed himself as to where he lived, and went to place himself near his bed, that the Alligator might eat the Rabbit when he arrived.

The Rabbit was on his guard; and when he arrived, he said, “Good-day, dear House!” The House never replied; but one day when he said, “Good-day, dear House!” the Alligator replied, “Good-day, Rabbit!”

“What? You never answer me, dear House!” He opened the door, looked inside, and, when he saw the back of the Alligator, he said, “What are those pegs that I see here? I am not a guitar-player, and I am not a violinist. I had better go to another ranch!”

There he was when the Cockroach arrived. “Good-day, Uncle Rabbit!”

“Good-day, Aunt Cockroach.”

“I come for my corn.”

“All right, only it is very early. Let us lunch first, and then we will go.”

They were waiting for their lunch when they saw the Hen. The Rabbit said to the Cockroach, “Listen, Aunt Cockroach! Will not the Hen want to eat you?”

“Certainly, where shall I hide?”

The Rabbit said to her, “Madam, hide under this piece of bark here.”

When the Hen arrived, “Good-day, Uncle Rabbit!”

“Good-day, Aunt Hen!”

“I came for my corn.”

“Certainly, let us first take lunch, and then we will go and shell it.” The Hen sat down; and the Rabbit said to her, “Madam, would you not like to eat a cockroach?”

“Certainly,” said the Hen, “where is it?”

The Rabbit showed her the cockroach, and the Rabbit said, “Thus I am getting rid of my troubles.”

The Rabbit and the Hen were talking when they discovered the Dog, who was coming.

The Rabbit said, "Where are you going to hide, madam? For the Dog is coming, and will want to eat you. Hide under this carrying-basket." The Hen hid, and the Dog arrived.

"Good-day, Uncle Rabbit!"

"Good-day, Uncle Dog?"

"I came for my corn."

"Certainly! Sit down for a moment." The Dog seated himself; and the Rabbit said, "Listen, sir! Would you not like to eat a hen?"

"Where is it?"

"It is under this basket." The Dog ate the hen, and continued to talk with the Rabbit.

They were still talking when they saw the Lion; and the Rabbit asked the Dog if he was not afraid that the Lion would eat him.

The Dog said, "I am frightened. Where shall I hide?" and the Dog hid behind the house.

The Lion arrived. "Good-day, Uncle Rabbit!"

"Good-day, Uncle Lion!"

"I came for my corn."

The Rabbit said to him, "Sir, enter for a moment, we will go right away." The Lion entered; and the Rabbit said to him, "I'll tell you something, sir. Would you not like to eat a dog?"

"Why not? Where is it?" The Rabbit showed him where the dog was, and the Lion ate it at once.

There they were still talking when they discovered the Hunter, who was coming; and the Rabbit said, "Will he not want to kill you, sir?"

"Certainly," said the Lion. "Where shall I hide?"

"Hide on the rafter of the house. There he will not see you, sir, even if he should come. He will not do you any harm."

The Hunter arrived. "Good-day, Uncle Rabbit!"

"Good-day, Uncle Hunter!"

"I came for my corn."

"Certainly, Certainly," he said to him. "Come in, sir, and take a lunch first of hot cakes and fresh cheese, and then we will go to shell the corn. This is the only remaining debt that I have. Meanwhile, sir, would you not like to kill a lion?"

The Hunter said "Where is it?" The Rabbit showed him where the lion was, which the Hunter killed. The Hunter killed the lion, and the Rabbit made his escape. When the Hunter came back to the house to look for the Rabbit, he did not find him. The Rabbit had gone away.

He went on, and met a Serpent, who was under a stone and could in no way get out; and she asked every one who passed to pull her out. The Rabbit took pity on her and went to get some levers. He lifted the stone, and the Serpent was able to get out. When she was free, she wanted to eat the Rabbit.

Then he said to her, "Why do you want to do this to me? Haven't I done you a favor in taking you out from under that stone?"

The Serpent said to him, "Certainly, but don't you know that a good deed is repaid by evil deeds?"

"Allow me three witnesses before I die."

When two horses came down, the Rabbit said, "Excuse me, gentle-men! Just one word! Is it true that a good deed is repaid by an evil deed?"

"That is very true," said the Horse, "for formerly I was a good horse for my master. When he was a boy, he loved me well, and fed me well. Now I am old, and he has let me go into the fields without caring how I fare. Thus it is well said that good deeds are repaid by bad ones."

The Serpent said to him, "Now, do you see? You have only two more chances."

When two Steers passed by, the Rabbit said, "Excuse me, gentlemen! Just one word! Is it true that a good deed is repaid by evil ones?"

The Steers said, "Even if it causes sorrow, for once my master considered me a valuable animal. I served him well in my time. I was very obedient. As I served him, he loved me well. Now I am old; I am useless; and he has said that he has let me go to the field to recuperate a little, so that he can kill me."

They went on, and met a Donkey. He was standing on one side of the road, and was very sad. "Friend," said the Rabbit, "is it true that a good deed is repaid by evil ones?"

"Even if it causes sorrow," answered the Donkey, "for I gave good service to my master when he was a boy; and today, when I am old, he does not want to look at me. I just come from receiving a sound beating, which they gave me because I went to see my master."

"There is no help," said the Serpent, "you must die."

They were talking when a Rooster passed by, and he said to him, "Friend, I must die because of a good deed."

"What good deed have you done?" said the Rooster.

"I pulled the Serpent from under a stone, where she had been a long time."

The Rooster said, "How was she?"

The Serpent placed herself just in the same way as she had been under the rock; and he said, "That is the way you were placed!"

The Serpent replied, "Yes."

Then he said, "If you were in this position, stay in it."

The Rabbit replied, "I owe you my life."

He followed on his way; and they were nearing a town, when the Hunter arrived at his house, and saw the Rabbit. "There is no help, I'll kill you."

He put a ball through him, and the Rabbit died. The Hunter took the Rabbit, who was half dead; and the Rabbit said, "Now I believe that a good deed is repaid by evil ones."

## THE LONG-LEGS

**Tradition Bearer:** Unknown

**Source:** Boas, Franz. "Notes on Mexican Folklore." *Journal of American Folklore* 25 (1912): 219–220.

**Date:** ca. 1912

**Original Source:** Mexico

**National Origin:** Mexican

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The following tale demonstrates the postcontact influence of Christianity as it recounts the hierarchy of powers in the universe. The narrative is a Mexican **variant** of "Stronger and Strongest" (AT 203.1).

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**T**here was a Long-Legs [a variety of mosquito], and it was very cold. He was sleeping in the foliage of a tree, and on the next day he could not sleep because his foot was broken.

Then said the Long-Legs, "Cold, cold, how strong you are, who have broken my foot!"

Then the Cold said, "But stronger is the Sun, because he heats me."

He went to where the Sun is, and said to him, "Sun, how strong you are, Sun that heats frost, frost that broke my foot!"

"But stronger is the cloud, because it covers me."

"Cloud, how strong you are, cloud that covers sun, sun that heats frost, frost that broke my foot?"

"But stronger is the wind, because it dissolves me."

"Wind, how strong you are, wind that dissolves cloud, cloud that covers sun, sun that heats frost, frost that broke my foot!"

"But stronger is the wall, because it resists me."

"Wall, how strong you are, wall that resists wind, wind that dissolves cloud, cloud that covers sun, sun that heats frost, frost that broke my foot!"

"But stronger is the mouse, because he perforates me."

"Mouse, how strong you are—mouse that perforates wall, wall that resists wind, wind that dissolves cloud, cloud that covers sun, sun that heats frost, frost that broke my foot!"

"But stronger is the cat, because he eats me."

"Cat, how strong you are, cat that eats mouse, mouse that perforates wall, wall that resists wind, wind that dissolves cloud, cloud that covers sun, sun that heats frost, frost that broke my foot!"

"But stronger is the stick, because it kills me."

“Stick, how strong you are, stick that kills cat, cat that eats mouse, mouse that perforates wall, wall that resists wind, wind that dissolves cloud, cloud that covers sun, sun that heats frost, frost that broke my foot!”

“But stronger is the fire, because it burns me.”

“Fire, how strong you are—fire that burns stick, stick that kills cat, cat that eats mouse, mouse that perforates wall, wall that resists wind, wind that dissolves cloud, cloud that covers sun, sun that heats frost, frost that broke my foot!”

“But stronger is the water, because it quenches me.”

“Water, how strong you are, water that quenches fire, fire that burns stick, stick that kills cat, cat that eats mouse, mouse that perforates wall, wall that resists wind, wind that dissolves cloud, cloud that covers sun, sun that heats frost, frost that broke my foot!”

“But stronger is the steer, because he drinks me.”

“Steer, how strong you are, steer that drinks water, water that quenches fire, fire that burns stick, stick that kills cat, cat that eats mouse, mouse that perforates wall, wall that resists wind, wind that dissolves cloud, cloud that covers sun, sun that heats frost, frost that broke my foot!”

“Hut stronger is the knife, because it kills me.”

“Knife, how strong you are, knife that kills steer, steer that drinks water, water that quenches fire, fire that burns stick, stick that kills cat, cat that eats mouse, mouse that perforates wall, wall that resists wind, wind that dissolves cloud, cloud that covers sun, sun that heats frost, frost that broke my foot!”

“But stronger is the black-smith, because he makes me.”

“Blacksmith, how strong you are—blacksmith who makes knife, knife that kills steer, steer that drinks water, water that quenches fire, fire that burns stick, stick that kills cat, cat that eats mouse, mouse that perforates wall, wall that resists wind, wind that dissolves cloud, cloud that covers sun, sun that heats frost, frost that broke my foot!”—

“But stronger is Death, because he kills me.”

He went to Death, and said, “Death, how strong you are—death that kills the blacksmith, blacksmith who makes knife, knife that kills steer, steer that drinks water, water that quenches fire, fire that burns stick, stick that kills cat, cat that eats mouse, mouse that perforates wall, wall that resists wind, wind that dissolves cloud, cloud that covers the sun, sun that clears the frost, frost that broke my foot!”

“But stronger is God, because he sends me.”

“God, how strong you are, God who sends Death, Death who kills blacksmith, blacksmith who makes knife, knife that kills steer, steer that drinks water, water that quenches fire, fire that burns stick, stick that kills cat, cat that eats mouse, mouse that perforates wall, wall that resists wind, wind that dissolves cloud, cloud that covers sun, sun that heats frost, frost that broke my foot!”

## JOHN TIGER

**Tradition Bearer:** Samuel Villalobo

**Source:** Boas, Franz. "Notes on Mexican Folklore." *Journal of American Folklore* 25 (1912): 241–245.

**Date:** ca. 1912

**Original Source:** Mexico

**National Origin:** Mexican

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"John Tiger" is a **variant** of the **ordinary folktale** classified as AT 301B. The tale is often entitled "John the Bear." In this case, however, rather than being the offspring of a human mother and a bear, the protagonist is the son of a jaguar (Spanish, *tigre*).

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A man and his wife were living on their ranch at the outskirts of a village. They had several head of cattle which they milked every day. They used part of the milk for selling, and part for making cheese. The wife was pious, almost a fanatic, and went to mass every day just before her husband finished milking; then she took the milk of the first cows along for sale, and fulfilled her religious duties at the same time.

One Sunday it happened that she urged her husband to go to mass. After they had agreed upon this, he went to church, while she remained behind to milk the cows.

Unfortunately, that day one of them did not come to the corral, and, as it was getting late, the woman went out to look for her all around the corral; but instead of finding the cow of which she was in search, she met a tiger; and before she realized what was happening, the beast carried her to his cave, where he kept her locked up many years.

During this time the poor woman lived on raw meat, which the tiger obtained from the herd of her own husband. At the end of one year the woman gave birth to a boy, the son of the tiger, who grew up, strong and fierce, like his father, but who had human form. The years passed, and the boy developed extraordinary strength. Therefore he opened the stone door of the cavern, which his mother had not been able to move with all the efforts she had made. The mother, with the tenderness that belongs to all of them, taught him to speak, and told him her story as soon as she thought that her son understood her.

The boy asked her one day if she wished to leave her prison, and said that he could free her by killing his own father. The woman accepted the proposal of her son, although with great fear, and made up her mind to suffer the consequences in case he should not succeed. The beast had gone out to bring meat for his family. Then the boy, who was seven years old, searched for a weapon,

and found near the cave a stout and heavy pole, with which he prepared himself to murder his father.

The boy kept in hiding outside of the enormous rock which served as his mother's prison, when the tiger's terrific and wild howl was heard, which terrified the poor woman inside the cave as never before. The wild beast came to the door, and, when he tried to open it, he received a tremendous blow on the head, which killed him almost immediately. A second blow ended the life of the animal, who lay there, extending his teeth and his claws for a little while, as though he wanted to imbed them in the flesh of his enemy.

The boy and his mother left the dark place in which they had passed such sad days of their existence, and traveled to the ranch of the woman's husband. As might be supposed, the woman had not even a rag with which to cover herself. While they were walking through the woods, she covered herself with leaves; but when they came near the hut, she sent her son to see the master, and to ask him for a garment for his mother, who was naked. That poor man was no other than her husband, who preserved as a sacred token of remembrance the dresses of his beloved wife, whom he believed to have been dead for many years.

The woman reached the home of her husband, to whom she did not disclose herself at once. She only asked for a room in which she and her son might sleep several days. But while these days were passing, he became convinced that she was his wife. He questioned her one day. "Do you remember Mr. H——. You say that you lived here a long time ago?"

"Certainly," replied she. "He was a very good and true man." Then he noticed in her face an expression of sadness which overshadowed her soul and tortured her.

He did not doubt any longer, and said to her, "You must be my wife Maria, whom I have not forgotten a single moment, and whom I love with all my soul."

Maria could not restrain her tears, and said, "Yes, I am your wife; rather, I have been your wife; for now, although I should like to call myself so, I am unworthy of loving you. I have lived with a tiger that took me from your side." And she told him all the bitterness and sadness she had endured in the dark abode of that wild beast.

The couple lived united, and loving each other more than in the first years after their marriage. They agreed to take the boy to be baptized; and they called him Juan, and his godfather was the priest of the village. They sent the boy to school; but as soon as his fellows saw him, they made fun of him, and called him Little-Hairy-Body or Juan Tigre. And Juan, who had in his veins the blood of the tiger, with one stroke of his fist left all those who made fun of him foolish for all their lives. His parents, in order to reform him, left him with his godfather, the priest. He thought he could reform Juan by frightening him by means of the skulls of the dead, which, according to the beliefs of the people, haunted the steeple of the church.

One day, when Juan went up to toll the bells, he saw two skulls, which jumped about as though moved by a mysterious power. Juan smiled, threw them down so that they rolled about, and, when he arrived at home after calling to mass, he said to the priest, "Godfather, your servant-girl is very careless; she left on the stairs of the steeple the two calabashes in which she makes atole [corn-meal gruel]." The priest was surprised at the courage of the boy, and replied, saying that he would tell the girl to take better care of her things.

Then he sent him to another town to take a letter to the priest there, with the condition that he should sleep alone in a hut which stood all by itself in the fields. Juan stayed there, as he had been told, continued his way on the following day, and on his way back he slept there again. He had hunger, but had no wood to heat the food that he was carrying.

Juan said to himself, "Why is there no wood or straw of any kind to make a fire, and heat my supper?" At the same moment he heard a noise which announced a falling body. They were bones of skeletons, which Juan used as fuel to heat his meal.

Undoubtedly the ghosts knew his courage, and said, "In the corner which looks southward, at a depth of half a yard, you will find a pot full of gold and silver coin, for, on account of this money, we have been haunting this spot for a long time."

Juan left there, and directed his steps to his godfather, to whom he gave the reply to his message, and explained to him the place that had been indicated to him, and where the money was. The priest took this wealth away in small quantities, so that nobody should know what he was doing.

Two years passed. The father of Juan had come to be rich, because he participated in the enormous wealth that his son had found. He, however, on account of his instincts, had to look for adventures, and make himself famous by his deeds throughout the world.

He left his home, armed only with a goodly iron pole, which he alone, on account of his extraordinary strength, could manage. He met a ghost, a man who carried enormous stones, and a very noted person called "Big-Finger" because he lifted whatever he liked with his first finger and without any effort.

These three wished to fight Juan Tigre; but it was impossible to vanquish him, and he made them his slaves. They traveled about several days, and came to a hut in the field which seemed to be inhabited. Notwithstanding appearances, nobody lived there.

The ghost stayed there, and was to prepare dinner for his fellows who went out to hunt. Poor ghost! He would better have gone with his friends! A wildman, ugly, exceedingly ugly, came to the hut, beat him, threw away his dinner, and ordered him to leave at once, or else he would kill him. The hunters came back, and the ghost explained to them what had happened. Then Juan Tigre, the chief, scolded him severely, and ordered that on the following day Big-Finger should stay at home. To him and to Stone-Carrier happened the same as to the ghost.



Then Juan Tigre said, "You all go and hunt, I shall await the wildman and see what he wants." Poor negro! Better he had not come! Juan beat him so hard, that the poor wildman had to flee precipitately, leaving a line of blood on the road, for he had torn off one of his ears. When Juan's companions arrived, he gave them a good dinner to eat, while they had not been able to provide a meal.

After dinner they followed the tracks of the wildman, and noted that in all probability he had gone down into a well. They brought halters; and Juan went down to the bottom of the well, telling his companions to pull him up as soon as he should shake the rope. After a few moments Juan shook the rope, and his companions began to pull up something heavy. They were surprised to see a beautiful maiden tied in the halter. They lowered the rope again, and pulled up another, younger girl. The same happened a third time.

Then each one of these bad people said, "This one shall be my wife!" and each one took his future wife by the arm.

They left Juan in the dark well. When the chief saw that the halter was not coming down again, he threatened the wildman of whom we have spoken, and who was in the bottom of the well, howling on account of the loss of his ear, with death, if he should not take him out of there. The wildman said, "Do not kill me! Let me live here! If you wish for anything, bite my ear which you have, and you will get your wish." Juan bit the ear, and, to his great surprise, he saw himself out of the well without knowing how it had happened.

By means of the ear he also learned the whereabouts of his companions, who thought Juan would die in the well, and took those beautiful maidens to the house of the King, who said that he was their father, and that they had been carried away by a wildman whose whereabouts could not be discovered.

The King compelled his daughters to marry the bad persons who had returned them to their father. They protested, saying that the person who had saved them was a stout, fierce, and ugly man, with whom each of them had left a ring. The father insisted on his idea; and the miserable companions of Juan would have triumphed, if he had not appeared on time at the castle of the King and shown the rings which his daughters had given him.

The King ordered the treacherous friends of Juan to be shot, and said to him, "You shall be the master of my daughters. They love you, because you have saved them from the claws of the monster; and as a prize for your virtues and strength you shall be my heir."

## GOD

**Tradition Bearer:** Unknown

**Source:** Boas, Franz. "Notes on Mexican Folklore." *Journal of American Folklore* 25 (1912): 215–217.

**Date:** ca. 1912

Original Source: Mexico

National Origin: Mexico

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This moralistic tale of three brothers and their choices of either money or grace derives from European sources. As seen in all cross-cultural borrowing, however, there is considerable adaptation to new settings. Franz Boas notes a particularly interesting one in this case: “[T]he end may be in part a description of the Mexican journey to the lower world, in which the soul has to pass between two mountains that strike each other, past a serpent guarding the trail, past the green lizard, eight deserts, eight hills, the wind of the knives, and a river which has to be crossed on the backs of the dogs of the dead” (251).

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There was a man who had three sons. One day the oldest one said to his father, “Father give me your blessing, for I am going to seek my fortune”; and he went. He walked and walked along a road until he came to an old hut, and there was an old man who was God. The boy said, “Good-day, sir!”

“Good-day, son!” replied the old man. “Have you no work, sir?”

“Certainty,” replied the old man. “Come in! Be seated! Let us take lunch, and then you shall go and take a letter to Monjas.” After the boy had eaten, he said to him, “Sweep the house, and saddle this donkey and go and take this letter.”

The boy went, and came on the road to a red river, and he was much frightened. He threw the letter into the river and went back. The old man said at once, “Have you come back already, son?”

“Already, sir,” he said to him. “Did you deliver the letter?”

“Yes”; and the letter had come back again to the hands of God.

“All right!” he said. “Now what do you want?—money or grace?”

“Money,” he said to him. “Then take this napkin,” he said to him, “and you will have in it whatever you wish for.”

The boy went to his house well satisfied, and said, “Father, here I bring this napkin, and we must lunch with it presently.” Then the boy said, “Napkin, by the virtue given to thee by God, I ask thee to give me a lunch”; and at once a table was there, with much to eat.

After this the second brother said, “Father, give me your blessing, for I am going to seek my fortune”; and he went the way which his brother had taken.

He found the old hut and also the old man. He said, “Good-day, sir!”

“Good-day, my son!”

“Have you nothing to do, sir?”

“Yes,” replied the old man. “Come in! Be seated! We will lunch. Then sweep the house, put flowers on the altar; saddle the donkey, and go to take this letter to Monjas.”

The boy did so, and also met the red river, threw the letter into the river, and came back. The letter came again to the hands of God.

The boy arrived; and the old man said to him, "Have you come already, son?"

"Already, sir," he replied. "And now, what do you want? Money or grace?"

"Money," replied the boy. Then he presented him with an empty trunk, took a little pole, touched the top of the trunk with it, and said, "Pole, pole, by the virtue that God has given to thee, put this trunk in my house"; and immediately the trunk was transferred to the house of the boy. He bade good-bye to the old man; and when he arrived in his house, the trunk was there full of money.

Then the youngest brother said, "Father give me your blessing, for I, too, will seek my fortune." The father gave him his blessing, and the boy took the same road. He found the old hut and God who lived there. The boy said, "Good-day, sir!"

"Good-day, boy!" replied the old man. "Have you no work, sir?"

"Yes," replied the old man. "Come in! Be seated! We will lunch," and he gave him some very tough cakes to eat; and the boy said to himself, "Poor old man! How can he sustain himself on those tough cakes?" and God heard him, and said, "Arise, sweep the house; put flowers on the altar, saddle this donkey, and go to Monjas to take this letter there."

The boy went. First he came to the red river. He had no fear, passed it, and the water reached to the hoofs of the donkey. He went on. He walked and walked. He came to a white, white river. He passed it. Then he came to a green, green river. He passed it. Then he came to a grassy hill, and the cattle that roamed there, how lean they were! Then he came to a barren hill, and the cattle that roamed there were fat. He walked on and on, and came to rocks which were striking one another. Again he walked on and on, and came to a roast that was roasting.

He arrived at Monjas, inquired for the church, and delivered the letter into the hands of the Virgin. Then the Virgin said to the boy, "Take this little hat as a sign that you have delivered to me my letter. Tell God what you have seen on the road."

When the boy went back, there was nothing on the road. He reached the hut of the old man, and the old man said to him, "Have you come already, son?"

"Already," replied the boy. "Well," said the old man to him, "tell me about what you have seen on the road."

"Sir," said the boy to him, "first I saw a red, red river."

"That red river," said God, "is the blood that your mother shed for you."

"Then I saw a white, white river."

"That is the milk that you have sucked."

"Then I saw a green, green river."

“Those are your mother’s veins.”

“Then I saw a grassy hill with lean cattle.”

“Those are the cattle of the rich.”

“Then I saw a barren hill with fat cattle.”

“Those are the cattle of the poor.”

“Then I saw several rocks which struck one another.”

“Those are the godmothers when they are fighting.”

“When I came to Monjas there was a roast roasting.”

“That is the tongue of the gossip.”

“Well, son,” said God to him, “and now what do you want? Money or grace?”

“Grace,” replied the boy. “All right I” said the old man to him. “Take this crucifix, and on the base you will find a present every day.”

The boy left well satisfied. When he arrived at his house, he placed the crucifix on his altar; and every day early, when he awoke, he found two dollars on the base of the crucifix.

One day when the boy was eating, he saw at a distance an old man wrapped in his sheet, and full of ulcers, and disgusting to see. He came to the entrance, and said, “Good-day!”

“Good-day, sir?” replied the boy; while the other brothers began to cover the food, because the old man was very disgusting to see. Only the youngest boy gave the old man to eat.

Then the Lord said, “You have not felt disgust at seeing me; and now I’ll take you up, body and soul.” He took up the boy, and the brothers remained with their food full of grubs, and in the pot, instead of the food, a snake.

## CINDER MARY

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Mason, J. Alden. “Four Mexican-Spanish Fairy-Tales from Azqueltan, Jalisco.” *Journal of American Folklore* 25 (1912): 192–194.

**Date:** ca. 1912

**Original Source:** Mexico

**National Origin:** Mexico

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The following narrative of “Cinderella” (AT 510A) combines a medieval social structure (for example, an aristocratic hierarchy), Spanish European references (for example, “Black Moors”), and localization (for example, “five hundred pesos”) to produce a uniquely New World **variant** of the classic tale.

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Once there was a poor orphan-girl who lived in an ash-hole belonging to the Black Moors. One day when one of them went there to throw out the ashes, he saw her, and asked her to come to their house. There they asked her name; but the poor girl did not know her own name, nor were they able to discover it. Finally they gave her the name of Maria Ceniza (Cinder-Mary).

Now, the Black Moors were witches; but they did not wish Cinder-Mary to learn the fact, so they gave her a black sheep's skin and a half-real [small Spanish coin] of soap, and sent her to the river, telling her not to waste the soap, but to wash the sheep-skin until it was as white as a pod of cotton.

Cinder-Mary knelt by the river and wept, because she could not wash the sheep-skin as the Moors had commanded her. Suddenly there appeared a lady, who asked her why she was weeping; and Cinder-Mary replied, that, if she could not wash the black sheep-skin as white as a pod of cotton, the Black Moors would kill her. Then the lady told her that she would bring her two white stones with which she would be able to wash the black sheep-skin. Presently she returned, and soon Cinder-Mary had washed the sheep-skin as white as a pod of cotton. Then the lady gave her a magic wand, and told her that when she needed anything, she need only speak to the wand. Then, placing a tiny star on Cinder-Mary's forehead, she disappeared.

Now, one of the Black Moors had a daughter; and when she saw the star on the forehead of Cinder-Mary, she was very jealous, and asked her mother to have a black lamb killed, that she also might go to the river to wash the skin. So, going to the river, she commenced to weep; and when the lady appeared to her and asked her why she was weeping, she replied that it was because she could not wash the black sheep-skin. Then she asked her if she would not put a star on her forehead likewise, but the lady replied that she would put nothing but "mango de burro" there. Then the girl returned to the house of the Black Moors.

Another day the Moors said to Cinder-Mary that they were going to mass, and they left her behind to prepare the breakfast. "If you have not a good breakfast ready when we return, we shall kill you," they said.

Then Cinder-Mary asked her magic wand to give her a dress such as had never before been seen in the world, and some shoes, in order that she might go to mass. Then she followed a little behind the Moors, and entered the church; and neither the Moors nor the rest of the people recognized her. When the priest saw her, he was much impressed with her beauty, and thought that she would make an excellent wife for the prince; so he gave orders that double guards be stationed at the doors of the parish, and that she be not allowed to leave.

This, however, did not deter Cinder-Mary, who fastened some wings to her back, so that they might not catch her. The guards tried to restrain her, but only succeeded in catching one of her shoes. Then she flew back to the house of the

Moors and ordered her magic wand to prepare a breakfast with good food. Soon the Moors came home, and began to talk about the beautiful maiden whom they had seen with a star which illumined everything up to the grand altar; but it was Cinder-Mary.

Then the king ordered his men to search all the villages and ranchos for the maiden who had left the shoe behind. Soon they came to the house of the Black Moors, and found Cinder-Mary's other shoe.

They were about to carry the daughter of the Moor to the king, when a little dog commenced to howl, saying, "Mango de Burro goes, and Star of Gold remains." Then the king's retainers demanded to see the other maiden who was hidden in the house. Accordingly they left the girl who had the "mango de burro" on her forehead, and carried Cinder-Mary to the king, that she might marry the prince. There was a grand wedding, and Cinder-Mary was given a castle in which to live with the prince.

Soon afterwards the Black Moors came to the castle and asked that they be allowed to louse Cinder-Mary. They came to her while she was bathing, with her hair loose, and commenced to louse her. Suddenly they stuck a pin into her head, so that she became enchanted and flew away, for they were afraid that she would denounce them because they were witches. Then they left without as much as saying good-bye.

When her attendants came for Cinder-Mary, she was gone, and the only living being they could find was a dove in a cypress tree. Then they went to the head servant and asked him how much he would give them for the dove which they had found singing in the cypress tree, and which said in its song that it wanted to see the king in his palace. The dove, they said, was crying piteously. The servant went at once to the king and told him about the dove. Then the king asked him how much he wanted for bringing the dove to him; and the servant replied, that if he would give him five hundred pesos, he would bring it. The king agreed, and the servant went and brought him the bird. While stroking its back, the king found a pin stuck in its head, and pulled it out. Immediately the bird became Cinder-Mary. Then he asked her why the Black Moors had thus bewitched her; and she replied, that it was because they were witches, and were afraid that she would denounce them.

Then the king ordered that the Moors be brought before him, and he condemned them all to be burned to death with green wood.

## THE STORY OF THE SUN AND THE MOON

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Mason, J. Alden. "Four Mexican-Spanish Fairy-Tales from Azqueltan, Jalisco." *Journal of American Folklore* 25 (1912): 196-198.

**Date:** ca. 1912

**Original Source:** Mexico

**National Origin:** Mexico

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The following tale combines **motifs** such as G532—the hiding and deception of the sun and moon by their mothers when they smell human blood—and “The Obstacle Flight” (D672)—the protagonist throws small objects behind him that are magically transformed to aid in his flight. In this narrative, a clever soldier seeks a woman who appears to him in a dream. The tale, best labeled as an **ordinary folktale**, draws heavily on familiar European traditions to create its plot.

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Once there was a soldier who saw a maiden in his house one night. He thought he might have been dreaming when he saw her, and decided to watch again the next night. When she appeared again, he lighted a candle, that he might see how beautiful she was; but no sooner had he done so, than he received a blow in the face which caused him to drop the candle and spill a drop of wax on the floor. Then the maiden disappeared. “I will go and search for her,” said the soldier, and he set out.

Soon he met on the road two brothers who were fighting about their inheritance. One of them said to the other, “Here comes a man who will know how to arrange it.”

When the soldier came up to them, he asked, “What are you doing, my good men?”

And they replied, “We are fighting over our inheritance.”

“My father,” said one of them, “had these magical boots, this magical cudgel, and this hat; and my brother wishes to inherit all of them. So I told him that you would arrange the matter for us.” The soldier agreed, and told the boys to run a race to a near-by hill and back. “Whoever arrives here first,” said he, “will be the owner of all that your father possessed.” The boys agreed, and started off; but when they re-turned, the soldier had disappeared with the magical objects. “Did I not tell you that he would settle the matter for us?” said one to the other.

Then the soldier went on, taking three leagues at a step, with the aid of his magic boots, until he came to the house of the Sun. Entering, he said to the old woman there, “Good evening, grandmother!”

“What are you doing here, my good son?” she asked. “When my son comes home, he will eat you!” Soon they heard the Sun approaching; and when he came in, he was very angry. “Mamma, mamma!” he cried. “Here is a human being! Give him to me! I will eat him!” But the old woman only replied, “No, my son! It is only a poor traveler, who is stopping here.” And then she gave the Sun a little box on the ear.

Then the soldier went on, taking three leagues at a step, until he came to the house of the Moon, and went within to greet the occupants. Seeing an old woman, he said to her, "Good evening, grandmother!"

"Why have you come here, my good son?" she asked. "My son will come home and eat you!" And soon arrived the Moon, very angry, and cried out, "Here is a human being! Give him to me! I will eat him!" But the old woman, the mother of the Moon, merely replied, "No, my son, you must not eat him. It is only a poor traveler, who is stopping here." Then she boxed his ears.

The soldier went on until he came to the house of the mother of the Wind. Here he found the Wind weeping because his mother had just died. So he said to the Wind, "What will you give me if I revive her?"

"Would that you could do so, my friend!" cried the Wind. "If you succeed, I will go with you to seek your lady." Then the soldier hit the old woman three times with his magic cudgel, and she rose up and began to talk. Then the soldier said, "Let us go to seek my lady. I will go ahead, and you follow behind." Then he set out at such a pace that the Wind was unable to keep up with him. "It is these boots which make me travel so fast," he said to the Wind.

"Lend me one of them," replied the Wind. "Then we may converse as we go."

Finally the Wind said, "Wait here a little while. I will go to see the maiden for whom we are searching." Presently he arrived, and found the mother of the maiden warming herself. He entered very briskly; and the old woman said, "Daughter, go to your sister and give her food." So the girl went to carry the food. Then the Wind said, "I told the soldier to follow a little ways behind."

Soon the soldier came in, and did not stop until he had looked through the entire house for his lady. After opening the seven doors, he at last found her, and she immediately commenced to give thanks to God. Then she and the soldier began to arrange a plan of escape from the place where she was confined. He told her to get a comb, a brush of pine needles, a thimbleful of ashes, and another of salt. Then he gave her a piece of the magic hat, a bit of the boot, and another piece of the cudgel. He embraced her, and they left the room where she had been imprisoned. Then they fled.

Soon the old woman found that they were gone, and commenced to pursue them, and soon drew near to them. "Throw down the piece of comb!" said the soldier; and immediately there grew up a thick brush behind them, and the fugitives fled on. Soon the old woman was near overtaking them again, and the girl threw behind them the brush; and immediately there grew up a wood of spiny pine trees, and the fugitives fled on. Again the old woman came nearer, and this time they threw down the thimble of ashes, and there appeared a fog of great density, and the fugitives fled on. But again the old woman approached them; and this time they threw down the thimble of salt, and there appeared behind them a great river. Then the old woman sat down on the bank and began to weep, crying, "Oh, ungrateful daughter! The grain of corn will return in the



spring of water!” Then the girl turned to the soldier, and said, “You have released me from the prison where I was confined, but not from the curse which my mother has laid upon me.”

Soon the soldier said to the maiden, “I will leave you here a little while, and go to see my parents.”

“Very well,” she replied. “I will tie three knots in your belt. In one I will tie my clothes; the second is that you may not forget me; and the third is that you do not allow your parents, nor your brothers and sisters, nor any of your kinsfolk, to embrace you.” So the soldier went home and met his family; but at night, while he was sleeping, his grandmother came and embraced him, and immediately he forgot the maiden whom he had left at the spring of water.

Then the parents of the soldier decided to marry him with another woman, and the wedding was about to be celebrated. Then there came to the wedding the maiden whom the soldier had left at the spring of water, begging that she be allowed to give an entertainment at the wedding feast.

So, when all were assembled, she took two little doves, and said to them, “You remember, ungrateful little dove, that you released me from the prison where I was confined, but from the curse of my mother, no!”

“Kurukuku, I do not remember.”

“You remember, ungrateful little dove, that you left me at the spring of water.”

“Kurukuku, I believe that I am beginning to remember.”

“You remember, ungrateful little dove, that I tied my clothes in your belt.” Then the little dove remembered, and the soldier embraced the maiden and they went away. But the other woman they killed, and so ends the story of the Sun and the Moon.

## HOW THE ELVES PUNISHED A QUARRELSOME MAN

**Tradition Bearer:** Luciano Munoz

**Source:** Blake, Mary. “The Elves of Old Mexico.” *Journal of American Folklore* 27 (1914): 237–238.

**Date:** ca. 1914

**Original Source:** Mexico

**National Origin:** Mexico

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The duendes in this supernatural **legend** act as agents of social order. Although specifics regarding these mythical creatures vary from community to community, in both Spain and in the Spanish-descended cultures of the Western hemisphere duendes are compared to the fairies, goblins,

or brownies of other folk traditions. The citing of specific locations and the naming of specific individuals who participated in alleged events are typical **validating devices** of legends.

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In former times there was a ranch called “La Loma de Bufanda,” which I think still exists under that name. The owner had good land; and he had two large barns—one for wheat, and the other for hay. Near the barns was a house where the over-seer, José Maria Ruga, lived. The household consisted of José, his wife, two sons, and two daughters. One son was a cowherd, the other a shepherd.

Now, this family knew that duendes inhabited the barn which held hay. They had sometimes caught glimpses of them, and they described them as lightly clad children of diminutive stature. The shepherd was a gentle lad, who had made himself a rude musical instrument like a flute; and on Sundays and holy days he often sat among the haystacks in the barn, and played little tunes to the elves. He would hear childish giggles of delight, quickly suppressed, followed by stealthy footsteps toward him; but he rarely saw the little ones on these occasions. At the close of the concert, a half-eaten fruit or a bright-colored pebble, and sometimes a live frog or a harmless little snake, was dropped at his feet. The elves were like small boys in their tastes, and gave the shepherd the things most prized by them-selves.

Once there was a dance given at La Loma, and to this there came from a neighboring ranch a man who was of the most quarrelsome. He began by asking the shepherd’s betrothed to dance. When she refused, for of course no respectable girl cares to dance with other than her promised husband, he insisted, and tried to pull her from her seat.

Then the cowherd, who stood near, said, “Friend, this maiden is betrothed to my brother. Find thyself another partner.”

At that, the quarrelsome fellow, whose head had been heated by drink, answered, “I dance with whom I please,” and pushed the cowherd aside so violently that the overseer’s son fell against a stone bench and cut his cheek.

The girl screamed, and hid her face in her scarf; while all the young men with one accord hustled the brawler from the courtyard, where the dance was going on, to the hay-barn, into which they thrust him and locked the door, saying, “There canst thou pass the night, dancing with whichever lady-mouse pleases thee.”

With much laughter they returned to the dance, leaving the quarrelsome man to kick at the door and shout maledictions. At last the fellow grew tired of this occupation, and, lying down upon the hay, he fell asleep.

In a short time he awoke with a scream from a dream of being buried alive, to find himself completely covered with the hay. He shook himself free from it, and composed himself to sleep again; but no sooner had he closed his eyes than

great bundles of hay fell on him. “There are other prisoners in the barn,” thought the quarrelsome man; and he called in a loud voice, “Who are you, and where are you?” There was no answer.

The man, as was his wont, began to shout insults, which were answered by a perfect shower of hay. He groped around the immense building among the stacks, but he found no one. At last he lay down again, and was again nearly smothered. He knew his tormentors then, and began to plead, “Dear duendes, pretty little duendes, let me sleep!” He could go no further, for a fistful of hay was suddenly thrust into his mouth. He was half-strangled, and each of his painful coughs brought a peal of laughter from the surrounding darkness.

When he had recovered a little, he exclaimed, “Unless you little brutes leave me alone, I shall set fire to the hay, even if I myself perish with you!” Now, this was a threat that the man was powerless to put into effect, as he had nothing with which to make a fire; but the elves were so frightened that they were perfectly quiet after that, and just before dawn the quarrelsome man fell asleep. The young men came early to release the prisoner, who was mightily shaken by the night he had passed. He related what had happened; and all, narrator as well as listeners, found the account so interesting, that they went off to drink coffee together, and to astonish the women with the tale.

## THE PRIEST AND THE DEVIL

**Tradition Bearer:** Unknown

**Source:** Boas, Franz. “Notes on Mexican Folklore.” *Journal of American Folklore* 25 (1912): 223–225.

**Date:** ca. 1912

**Original Source:** Mexico

**National Origin:** Mexico

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The priest’s domination of the devil in the form of a tiny, but fully formed, human (a manikin), beyond its assertion of the power of Christianity to prevail over evil, incorporates elements of Mexican and Mexican American folk belief concerning the devil. Two of the more important of these are the revelation of the devil’s disguised identity by his having the feet of a rooster and the supernatural flight seen in Mexican American tales such as “Witch Flights” (page 283).

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**T**here was a man pursued by the Devil, to whom, wherever he went, he appeared in the form of a manikin. Once upon a time the man went to mass, and there was the Devil. Whatever the padre did at

mass, the Devil did too. He alighted on the shoulders of the boys, and made them sleep.

The man went and talked with the curate; and the padre said, "I'll take your confession, in order to see why you have these visions. Tomorrow go to early mass, in order to see if you'll again see that manikin."

The man went to mass, and there he [the manikin] was. Then he went to confession, and the Demon went there also. Then the padre said, "My son, take this string, and follow the Demon wherever he goes, catch him with this string, and bring him to me."

Again the man went to church with the string in his hand. The Demon left the church, and the man followed behind. He saw how he made some dogs fight; he saw how he made some drunkards fight; and the man followed the Demon. He entered a saloon, and put himself into a pot of tepacke [cane sugar-based liquor].

Then he went to notify the curate that the Demon had put himself in a pot of tepacke; and the curate said to him, "Go and ask the lady how much she wants to allow you to put your hand in and pull out that beast that is in the pot." The lady was frightened, and said, "You shall pay me nothing, only pull that beast out of there." Then the man put his hand and the string in, and caught him in a noose. It was not a manikin that came out, but a person with the feet of a rooster; and he took him to where the padre was; and the padre said to him, "Tie him up here, and give him hay to eat."

Then the padre went to where the beast had been tied up, and said to him, "Why are you interfering where it does not behoove you?" The Demon said to him, "Let me go! Promise to free me, and I'll tell you why."

"Yes," said the padre. "I promise to free you; But tell me, why do you come to my church?" Then the Demon replied, "Because you owe a vow to Rome; and if you wish to fulfill it, I'll take you there in four and twenty hours."

"Yes," said the padre to him. "But you know," said the Demon, "we shall not travel by land, but by sea."

"All right!" said the padre. "Early tomorrow we will go."

The next day, when daylight broke, a saddled mule was in front of the door of the curate's house. The padre mounted, and they went on the waters. In four and twenty hours they were in Rome.

The padre arrived at a house, and tied up his mule. The padre went to church, and brought from there many relics, pictures, and rosaries, which he put into a satchel. He did not find the mule tied up, but the people of the house were very much frightened because the mule had turned into a man; and the man said to the landlord, "Would you like to see how I put myself into this bottle of wine here?"

"Yes," said the people, "we should like to see how you do it." Then he put himself into the bottle.

The padre came, put the string inside the bottle, caught him in the noose, and pulled him out in the shape of a man. "Let us go!" he said, "I am ready."

He tied up the man by the nape of his neck, and he turned again into a saddled mule, and the curate mounted her. Then the mule could not walk, on account of the relics which the curate carried. The Mule said to him, "Throw away those things which you are carrying, for they burn me much. I promise you that you shall find them on your table."

Then the padre threw his relics into the middle of the sea, and in four and twenty hours he arrived at his house. The padre let him go, and said, "Go away, accursed one, and never come again to trouble me." The Demon did not come back.

## **HOW THE ELVES PUT A HOLY FATHER AND HIS SACRISTAN TO FLIGHT**

**Tradition Bearer:** Luciano Munoz

**Source:** Blake, Mary. "The Elves of Old Mexico." *Journal of American Folklore* 27 (1914): 237–238.

**Date:** ca. 1914

**Original Source:** Mexico

**National Origin:** Mexico

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The duendes are noted for mischief rather than malice as is shown in the following **legend**. Their threat to "cut off the priest's head" was merely a joke that exposed the pretensions and apparent lack of faith of their would-be exorcist.

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**I**n the ranch of San Jeronimo, jurisdiction of San Francisco del Rincon, many old houses were full of elves. In one house in particular the sprites were riotous from eight at night until dawn. The master of the house went to the priest of the nearest village and begged him to come and exorcise the spirits.

The priest willingly consented; and the next night he arrived on horseback, with his sacristan mounted behind him, bearing all the articles necessary for the holy task. "Now, father," said the man of the house, as he helped the good man dismount, "my son will unsaddle and feed the horse, while you and the sacristan will have a bite to eat before the service."

The three entered the house, and were soon seated upon a bench: while the man's wife placed before them three earthen dishes of pork cooked deliciously with green peppers, herbs, and olives; a pile of fresh tortillas; and three jugs of pulque (the national drink of Mexico, the juice of the maguey-plant). Each man rolled a tortilla to use as a spoon, and dipped it into his dish. Just as the little father had swallowed the first savory mouthful, a clamor of small voices began

in the next room, He let his tortilla fall into his dish, and asked, "Who is in there?"

"The duendes, father," answered the woman. "It is the hour when they begin their pranks."

Just then there was a sound of metal being drawn back and forth over a stone. "What are they doing now?" inquired the sacristan.

A shrill voice from within replied, "We are sharpening a knife which we shall use to cut off the priest's head."

"Saddle the horse and follow us with it!" cried the priest to the man of the house, as he started running down the road, dragging the sacristan after him. They continued to run knee-deep in dust, until they fell upon the moonlit road exhausted. There the man with the horse helped them, and assisted them to mount. The priest advised the horse-owner to sprinkle the home with the holy water. The man returned to his home, and sprinkled the holy water over the floors and walls of his two rooms; but the elves were never so boisterous as that night. The duendes never left that house, it is said. They seemed to bring prosperity to a house. It is certain that their hosts never lacked good food and raiment.

# NAHUA

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## QUETZALCOATL AND TEZCATLIPOCA

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Spence, Lewis. *The Myths of Mexico and Peru*. London: G. G. Harrap and Company, 1913. Internet Sacred Text Archive <http://www.sacred-texts.com/nam/mmp/mmp1.htm> (April 10, 2007).

**Date:** pre-sixteenth century

**Original Source:** Nahua

**National Origin:** Native American

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The Nahua are a cluster of culturally and linguistically related groups indigenous to Mexico and Central America. The contemporary Nahua reside from Central Mexico to El Salvador and Nicaragua. Historically, the Aztec are the best known of the Nahua cultures, and during the pre-Columbian era, they developed an advanced civilization in the area of contemporary Mexico. The Aztec and related groups used the term Nahua, meaning “Those who live by Rule,” to distinguish themselves from the neighboring cultures that did not attain the Nahua level of cultural complexity. According to Nahua tradition, they originated in Aztlan and later migrated into the Mexican Plateau region. In Nahua **myth**, the Toltecs were the first to arrive in Mesoamerica, but scholars cannot incontrovertibly establish the fact of the existence of the Toltecs as an ethnic group outside of Aztec myth. The following myth illustrates the basic features of these sacred histories.

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**I**n the days of Quetzalcoatl there was abundance of everything necessary for subsistence. The maize was plentiful, the calabashes were as thick as one’s arm, and cotton grew in all colors without having to be dyed. A variety of

birds of rich plumage filled the air with their songs, and gold, silver, and precious stones were abundant. In the reign of Quetzalcoatl there was peace and plenty for all men.

But this blissful state was too fortunate, too happy to endure. Envious of the calm enjoyment of the god and his people the Toltecs, three wicked “necromancers”—Huitzilopochtli, Titlachuan (or Tezcatlipoca), and Tlachahuepan—plotted their downfall. These laid evil enchantments upon the city of Tollan, and Tezcatlipoca in particular took the lead in these envious conspiracies. Disguised as an aged man with white hair, he presented himself at the palace of Quetzalcoatl, where he said to the pages in-waiting, “Pray present me to your master the king I desire to speak with him.”

The pages advised him to retire, as Quetzalcoatl was indisposed and could see no one. He requested them, however, to tell the god that he was waiting outside. They did so, and procured his admittance.

On entering the chamber of Quetzalcoatl the wily Tezcatlipoca simulated much sympathy with the suffering god-king. “How are you, my son?” he asked. “I have brought you a drug which you should drink, and which will put an end to the course of your malady.”

“You are welcome, old man,” replied Quetzalcoatl. “I have known for many days that you would come. I am exceedingly indisposed. The malady affects my entire system, and I can use neither my hands nor feet.”

Tezcatlipoca assured him that if he partook of the medicine which he had brought him he would immediately experience a great improvement in health. Quetzalcoatl drank the potion, and at once felt much revived. The cunning Tezcatlipoca pressed another and still another cup of the potion upon him, and as it was nothing but pulque, the wine of the country, he speedily became intoxicated, and was as wax in the hands of his adversary.

Tezcatlipoca, in pursuance of his policy inimical to the Toltec state, took the form of an Indian of the name of Toueyo (Toveyo), and bent his steps to the palace of Uemac, chief of the Toltecs in temporal matters. This worthy had a daughter so fair that she was desired in marriage by many of the Toltecs, but all to no purpose, as her father refused her hand to one and all. The princess, beholding the false Toueyo passing her father’s palace, fell deeply in love with him, and so tumultuous was her passion that she became seriously ill because of her longing for him.

Uemac, hearing of her indisposition, bent his steps to her apartments, and inquired of her women the cause of her illness. They told him that it was occasioned by the sudden passion which had seized her for the Indian who had recently come that way. Uemac at once gave orders for the arrest of Toueyo, and he was hauled before the temporal chief of Tollan.

“Whence come you?” inquired Uemac of his prisoner, who was very scantily attired.

“Lord, I am a stranger, and I have come to these parts to sell green paint,” replied Tezcatlipoca.



“Why are you dressed in this fashion? Why do you not wear a cloak?” asked the chief.

“My lord, I follow the custom of my country,” replied Tezcatlipoca.

“You have inspired a passion in the breast of my daughter,” said Uemac. “What should be done to you for thus disgracing me?”

“Slay me; I care not,” said the cunning Tezcatlipoca.

“Nay,” replied Uemac, “for if I slay you my daughter will perish. Go to her and say that she may wed you and be happy.”

Now the marriage of Toueyo, to the daughter of Uemac aroused much discontent among the Toltecs; and they murmured among themselves, and said, “Wherefore did Uemac give his daughter to this Toueyo?” Uemac, having got wind of these murmurings, resolved to distract the attention of the Toltecs by making war upon the neighboring state of Coatepec.

The Toltecs assembled armed for the fray, and having arrived at the country of the men of Coatepec, they placed Toueyo in ambush with his body-servants, hoping that he would be slain by their adversaries. But Toueyo and his men killed a large number of the enemy and put them to flight. His triumph was celebrated by Uemac with much pomp. The knightly plumes were placed upon his head, and his body was painted with red and yellow, an honor reserved for those who distinguished themselves in battle.

Tezcatlipoca’s next step was to announce a great feast in Tollan, to which all the people for miles around were invited. Great crowds assembled, and danced and sang in the city to the sound of the drum. Tezcatlipoca sang to them and forced them to accompany the rhythm of his song with their feet. Faster and faster the people danced, until the pace became so furious that they were driven to madness, lost their footing, and tumbled pell-mell down a deep ravine, where they were changed into rocks. Others in attempting to cross a stone bridge precipitated themselves into the water below, and were changed into stones.

On another occasion Tezcatlipoca presented himself as a valiant warrior named Tequiua, and invited all the inhabitants of Tollan and its environs to come to the flower-garden called Xochitla. When assembled there he attacked them with a hoe, and slew a great number, and others in panic crushed their comrades to death.

Tezcatlipoca and Tlachahuepan on another occasion repaired to the market-place of Tollan, the former displaying upon the palm of his hand a small infant whom he caused to dance and to cut the most amusing capers. This infant was in reality Huitzilopochtli, the Nahua god of war. At this sight the Toltecs crowded upon one another for the purpose of getting a better view, and their eagerness resulted in many being crushed to death. So enraged were the Toltecs at this that upon the advice of Tlachahuepan they slew both Tezcatlipoca and Huitzilopochtli. When this had been done the bodies of the slain gods gave forth such a pernicious effluvia that thousands the Toltecs died

of the pestilence. The god Tlachuepan then advised them to cast out the bodies lest worse befall them, but on their attempting to do so they discovered their weight to be so great that they could not move them. Hundreds wound cords round the corpses, but the strands broke, and those who pulled upon them fell and died suddenly, tumbling one upon the other, and suffocating those upon whom they collapsed.

The Toltecs were so tormented by the enchantments of Tezcatlipoca that it was soon apparent to them that their fortunes were on the wane and that the end of their empire was at hand. Quetzalcoatl, chagrined at the turn things had taken, resolved to quit Tollan and go to the country of Tlapallan, whence he had come on his civilizing mission to Mexico. He burned all the houses which he had built, and buried his treasure of gold and precious stones in the deep valleys between the mountains. He changed the cacao trees into mesquites, and he ordered all the birds of rich plumage and song to quit the valley of Anahuac and to follow him to a distance of more than a hundred leagues.

On the road from Tollan he discovered a great tree at a point called Quauhtitlan. There he rested, and requested his pages to hand him a mirror. Regarding himself in the polished surface, he exclaimed, "I am old," and from that circumstance the spot was named Huehuequauhtitlan (Old Quauhtitlan). Proceeding on his way accompanied by musicians who played the flute, he walked until fatigue arrested his steps, and he seated himself upon a stone, on which he left the imprint of his hands. This place is called Temacpalco (The Impress of the Hands). At Coaapan he was met by the Nahua gods [the necromancers Huitzilopochtli, Tezcatlipoca, and Tlachuepan, who were inimical to him and to the Toltecs.

"Where do you go?" they asked him. "Why do you leave your capital?"

"I go to Tlapallan," replied Quetzalcoatl, "whence I came."

"For what reason?" persisted the enchanters.

"My father the Sun has called me thence," replied Quetzalcoatl.

"Go, then, happily," they said, "but leave us the secret of your art, the secret of founding in silver, of working in precious stones and woods, of painting, and of feather-working, and other matters."

But Quetzalcoatl refused, and cast all his treasures into the fountain of Cozcaapa (Water of Precious Stones). At Cochtan he was met by another enchanter, who asked him whither he was bound, and on learning his destination proffered him a draught of wine. On tasting the vintage Quetzalcoatl was overcome with sleep.

Continuing his journey in the morning, the god passed between a volcano and the Sierra Nevada (Mountain of Snow), where all the pages who accompanied him died of cold. He regretted this misfortune exceedingly, and wept, lamenting their fate with most bitter tears and mournful songs. On reaching the summit of Mount Poyauhtecatli he slid to the base. Arriving at the sea-shore, he embarked upon a raft of serpents, and was wafted away toward the land of Tlapallan.

## THE ORIGIN OF THE CALABASH TREE AND THE TOBACCO PLANT

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Hartman, C. V. "The Mythology of the Aztecs of El Salvador." *Journal of American Folklore* 20 (1907): 144–146.

**Date:** ca. 1907

**Original Source:** Nahua

**National Origin:** Native American

The following **myth** of the origin of two sacred plants is drawn from the Aztec-Pipil Nahua culture indigenous to western El Salvador. Oral tradition claims the Pipil migrated to El Salvador from central Mexico. Although the surviving record of Pipil oral tradition is relatively scant, it is clear that their myths were profoundly influenced by the neighboring Maya cultures. For example, compare the sacred nature of the calabash in the following myth to the Quiché Maya myth "The Calabash Tree" (page 364).

The wizards come into the houses by night in the shapes of dogs, hogs, cats, or owls, and entice the women away with them. The women are acquainted with a number of tricks and dodges of which the men have no knowledge. The men are asleep, unaware of everything. Sesimite, or the Giant, was in the habit of coming to a house in the pueblo of Ahuachapan and carrying off the wife of one of the men to enjoy her.

The neighbor, the husband's friend, observed it and gave him warning. "Do you not know," said he, "that your wife is a witch, who steals away at night in a disguise to meet her lover? Take care of yourself!"

The husband kept watch over his wife, and observed her get up in the middle of the night and place a log of wood in his arms instead of herself. Then she swung herself up to the beams of the ceiling, falling straightway to the floor, where she lay headless, her head having vanished through the door.

The husband narrated to his neighbor what had happened. "What am I to do?" he said.

"Let us think out something to do!" said his neighbor. "Let the body lie where it is, but put a heap of hot ashes on the spot where the head belongs. That is the best method of curing women who give themselves up to witchcraft."

The man did as he was told. Later, during the night, the head re-turned, but could not succeed in attaching itself to the trunk. "Where are you, you cruel husband, who have done this thing?" the head exclaimed. The husband, however, who had gone up to the loft, made no reply, but sat crouched up in a

corner perfectly still. Thereupon the head flew up to the loft. When it saw the husband, it settled on his shoulder and stuck fast there.

The man being aware of the fact with regard to witches, that you never get rid of them, if once they settle on your body in that manner, was grievously distressed at his woeful fate and went to the priest to inquire what he ought to do.

“Take matters quietly and wait!” said the priest. The head, however, remained on the man’s shoulder. The man wept at his misfortune, but that availed nothing. Not until after the lapse of a long time did the man succeed in enticing the head to leave his shoulder.

That occurred on one occasion, when the man was out in the woods, and at a time of the year when the zapotes [a soft sweet fruit] were just beginning to ripen. The man, as he was wandering about in the woods, caught sight of a gigantic zapote tree. “My daughter,” said the man to the head, “there are some zapotes already ripe in that tree. Would it not be nice to have some zapotes to eat? I know you are fond of that kind of fruit! Get off my shoulder while I climb up the tree, and do you sit here meanwhile on my back-cloth,” said the man. So saying he spread out his garment on the ground and the head settled itself down upon it.

The man then climbed the tree and got hold of a few quite green zapotes, which he hurled with all his force at the head. It jumped and cried out and called upon the man for mercy. “Have pity, for mercy’s sake, have pity upon me. Oh, cruel husband that you are! Do you want to kill me?”

“Oh, no,” said the man. “Why, I was choosing out the fruit that is ripest, those green zapotes fell off accidentally.” Straightway he began anew to hurl down upon the head the hard green fruit, and the head yelled and uttered lamentations. At that moment a roe happened to be passing quite near to the spot. The head then sprang up into the air and settled on the back of the roe, who in terror made off into the woods. The plaits came undone and the hair was tossed about by the wind. At the first precipice she came to, the roe threw herself over, and nothing remained of them but “dust” and skulls (*pinole y calaveras*).

The husband then returned to the priest and reported what had happened. The priest replied, “You must now follow in the footsteps of the roe and collect all the hairs which aid you in finding the place where the head lies. Then you must bury the head with all the hair at the same spot, and you must carefully tend the mound over the grave. For from that head something will arise.” The man obeyed the priest’s injunctions.

After burying the head he made a habit of going every fifteenth day to put the grave in order and to root up the weeds. He had been to the grave in this way many times, when one day he saw a sprout shooting up out of the mound. The young plant grew apace and soon became a tree, which one day brought forth a black flower, resembling the bowl of a pipe in shape. This flower gave place to a very large, round, green fruit. The tree was that which we now call “*huachkal quahuit*” (the calabash tree).

Once more the husband repaired to the priest and narrated what had taken place. "Be very careful of that fruit," said the priest. "Do not touch it until it is quite ripe." When the fruit had at length ripened and gone yellow, it fell to the ground. Then the priest lent the man a saw, with which he very cautiously began to divide the shell. To his amazement he observed something moving inside the fruit. His surprise turned into alarm when he plainly heard infant voices from within the calabash. The shell of the fruit had now been cut open.

Within there were four small children, three boys and a girl, who at once asked him, "Are you our father? Where then is our mother?" The mother being dead, the children were taken in hand by the husband's parents-in-law, Sesimite the Giant and Tanteputz, the man-eating woman.

The virgin up in the sky, to-wit, the Moon, dispatched a messenger, carrying a bamboo joint filled with milk from her own breast to the motherless little children found in the calabash. The messenger handed the joint to the alligator, who, however, drank up the milk himself. The rabbit, on hearing that, went to the alligator to ask him what he had done with the milk sent by the moon to the motherless children in the calabash.

"Here it is," said the alligator, opening its mouth and stretching out its tongue. With a rapid slash the rabbit cut off the alligator's tongue, leaving only a short stump in its mouth. Thereupon the alligator dived down into a deep pool. Ever since he lost his tongue the alligator in shame frequents the deepest pools of the rivers to hide himself.

The girl in the calabash was named Xochit Sihuat, "the flower-girl." In course of time she became one of the most beautiful women that have ever lived. Her black hair was very long, and she was ever en-compassed with that fresh scent that emanates from a woman on leaving the bath. "No man shall ever touch me," she said, "but after I am dead all the people in the world shall take delight in the glorious strength of which I am possessed."

She died quite young, a virgin as she had vowed, and on her grave there sprang up a plant called yet, which has a finer aroma and is possessed of diviner qualities than any other plant in the world [tobacco].

## THE QUEEN WITH A HUNDRED LOVERS

**Tradition Bearer:** Adapted from *Relación histórica de la nación tulteca* by Alva Cortés Ixtlilxóchitl (ca. 1648).

**Source:** Spence, Lewis. *The Myths of Mexico and Peru*. London: G. G. Harrap and Company, 1913. Internet Sacred Text Archive. <http://www.sacred-texts.com/nam/mmp/mmp1.htm> (April 10, 2007).

**Date:** pre-sixteenth century

**Original Source:** Nahua

**National Origin:** Native American

The following historical narrative of the Mesoamerican Nahua ruler Nezahualpilli is contained in a historical account written between 1600–1608 and commissioned by the Spanish viceroy to New Spain. Despite the fact that the narrative was committed to print, oral tradition provided his primary resource. Therefore, the tale of “The Queen with a Hundred Lovers” is best classified as a **folk history** as distinct from historiography (a scientific history). As such, it reflects a worldview and attitudes toward the past more than an unbiased view of historical events.

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When Axaiacatzin, King of Mexico, and other lords sent their daughters to King Nezahualpilli, for him to choose one to be his queen and lawful wife, whose son might succeed to the inheritance, she who had the highest claims among them, for nobility of birth and rank, was Chachiuhnenetzin, the young daughter of the Mexican king. She had been brought up by the monarch in a separate palace, with great pomp, and with numerous attendants, as became the daughter of so great a monarch. The number of servants attached to her household exceeded two thousand.

Young as she was, she was exceedingly artful and vicious; so that, finding herself alone, and seeing that her people feared her on account of her rank and importance, she began to give way to an unlimited indulgence of her power. Whenever she saw a young man who pleased her fancy she gave secret orders that he should be brought to her, and shortly afterwards he would be put to death. She would then order a statue or effigy of his person to be made, and, adorning it with rich clothing, gold, and jewelry, place it in the apartment in which she lived. The number of statues of those whom she thus sacrificed was so great as to almost fill the room.

When the king came to visit her, and inquired respecting these statues, she answered that they were her gods; and he, knowing how strict the Mexicans were in the worship of their false deities, believed her.

But, as no iniquity can be long committed with entire secrecy, she was finally found out in this manner:

Three of the young men, for some reason or other, she had left alive. Their names were Chichucoatl, Huitzilimitzin, and Maxtla, one of whom was lord of Tesoyucan and one of the grantees of the kingdom, and the other two nobles of high rank. It happened that one day the king recognized on the apparel of one of these a very precious jewel which he had given to the queen; and although he had no fear of treason on her part it gave him some uneasiness.

Proceeding to visit her that night, her attendants told him she was asleep, supposing that the king would then return, as he had done at other times. But the affair of the jewel made him insist on entering the chamber in which she

slept; and, going to wake her, he found only a statue in the bed, adorned with her hair, and closely resembling her. Seeing this, and noticing that the attendants around were in much trepidation and alarm, the king called his guards, and, assembling all the people of the house, made a general search for the queen, who was shortly found at an entertainment with the three young lords, who were arrested with her.

The king referred the case to the judges of his court, in order that they might make an inquiry into the matter and examine the parties implicated. These discovered many individuals, servants of the queen, who had in some way or other been accessory to her crimes: workmen who had been engaged in making and adorning the statues, others who had aided in introducing the young men into the palace, and others, again, who had put them to death and concealed their bodies.

The case having been sufficiently investigated, the king dispatched ambassadors to the rulers of Mexico and Tlacopan, giving them information of the event, and signifying the day on which the punishment of the queen and her accomplices was to take place; and he likewise sent through the empire to summon all the lords to bring their wives and their daughters, however young they might be, to be witnesses of a punishment which he designed for a great example. He also made a truce with all the enemies of the empire, in order that they might come freely to see it.

The time having arrived, the number of people gathered together was so great that, large as was the city of Tezcuco, they could scarcely all find room in it. The execution took place publicly, in sight of the whole city. The queen was put to the garrote (a method of strangling by means of a rope twisted round a stick), as well as her three gallants; and, from their being persons of high birth, their bodies were burned, together with the effigies before mentioned. The other parties who had been accessory to the crimes, who numbered more than two thousand persons, were also put to the garrote, and burned in a pit made for the purpose in a ravine near a temple of the Idol of Adulterers.

All applauded so severe and exemplary a punishment, except the Mexican lords, the relatives of the queen, who were much incensed at so public an example, and, although for the time they concealed their resentment, meditated future revenge. It was not without reason, says the chronicler, that the king experienced this disgrace in his household, since he was thus punished for an unworthy subterfuge made use of by his father to obtain his mother as a wife!





**CARIBBEAN**

***African Caribbean***



# ANTIGUA

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## NANCY AND THE HONEY TREE

**Tradition Bearer:** George W. Edwards

**Source:** Johnson, John H. "Folk-Lore from Antigua, British West Indies." *Journal of American Folklore* 34 (1921): 51–52.

**Date:** 1921

**Original Source:** Antigua

**National Origin:** African American

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Antigua was established as a British colony in the seventeenth century. Located in the Eastern Caribbean Sea, it is the largest of the Leeward Islands. This tale of the **trickster** Anansi (Nancy in this version) is popular in the West Indies. As is common in both Continental African tales and African American plots, the narrative portrays Anansi as both trickster and dupe when he matches wits with monkey. Supernatural elements are included in the motifs of the speaking tree, the transformation of Nancy, and the power of the word "Wheelum," which causes the tree to wheel around and throw its victims. In a Jamaican **variant** collected by Beckwith (1924), the word is "Fling-a-mile." In both versions, therefore, Nancy's own words lead to his downfall. See "How Come Mr. Buzard to Have a Bald Head" (page 163) and "How Ananse Tales Got Their Name" (Volume 1, page 61) for southern U.S. and West African views of Anansi.

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**W**hile Nancy was goin' on dis day, he see dis tree. Come up to dis tree, an' say, "Ah! dis a pretty little tree. Dis honey tree is a pretty little tree."

De tree say dat he mus' call 'em "Wheelum." Nancy laugh, an' say dat it was a honey tree. Dat he not need to call it "wheelum." Den Nancy get up in dat tree, an' start to suck de honey. He suck till he get all de honey what he want. Den he got stuck when he go to pull off from de tree. He twist, but he can't loose himself. Nancy start to beg. Say, "Please, Mr. Honey-Tree, don' catch me! Leave me go, please, Mr. Honey-Tree!"

Honey-Tree say, "My name not Honey-Tree. My name Wheelum," Nancy say, "Alright, Mr. Wheelum! Dat all right! Please let me go, Mr. Wheelum!"

When Nancy say "Wheelum," de tree start to spin. Dat tree wheel an' wheel. When it have him goin' round so, yap it loose him. Nancy was put at a distance by dis tree. He land, an' pick hisself well hurted by dis tree call "Wheelum."

Now Nancy come, an' all prepare to fool some a dese other animals wid dis tree. Soon he see Bro' Cow comin'. Bro' Cow he a stupid one, an' Nancy pick him quick. Say, "O Bro' Cow! Ah done find one very sweet tree."

Bro' Cow say, "Where dis tree? Show me it!"

An' Nancy carry him to where dis tree was. When he got him dere, he tell him dat he mus' suck, an' he will get all de honey dat he can eat. Bro' Cow did suck. When he finish, he not able to loose hisself. He cry, an' tell Bro' Nancy to help get him off. Nancy laughin' for fair now. Cow beg de tree to let he go. De tree say it name Wheelum. Den when Cow say "Wheelum," de tree t'row him also at a distance. An' he was hurted too.

Bro' Nancy have all dis sport. He fool some dese other animals wid dis same honey tree. By an' by he see Bro' Monkey. Now, Bro' Monkey was in dis tree, an' see all dat Nancy do. He come down, an' pass to where Nancy was. Nancy greet him. Say, "Well, Bro' Monkey, jus' de man I like to see. jus' de man. Bro', dere is a honey tree dat has so sweet t'ing; an' I going to carry you dere, bro'." De monkey was willin', an' Nancy took him.

Dey come to dis tree. Nancy tell Monkey dat he must suck. Monkey answer dat he will not suck till Nancy firs' suck. Nancy say, "What matter, bro'? Dat is sweet dere. You go. I have finish my suck. What matter you? Not want dat sweet t'ing dere! Come on, Bro' Monkey! suck from dis tree!" But Monkey refuse to suck till Nancy go firs' to suck. No matter what Nancy say, he still will not suck firs'. After dis, Nancy go to de tree, an' whisper, "Ah goin' suck firs', Bro' Honey-Tree, but don' hol' me! Hear, Bro' Honey-Tree, don' hol' me!"

De honey tree answer dat it will not hol' him. Den Nancy say, "Alright, Bro' Monkey! I going suck firs'. We going get full of dis honey."

Nancy went, an' he suck. But Monkey did not suck. De tree hol' him; an' no matter what he say, de tree not loose him. Monkey had in dis time gone to a distance. Here he put up a tall spike. Dese spike were jus' where de tree was t'rowin'. Monkey tell Nancy dat he going tell de tree wheelum.

Nancy say, "No!" Monkey he in all kind of glee an' jump 'round. Nancy he keep beggin' dat tree please let he go. Dis de tree would not do. Nancy say, "Please don' hol' me, Bro' Honey-Tree! Please let me go, Bro' Honey-Tree!"

Tree say, “My name not Honey-Tree. My name Wheelum.”

Den Bro’ Monkey shout, “Wheelum, wheelum, wheelum!” An’ de tree turn an’ commence to spin about. De tree wheel an’ wheel. Yap de tree let Nancy go, an’ he land upon dis spike. Nancy he turn to spider, an’ run in de cassy tree.

I went through Miss Havercomb alley,  
An’ I see a lead was bending;  
So da lead ben’,  
So da story en’.

## NANCY FOOLS HIS WIFE

**Tradition Bearer:** George W. Edwards

**Source:** Johnson, John H. “Folk-Lore from Antigua, British West Indies.” *Journal of American Folklore* 34 (1921): 49–50.

**Date:** 1921

**Original Source:** Antigua

**National Origin:** African American

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Nancy (Anansi) turns tragedy to selfish triumphs by claiming to his wife that his arm was lost not as punishment for a crime, but rather in a work accident. His use of disguise to deceive his wife out of her only possessions suggests the **trickster’s** common ploy of “shape-shifting.”

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**D**is Nancy was real smart. He have wife too, an’ a son name Little Toukouma. On one day when Nancy was out stealin’, he get his arm caught, an’ it was cut off. Some man stuff he was stealin’ when de arm get caught, an’ it take off. Dis arm got take jus’ at de elbow. When Nancy come home, his wife say, “Ah, Nancy! How you get your arm cut off?”

Nancy say he been to a mill workin’, when it caught his arm an’ tear it off. He say dat it took all his arm. Dey was sorry fer Nancy, an’ he don’ do nothin’ now. He eat all dat he could get. An’ when da wife she gone, Nancy take all de food from de little Toukouma. Dis boy would be dere wid de food, an’ Nancy would come to him. Say, “Gi’ me dat food, or Ah show you me stump.” Den de boy go shoutin’, for he afraid to have Nancy show him de stump a his arm. While he cryin’, de wife come, an’ say Nancy refuse to admit dat he show de boy de stump.

Dis day come when Nancy want to get all de food what his wife got. Now, de woman had two pigs and a field of yams. Nancy try to t’ink how he could get dese. Each day she go to feed de pigs an’ work de yams. Nancy make up his

mind dat he must get dem. On dis day Nancy he stay in de bed. Make out dat he sick. Say, "Wife, me so sick! O wife! Me too sick. Me too sick." De woman tell him dat he must go to de doctor. Nancy say, "Ah, wife me too sick. Me can't go, wife. Me too sick, wife." He roll an' toss about, an' de woman t'ink he about to die. Nancy tell her, "Wife, you go get de doctor! Wife, me too sick. You go!" She t'ink dat her husban' was really sick, an' she start fer de doctor. When she gone, Nancy up from de bed an' take another road, so dat he come out in front of where de woman is goin'.

When Nancy get dere [to meet her on the road], he have another kind a coat, so dat de woman not able to know he her own husban'. She come along. Nancy come out. Say to her, "Whar you goin', Mrs. Anancy?" She tell him dat her husban' so sick. Dat he look like he goin' to die. She goin' to get de doctor to come. He tell her dat she is doin' de right, an' dat she must be sure to get de doctor for him.

So she went. Nancy take by different road, and he come to de place where de doctor live. When de woman come, he take bearing like he de doctor. She come to dis place.

Say, "O doctor! Nancy is too sick. Me 'fraid he will die. Me here to bring you to him."

Den Nancy say to her. She not know who he was. All time t'ink dat dis was de doctor. "Well, Mrs. Anancy, dat is too bad. Dis is what you try to make you' husban' better. You has two pigs an' a field a yams. If you kill dem pigs an' cook 'em up wid jus' de hair off, also cook up de yam wid dem, dat will cure you' husban'."

Dese pigs an' de field a yam was all dat dis woman had. But she fool. De doctor say dat no matter what Nancy say, she mus give him dese t'ings, or he will die. She got home. Nancy was dere now in bed. Groanin' like he was goin' to die. Ask her what de doctor tell her. She say dat de doctor say she mus' kill a pig wid only de hair off, an' cook wid de yams.

Nancy say, "Don' do it, wife! Don' kill you' pig! Me not satisfy you kill de pig." He foolin' her now, an' she was sure to kill dem. So she have one pig kill, an' did as de doctor tol' her. When she bring de pig an' yams to Nancy, he eat it all.

On de next day she ask him how he feel. He say, "O wife! Me sure to die. Me too sick." Den she tol' him dat she was goin' to kill de other pig. Nancy say, "No!" But she sure dat only way to save Nancy, an' she did it.

She bring de food. Nancy eat every bit a dis, an' not give his wife an' Little Toukouma any. Dat's de way Nancy fool his wife.

Finish.

## **PLAYING MOURNER**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Johnson, John H. "Folk-Lore from Antigua, British West Indies." *Journal of American Folklore* 34 (1921): 61–62.

Date: 1921

Original Source: Antigua

National Origin: African American

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The theft of food by a **trickster** is a common folktale motif. This tale of rat's betrayal of his friend cat closely resembles "Theft of Butter (Honey) by Playing Godfather" (AT 15). **Variants** of AT 15 are found elsewhere in this collection (see "Playing Godfather," page 164). The following narrative departs from AT 15, however, by virtue of the omission of the concluding **motif** of pinning the food theft on the victim (see "How Brer Fox Dream He Eat Brer Possum," page 177, for an example of this plot twist). "Playing Mourner" concludes instead with justice for the offender, which serves to explain the origin of the enmity between cats and rats.

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**P**ussy and Rat was great friends. Dey was all de time in each other company.

On dis occasion Pussy learn dat his father is dead. Rat cry an' tell him dat he sorry. Pussy is sick at dis. Dese two prepare to go to de wake. Pussy not feelin' well. Rat pretend dat he is sick too. Dey both had a big barrel of rice. Before dey go to de wake, dey is goin' to cook dis rice. Dey cook it.

When de wake is over, dey will come for de rice. Both put a big cover over dis rice. De rice was finish. Also dey was to take somet'ing for dis wake. Dey had a tambourine, a triangle, an' a fiddle-bow. Dey prepare dese to take. At de wake dey will have dese. Pussy say, "Come, Bro' Rat! Me father dead. We goin' to de wake now."

"Dat is all right," Rat tell him. An' dey went. When dey gone some ways, Rat say, "Ah, Bro' Pussy! me forget de tambourine. Goin' back to get it." Pussy tell him he mus' hurry. He father dead, an' de wake done commence.

Rat went back. He hop in de kettle an' eat some of de rice. Now he come again. Dey went on. Pussy cryin' 'cause he father dead. Rat he cry too. Dey have de tambourine. Rat stop hear. Say, "Ah, Bro' Pussy! we done forget de triangle. Can't go widout de triangle."

"Bro' Rat, how go off widout de triangle? We need dem t'ings for to have at de wake."

Rat tol' him dat is "you' father," an' he will go back for de triangle. Bro' Pussy consent, an' Rat went back to their house. When he get back again, he jump in de kettle wid de rice. Eat full.

Now he come, an' dey go on. Pussy cryin' an' Rat bawlin'. Pussy say, "Step up dere, Bro' Rat! we is behin' for de wake now. My father mus' need for me to get to de wake."

Dey almos' dere. Rat stop. Say, "What happen to de fiddle-bow? You has de fiddle-bow?" Pussy has not it. He excite dat dey no have de fiddle-bow.

Rat tell him dat is all right, an' dat he goin' get it. "You' father dead, and me goin' bring back dat fiddle-bow. You is wait here. Jus' wait at dis point for me. I goin' back." An' Pussy let Rat go back.

Rat get back, an' he clean de pot. Not any rice in it. In dis time Pussy start to t'ink dat Rat fool him. An' he come back.

When he is dere, he not see nothin'. Look around, Bro' Rat not in sight. He move all round, can't find he friend. By an' by he hear sound, "Chip, chip, chip, chip, chip, chip, chip, chip!"

Dis sound is at de kettle. Soft, Pussy move to it. He creep up to it. Hear, "Chip, chip, chip, chip, chip!" Now he know where was Bro' Rat. De cover is on de pot. Bro' Pussy get to de cover. Jump on it. Cry, "Well, Bro' Rat, I's got you at it. So you is in dere. I goin' kill you, Bro' Rat." Rat beg him not to kill 'em. Say, "Please don' kill me, Bro' Pussy! Do anyt'ing to me, but please don' kill me!" Bro' Pussy insist dat he was goin' kill him. Rat beg dat he don't. Say he must not kill 'em. Den Pussy agree not to kill him, an' open de top.

Rat hop out. Pussy jump on him. Den John Cowrie (cat) lift him. He toss him. He let him go, den catch him. He beat him. He t'row him. He pounce on him. Beat him, but he did not kill him. He do dis till Rat was dead. But he did not kill him. He played him till he dead. Dat is why cat play wid de rat dat dey caught.

## **WHY RABBIT HAS A SHORT TAIL**

**Tradition Bearer:** George W. Edwards

**Source:** Johnson, John H. "Folk-Lore from Antigua, British West Indies." *Journal of American Folklore* 34 (1921): 49–50.

**Date:** 1921

**Original Source:** Antigua

**National Origin:** African American

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In this tale of the master **trickster** being tricked, rabbit seems a particularly easy dupe. The narrative resembles "The Tail-fisher" (AT 2). In the classic model, however, bear or wolf is tricked into using his tail to fish through a hole in the ice. The ice freezes around the tail, and when the tail-fisher is compelled to escape, the originally long tail is bobbed. Caribbean environmental factors require a modification of the preceding plot.

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**D**is was how dis come, Rabbit once have a tail long like dem other an'mals. Not short all de time.  
On dis occasion Rabbit was goin' about, an' he was hot. Dis was



summer, an' everyt'ing was hot. Rabbit he had run all over, was feelin' warm. By a' by he come to where Bro' Barracuda was. When Bro' Rabbit come near to de water, Bro' Barracuda speak to him. Say, "Why is it dat you so warm, Bro' Rabbit?"

Rabbit tell him dat is so warm 'round here, an' dat he been runnin' all 'bout. He not able to stay cool.

Den Bro' Barracuda fool Rabbit. An' Rabbit is a smart one. Bro' Barracuda say, "Bro' Rabbit, I will tell you which way you can get cool." Rabbit he glad for dat, an' ask de Barracuda to please do dis. Bro' Barracuda say dat Rabbit must come up to dis piece of wood what is over de water, an' let he tail hang down into de water. "In dis way, Bro' Rabbit, de cool from de water will go up from you' tail, an' you will not be warm."

Rabbit not against dis, an' he come. Now, when Rabbit come up to dis piece a wood, he drop his tail to de water. Den Bro' Barracuda sneak up to Rabbit tail, an' he bit it off.

Dat how Barracuda fool Rabbit, an' is why Rabbit has dat short tail.  
Finish.

## MR. HARD TIME

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Johnson, John H. "Folk-Lore from Antigua, British West Indies." *Journal of American Folklore* 34 (1921): 82–83.

**Date:** 1921

**Original Source:** Antigua

**National Origin:** African American

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The foolish misunderstandings of a husband's orders to his wife lead first to disaster then to wealth in this **variant** of "Guarding the Door" (AT 1653A).

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**Y**ou see, it was like dis. A man was goin' out one day, an' he took his money an' give it to his wife, an' tell her to keep it for hard time. At the same time, you know, he had owed a man by the name of Mr. Hard-Time. His wife misunderstand him, an' pay it all to Mr. Hard-Time. When da husban' come home, she tol' him, "Mr. Hard-Time was here, an' I pay him all da money you gave."

You can picture dat man feelin', for it was all da money he had. Man got 'rouse', an' start to quarrel with his wife. Den he tol' her to close de door an' follow him. Instead of she closin' de door, she lift up de door an' put it on her shoulder.

An dey went travelin' through a wood. Whiles' dey was goin' on, you know, dey saw all kinds of food under a tree, an' dey sat down an' was ready to eat some of what was dere. In da mean time dey heard a set of robbers comin', an' both clamored up in da tree. Dis woman climb da tree with dis heavy door on her back, too. Well, da robbers come an' form a circle under da tree. Dey bring in all dere gold, an' had it under dis tree. Well, da robbers didn't see dem. Den da woman said de door was hurtin' her shoulders, an' she were goin' to t'row it; an' her husban' tell her not to do it, da robbers see it an' kill dem. An' she t'rowed it down. Da robbers got scared, an' said, "Da Lord has sent us vengeance in an earthquake." 'Cause dat door came crashin' down. So dey run an' make another camp.

Dere was a little boy with dem. Dey sent him back to see what had become of da gold. Da little boy came along whistlin'. Da man tol' him dat's not da way to whistle come, an' he'll show him how to whistle like a man. He tell him to long out [stick out] his tongue an' let him scrape it. Da man did scrape a little of da boy's tongue, an' he whistle a little clearer. Den he ask him, "Don't you see you whistle clearer?"

Da boy say, "Yes," an' ask him to scrape a little more. Da boy long out his tongue, an' da man cut off a piece of his tongue.

At that da boy run back to da robbers, goin', "Ma, ma, ma, ma, ma, ma!" talkin' like a man who is dumb. At dat da robbers got scared an' start to run too, an' dey run in da sea an' all over. Some turn shark, some turn whale, some turn ballyho (a fish), some turn turtle, dey turn all different kind a animal. Durin dis time da man an' woman took to carry home da gold. Dey brought back a wagon an' carry away da rest of da stuff.

An' I, da storyteller, got some of dat money, an' became rich myself.  
And I went through Miss Havercomb alley,  
An' I see a lead was bending;  
So de lead ben',  
So de story en'.

## UNDER THE GREEN OLD OAK TREE

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Johnson, John H. "Folk-Lore from Antigua, British West Indies." *Journal of American Folklore* 34 (1921): 62–63.

**Date:** 1921

**Original Source:** Antigua

**National Origin:** African American

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"Under the Green Old Oak Tree" is a **variant** of "The Singing Bone" **tale type** (AT 780). The version adheres to the classic plot: the bone of

a murder victim is crafted into a musical instrument that makes an accusation that leads to the perpetrator of the crime.

---

**D**is a nice little story. Der woman had two chil'ren. One was a boy. an' der oder was a girl. De fader a dese chil'ren die. Moder decide to marry again. She marry to anoder man.

Each day dese chil'ren did go to de mountain to get flowers. Dey went on dis day. Girl had a better bucket den what de broder got. Dey cumin' wid de flowers. On his way home, de boy stop wid de gal. He t'inkin' some evil plan. Want dis bucket which was his sister. She would not consent to gi' him dis bucket. He t'ink it best to kill der sister. He kill de sister. He kill dis girl near to a big oak tree. An' he hide her dere. After he kill her, he go home. Can't give no account a he sister. Dey all went to search for de girl, but none can find her.

Der broder stay home. Month gone.

Shepherd-boy dat is comin' down de mountain meet [finds] a big bone like a flute. He pick dis bone under dat same tree. He took up de bone an' play. Comin' home wid de flock, he play on de bone. It play a sweet tune:

My broder has killed me in de woods, an' den he buryth me.  
 My broder has killed me in de woods, an' den he buryth me  
 Under de green of oak tree, an' den he buryth me.

Dat's all it could play. It play sweet, you know. Comin' home, all dat hear dis tune beg de boy for a play on it. He give dem a play.

Now he way down de mountain. Mos' to where de moder is livin'. He meet de moder. She ask him for a play. He give her a play. As quick as she play, t'ing say—

My dear moder, my dear moder, it my dead bone you play.  
 My dear moder, my dear moder, it my dead bone you play.

She drop an' faint, but never die. All de people was lookin' for de girl. Dis broder meet de boy. He ask him for a play. Take de bone an' start. T'ing say—

My broder, it is you dat has killed me.  
 My broder, it is you dat has killed me.

An' dere he faints an' dies.  
 Dat is de end a da green of oak tree.

# BAHAMAS

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## BROTHER RABBIT AN' BROTHER TAR-BABY

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Edwards, Charles L. "Some Tales from Bahama Folk-Lore." *Journal of American Folklore* 4 (1891): 50–51.

**Date:** 1891

**Original Source:** Bahamas

**National Origin:** African American

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The Bahamas (Commonwealth of the Bahamas) is an archipelago located in the Atlantic Ocean between the U.S. state of Florida and Cuba. Although Christopher Columbus' first landfall in the Western hemisphere was on San Salvador in the Bahamas, in the mid-seventeenth century English settlers established a British presence that led to the Bahamas becoming a crown colony. In the wake of the U.S. struggle for independence, the Bahamas provided a refuge for loyalists who immigrated along with their slaves in the late 1700s. The African-descended population of the islands was bolstered further in the nineteenth century by runaway slaves who escaped to the Bahamas following the emancipation of slaves in the British West Indies in 1834. The African influence is apparent in the following tales.

"Brother Rabbit an' Brother Tar-Baby" enjoys not only a general popularity because of a widely read version, "The Wonderful Tar-Baby Story," by Joel Chandler Harris, and the twentieth-century Walt Disney print and film versions, but also a wide oral distribution with versions found in South and East Asia, Africa, and Europe as well as the Western hemisphere (see the Native American Natchez tale "The Tar Baby," page 121). The tale of "The Tar Baby and the Rabbit" (AT 175) is

usually concluded with the “Briar-patch Punishment for Rabbit” (AT 1310); “fine grass” is substituted for briars below. The **formulaic** “Once it was a time a very good time/De monkey chewed tobacco an’ ‘e spit white lime” serves as an opening marker equivalent to the familiar “Once upon a time” of the **märchen**. As is common in African American tradition, rabbit is a **trickster** figure living by his wits, outsmarting stronger beings, and overcoming superior numbers to achieve his ends. Given the position in which the African bondsperson was placed in the New World context, rabbit’s antics may serve not only as comic catharsis but also as models for emulation under social oppression. In this version, rabbit plays out both the strengths (cleverness and audacity) and the weaknesses (selfishness and impulsiveness) in his effort to obtain the necessities of life at the expense of other’s labor. Nevertheless, rabbit plays a common role of tricksters in transforming the world, avenging himself on the other animals by forcing them from their initial anthropomorphic lifestyle, and condemning them to run wild in the bush.

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Once it was a time, a very good time,  
De monkey chewed tobacco an’ ‘e spit white lime.

**S**o dis day Brother Rabbit, Brother Bouki (hyena), Brother Tiger, Brother Lizard, Brother Elephant, Brother Goat, Brother Sheep, Brother Rat, Brother Cricket; all o’ de creatures, all kind, so now dey say, “Brother Rabbit, you goin’ help dig well?”

Brother Rabbit say, “No!”

Dey say, “When you wan’ water, how you goin’ manage?”

‘E say, “Get it an’ drink it.”

Dey say, “Brother Rabbit, you goin’ help cut field?”

Brother Rabbit say, “No!”

Dey say, “When you’re hungry, ho you goin’ manage?”

“Get it an’ eat it.” So all of ‘em gone to work. Dey went; dey dig well first. Nex’ dey cut field.

Now dis day Brother Rabbit come. Dey leave Brother Lizard home to mind de well. So now Brother Rabbit say, “Brother Lizard, you want to see ho can make de mostest noise in de trash?”

Brother Lizard say, “Yes!”

Brother Rabbit say, “You go in dat big heap o’ trash dere an’ I go in dat over dere” (Brother Rabbit did want to get his water now).

Brother Lizard gone in de trash; ‘e kick up. While ‘e was makin’ noise in de trash, Brother Rabbit dip ‘e bucket full o’ water. He’s gone!

So no when Brother Elephant come, an’ all de other animals come out of de field, Brother Elephant say, “Brother Lizard, did you’ let Brother Rabbit come here today an’ take dat water?”

Brother Lizard say, "I couldn't help it!" 'E say, "E tell me to go in de trash to see who could make the mostest noise."

Now de next' day dey leave Brother Bouki home to mind de well.

Now Brother Rabbit came. 'E say, "Brother Bouki, you wan' to see who can run de fastes'?"

Brother Bouki say, "Yes."

'E say, "You go dat side, an' le' me go dis side." Good! Brother Bouki break off; 'e gone a runnin'. Soon as Brother Bouki git out o' sight Brother Rabbit dip 'e bucket; 'e gone.

So no when Brother Elephant and the rest of them come dey say, "Brother Bouki, you let Brother Rabbit come 'ere again today and take our water?"

'E say, "'E tell me to have a race to see who could run de fastes', an' soon's I git a little ways 'e take de water an' gone."

So Brother Elephant say, "I know how to ketch him!"

All of them went to de pine yard. Dey make one big tar baby. Dey stick 'im up to de well.

Brother Rabbit come. 'E say, "Hun! dey leave my dear home to min' de well today." Brother Rabbit say, "Come, my dear, le' me kiss you!" Soon as 'e kiss 'er his lip stick fas'. Brother Rabbit say, "Mind you better le' go," 'e say, "You see dis biggy, biggy hand here," 'e say, "If I slap you wid dat I kill you." No when Brother Rabbit fire, so, 'e han' stick. Brother Rabbit say, "Min' you better le' go me," 'E say, "You see dis biggy, biggy han' here; f I slap you wid dat I kill you." Soon as Brother Rabbit slap wid de other han', so, 'e stick. Brother Rabbit say, "You see dis biggy, biggy foot here: my pa" say, "'f I kick anybody wid my biggy, biggy foot I kill 'em." Soon as 'e fire his foot, so, it stick. Brother Rabbit say, "Min' you better le' go me." Good! soon as 'e fire his foot, so, it stick. Now Brother Rabbit jus' was hangin'; hangin' on de Tar-baby.

Brother Bouki come runnin' out firs'. 'E say, "Ha! we got 'im today! We got 'im today!" 'E gone back to de field; 'e tell Brother Elephant; 'e say, "Ha! Brother Elephant; we got 'im today!"

Then all of 'em gone out now dey ketch Brother Rabbit. Now dey did want to kill Brother Rabbit; dey didn't know where to t'row 'im. Brother Rabbit say, "'f you t'row me in de sea" (you know 'f dey had t'row Brother Rabbit in de sea, dey'd a kill 'im)—

Brother Rabbit say, "'f you t'ro me in de sea you won't hurt me a bit." Brother Rabbit say, "'f you t'row me in de fine grass, you kill me an' all my family."

Dey take Brother Rabbit. Dey t'row 'im in de fine grass. Brother Rabbit jump up; 'e put off a runnin'. So now Brother Rabbit say, "Hey! ketch me 'f you could." All of 'em went away now.

Now one day dey [the other animals] was all sittin' down eatin'. Dey had one big house; de house was full o' all kinds o' animals. Brother Rabbit gone; 'e git up on top de house; 'e make one big hole in de roof o' de house. Brother Rabbit sing out, "Now, John Fire, go out!" Brother Rabbit let go a barrel o' mud; let it run right down inside de house. when 'e let go de barrel o' mud, so,

every one of 'em take to de bush, right wild; gone right over in de bush. Brother Rabbit make all on 'em went wild, till dis day you see all de animals wild.

E bo ban, my story 's en':  
If you don't believe my story 's true,  
Ask my captain an' my crew.

## BROTHER ELEPHANT AND BROTHER WHALE

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Edwards, Charles L. *Bahama Songs and Stories. Memoirs of the American Folklore Society*, No. 3. New York: American Folklore Society, 1895, 65.

**Date:** 1895

**Original Source:** The Bahamas

**National Origin:** African American

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“Brother Elephant and Brother Whale” is distributed not only in the West Indies but throughout the American South and in African South America. A **variant** of “Deceptive Tug-of-War” (AT 291), Brother Rabbit (B’Rabby) indulges in his pastime of stirring up trouble by issuing false challenges that pit unwitting competitors against each other. Along the way, there is another object lesson concerning the power of brain over brawn.

---

Once it was a time, a very good time,  
De monkey chewed tobacco an’ ‘e spit white lime.

**N**ow dis day Brother Rabbit was walkin’ ‘long de shore. ‘E see Brother Whale. ‘E say, “Brother Whale!”

Brother Whale say, “Hey!”

Brother Rabbit,” Brother Whale, I bet I could pull you on de shore!”

Brother Whale, “You can’t!”

Brother Rabbit say, “I bet you tree t’ousan’ dollar!”

Whale say, “All right!” ‘E gone.

‘E meet Brother Elephant. ‘E say, “Brother Elephant,” ‘e say, “I bet I could pull you in de sea!”

Brother Elephant say, “Me!” ‘E Dey ain’t ary man in de worl’ can pull me in de sea!” Brother Rabbit “I’ll try it tomorrow at twelve o’clock.”

‘E gone an’ get a heap o’ rope. ‘E say, “Now today we’ll try”

‘E tie one end of the rope aroun’ Brother Whale’s neck, and den ‘e tie one end aroun’ Brother Elephant’s neck. ‘E say, “When you hear me say, set taut,’ you mus’ set taut.”

'E say, "Pull away!"

When Brother Whale pull, 'e pull Brother Elephant in de surf o' de sea.  
'E say, "You think dis little Brother Rabbit doin' all o' dat!"

When Brother Elephant pull, 'e pull Brother Whale in de surf o' de sea.  
Brother Whale catch underneath one shelf o' de rock, and Brother Elephant  
catch to one big tree. Den de two of 'em pull so heavy de rope broke.

Brother Whale went in de ocean and Brother Elephant went way over in  
pine-yard. Das why you see Brother Whale in de ocean today and das why you  
see Brother Elephant over in de pine bushes today.

E bo ban, my story 's en',  
If you doan' believe my story 's true,  
Ask my captain an' my crew.

## **BROTHER RABBIT, BROTHER BOOKY, AND BROTHER COW**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Edwards, Charles L. "Some Tales from Bahama Folk-Lore." *Journal of American Folklore* 4 (1891): 50–51.

**Date:** 1891

**Original Source:** Bahamas

**National Origin:** African American

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In the usual pairing of rabbit and Booky (spelled variously as Bouqui, Bouki, Bookie), Booky plays the foil to rabbit and is the butt of all his jokes (see, for example, "Brother Rabbit an' Brother Tar-Baby," page 414). In this tale, however, Bouki imitates rabbit, tries his hand at being a con man, triumphs over his dupes, and wins rabbit's praise.

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Once it was a time, a very good time,  
De monkey chewed tobacco an' 'e spit white lime.

**N**ow dis day it was Brother Rabbit an' Brother Bouki. The wind was blowin'; dey did n' have nuthin' to eat; dey could n' ketch no fish. Dey was travelin' along to see if dey could n' find something to eat. An' now when Brother Rabbit look 'e see one big cow; 'e gone to de cow.

Den 'e take his hand an' spank on de cow bottom. 'E say, "Open, Kabendye, open!" When de cow bottom open Brother Rabbit jump in with his knife an' his pan. 'E cut his pan full o' meat. Brother Rabbit say, "Open, Kabendye, open!" and de cow bottom open an' Brother Rabbit jump out.



Good! Now Brother Rabbit was goin' home; his pan full o' meat. Brother Bouki see Brother Rabbit; say, "Brother Rabbit, where you get all dat meat?" Brother Bouki say, "'f you don' tell me where you get all dat meat I goin' tell!"

Brother Rabbit say, "Go right down dere where you see one big cow."

Brother Bouki say, "Hall right!"

Brother Rabbit say, "When you get dere you must take your ban'- an' spank hard on de cow bottom an' say, 'Open, Kabendye, open!'" Brother Rabbit say, "Soon as dey open you must jump in." Den 'e say, "O' You see one big t'ing inside dere; you must n' cut dat!" Brother Rabbit say, "Mind, 'f you cut dat de cow goin' to fall down dead."

Brother Bouki gone. When 'e got dere 'e take his hand; 'e spank on de cow bottom an' 'e say, "Open, Kabendye, open." Den 'e jump in. Brother Bouki cut, 'e cut, 'e cut his hand full! Brother Bouki wan' satisfied; 'e went an' 'e cut de cow heart; de cow fall down; *Bran*, 'e dead! Den Brother Bouki say, "Open, Kabendye, open!" After 'e foun' de cow bottom could n' open, 'e went inside de cow mouth. Nex' mornin', when de people come to feed 'im, dey found de cow dead.

Now dey begin to clean de cow; skin 'im. After dey done clean 'im dey cut 'im open; dey take out all his guts. Brother Bouki was inside de maw; swell up. De woman say, "Cut dat big t'ing open. See what in dere! "After dat dey went to cut it open; den Brother Bouki jump 'way yonder. Dey did n' see 'im.

Brother Bouki say, "See what you t'row on me. Ma jus' sent me down here to buy fresh beef, den you go t'row all dis nasty stuff on me!"

De people say, "Hush, don' cry, we give you half o' de cow!"

Brother Bouki say, "I don' want no half!" 'E say, "I goin' to carry you to jail!"

Den de man say, "No, Brother Bouki, we give you half o' de cow! "De man goin' t'row another stinking' pan o' water an' blood out. Brother Bouki jump 'way yonder [in order to be splashed by the water and blood]. De man t'row it on Brother Bouki.

Den Brother Bouki say, "Now I ain' goin' to stop; I goin' carry you right to de jail!"

De man say, "Hush, Brother Bouki, don' cry, I goin' give you half o' de cow!" Anyhow, dey give Brother Bouki half o' de cow. Brother Bouki take it on his shoulder; 'e gone.

When 'e look 'e see Brother Rabbit.

Brother Rabbit say, "Hey, where you get all o' dat meat?"

Brother Bouki say, "I went down dere; I cut dat big, big t'ing in de cow, an' de cow fall down dead." Den 'e say, "When de people come in de mornin' to kill de cow," 'e say, "I was inside de cow; when dey cut dat big t'ing I jump 'way yonder"; I say, "See what you t'row 'pon me!" 'e say, "Den dey give me half o' de cow."

Brother Rabbit say, "Dat 's de way to do!"

E bo ban, my story 's en':  
If you don't believe my story 's true,  
Ask my captain an' my crew.

## THE GIRL AND THE FISH

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Edwards, Charles L. "Some Tales from Bahama Folk-Lore: Fairy Stories." *Journal of American Folklore* 4 (1891): 247.

**Date:** 1891

**Original Source:** Bahamas

**National Origin:** African American

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Collector Charles Edwards notes that catching the tiny fish that gather in old conch shells is a common pastime for children in the Bahamas. Martha Warren Beckwith (1924) in her discussion of this **tale type**, which she labels "The Fish Lover," notes that it is common in Jamaica and distributed widely in the West Indies. The message of the tale is that violations of the natural order cannot be tolerated. As Beckwith's label attests, this **ordinary folktale** is classified "The Fish Lover" (AT 431C).

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**T**his day this girl went down to de sea for salt water. She catch one little fish out de conch shell. She name him Choncho-wally. She put him in de well. Ev'ry morning she use to put some of her breakfas' in de bucket an' carry to de fish; an' some of her dinner, an' some of her supper. She feed him 'till 'e get a big fish.

This mornin', when she went' to carry de breakfas' for him, she sing:

Conch-o, Conch-o-wall-y,  
Don't you wan' to mar-ry me,  
my daddy short-tail.

'E comes up an' she feed him. Den she let him go down. When she wen' home, de boy say, "Pa, sister' got somet'in' inside de well."

Den de nex' day she come; bring vittles again for him. De man say to de boy, "You go behin' de. tree an' listen to what she goin' sing." De gal sing:

Conch-o, Conch-o-wall-y,  
Don't you want to marry me,  
My daddy short-tail?

Huh! De boy catch it [hears her song]; 'e gone; tell 'e pa. De boy say, "Pa, sister say, 'Conch-o, Conch-o-wally,' etc. De man go; 'e took he grange, [fish spear] 'e sing, "Conch-o, Conch-o-wally," etc. De fish come up; 'e strike him. 'E carry him home an' they had some for dinner. De gal say, "I bet you this nice fish!"

Den de gal took some in de bucket to carry to de fish. Den when de gal went' to de well to call de fish, she sing,

Conch-o, Conch-o-wally,  
Don't you want to marry me,  
My daddy short-tail?

She sing again,

Conch-o, Conch-o-wally,  
Don't you want to marry me,  
My daddy short-tail?

She ain' hear no fish, an' she ain' see none. She sing again,

Conch-o, Conch-o-wally,  
Don't you want to marry me,  
My daddy short-tail?

She begin to cry now,

Conch-o, Conch-o-wally,  
Don't you want to marry me,  
My daddy short-tail?

Den she went' home to de house, behin' de house, an' she cry 'erself to death.

E bo ban, my story 's en':  
If you don't believe my story 's true,  
Ask my captain an' my crew.

## **THE BIG WORM**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Edwards, Charles L. *Bahama Songs and Stories. Memoirs of the American Folklore Society, No. 3.* New York: American Folklore Society, 1895, 72–73.

**Date:** 1895

Original Source: The Bahamas

National Origin: African American

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“The Big Worm” is a member of the class of stories known in the Bahamas as “old story.” These stories are, at their cores, of African rather than European origin.

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Once it was a time, a very good time,  
De monkey chewed tobacco an’ ‘e spit white lime.

So once there was a man; he had two sons; dey did n’ have no fire. All dey had to eat was raw potatoes. Now de man send’ dis boy to look for fire. De boy walk; he walk; he walk till ‘e saw smoke rising. When ‘e gone ‘e get to dat fire.

When ‘e get there, he saw a worm was full o’ fire. De boy say, “Dimme some fan!” (Give me some fire).

De worm say, “‘T ain’, ‘t ain’ none; jus’ enough for me.” De worm say, “Come in little closer.” *Good!* Soon as de boy wen’ a little closer, when ‘e went to reach de fire de worm swallow him down.

Den de boy wen’ down, right down, down inside de worm till ‘e stop. De boy met whole lot o’ people what de worm did swallow.

So now de man tell de other son, “I wonder where my son gone?”

De other son say, “Pa, I goin’ look for him.” ‘E walk, ‘e walk, ‘e walk till ‘e come to this big worm, what had de fire in his mouth. So now de boy went to de worm. De boy say, “Dimme some fan!”

De worm say, “Keelie o’ fire” (Come and get fire).

De boy say, “*Do i en e* [untranslated, perhaps a retention from an African language], dimme some fan?”

De worm say, “Come a little closer.” De worm say, “Time for Joe come” (Time to go home). De worm say, “Keelie o’ fire.”

When de boy wen’ to get de fire so, de worm swallow him down. De boy wen; ‘e wen’ down; ‘e wen’ down, till ‘e met ‘e brother.

Now de boy father say, “My two sons gone an’ I might as well gone too.” De man take ‘e lan’ (lance); it fairly glisten, it so sharp. When ‘e get there where de worm was wid de fire in he mouth, de man say, “Dimme some fan!”

De worm say, “You too do fur me!” (You’re too much for me). De worm say, “Keelie o’ fire.”

When de man wen’ to get de fire, so, de worm wen’ to swallow him. De man take he’ lan’; as ‘e was goin’ down ‘e cut de worm; ‘e cut de worm till ‘e cut de worm right open an’ all de people come, an’ dat was a big city right there.

E bo ban, my story ‘s en’,  
If you doan’ believe my story ‘s true,  
Ask my captain an’ my crew.

# JAMAICA

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## THE ORIGIN OF WOMAN

**Tradition Bearer:** Harry Murray

**Source:** Bates, William C. "Creole Folk-Lore from Jamaica II: Nancy Stories." *Journal of American Folklore* 9 (1896): 124–125.

**Date:** 1896

**Origin:** Jamaica

**National Origin:** African American

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Jamaica is an island located in the West Indies, east of the Central American coast, south of Cuba, and west of Haiti. From the mid-seventeenth century through independence in 1962, it was under British rule. The following "origin" tale, embedded within an argument between a husband and wife, serves no explanatory function as does the **myth genre** that it parodies. Rather, this story serves as an example of a comic narrative turning on alleged gender differences based on a flawed act of creation.

---

A discussion arose between black Lizzie and her husband upon the origin of man. Harry laid it down for an axiom that he was made from the dust of the earth, because the minister said so.

"I make out o' dust fe' sartin."

To him, according to the story, Lizzie replies, "Me no make out o' none dirt." Then Harry, "Ef you don' make out o' dirt, wha' you make out o'? You make out o' dirt, yes!"

"I don't make out o' notin' o' de skin."

"Den wha' you make out o'? You mus' make out o' some golden thing or another, den?"

"I don' make out o' no golden thing, an' I don' make out o' none dirt. I make out o' bone."

"Make out o' wha'?"

"Bone!"

"Bone?"

"Yes, bone to be sho'."

"Wha' kin' o' bone?"

"Rib's bone! You na hea' minista' say so?"

"Well, I don' know what to say 'bout dat; I don' like to say dat wha' minista' say not de truth; but I mean fe' say, when minista' read 'bout dat rib's bone, him must mean white woman, because dem white, so de bone white. Ef you make de same, you' 'skin would a been white."

"Cho," said Lizzie, "ef you had opened your ears instead of sleeping, you would a hea' de minsta' say de 'skin notin', but de blood, da de thing, because in de book say, dat white-o, brown-o, black-o, all make de same blood; you eba' see white blood an' black blood?"

"Look you," said Harry, "It you know how me Uncle Jame use to say woman came in dis worl'?"

"Cho, no bother me."

"Never min', I going tell you. Dem make two men; de first one he made very well, but when dem make de other one, it's kinda' spoil. Den as dem look upon it, so it began to jump about, and shake him head, and do all kind o' stupid thing, like a how woman goes on. Den one o' dem hold him, say, "Wha' kind o' thing you?" Den de oder say, "Cho, him no use, him can' talk. Every day him was like a dummy, till one day dem hol' him so, examine him tongue, den dem see de tongue tie; dem take a razor, cut it. As dem cut it so, bam! de thing mouth begin to fly, dem couldn't stop it. Dem say, "Well, dem sorry dey ever cut de tongue." From dat time, it make you hear dem say, "'Ef you wan' woman to be good, give him 'tump o' tongue (stump of tongue, a tongue-tie)."

## ANNANCY AND THE YAM HILLS

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Smith, Pamela Coleman. "Two Negro Stories from Jamaica." *Journal of American Folklore* 9 (1896): 278.

**Date:** 1896

**Original Source:** Jamaica

**National Origin:** African American

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"Annancy and the Yam Hills" shows the popular **trickster** figure in a typical attempt to satisfy his own needs at his neighbor's expense. In a

gloss on a **variant** of this tale, Martha Warren Beckwith claims that the story turns on a belief that it is “unlucky to reveal to others a marvel one has seen oneself, or to repeat certain taboo words” (1924, 254). In any case, Annancy, rather than being constrained by the witch queen’s tyranny, finds a way to subvert it, at least temporarily. The concluding maxim concerning the penalty for greed is a common way of ending Annancy tales in some Caribbean traditions.

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**O**ne time Annancy lived in a country where the Queen’s name was Five, an’ she was a witch; an’ she says whoever say “five” was to fall down dead.

It was very hungry times, and so Annancy go build himself a little house by de side of de river. An’ him make five yam hills. An’ when anybody come to get water at de river he call them an’ say, “I beg you tell me how many yam hills I have here. I can’t count whoever well.” So den dey would come in and say, “One, two, three, four, *five!*” an’ fall down dead. Then Annancy take dem an’ corn dem in his barrel [preserved them in brine] an’ eat dem, an’ so he live in hungry times—in plenty.

So time go on, an’ one day Guinea fowl come dat way, an’ Annancy say, “Beg you, Missus, tell me how many yam hills have I here.” So Guinea fowl go an’ sit on hill an’ say, “One, two, three, four, an’ de one I am sittin’ on!”

“Cho!” say Annancy; “you don’t count it right!” An’ Guinea fowl move to another yam hill an’ say, “Yes, one, two, three, four, an’ de one I am sittin’ on.”

“He! you don’t count right at all!”

“How you count, den?”

“Why dis way,” say Annancy, “One, two, three, four, **FIVE!**” an’ he fell down dead, an’ Guinea fowl eat him up!

Dis story show dat “Greedy choke puppy.”

## **CUNNIE-MORE-THAN-FATHER**

**Tradition Bearer:** George Parkes

**Source:** Beckwith, Martha Warren. *Jamaica Anansi Stories. Memoirs of the American Folklore Society*, No. 17. New York: American Folklore Society, 1924, 27–31.

**Date:** 1924

**Original Source:** Jamaica

**National Origin:** African American

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In the wake of being outwitted at every turn by the cleverness of Cunnie-mo’n-father (that is, “More Cunning Than Father”), Anansi is

driven to murderous fury by losing his title of supreme **trickster** to his child. Folklorist Martha Warren Beckwith points out that this tale has parallels throughout the Caribbean, Latin America, and Africa. The particular narratives in this **cycle** of folktales differ in their details, but all focus on the superior wit of the son and the jealousy of the father, Anansi.

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**A**nansi has seven children. He ask them how they would like to name. Six of them like different name, but one boy say he would like to [be] name “Cunnie-mo’n-father.” So for every tack [trick] Anansi put up, Cunnie-mo’n-father break it down.

One time he work a groun’ very far away into the bush, an’ in going to that bush he pass a very broad flat rock. So one day a man give him a yam-plant; that yam name “yam *foofoo*” [a yellow yam]. The same day plant the yam, it been bear a very big one same day. So nobody in the yard know the name of that yam save him, Anansi, alone.

So when he go home, he cook the yam an’ call the wife an’ chil’ren aroun’ to eat, an’ say, “Who know name, nyam; who no know name, don’ nyam!” So as no one know the name, they didn’t get none of it; Anansi alone eat off that yam that night. The nex’ day go back to the groun’ and the yam bear a larger one. He bring it home an’ bile it again, call the wife an’ chil’ren an’ say, “Who know name, nyam; who no know name, don’ nyam!” The nex’ day he went back an’ the yam bear a larger one than the previous day. He cut it an’ carry it home, cook it, call up the wife an’ chil’ren; he alone eat it.

Cunnie-mo’n-father say, “Look here! I *mus’* fin’ out the name of that yam!” He got some okra an’ went to the place where the broad rock is an’ mash up the okra an’ have the place quite slippery, an’ hide himself away in the bush near by. Anansi now coming with a larger yam this time. As he reach to the rock, he make a slide, fa’ down, an’ the yam smash.

He said, “Lawd! All me yam *foofoo* mash up!”

Cunnie-mo’n-father now catch the name, an’ he ran home now an’ tell mother an’ other chil’ren, “Remember! yam *foofoo*!” Anansi then take up the pieces, put them together and carry home. He cook it an’ ca’ all of them roun’ to eat.

He say, “Who know name, nyam; who no know name, no nyam.” They began to guess all sort of name; after that, whole of them say, “Yam *foofoo*! yam *foofoo*!” Anansi get vex, say, “Huh! eat! nobody fin’ it out but Cunnie-mo’n-father!”

Anansi then get to hate Cunnie-mo’n-father, want to make an end of him, but he didn’t know what way was to do it. So one night Brar [Brother] Tiger came to pay a visit to Anansi at his house. While both of them sittin’ an’ talkin’, at that time Cunnie-mo’n-father was lying down underneath the table fawning [feigning] sleep.



Anansi said to Tiger, "Look heah! ev'ry tack dat I put up, Cunnie-mo'-n-father break it down. I wan' to mak an end of him, but I don' know what way to do it." That time, Cunnie-mo'-n-father listen.

Tiger said, "I wi' kill him fo' you."

Anansi say, "How you will manage it?"

So Tiger said to Anansi, "You mus' put up a tack, an' I wi' ketch him."

Anansi said, "Look heah! Tomorrow night jus' at dinner-time you come here hide yo'self in the pepper tree; behin' that fattest limb, you hide yo'self there, an' I will sen' him to pick some pepper an' as he put his han' on the pepper tree, you mus' hol' him."

So the nex' night at dinner-time Tiger went to hide himself there. Anansi call Cunnie-mo'-n-father, say, "Go get pepper from the pepper tree."

Cunnie-mo'-n-father start for de pepper tree. On his way going he call in the kitchen an' take a fire-stick, an' as he went to the pepper tree, he shove the fire-stick right in Tiger face.

Tiger cry out, "W'y-ee!" an' gallop away.

Cunnie-mo'-n-father return to Anansi an' say he hear something in the pepper tree cry, so he don' pick any. Anansi eat his dinner that night without pepper.

A few minutes after, Tiger come back in the house an' tol' Anansi what have taken place. Anansi say, "Well, the boy have tack! but we *mus'* ketch him." At that time the boy go under the table lay down an' study for them again.

Tiger say, "How mus' we ketch him?"

Anansi said, "You come here tomorrow twelve o'clock an' I'll sen' him up on a cocoanut tree an' while he in the tree, you wait underneath; when he come down you ketch him." The nex' morning, Cunnie-mo'-n-father get two bags, fill it with red ants go up same cocoanut tree an' hide it, preparing for Tiger. At twelve o'clock Tiger come to Anansi yard. Anansi call for Cunnie-mo'-n-father an' said, "Go an' get me some cocoanuts off'n that tree." He went, an' Tiger lay wait under the tree for him. He shout to Tiger he mus' look up an' show him the bes' cocoanut he want, an' while Tiger do that, he open one of the bag an' throw it down in Tiger face. Ant begun to bite him an' he has to run away. Cunnie-mo'-n-father slip right down off the cocoanut tree, so he didn't get any cocoanut.

In the evening, Tiger went back to Anansi to tell him how Cunnie-mo'-n-father do him again. While the two of them was talking an' setting up another tack, Cunnie-mo'-n-father was underneath table listening to them again.

Anansi said, "The boy smart! but I goin' to put you up a tack fo' ketch him! Look heah! Tomorrow at twelve o'clock, you fin' yo'self at me groun' an' you will see a fat root of yam near to a tree. You mus' hide yo'self in the bush an' I will sen' him there to come cut yam, an' as he come there, hol' him."

Tiger then went an' fix himself in the yam bush. At twelve o'clock Anansi call Cunnie-mo'-n-father an' sen' him to groun, to cut yam an' tell him that very spot whe' he is to dig them.

Cunnie-mo'n-father went to the groun' an' shout out "Yam-o-e-e! yam-o-ee! yam-o-ee!" t'ree times. Nobody answer. Cunnie-mo'n-father say, "I t'ink father tell me say that when I come to groun' call fo' yam, yam wi' speak, an' de yam don' speak!" Call again, "Yam-o-ee!"

So Tiger answer him, "O-ee-e!"

So Cunnie-mo'n-father say, "From me bwoy born, the firs' I hear that yam can talk!" So run home back lef' Tiger.

So Tiger leave the groun' an' come home an' tell Anansi what happen.

Anansi said, "Well, 'cunnie mo' than me' fe trew, but we goin' to ketch him!"

At that time Cunnie-mo'n-father underneath the table fe listen, an' unfortunately he fell fas' asleep. So Anansi an' Tiger ketch him an' make a coffin an' put him in. Anansi tell Tiger he mus' take him t'row him far away in the sea where he kyan't come back again. Tiger lif' up the coffin, put it on his head an' start on the journey.

On reaching to a bush he help down the coffin an', as the sun was so hot, went underneath a tree an' fall asleep. Now there was a little hole in the coffin, an' looking thru that hole, Cunnie-mo'n-father saw an ol' man comin' along drivin' a flock of sheep. He began to cry, sayin' they want him to go to heaven an' he don' ready to go yet.

The ol' man said, "Bwoy, you too foolish! Heaven's a good place an' you don' ready to go there yet? You open the coffin put me in!"

The ol' man open the coffin, Cunnie-mo'n-father come out, put in the ol' man an' nail up the coffin back with him in it. He then drove the sheep a little way up inside the bush. Tiger now wake out of his sleep, lif' up the coffin an' away he went to the sea with it, an' go as far he could an' t'row the coffin down in the sea drown the ol' man, fe' a heaven he want to go! He then go back to Anansi yard an' tell him that he has finish with the fellow—no more of him, fe' he has drown' him in the deepest part of the sea.

Later in the evening, while Anansi an' Tiger was sitting down an' talking about the badness of Cunnie-mo'n-father, Anansi look an' see a flock of sheep was coming up to his house an' some one driving it. The driver was Cunnie-mo'n-father.

Anansi says to Tiger, "But now look at the bwoy what you drown' today, look at him driving a flock of sheep coming up!"

Tiger said, "No! 'cause I t'row him in the farthest part of the sea!" They waited until he drove them up to the yard. Tiger said to him, "Boy, don't it was you I t'row into the sea today?" Cunnie-mo'n-father said, "Yes, the place whe' you t'row me I get these sheep, an' if you did t'row me a little further, I would get double more than this!"

Anansi, hearing that, said that he would like to get some himself an' Cunnie-mo'n-father mus' carry him an' t'row him at the part where he can get the sheep. Cunnie-mo'n-father then get a coffin make an' put Anansi in it carry him to the sea-side, hire a boat, an' carry him far far away in the sea an' drown him.

An' that was, the las' of poor Anansi in *that* story.

## ANANSI AND THE LADY IN THE WELL

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Trowbridge, Ada Wilson. "Negro Customs and Folk-Stories of Jamaica." *Journal of American Folklore* 9 (1896): 283–284.

**Date:** 1896

**Original Source:** Jamaica

**National Origin:** African American

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Anansi, often simply called "Nancy" in Jamaican tradition, plays out the ambiguities of **tricksters** cross-culturally. While identified with a large, black spider found throughout the islands, in the "Nancy tales," he may take on the human form along with his human attributes. Often turning his guile to selfish and even sadistic ends, in the tale of "Anansi and the Lady in the Well," he acts as a compassionate intermediary between an abused wife and her neglected child. Although his motivations remain unknowable, he intervenes to help the victims of an abusive and exploitive male figure.

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Once it was a time when there was a good queen. An' she have husban' an' one pretty baby. An' she have one little pet dog, who go trot, trot, all 'bout de house after her.

Now de husban' he t'ink nothin' at all of him wife, an' he say to himse'f. "I put dat queen down de ole well, and den I get another mo' beau'ful queen." Den he do dis same t'ing what he t'ink in him ole black heart.

Now de queen she fall way down to de bottom of de well an' she can't scramble out no way, an' jus' sit all de day and cry fu' her baby. By an' by Nancy he come scrape, scrape, crup, crup, down de side de well an' say, "Howdy! W'at fo' you' cry, me lady?"

De queen say, "Howdy, Nancy! Me cry fo' me baby."

"Jus' jump on me back," say Nancy, "an' I fetch you' out dat well."

He take de queen on him back and go scrape, scrape, crup, crup, up de side de well. Den he say, "Now run! wash de baby, an' me fetch you down de well again befo' your husban' catch you."

Den she run to de door an' sing:

O-pen de do', my lit-tle dog-gie!

An' de little dog sing:

Yes, fo' cer-'a'n, my fair lah-dy!

Den she sing ‘gain:

Fetch the baby, my lit-tle dog-gie!

An’ de little dog sing:

Yes, fo’ certain, my fair la-dy!

An’ so till all de t’ings fetched an’ de baby all wash, dress, an’ sleep so sweet. Den she run back to Nancy an’ he take her on him back an’ go scrape, scrape, crup, crup, back down de well ‘gain. [In telling this story the narrator will often sing for each article of the baby’s toilette, and sing the reply of the dog, in the simple measures given above.]

An’ ev’ry day Nancy come dis way and say, “Howdy, me lady!” and take de queen on him back an’ fetch her out de well, an’ she wash an’ dress dat baby till him grow big boy.

## COCK’S BREAKFAST

**Tradition Bearer:** Richard Morgan

**Source:** Beckwith, Martha Warren. *Jamaica Anansi Stories. Memoirs of the American Folklore Society*, No. 17. New York: American Folklore Society, 1924, 61.

**Date:** 1924

**Original Source:** Jamaica

**National Origin:** African American

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The tale of the “Cock’s Breakfast” casts cockroach in the role of **trickster**. Martha Warren Beckwith, in fact, suggests a comparison between cockroach and the more famous African and African American trickster Anansi (1924, 260). Cockroach is featured in similar tales in Caribbean tradition. The present narrative is built on “Enmity of Fowl and Cockroach” (*Motif* A2494.5.18).

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One day Cockroach said to Cock, “Brother Cock, get little breakfas’, so I will come an’ have breakfas’ wid you.” Cock said yes. Cockroach come, Cockroach eat.

When he done ‘e said, “Brother Cock, when you know time my breakfas’ ready, come.”

Cock said, “How mus’ I know?”

Cockroach said, “I will gi’ you a sign. When you hear I make noise, don’ come; but when you hear I stay still in de yard you mus’ come.”

When Cock go, he didn't fin' Cockroach. Cock return back to his yard. Secon' day, Cockroach come an' say, "Oh, Brother Cock! after I lef' you here, I got pain all over my skin so I go an' lie down, I couldn't look a t'ing; but t'-day you can come."

Cock do de same, go to de yard, didn't fin' him, return back. When he got half way, he hear in Cockroach house,

Ring a ting ting,  
Me know fool for fool!

Cock take time, tip on him toe. An' go long to one gourd, he hear cockroach in a de gourd. An' Cock take him beak, lick him at de gourd. Cockroach run out. Cock pick him up an' swaller him.

So from dat day, not a cockroach walk a fowl yard any more.

## TIGER SOFTENS HIS VOICE

**Tradition Bearer:** George Parkes

**Source:** Beckwith, Martha Warren. *Jamaica Anansi Stories. Memoirs of the American Folklore Society*, No. 17. New York: American Folklore Society, 1924, 116–118.

**Date:** 1924

**Original Source:** Jamaica

**National Origin:** African American

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As is the case with various tales from the African Caribbean, an animal desires a human woman for his wife. These tales usually share a similar **motif** of the magic power of song to charm and transform.

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Once upon a time a woman had one daughter, an' that daughter was the prettiest girl in an' around that country. Every man want the girl to marry, but the mother refuse them as they come.

Tiger, too, wanted the girl, an' demands the girl, an' the mother says no. Tiger said if he don't get the girl he will kill her. So they remove from that part of the country and go to another part, into a thick wild wood where no one live. And she made a house with a hundred doors and a hundred windows and a large staircase; and the house is an upstairs, an' there both of them live.

Tiger hear of it, always loafing aroun' the house to see if he can catch the girl, but the girl never come out. During the day, the mother went to her work, leaving the girl at home. When going out, the mother fasten all the doors an' windows; coming home in the evening, at a certain spot where she can see the

house an' notice that all the windows an' doors are close as she leave it, then now she have a song to sing, go like this—

Tom Jones, Tom Jones, Tom Jones!  
(that's the name of the girl)

Girl now—

Deh lo, madame!

Woman said to her now—

Fare you well, fare you well, fare you well,  
Fare you well, me dear; fare you well, me love!  
A[in't] no Tiger, deh la, ho, deh la, ho?  
Me jus' come, ho!

Then the door open, so—

Cheeky checky knock umbar,  
Cheeky checky knock umbar,  
Cheeky checky knock umbar.

The door don't open without that song now, and when it open, the mamma go into the house.

At that time, Tiger in the bush listening to the song. So one day while she was away, hear time for her to come home, Tiger approach the spot where she always sing. He now in a very coarse voice sings the song—

Tom Jones, Tom Jones, Tom Jones!

Girl now—

Deh lo, madame!

The girl look from the window, said, "Tiger, a who no know sa' a you!" [I know who you are.] So now Tiger go 'way an' hide till mamma come. When she come, he listen good. Next day, Tiger go to a blacksmith an' ask de blacksmith what he t'ink can give him, Tiger, a clear v'ice [voice].

De blacksmi't say he must hot a long iron an' when it hot, mus' take it push down his t'roat. An' de blacksmi't give him a bit of meat to eat after he burn the throat an' that will give him a clear v'ice. So Tiger go away eat de meat first an' den burn de t'roat after.

Nex' day he went to the spot where the woman always sing from. An' that make his v'ice more coarser. He sing now—

Tom Jones, Tom Jones, Tom Jones!

Girl now—

Deh lo, madame!

The girl look thru the window an' say, "Cho! a who no know sa' a you!" So Tiger got vex' now, an' he went home, burn the throat first and afterward eat the meat, and that give him a clearer v'ice than the woman. The nex' day, when most time for the woman to come home from her work, Tiger went to the spot where he can see the house. He begin to sing—

Tom Jones, Tom Jones, Tom Jones!

Girl now—

Deh lo, madame!

The girl answer (tho't it was her mother now)—

Deh la, madame!

Then Tiger say—

Fare you well, fare you well, fare you well,  
 Fare you well, me dear; fare you well, me love!  
 A no Tiger deh lo o-o-o  
 Me jus' come, h-o-o-o!

The door commence to open now—

Cheeky cheeky cheeky knock umbar,  
 Cheeky cheeky cheeky knock umbar,  
 Cheeky cheeky cheeky knock umbar!

And as the door open, Tiger step up an' caught the girl an' swallow her.

And when the mother coming home, reach to the spot and saw the doors and windows open, she throw down what she carry and run to the house. And she saw Tiger lay down. And the mother then went away an' get some strong men come an' tie Tiger, kill him, an' open de belly an' take out de daughter. At that time, little life left in her an' they get back the life in her. The woman then

leave the house an' go off away far into another country, and that is why you always fin' lot of old houses unoccupied that no one live in.

## THE WITCH AT BOSEN CORNER

**Tradition Bearer:** Martha Roe

**Source:** Beckwith, Martha Warren. *Jamaica Anansi Stories. Memoirs of the American Folklore Society*, No. 17. New York: American Folklore Society, 1924, 94–96.

**Date:** 1924

**Original Source:** Jamaica

**National Origin:** African American

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The following tale is a Caribbean **variant** of “The Kind and the Unkind Girls” (AT 480). This widely distributed narrative is represented in the tale corpus of Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm as “Frau Holle.”

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A woman have two daughter; one was her own chil' an' one was her daughter-in-law. So she didn't use her daughter-in-law good. So de place whe' dem go fe water a bad place, Ol' Witch country. De place name Bosen Corner.

One day she sen' de daughter-in-law fe water. So when she go long, she see so-so [only] head in de road; she put her hand on belly mek kind howdy. Go on again, see two foot go one in anudder so (crossed) in de road. An' say, “Howdy, papa.”

So-so foot say, “Gal, whe you gwine?” She said, “Mamma sen' me a Bosen Corner fe water.”

He say, “Go on, gal; good befo' an' bad behin'.” She go on till she ketch to a little hut, see one ol' lady sit down deh. She say, “Howdy, nana,” De ol' lady say, “Whe' you gwine?” Say, “Ma sen' me a Bosen Corner fe water, ma'am.” De ol' lady say, “Come in here; late night goin' tek you.” De Ol' Witch go pick up one piece of bone out dungle-heap an' choppy up putty in pot, an' four grain of rice. Boil de pot full of meat an' rice an' get de gal dinner. De gal eat, an, eat done call her say, “Me gal, come here 'cratch me back.” When she run her han' 'cratch her back so, back pick all de gal han' so it bleed. Ol' Witch ask her, “What de matter you' han'?” Say, “Not'ing, ma'am.” Even when it cut up all bleed, never say not'ing. When she go sit down, ol' lady go out of door come in one ol' cat. De ol' cat come in de gal lap, an' she hug it up an' coax de cat an' was so kin' to de cat. An' de gal sleep an' get up to go away in de mo'ning, De ol' lady tell her say mus' go roun' de house see some fowl-egg. She tell de gal say, de egg whe' she hear say, “Tek me! tek me!” dem are big egg; she musn't



tek dem; small egg say, “No tek me!” she mus’ tek four. First crossroad ketch, she mus’ mash one. Firs’ crossroad she mash one de egg, an’ see into a big pretty common. Second crossroad she mash udder one; de common pack up wid cow an’ goat an’ sheep an’ ev’ryt’ing dat a gentleman possess in property. De t’ird crossroad she mash anudder one; she saw a pretty young gentleman come out into a buggy. De fourt’ crossroad she mash de las’ egg an’ fin’ de gentleman is a prince an’ he marry her.

De daughter-in-law come, her an’ her husban’, drive into de yard see murder-in-law. She expect’ de Ol’ Witch kill de gal didn’t know she was living. So she sen’ fe her own daughter, sen’ a Bosen Corner fe water, say de udder one go get fe her riches, so she mus’ get riches too. De gal tek a gourd an’ going now fe water too. Go long an’ see so-so head an’ say, “Ay-e-e! from me bo’n I nebber see so-so head yet!” So-so head say, “Go long, gall better day befo’.” An’ go long an’ meet upon so-so foot, an’ say, “Eh! me mamma sen’ me fe water I buck up agains’ all kind of bugaboo, meet all kin’ of insect!” An’ say, “Go long, gall better day befo’.” An’ go de ol’ lady house now. De ol’ lady go tek de ol’ bone go putty on de fire again, an’ say, “Nana, you gwine tell me so-so bone bile t’-day fe me dinner?” An’ when she see de four grain of rice she say, “Nebber see fo’ grain of rice go in a pot yet!” Till it boil de pot full de same wid rice an’ meat. De ol’ lady share fe her dinner give her, an’ she go tu’n a puss an’ come back in. When de puss beg fe little rice, de gal pick her up fling her out de door. Ol’ lady call her fe come, ‘cratch him back too, an’ put him han’ to ‘cratch him back, draw it back say, “Nebber see such a t’ing to ‘cratch de back an’ cut han’!” Nex’ mo’ning, de ol’ lady tell her mus’ look in back of de house tek egg. De big egg say, “Tek me! tek me!” mus’n’t tek dem; de little egg say, “No tek me! no tek me!” mus’ tek four. She don’ tek de small one, tek four of de big egg. De firs’ crossroad she break one an’ see a whole heap of snake. At de secon’ crossroad she break anudder an’ see a whole lot of insect. At de las’ crossroad she massoo one, an’ see a big Ol’ Witch man tear her up kill her ‘tiff dead in de road.

## JACK AND THE DEVIL ERRANT

**Tradition Bearer:** Elizabeth Hilton

**Source:** Beckwith, Martha Warren. *Jamaica Anansi Stories. Memoirs of the American Folklore Society*, No. 17. New York: American Folklore Society, 1924, 61.

**Date:** 1924

**Original Source:** Jamaica

**National Origin:** African American

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The following **ordinary folktale** is a classic example of “The Girl as Helper in the Hero’s Flight” (AT 313). As such, the plot incorporates

the six characteristic episodes of AT 313: “Hero Comes into Ogre’s [Devil’s] Power,” “The Ogre’s Tasks,” “The Flight,” “The Forgotten Fiancée,” “Waking from Magical Forgetfulness,” and “The Old Bride Chosen.” The tale is an African American **variant** of a common European type.

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Jack was a great gambler—no one could ever beat him a game; and he went and gambled with the Devil Errant. Jack won the first, second and third games; the Devil Errant won the fourth and the fifth games,

The Devil Errant said to Jack, “I require nothing of you but to find me in three months.” No man knew where the Devil Errant lived, and if Jack doesn’t find him in three months, the Devil Errant will take his head. And the Devil Errant knew where Jack lived.

Jack was fretting and didn’t know what to do. He asked every one of his friends and they said they didn’t know the Devil Errant and didn’t know where he lived. He went to the keeper of the world and asked him where the Devil Errant lived.

He said, “How could you play cards with a man like that! However, I am keeper of all the beasts. In the morning I will ring the bell and all will come and I will ask them if they know the Devil Errant.”

In the morning he rang the bell and all the beasts came. Everyone said he didn’t know the Devil Errant. So he said, “I don’t know what to do, Jack; but I have a brother who lives three hundred miles from here, and I will roll a barrel and you must go after the barrel; where the barrel stops, that will be where my brother lives.”

In the morning, he rolled the barrel and Jack followed the barrel, and it stopped in the brother’s yard and Jack stopped too. And he asked the brother if he knew the Devil Errant and he said no, didn’t know a man like that. And he said, “Well, I am the keeper of all the fish in the sea. In the morning I will ring the bell and all the fish can come und I will ask them if they know the Devil Errant.” In the morning, he rang the bell and all the fish came and they said they didn’t know a man like the Devil Errant.

Jack was fretting, for it only needed three days and the three month would be gone, The brother said, “Well, I don’t know what to do, but I have another brother who lives two hundred miles from here. Tomorrow I will roll the barrel and where that barrel stops that will be the place.

In the morning, he rolled the barrel and Jack followed after the barrel, and when he got to the other brother the brother said, “Well, I don’t know such a man by the name of the Devil Errant, but I am the keeper of all the birds in the year, and in the morning I will ring the bell and they will come and I will ask them if they know the Devil Errant.”

In the morning, he rang the bell and all the birds came except one named the Quack, and everyone said he didn’t know the Devil Errant. Little after, the

Quack came up. The keeper asked him why he didn't come all this time and he said, "I was just at the Devil Errant's yard picking up a few grains of corn."

The keeper said to Jack, "This is the only one who can take you to the Devil Errant's yard."

Jack had to kill a cow now and cut it up in pieces and put it on the bird's back along with himself, and every time the bird said "Quack," give him a piece of meat. The Quack was a greedy bird; said "Quack" and gave him a piece, "Quack" and gave him a piece, "Quack" and gave him a piece, "Quack" and gave him a piece, till he gave him the whole cow, didn't have any more to give him. The bird said "Quack" and he gave him his hat, "Quack" and he gave him his boots, "Quack" and didn't have anything more to give him, and the bird dropped him at the river-side.

As Jack was there crying he saw an old man come. The man said, "Jack, what you doing here?" Jack said, "I was gambling with the Devil Errant and he won me the fourth and fifth times and he said I was to find him in three months, and the three months are up today."

The man said, "Well, I advise you to stay here for a few minutes and you will see the Devil Errant's two daughters come to bathe. You must not trouble those two, but when you see the third one come, when she goes to bathe take her clothes and hide them, and when she comes out to look for the clothing say to her, 'Your father played me a trick and I will play you one too!'"

Jack did so. When the girl looked for her clothes, Jack said, "Your father played me a trick and I will play you one too."

And the girl fell in love with Jack and told him all her father's secrets and said, "Now, Jack, when you go to my father's gate, if he tells you to come in you mustn't go in at the gate; for there will be a sword ready to cut off your head. Let him come and open the gate for you."

So when Jack went to the Devil Errant's yard, the Devil Errant said, "You are very clever indeed, Jack! Open the gate and come in."

Jack said, "No, you come and open it." The Devil came and opened the gate.

The Devil said, "As you are so clever to find me in three months. I will give you another task to do."

He dropped his gold ring into an empty well and said, "Go and pick it up."

When Jack went, the well was full of water. Poor Jack was hungry and crying. He saw the girl coming with his breakfast and a bag with a machete in it.

And she said, "Why are you crying, Jack?"

He said, "Because your father has given me a task I can't do."

She said, "What is it?" He said, "He dropped his ring into the well when it was empty, and when I went to pick it up, it was full of water."

She said, "Well, what you must do is to take this machete now and cut me up in pieces and I will be a ladder, and when you are coming back, you must take up every piece and put it into this bag and I will become the same woman."

Jack said he couldn't do it at all, but she forced him to and so he did it, He chopped her up and put her down and she became a ladder, and every time in coming up he took up a piece until he had taken up the whole, only one little piece he forgot, till at last she became the same woman, only she had lost one of her finger-joints; but she said, "Never mind for that, Jack!"

Jack took the ring to the Devil Errant and he said, "Since you are so clever, I will give you another task; take this house, now, and shingle it with dove feather." Jack was crying and he saw the girl coming with a barrel of corn.

She said, "Now, Jack, dash this corn about the house and every bird will come to feed; and pick the feathers and shingle it with dove feathers." And so Jack did.

And the Devil said, "You are so clever I will give you another task to do, and when you have done that I will set you free." And he gave him a bit and said, "Go and catch my horse in the pasture." When Jack went to the pasture he saw it was a mountain of sea. Jack was crying and he saw the girl coming with a gun and a stone.

She said, "Don't cry, Jack! take the bridle and stone, fire the gun and dash into the sea. The horse will come and put his head into the bit, as my grandfather was buried here."

When Jack carried the horse to the Devil Errant, the Devil Errant said, "You are very clever indeed. I will give you one of my daughters to marry." He had the three girls dress alike and gave a grand dance and said when they were dancing he must pick out the one that he loved the best. The girl told him that she would wear a different branch and told him what branch she would wear, so he picked out the youngest daughter. The Devil Errant said he couldn't give him that one at all because she was too young, but Jack said she was the only one he loved, and the Devil Errant couldn't break his promise and had to give her to him, and they got the parson to come and marry them.

That night the wife said, "Well, Jack, father is going to kill you tonight." When they went to bed, the wife made two wooden babies that would cry and put them in the bed; and they went into the pasture and got the best riding horses her father had and started for home. The devil got a pot of boiling water and threw it trough the chimney into the room on the bed. When he heard the babies cry, he went to cut their throats and he found the two wooden babies. So he went after them.

The horse's name was "Supple Jack." The girl said to Jack, "Look, look behind you and see what you see!"

Jack said, "Your father is at the horse's tail!" She said, "Take this grain of corn and throw it and it will turn a wood of trees that he can't pass." The Devil went back for his axe, and felled the wood.

She said, "Look, look behind you, Jack, and see what you see!"

He said, "Your father is at the horse's tail!"

She said, "Take this sweat and droop it behind you and it will mount to a great river he can't cross." The devil went back for his ladle and ladled the water till he drowned; he couldn't go any further!

The girl said to Jack, "As you have been away so long, don't take me with you; leave me at the lodgings and come back tomorrow for me. But you must not kiss anyone; if you kiss anyone, you will forget me and never remember me any more."

So Jack went home. His mother and sisters and everybody came to kiss him, but he refused to kiss them. He lay on the sofa sleeping and a pet dog came and kissed him, and Jack never remembered his wife any more for four years.

Then they made a great entertainment. Jack was just about to marry the next day to another woman, and he and his bride went to the entertainment. The first wife sat down at the window sad. They asked her to go with them to the entertainment. She said no, she was not going, but they forced her to go with them. As everybody was enjoying himself, they asked her to entertain them. She knocked her left side; a rooster came out. She knocked her right side; a hen came out. She knocked her stomach; a grain of corn came out. The rooster took it away from the hen.

The hen said, "Get away, you ungrateful rooster! You came into my father's yard, he gave you a task to do and you couldn't do it. He dropped his gold ring into the well and you couldn't take it out, had to mince me in pieces, and now I have lost one of my little finger joints!" She knocked again and another grain of coin came out. The rooster took it away from the hen.

The hen said, "Stop, you ungrateful rooster! You came to my father's yard, he gave you a task to shingle a house with dove feathers and you couldn't do it; I had to do it for you"

Jack said, "I remember something!"

She knocked on her stomach again and another grain of corn came out. The rooster ate it up. She said, "Get away, you ungrateful rooster you! You came to my father's yard. He gave you his bridle to go and catch his horse and you couldn't catch it and I had to show you how to do it!"

Jack said, "I just remember my fault!" Jack fell down at her feet and begged her to forgive him. He said to the company that a man had lost a key and was about to buy a new one when he found the old one just as good, and everybody told him there was now no occasion to buy the new one.

Jack said, "Well, this is my wife that I forgot for four years, and I have found her!" He put her in his buggy and drove home and left the other one in the same place. And they both lived happy forever.

## DE STORY OF DE MAN AND SIX POACHED EGGS

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Smith, Pamela Coleman. "Two Negro Stories from Jamaica." *Journal of American Folklore* 9 (1896): 278.

**Date:** 1896

**Original Source:** Jamaica

**National Origin:** African American

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The following tale is derived from an English source, “The Witty Exploits of Mr. George Buchanan the King’s Fool.” Buchanan, although he survives in folk narrative as a “fool” in the Elizabethan tradition, was tutor to James VI of Scotland and later an advisor and known as a social reformer. The presence of the tale in the African Caribbean corpus illustrates the influence of English traditions in this culture area.

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Once a man go travelin’ an’ he get hungry, so he stop at a tavern an’ order something to eat, so dey bring him six poached eggs. He eat dem, but he did not have any money, so he say he would come back an’ pay. In six years—or maybe it was more—be comeback an’ pay sixpence for de eggs. But den de tavern keeper say dat if he had not eaten de six poached eggs dey might have been chickens, and den de chickens would have grown up and hatch more chickens, an’ dey more—an’ more—an’ more—an’ tell de man he must pay six pounds instead of sixpence. An’ de man say he would not.

So dey go to de judge. An’ while dey was conversin’ a boy come in with a bundle under his arm. An’ de judge say, “What you got in de bundle?” and de boy say, “Parch’peas,” say, “What you goin’ do with dem?”

“Plant dem, sir!”

“Hi” say de judge, “You can’t plant parch’peas, dey won’t grow!”

“Well, sir, an’ poached eggs won’t hatch!”

So dey dismiss de man and he never pay a penny!

Dis story show dat you mus’ never count you’ eggs before dey hatch!

# ***Native Caribbean***





# ARAWAK

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## HARIWALI AND THE WONDERFUL TREE

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Roth, Walter E. *An Inquiry into the Animism and Folk-Lore of the Guiana Indians*. Thirtieth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, 1908–1909. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1915, 120–122.

**Date:** ca. 1908

**Original Source:** Arawak

**National Origin:** Native American

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The Arawaks were the first indigenous groups encountered by the Spanish in the Caribbean. They occupied the modern West Indian islands of the Bahamas, Cuba, Hispaniola (Haiti and the Dominican Republic), Jamaica, and Puerto Rico. The Taino were the dominant Arawak culture in the area at the time of first European contact. The “piai” is the holy man and healer of Arawak tradition. Many are regarded as having such an aura of the sacred as to be venerated after death. This **myth** in which Hariwali creates new species in his quest for revenge against an unfaithful wife and treacherous brother, and travels to the land of the spirits to retrieve his brother to alleviate their mother’s grief, illustrates the power the piais were believed to possess.

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**H**ariwali was a clever, painstaking piyai, who spent most of his time in clearing the field for his two wives. These two women, their children, and his brother lived with him at his house. While felling the timber, the wives undertook, turn and turn about, to bring their husband some cassiri [cassava juice beer] daily.

It happened now that while carrying the usual refreshment one of the wives was met by the brother-in-law, who was bringing in some itiriti [a plant whose stems are used for plaiting household articles] strands to weave baskets with.

“Hullo!” he said, “where are you going?” to which he received reply, “I am taking cassiri to my husband; the field—But I like you. Do you like me?”

“No, I don’t,” he answered, “and even if I did, my brother, being a medicine-man, would find it out very soon.”

She tried him again, and tempted him sorely, and then she threw her arms round him. He was but mortal. She assured him that her husband would never find out what had happened, and both went their respective ways. Before she reached the field, however, she broke the calabash [in which the cassiri was contained]; then with a pointed stick she cut her knee, causing it to bleed. When Hariwali saw her coming slowly along with a limp carrying the broken calabash, he asked her what had happened. All she could do was to point to the scratch and blood on her lame knee, and tell him that she had had an accident, having fallen on a stump. He was a shrewd piyai, however, and knew exactly what had happened, and though he said nothing then, he determined not only upon getting rid of her, but of his other wife also; he just then, however, directed her to return home.

Next morning he bade both the women accompany him, as he intended fishing in the pond, and he merely wanted them to do the cooking and make the fire. When fire had been made, he brought them a turtle, which they put on the hot ashes without killing it, so it promptly crawled out; they pushed it on again, but with the same result. It was the omen betokening their death. The semi-chichi [sorcerer] had bewitched them and they thought they had already killed the turtle.

What they imagined was that the fire was not hot enough, and so the faithless spouse went to look for more dry wood. Now, as she was breaking up the timber she found it very hard work, and exclaimed Tata—Ketaiaba (literally, hard to break), but no sooner were the words out of her mouth, than she flew away as a hawk, the “bul-tata,” which can often be heard crying bul-tata-tata-tata.... Of course it was her husband who had done this. The other wife said she felt hot and would bathe her skin; no sooner had she ducked into the pond, than her husband turned her into a porpoise—she was the very first porpoise that ever swam in these waters.

Hariwali thus punished his wives, and now pondered over what he should do with his brother. While returning home, he met the very man with bow and arrows starting out to hunt, but neither spoke. That same afternoon the brother, who had never missed a bird before, made a bad shot every time now, the arrow invariably flying absurdly wide of its mark. This was really all Hariwali’s doing. At last the brother did manage to hit a bird, but only just hard enough to knock a few feathers off, nothing more.

“Don’t do that again,” said the bird, “and now look behind you.” And when he did so, there was a large sheet of water, and he realized that he was upon an

island. But how to escape? Round and round he wandered, until he finally found a path; no ordinary path, but a Yawahu's ["spirit" in the generic sense] path leading to the Spirit's house.

Arrived at the house, the Yawahu caught him, and took all his bones out except those of his fingers; this was done only out of kindness, so that he could not escape, the Yawahu putting him into a hammock and paying him every care and attention. The bones themselves were tied up in a bundle under the roof (as bundles are kept by many other Indian tribes). The Yawahu was quite a family man, with plenty of youngsters who were always practicing with their bows and arrows; when their arrows got blunted they had only to go up to the captive's hammock and sharpen them on his bony finger tips.

All this time, Hariwali's mother would cry regularly every night over her absent son, whose whereabouts and condition she was absolutely ignorant of. So at last the pi'ai's heart became softened, and he determined on going to fetch his brother home again. It was all due to his "medicine" that his brother fell into the clutches of the Spirits. He told the old woman to pack up everything, because when he returned with his brother they and all their family would have to leave the place forever.

The night previous to their departure, he "played the shak-shak" (that is, called up his Spirit friends with the rattle), and next morning hosts of parrots were passing overhead. His children called his attention to them; so he went out and asked the birds to throw down a seed of a certain tree the bark of which he used medicinally. This they did, and though the youngsters saw the seed falling, directly it touched ground the father put his foot on it, and look as much as they could, the children could not find it. As he did not want them to know what he was doing, he told them that nothing had fallen, that they must be mistaken, and that they must run away now. Young folk are not allowed to see what the old medicine-men practice.

When left alone, Hariwali planted the identical seed just where it had fallen, and that same evening repeated the performance with the rattle; by next morning a stately tree had grown from that one seed. He told his mother to tie all the things which she had packed up, on the branches of this tree and to await his and his brother's return.

It was not long before he reached the Yawahu's place, where, the family being away, he had no difficulty in releasing the captive, untying the bones from the roof, and making good his escape. Unfortunately the Spirit returned earlier than was expected, and seeing the empty hammock and no parcel of bones, was not long in concluding what had happened. He recognized the fresh tracks, and put his dogs on the scent.

Poor Hariwali and his brother! They heard the barking of the dogs and the whistling of the Spirit, and barely had time to crawl into an armadillo hole. They just managed to get out of sight when Yawahu came up, threatening that if they did not come out, he would drive a stick into them; the fugitives laid

low, and said nothing. Yawahu then shoved a stick in, but Hariwali touched it with his hand, and changed it into a bush-master snake. (This is why, even to the present day, a bush-master snake is always found in an armadillo hole.) At any rate, Yawahu on seeing the serpent thought he must have been mistaken in following the tracks and retraced his steps. Having put the bones back into his brother's skin, and waiting till the coast was clear, Hariwali led the way home.

And how glad their mother was to see them! She had everything packed away in and among the branches of the big tree, and she herself, her daughter, and the grandchildren were all prepared for a long journey. As night fell, they all, big and little, climbed up into the lower branches, finding shelter among the leaves while Hariwali made his way up to the very summit and began again the shak-shak performance.

This continued till quite into the middle of the night, when all of a sudden, the family below felt the tree shaking, and heard rumbling noises, followed by a quivering, and experienced a sensation of the trunk being rooted out of the sand, and starting to fly up into the air. Now, it was just about the moment when they were off on their proposed journey that the old woman's daughter, the pi'ai's sister, felt a bit chilly, and casting her eyes downward, remembered that she had left her apron behind in the house. All she could do was to shout out to her brother above, Dekeweyo-daiba (literally, "my apron back"), "I have forgotten my apron," and he told her to slip down quickly and fetch it. But by the time she had reached the old home, she was changed into a wicissi-duck (*Anas autumnalis*), which even yet can always be heard saying dekeweyo-daiba, but as it only whistles these two words, they do not sound so distinctly as if they were spoken slowly.

As to the rest of the family—well, we know that the wonderful tree flew away somewhere, but we have never heard anything more about the people who were on it.

## **THE TIGER CHANGED INTO A WOMAN**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Roth, Walter E. *An Inquiry into the Animism and Folk-Lore of the Guiana Indians*.

Thirtieth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, 1908–1909. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1915, 202–203.

**Date:** ca. 1908

**Original Source:** Arawak

**National Origin:** Native American

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Stories of tiger (*tigre*, jaguar) are common among both the Caribbean and South American Arawaks, Caribs, and related Native American

cultures. Two beliefs are crucial to the narrative that follows. The first is the belief that animals are sentient beings possessed of spirits, as are human beings. The second is that metamorphosis from animal and human and human to animal occurs regularly.

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There was a man justly noted for his skill in hunting bush-hog. Though his friends might be more than a match for him in hunting other game, with bush-hog he had hardly an equal, certainly no superior. He would always succeed in killing five or six, when the Tiger who invariably followed on the heels of the pack would catch only one or two.

The Tiger could not help noticing his success, and on the next occasion that our friend went into the bush changed himself into a woman, and spoke to him. She asked him how he managed to kill so many bush-hog, but all he could tell her was that he had been trained to it ever since the days of his early boyhood. She next expressed her desire to have him for a husband, but he, knowing her origin, was not too anxious to give a decided answer.

She overcame his scruples, however, by convincing him that if they lived together, they could kill ever so many more bush-hog than it was possible to do singly. And then he agreed. He lived with her for a long, long time, and she turned out to be an exceedingly good wife, for besides looking after the cooking and the barbecuing, she made an excellent huntress.

One day she asked him whether he had father or mother, and learning that his parents and other relatives were still alive, inquired whether he would not like to pay them a visit, because she felt sure that from not having seen him for so long the old people would think him dead.

And when he said, "All right! I would like to go home," she offered to show him the road and to accompany him, but only on the condition that he never told his folk from what nation she was sprung. Before they started, she said they must go hunting for a few days, so as to be able to take plenty of bush-hog with them. This they did, finally arriving at the house of his parents, who were indeed glad to welcome him after so many years.

The first question his old mother asked him was, "Where did you get that beautiful woman?" He told her that he had p. 204 found her when out hunting one day in the bush, at the same time taking care to omit all mention of the fact that she was really a Tiger. While at his old home, the couple went out hunting again and again, invariably returning with an extraordinarily large bag. This, unfortunately, proved to be their undoing.

All his friends and family became suspicious of his luck, and made up their minds to discover to what nation his beautiful wife belonged. He was often asked, but always refused to divulge the secret. His mother, however, became so worried and upset that he at last did make a clean breast of it to her, strictly warning her not to tell anyone else, as his wife might leave him altogether.

And now trouble soon came. One day the husband's people made plenty of cassiri, to get the old woman drunk, but when asked about her daughter-in-law she wouldn't tell: they gave her more drink and still she held her tongue: a last they gave her so much drink, that out came the secret and all the friends now knew that the beautiful creature whom they had so envied was after all only a Tiger.

The woman, however, who had heard her mother-in-law exposing her origin, felt so ashamed that she fled into the bush growling, and that was the last that was ever seen or heard of her. Her husband, of course, upbraided his mother roundly for betraying him but she said she really could not help herself; they had made her so drunk. And the poor husband would often go into the bush and call his wife, but there never, never came a reply.

## **THE BABRACOTE AND THE CAMUDI**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Roth, Walter E. *An Inquiry into the Animism and Folk-Lore of the Guiana Indians*. Thirtieth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, 1908–1909. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1915, 261–262.

**Date:** ca. 1908

**Original Source:** Arawak

**National Origin:** Native American

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The following **legend** underscores themes developed in “Haliwari and the Wonderful Tree” (page 443) and “The Tiger Changed into a Woman” (page 446). The sentient nature of the animal world is seen in the anaconda who is the mother-in-law's brother, and the tenuous nature of family relationships is dramatized by the husband's cruelty to his wife, mother-in-law, and younger brother. The issue of cannibalism is raised in the following narrative. The indigenous Caribbean peoples were accused of practicing ritual cannibalism. In fact, the Arawak name for the Caribs gave rise not only to the name of the geographic area, but also to the word “cannibal.” Note, however, that both in this narrative and in the Carib **myth** “How Pain, Misery, and Death Came into the World” (page 453), cannibalism is cast in an unfavorable light as an antisocial practice. The **motif** of the enduring physical signs of a tragic event (the images of the barbacote and the swollen anaconda) is common cross-culturally.

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**T**here was a man living with his wife and mother-in-law in the same house: the wife's father had been dead a long time. The man was always going out hunting, but, although he started early, and returned late, luck never seemed to attend his efforts.

This made the mother-in-law very angry, and one day she said to him, “You are a worthless son-in-law. Day after day, you go out hunting, and you bring back nothing. Day after day, you go out fishing, and bring back nothing.” The man made no reply to all this, but just laid himself quietly down in his hammock where he remained until next morning.

Next morning he called his wife and told her to pack the hammocks with sufficient cassava for two or three days, as he intended taking her out hunting with him. After they had traveled a long way, he killed her, cut her into pieces, and dried the flesh on a babracote [drying or cooking rack].

Next day he returned home with his victim’s liver, and handing it to his mother-in-law said, “Here’s the liver of a tapir for you. The wife is laden with the flesh and is slowly coming on behind.” The old woman, who was so hungry, spared no time in eating it, and when finished got into her hammock quite satisfied, anxiously looking down the pathway for her daughter. After watching for some hours in vain, she began to think that the alleged tapir’s liver must really have been her daughter’s. Turning to her son-in-law, she charged him with having killed her daughter, because it was then very late and still she had not returned.

He denied it and swore that she would soon be coming, but the woman would not believe him. She continued watching until late in the night, and then she knew that the liver she had eaten was indeed her own daughter’s. Of course she slept but little, and early next morning crept quietly out of the house, and made her way to her brother, the large camudi [anaconda], that lived at the head of the neighboring creek. She told him how her son-in-law had killed her child, and given her the liver to eat. She told him also that she would send the culprit along that very creek, and that as soon as he got within reach he was to catch and swallow him.

When she reached home again the old woman said nothing, but next day told her son-in-law that she was feeling very hungry, that he must go out hunting, and that if he went up to the head of the creek, he would find plenty of game to shoot. The son-in-law suspected something, so he went to a younger brother of his and told him to put in a day’s hunting at the head of that very same creek, while he took good care to take his bow and arrows in exactly the opposite direction.

That same evening, instead of returning to his own place, he came back to his younger brother’s house. No brother returned that night, nor the next day. Indeed, he never came back, because he had been killed and swallowed by the camudi, who had mistaken his man. The son-in-law, after waiting there a few days, then knew what had happened, and made his way to another settlement, far, far from the nagging old woman. On a clear night you can still see the babracote where he barbecued his wife, and close to its side you can just make out the camudi with its swollen belly, due to the younger brother being inside.

## HOW WE BEAT THE CARIBS

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Roth, Walter E. *An Inquiry into the Animism and Folk-Lore of the Guiana Indians*. Thirtieth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, 1908–1909. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1915, 382–384.

**Date:** ca. 1908

**Original Source:** Arawak

**National Origin:** Native American

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The following **legend** purports to explain the enmity between the Arawaks and the Caribs. Outside evidence suggests that the conflict began not on the South American mainland as this narrative suggests, but on the Caribbean Islands that they struggled to control. Both established island and mainland territories and remained in conflict over them. The **motif** of the treacherous husband appears again as a motivation for the ancient conflict among the two groups. An element of historical truth may lie at the heart of this legend: Caribs were alleged to be notorious for raids on the Arawaks with the intent of stealing Arawak women.

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**A**n Arawak and a Carib were very friendly: this must needs be so, because each had taken the other's sister to wife. They regularly used to go hunting together. After living in harmony for a long time, they went out hunting, but on this occasion they did not go in company, and they both stayed away longer than usual, and their friends were beginning to wonder what had happened to them.

The Arawak, having finally returned, went to see after his brother-in-law, followed his tracks into the bush, and came on the babracote upon which he found the dried body of his sister whom her husband had evidently killed. He went home, but did not speak for some time.

He then told his wife, the Carib's sister, to come into the bush and hunt with him: when he got her away, he killed and babracoted her. The Carib next came along to see what had happened, and he soon saw. He also went home again, but did not speak for some time.

Finally, he expressed a wish to fight and kill the Arawak, but the Nafudi [village headman] said, "No. All the Caribs together must fight the Arawaks together." So both sides cut a big field and planted plenty of the particular canes required for making arrows, and when these canes were full grown, they cut them down and completed their weapons, and both sides erected a strong house, Waiba, to store them in. Up at Jack Low, on the left bank of the Pomeroun, is still to be recognized the site of the old settlement and fortress, the place itself



even to this day being known as Waiba-diki. Furthermore, it was arranged by both parties that as they intended fighting their battle at sea, and not on land, they would allow themselves time to build a large number of canoes.

This being done, they filled their boats with arrows: twenty canoes were paddled by Arawaks, and forty by Caribs. They all went down the river, out to sea, at the Pomeroon mouth, each taking up such position as would permit of the intervening distance being just sufficient to allow of the arrows thrown from one side reaching the other.

The Arawaks, however, were shrewd. They made themselves cork-wood shields. The Caribs let fly their arrows first, but these stuck in the shields, then the Arawaks broke them off with their *mossi*, the now almost obsolete club. None of the Arawaks were slain, and it was now their turn to shoot.

This they did, with the result that they killed all their enemy, except two, whom they purposely spared in order that they might go home and tell their friends what had happened, and what to expect should they ever dare to fight the Arawaks again. The two who had been spared went away to the Cuyuni, to the Barima, and to the Waini, and remained three months gathering together all their people, who clamored that they would never rest until they had destroyed all the Arawaks.

The Arawaks were waiting for them at Waiba-diki, their stronghold, and stretched a vine-rope across the river; and as the hosts of Caribs approached up the stream, the steering paddles of their canoes became entangled in this rope, and broke away; and while the occupants were looking after them, their canoes all tossed one against the other in dire confusion, and the Arawaks shot showers of arrows into the wavering multitude.

Half the Caribs were destroyed; the other half effected a landing. But around their fortress, the Arawaks had already built a palisade, with just a few chinks in it to permit of arrows flying through; they were all well under cover, and though losing a few of their own people, massacred as before all their enemy, leaving but two to give the news to their friends.

These two went to the east, to Surinam, and started collecting the remnants of their own tribe from those parts. About three months passed. The Arawaks could wait no longer, so they traveled over to Surinam, and came upon the Carib forces, collected in a fortress with enclosing palisade, similar to what they themselves had constructed for their own preservation at Waiba-diki. The Caribs were in overwhelming numbers. So the Arawaks hid themselves, and sent in one of their number to reconnoiter. This man, who could talk Carib, painted himself like one of that nation, and boldly entered the enemy's camp, where he found them all drinking. He said he was a Carib, and that he had just come from the Pomeroon looking for his family; he accepted a little drink and then took his departure, but not before discovering that very early on the following morning, long before daybreak, a crab whistle (that is, made from a crab claw) would be blown as a signal for them to prepare for battle. The scout returned to his people, with all the information that he had gleaned.

That night, every one of the Arawaks made a crab whistle, and surrounding the Caribs while they were still drinking, blew their whistles, surprising the enemy, and slew them all, save one man and woman, who begged so earnestly for their lives that only their legs were speared. It is from this couple that all the present day Caribs are derived, and this is why there are comparatively so few of them. It was we Arawaks who broke their power.

# CARIB

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## HOW PAIN, MISERY, AND DEATH CAME INTO THE WORLD

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Roth, Walter E. *An Inquiry into the Animism and Folk-Lore of the Guiana Indians*. Thirtieth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, 1908–1909. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1915, 179–180.

**Date:** ca. 1908

**Original Source:** Carib

**National Origin:** Native American

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The Caribs' traditional home lay in the southern region of the West Indies called the Lesser Antilles and along the northern coast of South America. Most commentators believe that, prior to European contact, the Caribs migrated to the islands from the mainland of South America. The Yurokons are spirits of the forest. As illustrated in the following **myth**, they are believed to be shape-shifters and to have an aversion to sweet potatoes. In this narrative, a Yurokon is the agent by which death and misery is brought into human life, but the responsibility for the "fall from grace" is laid at the feet of a Carib.

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**I**n the olden times, there was no contention, all were happy, and no one became sick or died. It was then that the Yurokons used to come and live among us as our friends and associates; they were short people like ourselves. One Yurokon in particular used to come and drink *paiwarri* [A blackish fermented drink made from cassava used on occasions of feasting and sport] with my people, whom he would visit for the purpose regularly once a month.

The last time he came, he appeared as a woman with a baby at the breast. The Caribs gave her of the pepper-pot [meat stew], into which she dipped the cassava, which she then sucked and ate. The pepper-pot was so hot, however, that it burned the inside of her mouth and “heart,” and this made her ask for water, but her hostess told her that she had none. Yurokon therefore asked for a calabash, and leaving her baby up at the house, she went down to the waterside, where she quenched her thirst.

On her return, she looked for her little child, but it was nowhere to be seen: she searched high and low, but all in vain, because during her absence some worthless woman among the company had thrown it into the boiling cassiri pot.

By and by Yurokon went to stir the cassiri with the usual paddle-spoon, and, while she stirred, the body of her baby rose to the surface. She wept, and then, turning on the people, upbraided them, “Why have you punished me in this way? I have never had a bad mind against any of you, but now I will make you pay me. In future your children shall all die, and this will make you weep as I am weeping. And when children are born to you, you shall suffer pain and trouble at their birth. Furthermore, with regard to you men,” continued Yurokon, as she addressed the male members of the company, “I will give you great trouble when you go out to catch fish.”

And so she did, because in those days we Caribs only had to go to the waterside, bail the water out with our calabashes, and picking up the fish that were left exposed at the bottom of the stream, just put the water back again to breed fish once more. Yurokon altered all this, and made us go to the trouble, annoyance, and inconvenience of poisoning the pools with various roots. What is more, Yurokon killed the worthless Indian who had thrown her boy into the cassiri, and then asked her children what had become of their mother.

“She has gone to the field,” they said.

“No, she has not; she is hunting after genitalia,” was the insulting rejoinder, a reply which she purposely gave in order to provoke them into a rage.

She asked them the same question a second time, and they told her she had gone to bake cassava.

“No, she has not,” replied Yurokon; “she has bored her way into my ear,” an answer supposed to be even more offensive. And she asked them the same question a third time, but on this occasion they told her that she had gone to dig sweet potatoes. As soon as they mentioned the word “potatoes,” Yurokon disappeared.

## **HOW THE MAN FOOLED THE TIGER**

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Roth, Walter E. *An Inquiry into the Animism and Folk-Lore of the Guiana Indians.*

Thirtieth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, 1908–1909. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1915, 218–219.

**Date:** ca. 1908

**Original Source:** Carib

**National Origin:** Native American

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Resembling “Ogre Carries Sham Dead Man” (AT 1139), the drunken **trickster** is able to defeat a much fiercer and stronger adversary—tiger (jaguar). As is common in this folktale tradition, the animal is given human attributes.

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**A**n Indian went to a somewhat distant settlement to drink paiwarri, and on arriving there in the early afternoon, commenced imbibing. By midnight, the drinks being finished, he started on the return journey, although the house-master warned him not to leave then but to wait for day-break, because an immense Tiger [jaguar] was known to be prowling about.

Our friend would not be persuaded, however, to postpone his departure, but only said, “Oh, never mind. I am not afraid, and if I meet him I will kill him!” So saying, he hung his poto [stone-club] over his arm, and went out into the darkness. Being more or less drunk, he staggered along, and soon fell dead asleep on the road just about the very spot where the Tiger, of which he had been warned, used to cross.

Tiger found him lying there motionless in the early morning, felt and sniffed him all over to see whether he was dead or alive, and finally sat down on him. This sobered the Indian, and Tiger, seeing that he was alive, started pulling down the bushes so as to clear a pathway along which he could drag the body to his lair. Having thus cleared a few yards, the animal returned and slung the man over his back so that the head and arms hung over one flank and the legs over the other.

This gave the man his opportunity, for as the animal carried him along he caught hold of the bushes with his teeth and hands and so impeded Tiger’s progress. The Tiger thought that the pathway which he had cleared was still too narrow, and accordingly replaced the burden on the ground and pulled down more bushes. The Indian thus fooled his captor some three or four times and, having now collected his wits, watched for the tiger to sling him once more on his back.

No sooner had Tiger done so, than he struck the animal’s head just above the ear with his stone-tipped club, and thus killed him. Making sure that Tiger was quite dead, he returned to the place where he had been drinking the night before, and told the house-master what had happened. The latter would not believe that any drunken Indian could have killed so big a tiger, but when he went and saw with his own eyes, he had to admit that his late guest had spoken truly.

## THE SUN, THE FROG, AND THE FIRESTICKS

**Tradition Bearer:** Unavailable

**Source:** Roth, Walter E. *An Inquiry into the Animism and Folk-Lore of the Guiana Indians*. Thirtieth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, 1908–1909. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1915, 133–135.

**Date:** ca. 1908

**Original Source:** Carib

**National Origin:** Native American

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Makunaima, was one of the twin children of the sun, and as such, he appears in the **myths** of many of the native cultures of the Caribbean and the northern coast of South America. The **motif** of twin boys delivered after the murder of their mother by a fearsome creature is seen elsewhere in Native American narrative (see, for example, the Wichita myth “The Two Boys Who Slew the Monsters and Became Stars,” page 148).

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**A** long time ago; there was a woman who had become pregnant by the Sun, with twin children, Pia and Makunaima. One day the as-yet-unborn Pia said to his mother, “Let us go and see our father. We will show you the way, and as you travel along pick for us any pretty flowers that you may come across.”

She accordingly went westward to meet her husband, and plucking flowers here and there on the pathway, accidentally stumbled, fell down, and hurt herself; she blamed her two unborn children as the cause. They became vexed at this, and when she next asked them which road she was to follow, they refused to tell her, and thus it was that she took the wrong direction, and finally arrived, foot-sore and weary, at a curious house.

This belonged to Tiger’s mother, Kono(bo)-aru, the Rain-frog, and when the exhausted traveler discovered where she was, she told the old woman she was very sorry she had come, because she had often heard how cruel her son was. But the house-mistress took pity on her, and telling her not to be afraid, hid her in the big cassiri jar, and popped on the cover.

When Tiger got home that night, he sniffed up and down, and said, “Mother, I can smell somebody! Whom have you here?” And though she denied having anybody on the premises, Tiger was not satisfied, but had a good look round on his own account, and peeping into the cassiri jar, discovered the frightened creature.

On killing the poor woman, Tiger found the two as-yet-unborn children, and showed them to his mother, who said that he must now mind and cherish

them. So he put them in a bundle of cotton to keep them warm, and noticed next morning that they had already begun to creep. The next day, they had grown much bigger, and with this daily increase in about a month's time they had reached man's size. Tiger's mother told them that they were now fit to use the bow and arrow, with which they must go and shoot the Powis (*Crax*) because it was this bird which had killed their own mother.

Pia and Makunaima therefore went next day and shot Powis, and these birds they continued shooting day after day. When they were about to let fly the arrow at the last bird, the Powis told them that it was none of his tribe who had killed their mother, but Tiger himself, giving them both full particulars as to how he had encompassed her death.

The two boys were very angry on hearing this, spared the bird, and coming home empty-handed, informed the old woman that the Powis had taken their arrows away from them. Of course this was not true, but only an excuse; they had themselves hidden their arrows in the bush, and wanted the chance of making new and stronger weapons. These completed, they built a staging up against a tree, and when Tiger passed below, they shot and killed him. And when they reached home, they slaughtered his mother also.

The two lads now proceeded on their way and arrived at last at a clump of cotton trees in the center of which was a house occupied by a very old woman, really a frog, and with her they took up their quarters. They went out hunting each day, and on their return invariably found some cassava that their hostess had baked.

"That's very strange," remarked Pia to his brother, "there is no field anywhere about, and yet look at the quantity of cassava which the old woman gives us. We must watch her."

So next morning, instead of going into the forest to hunt, they went only a little distance away, and hid themselves behind a tree whence they could see everything that took place at the house. They noticed that the old frog had a white spot on her shoulders: they saw her bend down and pick at this spot, and observed the cassava-starch fall. On their return home they refused to eat the usual cake, having now discovered its source.

Next morning they picked a quantity of cotton from the neighboring trees, and teased it out on the floor. When the old woman asked what they were doing, they told her that they were making something nice and soft for her to lie upon. Much pleased at this, she promptly sat upon it, but no sooner had she done so than the two lads set fire to it; thereupon her skin was scorched so dreadfully as to give it the wrinkled and rough appearance which it now bears.

Pia and Makunaima next continued their travels to meet their father, and soon arrived at the house of a Maipuri (tapir), where they spent three days. On the third evening Maipuri returned, looking very sleek and fat. Wanting to know what she had been feeding on, the boys followed her tracks, which they traced to a plum tree; this they shook and shook so violently as to make all the fruit, both ripe and unripe, fall to the ground, where it remained scattered.

When Maipuri next morning went to feed, she was disgusted to see all her food thus wasted, and in a very angry mood quickly returned home, beat both boys, and cleared out into the bush. The boys started in pursuit, tracked her for many a long day, and at last caught up with her. Pia now told Makunaima to wheel round in front and drive the creature back to him, and as she passed, let fly a harpoon-arrow into her; the rope, however, got in the way of Makunaima as he was passing in front, and cut his leg off. On a clear night you can still see them up among the clouds: there is Maipuri (Hyades), there Makunaima (Pleia-des), and below is his severed leg (Orion's Belt).



# Glossary

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- anecdote:** Originally, a short, humorous tale. Now, the term commonly refers to single-episode narratives, regarded as true and commonly concentrating on an individual.
- animal tales:** Narratives told as conscious fictions in which the characters, though they speak and behave like human beings, are animals. These animal characters are commonly stock types. For example, in many Native American traditions, coyote is regarded as an exploitive, impulsive manipulator. In African American tales, rabbit is type cast in the same role. The tales are most often moralistic (“don’t be greedy”) or etiological (why the frog has no tail) in intent.
- belief tales:** Legends or personal experience narratives that are told with the purpose of validating a particular folk belief.
- cautionary tales:** Narratives whose plots embody a message cautioning against the consequences of particular kinds of behavior.
- culture hero:** Character in myth who finishes the work that brings technology (usually symbolized as fire), laws, religion, and other elements of culture to humans. Culture heroes may take over the business of creating order out of chaos where a Supreme Creator left off. The culture hero serves as a secondary creator or transformer of the universe. He/she transforms the universe by means of his gifts into a universe in which humans can live. In some myths, the culture hero cleanses the universe of things that threaten human existence: monsters, cannibals, or meteorological phenomena.
- cumulative tale:** A tale that begins with an incident, action, or phrase and adds a succession of elements to create a lengthy chain of events.
- cycle:** A group of tales that focuses on a central character, plot, or theme.
- fable:** Fictional narrative ending with a didactic message that is often couched in the form of a “moral” or proverb.
- fairy tale:** See **ordinary folktale**.
- family saga:** Chronologically and often thematically linked collection of legends constituting the folk history of a particular family, usually over several generations. The term was coined by folklorist Mody C. Boatright.
- folk history:** Accounts based on perceptions of historical events rather than on written documentation or similar media.

- formula/formulaic element:** Conventional elements that recur in folk narrative. For example, clichés, structural patterns, stock characters, or situations.
- framing:** The act of setting apart a traditional performance from other types of activity by words, occasions of performance or other distinguishing features.
- genre:** Type, category.
- legend:** Narrative told as truth, set in the historical past, and that does not depart from the present reality of the members of the group.
- local legend:** Legends derived from and closely associated with specific places and events believed to have occurred in those locales.
- märchen:** See **ordinary folktale**.
- motif:** Small element of traditional narrative content, such as an event, object, concept, or pattern.
- myth:** Narratives that explain the will (the intent) and the workings (the orderly principles) of a group's major supernatural figures. Myth is set in a world that predates the present reality.
- natural context:** Setting, in all its elements, in which a performance would ordinarily take place.
- novelle:** Romantic tale.
- numskull:** Character who behaves in an absurdly ignorant fashion, also called "noodle."
- ordinary folktale:** Highly formulaic and structured fictional narrative that is popularly referred to as "fairytale" and designated by folklorists as *märchen* or "wonder tale." Term coined by folklorist Stith Thompson.
- personal experience narrative:** Narrative intended as truth performed in the first person by the individual to whom the described events happened.
- personal legend:** Narrative intended as truth told about a specific (usually well-known) individual.
- resource person:** The bearer of a particular tradition, such as the performer of a folktale.
- stock character:** Recurrent narrative character who invariably plays a stereotyped role such as trickster or fool.
- tale type:** Standard, recurrent folk narrative plot.
- tall tale:** Fictional narrative often told as a firsthand experience, which gradually introduces hyperbole until the audience realizes by the conclusion that the tale is a lie.
- trickster:** Character who defies the limits of propriety and often gender and species. Trickster lives on the margins of his world by his wits and is often regarded as possessing supernatural power. Often a mythic figure such as a coyote or hare will function as both culture hero and trickster.
- validating device:** Any element occurring within a traditional narrative that is intended to convince listeners that the tale is true.
- variant:** Version of a standard tale type.

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**About the Editor**

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