

Stories from Shakespeare

CLASSIC LIT FOR YOUNG READERS

RETOLD BY JEANIE LANG

Stories from Shakespeare

Retold by Jeanie Lang

Libraries of Hope

Stories from Shakespeare
Classic Literature for Young Readers

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Stories from Shakespeare

Told to the Children by
JEANIE LANG

With Pictures by
N. M. PRICE and others

About This Book

In the libraries and on the bookshelves of grown-up people there are always a great many books that look very dull.

Most of them have no pictures; and if there are any, either they are not interesting, or else you have to read through pages and pages of what is hard to understand, before you come to anything about a picture that looks exciting.

There is one book that you find in nearly all those libraries and bookshelves. Sometimes it is in one fat volume, sometimes in three, sometimes in six or more.

If you ask a grown-up, 'What does S-H-A-K-E-S-P-E-A-R-E spell?' the grown-up will answer: 'That is Shakespeare.'

And if you say, 'What is Shakespeare?' he or she will probably reply: 'Shakespeare is the greatest writer that ever lived.'

Then, perhaps, you may try to learn what Shakespeare wrote about, and to find out what the picture of many fairies in a wood means, and what is the story of the funny man walking through a forest in his cap and bells. But, as you read, you will find all sorts of things that you do not understand. And perhaps you will put Shakespeare back into his place on the shelf and say: 'I wonder why people call Shakespeare the greatest writer that ever lived. I don't think his stories are very interesting.'

In this little book I have tried to tell you some of the Shakespeare stories, and to leave out the long words and the things difficult to understand.

Some day, when you are older, you

will read the real Shakespeare for yourselves. You will know then why people call him the greatest writer that ever lived. And you will say: 'The little book that I read long ago was only like a faint little pencil outline, and this is the greatest picture in all the world.'

But if you can say: 'Though it was only a tiny pencil outline, yet it taught me the stories,' then I shall be glad, for that is all that I wish to do.

JEANIE LANG.

The Tempest

Once on a time there lived in Milan, a city of Italy, a Duke whose name was Prospero.

He was very fond of every kind of learning, and while he read, and studied deeply, his brother Antonio ruled the people of Milan for him.

Prospero trusted Antonio, and thought he was as good and as honest as himself; but Antonio was a bad man who did not deserve that Prospero should trust him. Antonio liked so much to rule Milan that he plotted with the King of Naples, and promised him many things if he would help him to get rid of his brother Prospero. Then Antonio would be Duke of Milan.

One dark night this bad man opened

the gates of the city, and the King of Naples and his army came in.

They did not kill Prospero, but they took him down to the sea with his little girl Miranda, who was only three years old, and put him into an old ship that had no mast nor sails nor oars. It was such a poor old hulk that the very rats were afraid of being drowned if they stayed on board, and scampered away from it. Antonio put no food nor clothing in it, for he meant that Prospero and his little girl should be drowned, or should perish from cold and hunger.

But there was a kind old nobleman who was so sorry for the good Prospero and his pretty little baby girl that he did all he could to help them. He put food and water into the ship, and clothes, and all sorts of other things that they wanted. And because he knew how Prospero loved reading, he put in plenty of books

as well.

The winds blew and the waves tossed high as the old hulk drifted out to sea. Often the great waves swept over the deck, and Prospero's tears were as salt as the sea for sorrow for his little Miranda and the danger she was in.

Miranda herself was too little to know what danger meant. She looked like a bright little cherub, as she sat smiling at her father, and laughing at the waves that rushed like great white-maned horses at the ship and drenched her with their spray. But the ship passed safely through the stormy sea and came to an island, where Prospero landed and carried little Miranda on shore.

There were many trees on the island, and Prospero and Miranda heard cries and moans coming out of a big old pine. The cries were so loud and so sad that they made the wolves howl and

frightened the bears away.

Now Prospero was not only a very clever man, but he was a magician as well. By his magic he split up the tree, and out of it came a gentle, pretty little fairy called Ariel.

Ariel told Prospero that for twelve years he and many other fairies had been imprisoned in trees by a wicked old witch, who had since died. So Prospero set free the other fairies as well, and they and Ariel became his friends and served him. Besides these fairies there was no one on the island excepting the old witch's own son. His name was Caliban, and he was very ugly and stupid, and more like a wild beast than a man.

Prospero tried to make Caliban more gentle. He taught him the names of the sun and the moon and many other things, and fed him on berries and water, and treated him as if he was his friend.

But Caliban behaved so badly, and was so ungrateful and ill-tempered and savage that Prospero could not continue to make a friend of him. So he made him his slave, and Caliban had to cut wood and light fires, and stay in his dirty cave by himself, instead of living in their cave with Prospero and Miranda.

On this lonely island Miranda grew up from a dear little baby into a beautiful girl. Her father gave her lessons, but she had no one to talk to but him and the little fairy Ariel. Caliban was so ugly and so rough and rude that she was afraid to go near him.

One day when Miranda was no longer a little child, a terrible storm swept across the sea near the island. The thunder rolled and the lightning flashed; the winds howled, and the sky was black as ink.

It was Prospero's magic that had

made the storm. He knew that there was a ship sailing on the sea, and on this ship was his wicked brother Antonio. There were also on board the ship the King of Naples and his son, Prince Ferdinand; and the good old nobleman who had been so kind to Prospero and Miranda when they were set adrift, and a large number of nobles and sailors.

These people thought that the ship was going to be dashed ashore on the rocks of the island, and that it must go to pieces in the stormy sea and all of them be wrecked.

But all the time it was Prospero's magic that was frightening them, and he never meant that the ship should be wrecked, or that any of them should be drowned.

He sent his little fairy Ariel to hover over the ship and to cast lightning on the deck. No one could see Ariel as he darted

from place to place and terrified the sailors with the fury of the storm.

At last the ship's deck seemed to go on fire, and the sailors who were not hiding down below were so frightened that they plunged into the foaming sea to escape. The King of Naples, his son Prince Ferdinand, the old nobleman, and the bad Antonio plunged in too, and it looked as if every one must be drowned.

But Prospero and Ariel could do all sorts of wonderful things with their magic, and were able to save the ship and every one who had been on board. Ariel brought it into a little bay on the island, where it anchored peacefully in quiet water. The sailors who were hiding below the hatches he cast into a deep sleep, so that they did not know what had happened nor where they were.

The sailors who had leaped into the sea were picked up by another ship and

taken back to Naples. As for the King of Naples and Prince Ferdinand and Antonio and the good old noble and some others, Ariel brought them safely through the surf, so that not even their clothes were damaged.

Prince Ferdinand landed at a different part of the island from the others, so that his father and friends were sure that he was drowned, and Ferdinand himself thought that he was the only one saved.

While these shipwrecked people wandered round the island, feeling very sad and sorry, Prospero made Ariel take the form of a beautiful sea-fairy. Only his master Prospero was able to see him, but others could hear his little voice singing, and ringing like a clear, sweet bell.

As Ferdinand sat mourning all alone over the loss of his father, Ariel's voice, singing a sweet song, made him start up and try to find where the sound came

from.

Ariel's song began:—

'Come unto these yellow sands,
And then take hands.'

The music seemed to steal across the water, and the Prince followed it, wondering whether it came from the earth or from the sky.

Then Ariel sang again:—

'Full fathom five thy father lies;
Of his bones are coral made;
Those are pearls that were his eyes;
Nothing of him that doth fade,
But doth suffer a sea-change
Into something rich and strange.
Sea-nymphs hourly ring his knell;
Hark! now I hear them,—ding-dong,
bell.'

Then the other fairies echoed, like chimes,

'Ding-dong, ding-dong, ding-dong,

ding-dong';

and the poor Prince Ferdinand's heart grew very heavy, for he feared that the voices must be those of sea-fairies telling him that the King his father was drowned, and that he would never see him any more.

While Ferdinand sat full of care, Prospero and Miranda came to where he was.

Since she was a tiny child, Miranda had never seen any man but Prospero; and when she saw the young and handsome Prince she thought he must be a spirit.

When Ferdinand saw Miranda, he also thought she must be a spirit to whom the island belonged. She was so beautiful that at once he loved her, and when he found she was no Spirit, but talked just as he did, he told her that he loved her, and asked her to marry him.

This was just what Prospero wished, but he wanted to be quite sure that Ferdinand and Miranda really loved each other. He pretended that he thought that Ferdinand was a spy and had come to try to steal his island from him. He spoke to him very roughly and rudely.

'Come,' he said, 'I'll chain thy neck and feet together. I'll feed thee on withered roots and acorn husks, and salt sea-water shall be thy drink. Follow me!'

Prince Ferdinand was very angry with Prospero for speaking to him in such a way, so he tried to draw his sword to fight with him.

But Prospero's magic made the sword stick in its sheath and rooted the Prince to the ground.

Ferdinand found he was in the power of a magician, and that it was useless to struggle. Yet he might have gone on defying Prospero had he not loved Miranda

so much that he felt he would not mind being a prisoner if he might see her from his prison even once a day.

Miranda was very much ashamed and grieved at her father's rudeness and unkindness, and could not understand how he could treat the poor shipwrecked Prince so badly.

'Be comforted,' she said to Prince Ferdinand. 'My father is far kinder than his words would make you think. I never before heard him speak so cruelly.'

So Ferdinand went with Prospero and Miranda to the part of the island where they lived. And although Prospero made the Prince carry logs and do the same rough work that Caliban did, he was quite happy because he was near Miranda.

Meantime the King of Naples mourned the death of his son. He felt quite sure Ferdinand must be drowned,

although the others tried to comfort him by saying what a splendid swimmer the Prince was, and how they had seen him breasting the water and making for the shore. Then the King would faintly hope that even yet he might one day see his son's face. And while he sadly looked for his son, Ariel, at Prospero's command, terrified him and his followers in every possible sort of way.

By sounds and by fearful sights, and by hunting them as if an invisible pack of fierce hounds was chasing them and going to tear them in pieces, he filled their hearts with fear.

When they were very tired and hungry, Ariel and the other fairies, disguised in strange shapes, spread a splendid banquet before them, and played lovely music. But, just as they were beginning to eat, Ariel changed himself into a horrible bird that flapped its wings over the

table and made everything vanish away.

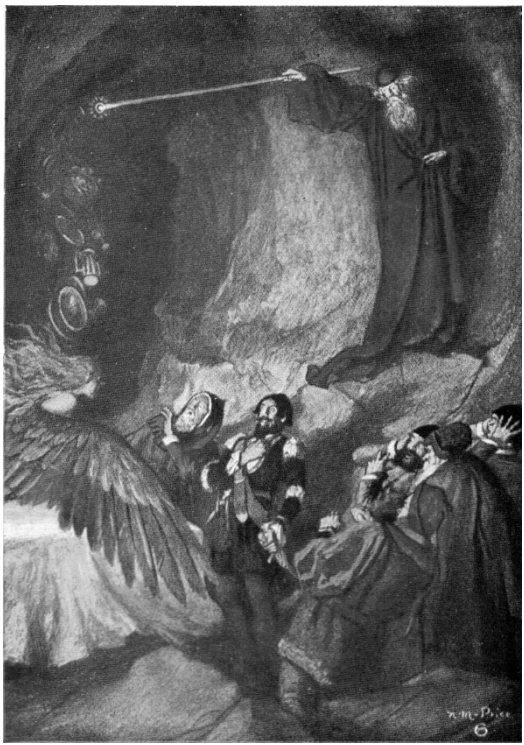
The company drew their swords to try to kill the bird, but Prospero's magic made them helpless.

Then Ariel, still in the form of this dreadful large bird, told the King and the wicked Antonio that all the terrible things they had come through were a punishment for their cruelty to the good Duke Prospero.

When he had stopped speaking, the thunder rolled, and the other fairies danced round them with ugly sounds and frightening faces.

The King of Naples and Antonio and the others were filled with fear, for they knew how wicked they had been. But the good old noble was not afraid, because he had done nothing but kindness to the magician Prospero.

Then at last Prospero in his magic robes appeared before them. He thought



A horrible bird that flapped
its wings over the table.

they had been punished enough by all the adventures and terrors they had gone through since the beginning of the storm, and he saw how sorry his brother Antonio and the King of Naples were for the wicked way they had treated him. So when they begged for his forgiveness and asked him to come back to Milan, he freely forgave them.

When the King sadly said that he knew he deserved the dreadful punishment of having his dear son drowned, Prospero said to him, 'You have given me back my dukedom. I will give you back something quite as good.'

He then took him to the mouth of the cave that was his home, and made him look in. And the King of Naples looked and saw his son Ferdinand safe and well, playing chess with the beautiful Miranda.

The King's happiness was very great.

He asked Miranda to forgive him for his cruelty to her father; and when Ferdinand told the King that Miranda was going to marry him, his happiness was greater still.

While they all rejoiced together, Ariel awoke the sleeping sailors on the ship, and they came on shore and rejoiced too.

Next morning all sailed for Naples, where Ferdinand and Miranda were married.

Prospero left his magic things behind him on the island and went back to rule in Milan, and to live peacefully and happily ever afterwards. The ship met with no more storms. The sea was smooth and blue, the sky smiled down on them, and the white sails gently filled with the soft breezes and carried them safely across the sea.

It was good little Ariel's last work for

Prospero, and when he had brought the ship safe to land, he was free for evermore and flew away Singing gaily:—

'Where the bee sucks, there suck;
In a cowslip's bell I lie:
There I couch when owls do cry,
On the bat's back I do fly
After summer merrily:
Merrily, merrily shall I live now,
Under the blossom that hangs on the bough.'

As You Like It

In France, long years ago, there lived two girls who were the very best of friends.

They were cousins, and both were beautiful. The taller and stronger of them was called Rosalind, and the name of the other was Celia.

Rosalind's father was a great Duke, but his brother, Celia's father, stole all his lands away from him and drove him out of his own dukedom.

Many powerful nobles, who hated the wicked brother, but loved Rosalind's father, went with him, and they made a court of their own far away, under the greenwood tree, in the Forest of Arden.

When Rosalind's father was driven from his castle, her uncle kept her there

to be a companion to his own little girl, Celia. They grew up together, and Celia was so sweet and so kind to Rosalind, that Rosalind sometimes forgot to be sad because her father was banished, and to be angry with her uncle for having been so cruel.

One of the truest friends of the banished Duke had been a brave knight called Sir Rowland de Bois. He was dead, but had left three sons. Oliver, the eldest, was not a good brother. Instead of doing as his father had wished, and being kind to his youngest brother, whose name was Orlando, he gave him no money, nor any chance of learning anything, and made him take all his meals with the servants. He was jealous of Orlando, and hated him because he was so brave and strong and handsome, and he was kinder to his own horses than he was to him.

Sir Rowland de Bois had an old

servant named Adam. He had served Sir Rowland very faithfully, and he loved Orlando, and was very sad at Oliver's cruelty to his young brother.

One day, when Orlando felt that he could not bear Oliver's ill-treatment any longer, he asked him to give him the money that his father had left to him and let him go and seek his fortune. He could not bear, he said, to go on leading an idle life, doing nothing and learning nothing.

But Oliver only mocked at him, and so the brothers had a quarrel. When Adam tried to make them friends, for the sake of their dead father, Oliver was angry with the old servant, and told him to get away.

'Get away, you old dog!' said he.

'You call me an old dog,' said Adam. 'Truly I have lost my teeth in your service. My old master would not have spoken such cruel words to me.'

Oliver hated Orlando more than ever after this quarrel. He planned what was the best way to kill him and to keep for himself the money that their father had left Orlando.

About this time the false Duke, Celia's father, gave a great wrestling match.

He had a very strong, paid wrestler of his own. This man wrestled so well that only the bravest dared to wrestle with him, and he often killed those with whom he wrestled.

Orlando was a very good wrestler and was afraid of no one, so he made up his mind to go to the match and wrestle with this man.

When Oliver knew that Orlando was going to do this, he sent for the Duke's wrestler to come to his castle to see him. He told the wrestler all sorts of wicked lies about Orlando. He was, he said, one

of the worst young men in France, and in every way was so bad that the wrestler would be doing a good deed if he broke his neck.

The wrestler promised to do his best to kill Orlando. 'If he can walk by himself when I have wrestled with him, I shall never wrestle any more,' he said.

Next day the wrestling match took place on the lawn in front of the Duke's castle.

The Duke and all his lords came to see the sport, and Celia and Rosalind also came. For in those long-ago days it was the custom for gentle ladies to look on at things that now seem to us very rough and very cruel. Just before Celia and Rosalind arrived, the Duke's wrestler had done a dreadful deed.

An old man had come to the match that his three handsome young sons might wrestle with the famous wrestler.

One after the other they had wrestled, and one after the other they had been thrown to the ground with their ribs crushed in. They were so badly hurt that their poor old father was sure that they were going to die, and cried over them so mournfully that some of those who heard him could not help crying too.

Every one said, after this, that it would be foolish for any one else to try to wrestle with a man as strong as this wrestler of the Duke's, and only one man offered to try.

This man was Orlando de Bois.

When he came forward he looked so slim and young and brave and handsome that even the wicked Duke, who did not know who he was, was sorry to think of the wrestler crushing his life out.

'Try to persuade the lad not to wrestle,' said the Duke to Celia and Rosalind. 'He has no chance at all. My

man is sure to kill him.'

Very kindly and very gently Celia and Rosalind begged Orlando not to think of going on with the match.

'You have seen a cruel proof of this man's strength,' said Celia. 'If you could see yourself with your own eyes, you would not run into the danger of such a fight. We pray you, for your own sake, to give it up.'

'Do give it up,' said Rosalind. 'No one will think you a coward for doing it, for we shall ask the Duke to stop the wrestling.'

But Orlando answered: 'Do not think badly of me for refusing to do what you wish. It is not easy to say no to ladies who are so kind and so fair. Let your beautiful eyes and gentle wishes go with me to my trial. If I am killed I have none to be sorry, and the empty place I leave may be better filled by another man.'

'I wish I could give you the little strength I have,' said Celia.

And Rosalind said, 'And mine too, to help out hers.'

'I wish I were invisible, that I might catch that strong fellow by the leg and trip him up as he is wrestling with you,' said little Celia.

Then the wrestling began, and every one watched to see the Duke's wrestler kill Orlando.

But instead of Orlando being killed by the wrestler, he lifted the strong man in his arms and threw him on the ground.

All the people shouted in amazement, and the Duke called out, 'No more! no more!'

'I beg your grace, let us go on!' said Orlando, 'we have scarcely begun.'

The Duke turned to his own wrestler, and asked him how he was. But the man lay quite still and quiet, and could not

speak nor move.

'He cannot speak, my lord,' said one of the nobles.

So the Duke had him carried away.

'What is thy name, young man?' he asked of Orlando.

'Orlando, my lord, the youngest son of Sir Rowland de Bois.'

'Your father was my enemy,' said the Duke. 'I would have been better pleased with your brave deed if you had told me of another father.'

'I am proud to be Sir Rowland's son,' said Orlando, 'and I would not change my place to be the Duke's adopted heir.'

Then the Duke and his lords and his servants went away, and Orlando was left alone with Rosalind and Celia.

Celia could not bear that her father should have spoken so sternly to Orlando.

'Were I my father, cousin, would I do

this?' she asked of Rosalind.

Then fair Rosalind spoke.

'My father loved Sir Rowland as his own soul,' she said to Celia, 'and all the world knew how noble Sir Rowland was. Had I known that this young man was Sir Rowland's son, I should have begged him with tears not to run into so great a danger.'

'Let us go and speak to Orlando,' said the gentle Celia. 'I am ashamed of my father's unkind words.'

Then she and Rosalind went up to Orlando and praised him for his bravery. And Rosalind, taking a gold chain off her own neck, gave it to him. She would have given him a richer gift, she said, had she not been only a poor girl.

Orlando loved them both for their goodness, but Rosalind he loved so much that he made up his mind to marry her one day if she would marry him.

Meantime the false Duke was angry with Orlando, the son of his enemy, for having defeated his wrestler, and he was angry with Rosalind for having given Orlando her gold chain.

The more the false Duke thought of those things, the angrier he grew. One of his courtiers was a kind man, so he told Orlando that the sooner he went away, the better it would be for him, as the Duke meant to do him harm.

The Duke himself roughly told Rosalind to leave his castle.

'If you are found even twenty miles from here within the next ten days, you shall die,' he said.

Celia was very sad at her father's cruelty to Rosalind, who was so dear to her. She begged the Duke not to be so unjust, but he would not listen to her.

Then she told him that if he sent Rosalind away, he must send her away

too, because she could not live without Rosalind.

'You are a fool!' said her father, and the more angrily told Rosalind that he would have her killed if she did not go at once.

But Celia would not part from Rosalind. So they made up their minds to travel together to the Forest of Arden, where Rosalind's father and his friends were hiding.

They knew they might meet with robbers on the way, so Celia stained her face to make it look sunburned, and dressed herself like a poor country girl not worth robbing. Rosalind put on boy's clothes, and took a little axe and a spear with her.

Now the Duke, Celia's father, had a jester called Touchstone. This jester was a very funny fellow who was always talking nonsense and cracking jokes, and he

loved his young mistress, Celia, very dearly.

'What if we took Touchstone with us?' said Rosalind, when they were dressed and ready to start. 'Would he not be a comfort to us?'

'He would go all over the wide world with me,' said Celia; 'let me ask him to come.'

So when Rosalind and Celia went off to the Forest, kind Touchstone led the way.

In his red clothes, with the bells on his cap jangling and the peas in his air balloon rattling, he gaily stepped out in front of them, carrying their bundle of food and clothes. And when night fell and the Forest was dark, and Rosalind and Celia grew weary and sad, Touchstone's merry face and the jokes he made soon cheered the two tired girls up again.

While these things were happening,

Orlando's brother had been planning how to kill Orlando. He was so jealous that he hated him all the more when he heard people praising him for having so bravely defeated the wrestler. He made up his mind to set fire to his room and burn him to death, or if he escaped, to murder him in some other way.

Adam, the old servant, overheard those wicked plots, and warned Orlando. Orlando decided to go to the Forest of Arden, and Adam said he would come too. Orlando had no money, but Adam said he must take all his savings, and so they, too, went off to the Forest.

Far away in the leafy woods Rosalind's father and his friends were very happy together. They hunted the deer, and had plenty of good food, and they sang merry songs as they rested under the shade of the thick green trees.

Here is one of the songs they sang:—



Kind Touchstone led the way.

'Under the greenwood tree,
Who loves to lie with me.
And turn his merry note
Unto the sweet bird's throat,
Come hither, come hither, come hither;
Here shall he see
No enemy
But winter and rough weather.'

As they feasted together one day, a young man rushed out from amongst the trees, his drawn sword in his hand.

'Forbear, and eat no more!' he cried.

The Duke and his friends asked him what he wanted.

'Food,' he said: 'I am almost dying for want.'

They asked him to sit down and eat, but he would not, for an old man who had followed him out of pure love was in the wood dying of hunger, he said, and he could eat nothing until he had first fed

him.

The young man was Orlando; and when the good Duke and his followers had helped him to bring Adam to where they were, and had tended them and fed them both, the old man and his master grew quite strong again.

When the Duke knew that Orlando was a son of his friend Sir Rowland de Bois, he welcomed him and the faithful old servant more warmly still.

So Orlando lived happily with the Duke and his friends in the depths of the Forest, but all the time he was thinking of Rosalind. Every day he would write verses about her, and pin them on trees in the wood or carve them deep in the bark. He could think of no one but her, he loved her so much.

Now Rosalind and Celia and Touchstone had also come safely to the Forest, and had hired a little cottage that be-

longed to a shepherd there.

Rosalind loved Orlando as much as he loved her, and when she read the verses Orlando left on the trees, her heart was glad, for she knew he had not forgotten her. At last one day she and Celia met Orlando. But he did not know them in the dress they wore and with their stained brown faces, and took them for the shepherd boy and his sister that they pretended to be.

He made great friends with them, and would often come to see them in their little cottage, and talk to them of Rosalind, the beautiful lady that he loved.

Meantime Orlando's brother had been well punished for his wickedness. When Orlando went away, the false Duke, Celia's father, thought that Oliver must have killed him. He took Oliver's lands away from him, and told him never

to dare to come back to his court until he had found Orlando.

So Oliver wandered away alone, to look for his brother. He sought him week after week in vain, until his clothes were in rags and his hair so long and rough that he looked like a beggar. On his way from Rosalind's cottage, Orlando came on him one day lying fast asleep under an old oak. Round his neck a big snake had curled itself, and was just going to bite him and kill him when it saw Orlando and glided away. Even as it went away, Orlando saw another dreadful danger near his unkind brother. A hungry lion was crouching under some bushes, ready to kill the sleeping man.

For a moment Orlando thought only of his brother's cruelties, and that he well deserved that the lion should spring on him and tear him in pieces. Twice he turned away to leave him, but he had too

generous a heart to do so cruel a thing even to his enemy.

He fought the lion and slew it, but not before it had torn his arm with its fierce, sharp teeth.

The noise of the fight awoke Oliver, who saw that Orlando was risking his own life to save him. Full of shame at his wickedness to Orlando, and Orlando's goodness to him, he told his brother how sorry he was, and begged his pardon, and they became friends.

Orlando took his brother to the Duke and had him fed and clothed, and said nothing of his wound.

But all the while it had been bleeding, and suddenly he fell to the ground and fainted from loss of blood.

When Rosalind heard of Orlando's wound, and saw a handkerchief stained with his blood, she too fainted, and those who saw her and thought she was a boy

laughed at her for being so womanish.

But soon Rosalind told them her secret.

'To you I give myself, for I am yours,' she said to the Duke, her father. Then, turning to Orlando, 'To you I give myself, for I am yours,' she said.

Then the Duke knew that Rosalind was his daughter, and Orlando knew that the shepherd boy was his own fair Rosalind, and there were no other men in all France as happy as were the Duke and Orlando de Bois.

Rosalind and Orlando were married at once, with leafy trees for a church, and singing birds for choristers, and on the same day Oliver, who was truly sorry for the bad deeds he had done, was married to Celia.

Just as they were going to be married, a messenger came to the Duke to say that his brother, Celia's father, the false Duke,

had repented. He had given up his duke-dom, and so the good Duke had his own again.

So they all had happy hearts that day under the greenwood tree.

The Merchant of Venice

Far away in a land where the sky is nearly always blue, and the sun nearly always shining, and where the sea also is blue as the sunbeams play on it, lies the beautiful city of Venice.

There are few paved streets and almost no horses or carts there. The streets are made of water, and strange black boats called gondolas glide silently along with their passengers from place to place.

The face Venice turns to the sea is of radiant white marble.

And one day, when you go there and see the white marble palaces close to the water, and the little boats with sails of red and yellow and orange, and the gondolas all black, and the great white-sailed ships from other lands, you will

think you are in Fairyland.

Long ago there lived in Venice a man called Antonio.

He was a merchant, and owned many ships that traded with far-off countries, and he was a very good man as well as a very rich one.

Antonio had a friend named Bassanio whom he loved more than all the world.

Bassanio was a soldier. He was very handsome and clever, but very poor. He loved a beautiful lady called Portia, and wanted to marry her.

But because Portia was as rich as she was beautiful, and Bassanio was very poor, he did not like to tell her that he loved her.

At last he could not bear to go on longer without knowing if Portia loved him. So he asked Antonio to lend him some money, that he might sail away to

where Portia lived and ask her to marry him.

But all Antonio's ships were at sea, and all his money was on board them. He could lend Bassanio nothing. 'But if you will go to a man who lends money,' he said to his friend, 'and get him to lend you some, you can tell him that when my ships come in I will pay him back all that he has lent you.'

Now there lived in Venice an old Jew named Shylock.

The Jews of Venice in those long ago days were not good. They lent money, but they forced people to pay so dearly for the loan that they made themselves rich, and those who had borrowed from them, poor.

Shylock was the worst of all the Jews in Venice. Antonio hated him because he knew him to be bad. Often he had called him names and treated him

roughly, because he was so angry with him for doing such wicked, cruel things.

Shylock had come to hate Antonio too, and longed to do him some harm.

Bassanio knew that Shylock had plenty of money, so he went to him to borrow what he wanted.

When Shylock knew that Antonio was the one who was to pay the money back, he was glad, for he thought that now his enemy had been given into his hands. He pretended to be very good and kind, and said he would lend Bassanio the money and not charge him anything for lending it. But just as a friendly joke, he said, Antonio might sign a bond promising that if, on a certain day, he did not repay him the money that Bassanio had borrowed, Shylock might cut off a pound of flesh from any part of Antonio's body that he pleased.

Bassanio did not trust Shylock, and

did not like Antonio to make such a dreadful promise.

But Antonio, who thought that Shylock only meant it as a joke, said, 'I am indeed contented to sign such a bond and say there is much kindness in a Jew. Why, Bassanio, do not be afraid. There is no chance at all of my having to do such a thing. A whole month before the money is to be paid back my ships will come in with cargoes worth three times the sum that Shylock has lent you.' And Antonio signed the bond.

'I like not this bond,' said Bassanio, who still felt uneasy.

But Antonio said, 'Come on! in this there need be no dismay. My ships come home a month before the day.'

So Bassanio, his pockets full of money, took leave of Antonio, and sailed away to where Portia lived.

Portia's father, who was now dead,

had feared that some bad man might wish to marry her, not because he loved her, but because she was so rich. And so, when he died, he left his daughter three boxes, one of gold, one of silver, and one of lead. On the gold box was printed:—

> *'Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire.'*

On the silver box was printed:—

> *'Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves.'*

And on the plain lead box was printed:—

> *'Who chooseth me must give and risk all that he has.'*

In one of the boxes was a portrait of Portia, and whoever chose the box which held the portrait was to be Portia's husband.

Portia was so beautiful and so rich

that very many men wanted to marry her But there was only one man that she loved, and that man was the brave and clever soldier Bassanio, who had once come from Venice to see her father.

Just before Bassanio arrived to ask her to be his wife, there came from Africa a very great Prince who wished to marry her.

This Prince was shown the boxes, and read the words on each of them.

'What many men desire,' said he, looking at the golden box. 'Why, that is certainly the fair Portia, and her portrait is sure to be in a box of gold.'

So he opened it, but all that he found in it was an ugly, bare skull, and these words:—

> 'All that glisters is not gold.
> Fare you well, your suit is cold.'

At this the Prince sadly said good-bye

to Portia and went back to Africa.

The next suitor was a prince from France, and he, too, was shown the boxes.

He was a conceited Prince.

'If I get as much as I deserve,' said he, looking at the silver box, 'then I shall gain the fair Portia.'

So he quickly opened it.

Inside it he found a picture of a fool's head, and these words:—

> 'There be fools alive, I wis,
> Silvered o'er; and so was this.
> So, begone, sir; you are sped.'

The Prince, feeling very silly, went away as sadly as the African Prince had done.

It was then that Bassanio came, and when he and Portia saw each other again they were even more in love than they had been before.

Portia was very much afraid lest Bassanio should choose the wrong box, but she dared not tell him which was the right one.

He looked at the box of gold and the box of silver. 'The things that are most beautiful outside are often the ugliest inside,' he said, 'I choose the common leaden box.' He opened it and there found a lovely portrait of Portia, and the words:—

> 'You that choose not by the view,
> Chance as fair and choose as true!
> Since this fortune falls to you,
> Be content, and seek no new.
> If you be well pleased with this,
> And hold your fortune for your bliss,
> Turn you where your lady is,
> And claim her with a loving kiss.'

Then Portia and Bassanio were indeed happy. They arranged to be married at once, and they had no thoughts that

Portia was very much afraid lest
Bassanio should choose the wrong box.

were not full of joy.

But, just then, there arrived a ship, bringing news from Venice. Two of Bassanio's friends were on board, and one of them had brought his wife with him. This wife was no other than the beautiful daughter of Shylock the Jew. Shylock was not kind to her, and she knew he would never let her marry any man who was not a Jew. So one night, she ran away from her father's house, taking with her a great deal of his money and some precious jewels, and was married to a young Venetian who loved her and who was the friend of Bassanio and Antonio.

These people from Venice brought a letter from Antonio to Bassanio.

When Bassanio read it, he grew so pale that Portia feared that some dear friend of his must be dead.

'I am half yourself, Bassanio,' she

said, 'and I must freely have the half of any bad news that this letter brings.'

'O, sweet Portia,' said Bassanio. 'Here are a few of the unpleasantest words that ever blotted paper.'

For the letter told him that Antonio's six ships, full of riches, that were sailing across the seas to him, had all been wrecked, and all Antonio's money was gone.

Nor was this all. Shylock hated Antonio more than ever since Antonio's friend had run away with his beautiful daughter. He was so furious at the loss of his daughter and his money that even in the streets he could not keep his anger to himself, but called out in a rage—'My daughter! my money! my jewels! Justice, justice! Find me my money and my daughter!' The rude little dark-eyed boys of Venice laughed at him and called after the ugly old Jew in his ugly old black

clothes as he shuffled along the market-place—'*My money! my daughter! my jewels!*'

That made him angrier still, so that when he heard that all Antonio's ships were lost, he was very glad.

'Now,' thought Shylock to himself, 'I shall have my revenge on the man that I hate, and on all those who love him.' So he went to the Duke who was ruler of Venice, and told him of Antonio's bargain and of the bond he had signed when the money was lent to Bassanio.

The Duke and all the other great people of Venice, and many of the merchants, tried to make him give up this cruel revenge. But he would listen to none of them.

'Because Antonio has not paid me the money he owes me,' said Shylock, 'he must pay me the pound of flesh he promised he would pay.'

And to the other Jews he owned that he would rather have a pound of Antonio's flesh than be paid twenty times the sum that was owed him.

In his letter to Bassanio, Antonio said he knew he must die to satisfy Shylock, since he had promised that if he could not pay him the money he owed, he would give him a pound of his flesh.

'In paying my debt to Shylock, it is impossible that I should live,' he wrote. 'I long to see you before I die, but if you do not care to come to Venice for love of me, do not let this letter persuade you to come.'

When Bassanio had read these words and had thought of the tears Antonio had had in his eyes as he bade him goodbye, and of how Antonio loved him so much that he was now ready to die, in order to pay Bassanio's debt, even his love for Portia could not keep him from

going off at once to Venice to try.

Portia had too kind and generous a heart to grudge his going.

'Marry me now,' she said, 'then go away to Venice at once. You must take plenty of my money with you, and pay the debt twenty times over, if need be, rather than that Antonio should die.'

So they were married, and, after the wedding, Bassanio went off post haste to Venice.

Antonio was in prison, where they put men who did not pay their debts. Even as a gaoler was taking him there, Shylock could not leave him alone.

'Take care of him, gaoler!' he said. 'This is the fool who lends out money for nothing. I shall have my pound of flesh! I shall have it!'

When Bassanio arrived in Venice, Antonio was brought before the Duke of Venice to be judged.

Antonio did not plead for mercy. A man must keep his promise, he said. He had promised Shylock to pay back the borrowed money, or else to give him a pound of his flesh. If he broke his word now, other people who did not belong to Venice would think that the merchants of Venice were not honest men.

The Duke begged Shylock to be merciful and not to keep Antonio to his bond.

'I *hate* Antonio,' said Shylock.

'Do all men kill the things they do not love?' asked Bassanio.

'Does any man hate the thing he would not kill?' replied Shylock.

'I will give you twice what Antonio owes you if you will let him go free,' said Bassanio.

'If you offered to pay me six thousand times more than what he owes me, I should still ask for my pound of flesh,'

said Shylock.

'How can you ever hope for mercy when you show none?' asked the Duke.

'I do not want mercy,' said Shylock. 'I want justice. Give me my pound of flesh.'

Then the Duke was at his wit's end. He could not bear to give Antonio over to the cruelty of the wicked old Jew. Yet the law had to be obeyed, and there seemed nothing else to be done.

Shylock felt that his revenge was very near, and he brought out a long knife and began to sharpen it. While he was sharpening it, a messenger came into the court. He told the Duke that a Doctor of Laws had arrived from a town not very far from Venice, to judge the case of Antonio and the Jew. The messenger brought a letter for the Duke from a very wise lawyer. This lawyer said he was ill and could not himself come to judge, but

that he had sent in his place a young lawyer who was very learned and very clever. Together they had carefully gone over the case, and the young man had now come to judge it.

When the Doctor of Laws in his scarlet robes came into the court, they saw that he was very young and very handsome.

He was very wise as well, as they soon could hear from the questions he put to Shylock.

When he had heard all that Shylock had to say, and all that Antonio had to plead, he begged Shylock to be merciful.

But Shylock would not hear of mercy, and refused to take the money Bassanio offered, even though Bassanio said he would give him ten times the sum he owed.

Then the lawyer said that as what Shylock claimed was according to the

law of Venice, it must be done. There was no escape.

'A Daniel come to judgment! yea, a Daniel! O wise young judge, how I do honour thee!' cried Shylock.

'You must prepare your bosom for the knife,' said the lawyer to Antonio.

'O noble judge! O excellent young man!' cried Shylock.

'Lay bare your breast,' said the lawyer.

'Yes, yes, his breast, nearest the heart, noble judge!' said Shylock, feeling his knife's sharp edge.

'Are there balances here to weigh the flesh?' asked the young man.

'I have them ready,' said Shylock.

'Have you a surgeon near to stop his wounds in case he bleeds to death?'

'No,' said Shylock, 'that is not in the bond.'

Then the young judge asked Antonio

if he had anything to say. Antonio told Bassanio how much he loved him, and how glad he was to die for his sake, and said good-bye.

'A pound of this merchant's flesh is yours,' said the judge to Shylock. 'The court awards it, and the law doth give it.'

'Most rightful judge!' said the delighted Jew.

'And you must cut this flesh from off his breast; the law allows it, and the court awards it.'

'Most learned judge!' said Shylock. 'Come, prepare, Antonio.'

'Wait a little,' said the judge. 'Flesh you are to have, but not one drop of blood. For if, in cutting your pound of flesh, you spill one drop of Antonio's blood, all your money, and everything else that belongs to you, must be taken by the city of Venice for its own.'

'O upright judge!' cried one of

Antonio's friends. 'Listen, Shylock! O learned judge!

'You asked for justice, and you shall have it,' said the judge.

'Then,' cried Shylock in haste, 'give me the money, Bassanio—three times what Antonio owes to me, as you said you would.'

'Not so fast,' said the judge. 'In the open court Shylock refused that money. We must be just. He may have his pound of flesh, *without one drop of blood,* but nothing else.'

Then Shylock, black with rage, asked for the money he had lent Bassanio, and no more.

But even that the judge refused him, and Shylock was going to rush out of the court in a fury, when the judge stopped him.

'This trial is not over yet,' he said. 'You are a Jew. According to the laws of

Venice, if any one who is not a citizen of Venice tries to take the life of a citizen of Venice, he must be put to death, and one half of his money and property given to the city of Venice, and the other to the man he has tried to kill. You have tried your best to kill Antonio. The Duke must decide what is to be done with you.'

'I shall show you more mercy than you showed to Antonio, Shylock,' said the Duke. 'I give you your life. But your money, and everything else you have, must be given to Antonio.'

The Jew, whose money was more dear to him than anything else, was broken-hearted. If he had no money left, he had as soon die, he said. Then good Antonio said that he would not claim the half of Shylock's money that ought to come to him, if Shylock promised to sign a will leaving all his riches to his daughter who had run away from him, and to her

husband.

'Art thou contented, Jew? What dost thou say?' asked the judge.

'I am content,' snarled Shylock.

Then Antonio and Bassanio, full of gratitude to the young judge, thanked him, and offered him as his fee all the money that Shylock had lent to Bassanio.

But the judge would take nothing, and said he was well paid with their content.

'Then, dear sir, take some remembrance of us,' said Bassanio, 'not a fee, but something to show our gratitude.'

'If you press me,' said the young man, 'I will take as a remembrance the ring you wear.'

Bassanio hastily drew back his hand, for the ring was one that Portia had given to him, and he had promised her never to part with it.

He told this to the judge, and offered him in place of it the costliest ring to be found in Venice.

But the young man would have that ring and no other. And when Bassanio found that he would accept nothing else, he gave it to him, for he feared if he refused to give it that the judge would not believe in his gratitude.

It was a moonlight night, and the sky was bright with stars when Bassanio, bringing Antonio with him, got back to the home of Portia.

Sweet music was played to greet them, but no music was so sweet to Bassanio as the music of his dear wife's voice. His heart was very full of happiness when he saw her again, and led her up to his friend Antonio.

But when Portia looked at his hand and asked him what he had done with his ring, Bassanio was less happy.

He explained to her what had happened, but she seemed much displeased. He begged her to forgive him, and Antonio told her that it was not Bassanio who was to blame. The ring had been given to the man who had saved Antonio's life, and Antonio was quite sure that Bassanio would never again break any promise he made to her.

'Then you shall be his surety,' said Portia. 'Give him this ring, and bid him keep it better than he kept the other one.'

With that she gave him the very ring that Bassanio had given to the judge. And when Bassanio was amazed, and could not understand, Portia told him that it was she, dressed up like a lawyer, who had judged the case so well.

Portia had hurried home at the end of the trial, and had arrived there only a few minutes before Bassanio and

Antonio.

Portia had brought with her some good news for Antonio. Three of the ships they had believed to be lost had come safely back to Venice, bringing with them rich cargoes.

So they talked and talked, till the moonlight on the sea was beginning to fade and make way for the rosy dawn.

And never was a happier wife than Portia, nor a happier, prouder husband than Bassanio, nor a happier, more grateful friend than Antonio, the merchant of Venice.

The Taming of the Shrew

In one of the beautiful cities of Italy there once lived a rich gentleman called Baptista. He had two daughters, the gentle and beautiful Bianca, and Katherine, who was as handsome as her sister, but who had so fiery and uncontrolled a temper that she was known by every one as Katherine the Shrew.

Many suitors wished to marry Bianca, but every one feared Katherine's sharp tongue and wild ways, so that in spite of her beautiful face she had no lovers.

Baptista began to fear that his elder daughter Katherine would never find a husband, and so he fell on a plan by which to get one for her. He told all those who wished to marry gentle Bianca that he would never allow her to wed until

her sister Katherine was married. Then Bianca's lovers began to plan and plot to find a man bold enough to marry 'wild cat Katherine,' as they called her.

About this time there came to Padua from the lovely old town of Verona a gentleman called Petruchio. His father, who was not long dead, had left him his estate and plenty of money, and Petruchio now wished to see something of the world and to find a wife.

Petruchio was a man who made all those he met readily obey him. He was very fond of jokes, and could act well, and he had the best of tempers, although sometimes he would pretend to be in such a rage that those who did not know him well thought him a madman and rushed from him in terror. With all this he was a wise young man, witty, and amusing, and a favourite with his friends.

Amongst the friends that Petruchio

met at Padua was one of the suitors of Bianca. When he heard from Petruchio that he was looking out for a wife, he at once told him how beautiful was Katherine, and how rich.

But he had to be honest and tell him of Katherine's cross ways and scolding tongue. 'If she scolds as loud as a thunderstorm, yet I shall make her love me,' said Petruchio.

To Baptista, then, Petruchio went.

'Pray, have you not a daughter, called Katherine, fair and good?' he asked.

'I have a daughter, sir, called Katherine,' said Baptista.

Then said Petruchio, 'I am a gentleman of Verona, sir. I have heard so much of the beauty, the wit, and the gentleness of your daughter Katherine that I have come to ask your leave to woo her for my wife.'

'I fear my daughter would not suit

you,' said Baptista sadly.

'I see you do not wish to part with her, or else you do not want me for a son-in-law,' said Petruchio.

'Indeed you are mistaken,' said Baptista, 'but whence are you, sir? what is your name?' When Petruchio told him who he was, Baptista found that he was the son of an old friend, and would gladly have had him for a son-in-law. Still he could not tell Petruchio that Katherine would make him a good wife, for even he was afraid of the passionate ways and furious tempers of his elder daughter.

As Baptista and Petruchio talked together, there rushed into the room Katherine's music-master with his head cut and bleeding, his face very pale, and his eyes big with fright.

'Why are you so pale?' asked Baptista, 'what is wrong? Will my daughter prove a good musician?'

'She will make a better soldier,' said the music-master. Then he told how he had corrected Katherine for the way she played. In one moment Katherine had struck him on the head with her lute, cutting his head open, and breaking the lute, so that he was fixed into it as into a pillory. While he stood gaping, amazed at her, she called him all sorts of rude names, 'rascal fiddler,' and 'Twanging Jack,' and twenty others, so that he was frightened out of his life.

Petruchio was delighted.

'She is a brave girl!' he said. 'I love her ten times more than ever, and long to have a chat with her.'

Then he told Baptista that he was in a hurry to be married, and wanted to see his bride at once.

While Baptista went to fetch her, Petruchio thought to himself what was the best way to treat so wild a bird as



Katherine had struck him
on the head with her lute.

Katherine.

'I will woo her with some spirit when she comes,' said he. 'If she scolds, then I shall tell her that she sings as sweetly as a nightingale. If she frowns, I shall say she looks as clear as morning roses newly washed with dew. If she will not speak a word, I shall say how charmingly she talks. If she tells me to begone, I shall thank her as if she had asked me to stay for a week. If she says she will not marry me, I shall ask her to name the day.'

When Katherine entered, proud, and angry that a stranger should ask to see her, he said cheerfully, 'Good-morrow, Kate, for that's your name, I hear.'

'They call me Katherine, that do talk of me,' said Katherine stiffly.

'You lie,' said Petruchio, 'for you are called plain Kate, and bonny Kate, and sometimes cross Kate, but, Kate, you are the prettiest Kate in Christendom, and

hearing your beauty, your mildness, and your virtues praised in every town, I have come to woo thee for my wife.'

Then began the strangest courtship that ever was.

Katherine was as rude to him as she knew how to be. She scolded, she wrangled, she tried to quarrel. But Petruchio would not quarrel with her. To all the cross, rude things she said to him he gave gentle, merry answers, praising her for her beauty, her sweetness, her gentleness, and her courtesy, and saying that those who had told him that she was ever anything else had lied to him.

At last he said, 'Sweet Kate, I am going to marry you whether you will or not. Your father has given his consent, and I am going to tame you, Kate, and bring you from a wild cat to a gentle Kate.'

When Baptista came in, Petruchio

told him that Katherine had been very kind to him, and that they had arranged to have their wedding on the following Sunday.

'I'll see thee hanged on Sunday first,' cried Katherine in a rage, and furiously abused her father for wishing her to marry such a madcap ruffian.

'Be patient,' said Petruchio to Baptista, 'she talks thus when you are here. When we were alone, no one could have been more tender and loving.' Then, turning to Katherine, he said, 'Give me thy hand, Kate. I will go to Venice to buy rings, rich clothes, and fine things for the wedding on Sunday. Kiss me, Kate, and provide the marriage feast, father, and invite the guests.'

When Sunday came, the feast was ready, the guests waiting, and Katherine, in fine clothes and with a sulky face, was ready to be made Petruchio's wife. The

hour fixed for the wedding came and went, yet the bridegroom did not come. The guests whispered; Baptista grew angry; Katherine raged, and then wept bitterly at being put to such shame. When every one was sure that Petruchio could not be coming at all, he rode up on a shambling old horse with common broken trappings. He himself was dressed like a beggar, in shabby, patched old rags, and wore a rusty, broken-hilted sword, while the servant who followed him was even worse, and more ridiculously dressed than his master.

'Where is Kate? where is my lovely bride?' he asked, when he had sprung from his horse. Baptista, much annoyed at being so disgraced by his future son-in-law, answered him very coldly, and asked him at once to go and change his clothes.

'Go to my room and I will lend you clothes of mine,' said one of the guests.

But Petruchio flatly refused to be married in any garments but the patched old suit he wore.

'Kate is going to marry me, not my clothes,' he said.

And so, finding it useless to reason with him, they went to church. There he behaved like a madman. For when the priest asked him if he would have Katherine for his wife, he swore so loud that the priest, in horror, dropped his book. While he stooped to pick it up, Petruchio gave him such a cuff on the head that down fell the priest and the book as well.

All the time they were being married he swore and stamped, and was so rough and rude, that Katherine, who had never before feared any one, trembled and shook for fear. When the wedding was over, he called for wine, drank some, and threw what was left in the sexton's face.

'His beard grows so lean and hun-

gerly, he said, 'that it seems to be asking for the leavings.'

When every one was ready to sit down to the marriage feast, Petruchio said it was impossible for him and his bride to stay.

'If you love me, stay,' said Katherine. But Petruchio's only answer was to call to his groom to bring round the horses.

Then Katherine flew into one of the rages that every one knew so well.

'Go, then!' she cried. 'The door is open. I will not go to-day; no, nor to-morrow, nor till I please myself.'

'O Kate, prithee be not angry,' said Petruchio.

'I will be angry,' said angry Katherine. 'You shall stay as long as I want. Gentlemen, forward to the bridal dinner. I see a woman may be made a fool, if she have not a spirit to resist.'

'They shall go forward, Kate, at thy

command,' said Petruchio. 'Go, feast as my wife tells you. But for my bonny Kate, she must go with me. I will be master of what is mine own.'

With that, before there was time for Katherine quite to realise what was happening, she was bustled off, and riding with her madcap husband to his country house.

The horses they rode were old, lean, and feeble, and the roads by which Petruchio brought home his bride were the worst he could possibly choose.

Coming down a muddy hill, Katherine's horse fell, with Katherine under it, in the mire. Petruchio did not try to help her up, but dashed at the groom and beat him because he said it was his fault that the horse had fallen. Katherine picked herself up and waded through the mud to try to pull him away from the groom. But at that Petruchio only raged

the more, and while Petruchio shouted, and Katherine protested, and the groom cried for mercy, all three horses ran away. At last the horses were caught, and Katherine, tired and bruised and muddy, reached her new home.

When the servants came to greet them, Petruchio raged and stormed at them all, till Katherine begged him to be more gentle with them.

When supper was brought, Petruchio found fault with every dish. Some were burned, he said, some badly dressed, and not fit to eat. And when hungry Katherine said that it would do very well, he would not give her any of it. It was unwholesome, said he, and threw it on the floor.

Tired and supperless, Katherine went to bed, but there she found no rest. Petruchio found as much fault with the bed as he had found with the supper. He

tossed about the pillows and bedclothes, till at last she was forced to sit on a chair and try to sleep. And even then there was no peace for her, for Petruchio's loud and angry voice as he scolded the servants for making his bride's bed so badly, kept her awake all night.

Next day Petruchio behaved in the same way, speaking with the greatest kindness to his wife, yet making everything as uncomfortable for her as he could. So hungry was she that she begged a servant to bring her some food, but he, after offering her many different things, and then making excuses for not bringing them, at length let her see that he dared bring her nothing without his master's orders.

'Did he marry me to starve me?' she asked angrily. 'Beggars who come to my father's door have food given to them. But I, who never knew how to beg, nor

ever needed to beg, am starved for meat, giddy for lack of sleep, with oaths kept waking, and with brawling fed. And that which vexes me most of all is that he pretends that he does it all out of love for me.'

Just then Petruchio came in, carrying a dish with some meat.

'How fares my sweet Kate?' he asked. 'See how diligent I am. I myself have cooked some food for you.'

Katherine made no answer.

'No thanks?' said Petruchio. 'What, not a word? Nay, then, you do not like it.' With that he ordered the servant to take the dish away.

'I pray you let it stand,' said Katherine.

'The poorest service is repaid with thanks; and so shall mine before you touch the meat,' said Petruchio.

'I thank you, sir,' said Kate, hunger

making her meek.

Petruchio then allowed her to have a little meal.

'Much good may it do your gentle heart,' he said.

> 'And now, my honey love,
> Will we return unto thy father's house;
> And revel it as bravely as the best,
> With silken coats, and caps, and golden rings,
> With ruffs, and cuffs, and farthingales, and things;
> With scarfs, and fans, and double change of bravery,
> With amber bracelets, beads, and all this knavery.'

Before Katherine had half satisfied her hunger, he told a servant to remove the dish. 'What, hast thou dined?' he asked, as if in surprise. He then ordered a tailor and a haberdasher to come in with the things he had ordered for her.

The haberdasher showed her a very fine cap.

'Fie! what a cap!' said Petruchio. 'It is no better than a walnut shell. It is a baby's cap. Come, let us have a bigger one.'

'I do not want a bigger one!' cried Katherine. 'This one is the fashion, and gentlewomen wear such caps as these.'

'When you are gentle, you shall have one too, and not till then,' said her husband.

Then Katherine lost her temper. 'Why, sir, I trust I may have leave to speak, and speak I will!' she said. 'I am no child, no babe. Your betters have endured to hear me say my mind; and, if you cannot, you had better stop your ears.'

'It is quite true what you say,' said Petruchio. 'It is a paltry cap, a bauble, a silken pie. I love you because you do not

like it.'

'Love me, or love me not,' said Katherine, 'I like the cap, and I will have it, or I will have none.'

'Thy gown?' said Petruchio, pretending to misunderstand. 'Why, yes. Come, tailor, let us see it. O what stuff is here! What's this — a sleeve? It is like a little cannon, carved up and down like an apple tart. Here's snip, and nip, and cut, and slish, and slash. What in the world, tailor, do you call this?'

The tailor answered: 'You told me to make it smartly and well, and according to the fashion and the time.'

'I never saw a better made gown,' said Katherine; 'in every way I admire it.'

But Petruchio would only loudly abuse the haberdasher and tailor, and tell them to go away, for he would take none of the rubbish they had brought. Privately he told his servants to keep the

things that his wife had admired, and to pay the tradesmen, but to Katherine he said, 'Well, come, my Kate, we will go to your father's even in the poor clothes we now wear.'

Then he ordered the horses to be brought, saying that as it was then about seven o'clock they would reach Baptista's house in time for dinner. Now, instead of being seven in the morning when he spoke, it was about two in the afternoon, and Katherine quite gently told him this.

'It will be supper-time ere you come there,' said she.

'It shall be seven before I go,' said he. 'I shall not go to-day. And look, Kate, when I go, it shall be what hour I say it is.'

When next day came, so well had Katherine learned her lesson, that she allowed Petruchio to say what he pleased about the hour when they set out.

On the way the sun shone brightly, and Petruchio said, to try her: 'How bright and goodly shines the moon.'

'The moon!' said Katherine. 'The sun; it is not moonlight now.'

'I say it is the moon that shines so bright,' repeated Petruchio.

'I know it is the sun that shines so bright,' insisted Katherine.

'Now, by my mother's son, and that's myself,' said Petruchio, 'it shall be moon, or star, or what I please, before I journey to your father's house.'

And he would have turned the horses and gone home again, had not Katherine hurriedly said: 'Let us go forward, I pray, since we have come so far, and it shall be the moon, or the sun, or whatever you please, and if you please to call it a rush candle, henceforth I vow it shall be so for me.'

'I say, then, it is the moon,' said

Petruchio.

'I know it is the moon,' said Katherine.

'Nay, then, you lie. It is the blessed sun,' said Petruchio.

'Then it is the blessed sun,' said Katherine; 'but sun it is not when you say it is not. What you will have it named, even that it is, and so it shall be so for Katherine.'

So they rode on in peace.

Presently they met an old gentleman, and to try Katherine's new obedience to him, Petruchio said: 'Good morrow, gentle lady.' Then to Katherine he said, 'Tell me truly, sweet Kate, did you ever see a fairer gentlewoman?'

He then praised the old gentleman's lovely complexion, and said his eyes were like stars. 'Sweet Kate, embrace this fair, lovely maid for her beauty's sake,' said he.

'Fair and fresh and sweet young maid, whither away?' said Kate, playing the game as well as Petruchio had done. 'Where is thy abode? Happy the parents of so fair a child!'

'Why, now, Kate,' said Petruchio sharply, 'I hope thou art not mad. This is a man, old, wrinkled, faded, withered, and not a maiden as thou say'st he is.'

'Pardon, old father,' said Kate, 'my eyes have been so dazzled with the sun that everything I look on seemeth green. Pardon, I pray thee, for my mad mistake.'

The old gentleman then journeyed on with them, and when he told them his name, they made him very happy by telling him that his son was going to marry Katherine's lovely sister Bianca, who was as gentle and as wise as she was wealthy.

When Katherine was married, Baptista had consented to Bianca's marriage

with one of her many suitors, and when Katherine and Petruchio and the old gentleman arrived the wedding festivities were going on.

As they all sat at table, there were not only Bianca and her bridegroom, and Katherine and Petruchio present, but yet another newly wedded pair, and as the feast went on the two other brides and bridegrooms began to make rather spiteful jokes about Katherine the Shrew. Katherine answered them very wittily and good-naturedly, and Petruchio backed her up in all she said. But when the ladies had left the room, the men, who stayed behind, went on to tease and mock at Petruchio because of his wildcat wife. Even old Baptista said to him sadly, 'Indeed I think, son Petruchio, that thou hast the veriest shrew of all.'

'Well, I say no,' boldly said Petruchio, 'and as a proof, let us each one send unto

his wife, and he whose wife is most obedient to come at first when he doth send for her shall win the wager which I shall propose.'

To this the other two husbands, sure of the meekness and obedience of their gentle wives, gladly agreed, and a wager of a hundred crowns was agreed on.

Bianca's husband first sent a servant to ask Bianca to come.

But the servant returned without her.

'My mistress sends you word that she is busy and cannot come,' said he.

'How! she is busy and she cannot come! Is that an answer?' laughed Petruchio.

But they mocked at Petruchio, and told him it would be well for him if his wife did not send him a worse answer.

Then it was the other bridegroom's turn.

He said to his servant, 'Go and entreat my wife to come to me.'

'Oh ho! entreat her!' laughed Petruchio. 'Nay, then she must needs come.'

'I am afraid, sir,' said the bridegroom, 'your wife will not be entreated.'

Again the servant returned alone.

'Where's my wife?' asked the husband very blankly.

'She says you have some goodly jest on hand,' said the servant. 'She will not come. She bids you come to her.'

'Worse and worse; she will not come! O vile, unbearable, not to be endured!' mocked Petruchio. To his servant he said, 'Go to your mistress, sir. Say I command her to come to me.'

'I know her answer,' said the husband whose wife had just refused to come.

'What?' asked Petruchio.

'She will not come,' said he.

But even as he was speaking, Kather-

ine's father gave a great exclamation. 'By my halidom!' he cried, 'here comes Katherine.'

And Katherine, going gently and graciously up to her husband, asked of him, 'What is your will, sir, that you send for me?'

'Where is your sister and the other bride?' asked Petruchio.

'They sit talking by the parlour fire,' said Katherine.

'Go, fetch them hither,' said Petruchio.

'Here is a wonder!' cried Bianca's husband as Katherine went away, 'if you talk of a wonder.'

'And so it is,' said the other man. 'I wonder what it bodes.'

'Peace it bodes,' said Petruchio, 'and love, and quiet life, and, to be short, all that is sweet and happy.'

'You have won the wager, good

Petruchio,' said Baptista; 'and I will add to the crowns that you have won twenty thousand crowns, another dowry to another daughter, for this is another daughter that you have given to me.'

'Nay, I will win my wager better yet,' said Petruchio, 'and show you better still her new goodness and obedience.'

When Katherine entered, bringing the two others, Petruchio said to her: 'Katherine, that cap of yours does not become you. Off with it, and throw it underfoot.'

At once Katherine took off the cap and threw it down.

'May I never have a cause to sigh till I be brought to such a silly pass!' cried the other bride.

And Bianca said, 'Fie, what a foolish duty call you this?'

'I wish your duty were as foolish too,' said her husband. 'The wisdom of your

duty, fair Bianca, has cost me a hundred crowns since supper-time.'

'The more fool you,' said Bianca, 'for laying on my duty.'

'Katherine, said Petruchio, 'I charge thee, tell these headstrong women what duty they do owe their husbands.'

And to the amazement of those who listened, Katherine talked to the other brides so wisely and so gently of the duties of a wife, that, when she had finished, Petruchio proudly and fondly kissed her.

'Why, there's a girl!' said he.

'He has tamed a shrew,' whispered the others.

But Katherine the Shrew was seen no more, for there was no gentler, kinder, happier, or more dutiful wife in all Padua than the one that happy Petruchio called his own sweet Kate.

A Midsummer Night's Dream

Long, long ago, in the days when fairies danced in the twilight and held their fairy balls in the woods, there lived in Greece a great and powerful Duke.

In Athens, where this Duke ruled, there was a law that fathers might make their daughters marry any man they might choose for them, whether the girl liked the man or not. If the daughter refused to marry the man her father had chosen, the law ordered that she was at once to be put to death.

One day there came to the palace of the Duke a very angry father, bringing with him his lovely daughter Hermia, and two young men, one of whom was as sad as Hermia.

'I have come to complain of my

daughter,' said the man. 'Demetrius wishes to marry her, and I have given my consent. But she says she has given her heart to Lysander, and will marry none but him. If she will not obey me and marry Demetrius, then I ask that she shall be killed, as the law of Athens orders.'

The Duke was a kind man, and was very sorry for Hermia. He tried to persuade her to do as her father wished, but she said she had rather die than marry Demetrius. Then the Duke talked to Lysander.

'Hermia loves me,' said Lysander, 'and I love Hermia. I am as well-born and have as many possessions as Demetrius. Why, then, should I give up Hermia?' Then he went on: 'Demetrius has no right to marry Hermia. He made her friend, Helena, love him dearly. Why does he not marry Helena instead of

trying to take Hermia away from me?'

But the Duke could do nothing for Hermia and Lysander. Although he was a ruler, he too had to obey the law of Athens. Hermia must obey her father, he said, or in four days she must die.

When Hermia and Lysander were alone together, Lysander tried to comfort Hermia, who was too sad to weep, although all the roses had faded from her cheeks.

'The course of true love never did run smooth,' said Lysander. 'Hear me, Hermia. I have an aunt who loves me as if I were her own son. Her house is seven leagues from Athens. Meet me tomorrow night in the primrose wood where once on a May morning we went with Helena. From thence we shall flee to my aunt's house, and there I shall marry you.'

Hermia gladly agreed, and as they made their plans Helena came in. At

once she began to mourn to them because Demetrius, whom she loved, no longer loved her. Hermia, whose heart was so full of her own happiness that she wished to make every one else happy, then said to Helena: 'I can never be the wife of Demetrius, for Lysander and I are going to run away and get married to-morrow night.'

Then thought Helena to herself: 'Demetrius does not love me, but if I tell him of Hermia's flight he will be grateful to me. If I cannot have his love, at least I can have his thanks.'

Straightway she sought Demetrius, and told him of the plans that Lysander and Hermia had made. Demetrius did not thank her, yet he was glad, for he fancied he was very much in love with Hermia, and he hoped to prevent her from marrying Lysander.

Next evening, when the shadows of

the trees were long and dark, when the warm summer night still breathed the scent of honeysuckle and wild thyme, and when the wild roses closed their golden eyes and went to sleep, Lysander and Hermia met in the wood. Demetrius went there too, and, meekly following him and hungering for a kind word, Helena also came.

But they were not the only people in the wood that night.

Perhaps if a little girl or boy had been there—a little girl or boy who had done nothing mean or selfish or cruel or greedy all that day—they might have heard soft rustling in the long green grass, and merry, tinkling laughter, as if the bluebells were nodding their heads and singing. They might have heard tiny voices, as sweet as the sweetest birds', and they might even have seen a flash and a shimmer of shining wings, as if

some beautiful butterflies were still astir, or as if some big fire-flies were playing hide-and-seek amongst the bushes.

For in that wood near Athens, Oberon and Titania, king and queen of all the fairies, were that night holding their revels.

And if Lysander and Hermia, and Demetrius and Helena had only had ears that were quick enough, and heads less full of their own affairs, this is what they might have heard a fairy saying:—

'Over hill, over dale,
Thorough bush, thorough brier,
Over park, over pale,
Thorough flood, thorough fire,
I do wander every where,
Swifter than the moon's sphere
And I serve the fairy queen,
To dew her orbs upon the green:
The cowslips tall her pensioners be;
In their gold coats spots you see;
Those be rubies, fairy favours,

In those freckles live their savours,
I must go seek some dew-drops here,
And hang a pearl in every cowslip's ear.'

It happened, just before this time, that the fairy king and queen had had a quarrel.

Titania had stolen from an Indian king his tiny, brown-faced boy, and made him her little page and pet. Oberon longed to have this little boy to be his servant, and wished the queen to give him up. This Titania refused to do, and, each time they met, the king and queen quarrelled so fiercely that all the elves would creep into acorn cups and hide themselves for fear.

This night, when flowers and birds were asleep, Oberon and Titania met in the wood.

''Til met by moonlight, proud Titania,' said Oberon.

'What, jealous Oberon?' said the queen. 'Fairies, skip hence. I have forsworn his company.'

'Why should Titania cross her Oberon?' asked the fairy king. 'I do but beg a little changeling boy to be my servant.'

'Set your heart at rest,' replied Titania. 'The fairy-land buys not the child of me. If you will patiently dance in our round and see our moonlight revels, go with us. If not, shun me, and I will spare your haunts.'

'Give me that boy, and I will go with thee,' persisted the king.

'Not for thy fairy kingdom,' said Titania. 'Fairies, away! We shall chide downright if I longer stay.'

So, with her train of elves, Titania danced off in the moonlight, and angry Oberon stayed alone, thinking how he might best punish her.

When he had thought of a plan, he called for Puck, the fairy whom he trusted most when any roguish trick was to be played.

Puck, or Robin Goodfellow, was what people called this merry, mischievous little elf. He was never so happy as when he was playing tricks. He would steal the house-wives' cream, or hide in the churn and dance while the breathless housewife tried in vain to make the butter come. Sometimes he would go to a merrymaking, and when a gossiping old woman was lifting a bowl of warm ale to her mouth, he would bob against her lips in the likeness of a roasted crab-apple and make her spill the ale. Sometimes he would take the likeness of a three-legged stool, and when an old dame was telling her friends what she thought was a very sad tale, he would slip from under her, and she would topple down on to the

floor, while her listeners held their sides and laughed and laughed again, and declared that they had never spent a merrier hour. At times he would jump into the oats where the ale was brewed, and spoil all that was brewing, and often at night, with a bunch of fire-flies in his hand, he would skip over bogs and ditches, leading unwary travellers astray and laughing merrily when they had hopelessly lost their way. Yet Puck, or Robin Goodfellow, was a good little fellow indeed to those who treated him kindly. No house-wife who spoke of 'Sweet Puck' was ever sorry for having said it. In the morning she would find her fire lighted, her house swept and dusted, her water carried, and her wood chopped, and only good luck came to the houses of those people that little Puck loved.

'My gentle Puck, come hither!' called

Oberon. 'Fetch me a blossom of that little purple flower that maids call Love-in-Idleness. The juice of it squeezed on the eyelids of those who sleep will make them, when they awake, fall in love with the first living thing that they see. I shall drop some of this juice on Titania's eyes when she is asleep, and, when she wakes, the first thing she looks upon—be it lion, bear, or wolf, or bull, or meddling monkey, or busy ape—she will love. Before I use another herb to take this charm away, I shall make her give up her little Indian to me.'

Puck was always so full of fun and frolic that he gladly darted off to seek the little purple flower. While he was gone, Demetrius and Helena came that way, and the fairy king, who saw and heard them without being heard or seen, listened to Helena while she begged Demetrius, who had loved her once, not

to be so unkind, and heard how cruelly Demetrius answered her.

'When Puck comes back with the flower,' said the kind little fairy king to himself, 'I shall help this poor Helena and make Demetrius love her as he used to do.

Soon, like a bright-winged moth flitting through the darkness, Puck returned, carrying a handful of purple blossoms.

Then said Oberon:—

'I know a bank where the wild thyme blows,
Where ox-lips and the nodding violets grow;
Quite over-canopied with luscious wood-bine,
With sweet musk-roses, and with eglantine:
There sleeps Titania, some time of the night,
Lull'd in these flowers, with dances

and delight;
And with the juice of this I'll streak her eyes.'

To Puck he gave orders—'Take some of the blossoms and search the woods until you find the young Athenian, Demetrius, lying asleep, squeeze the juice in his eyes, that he may love the fair lady, Helena, whom he is sure to see near him when he wakes.'

Then through the woods went Oberon, till a sound like the silver tinkle of a spring led him to where Titania was giving commands to her elves.

'Go, some of you, to kill cankers in the musk-rose buds,' said she. 'Some to kill the bats and take their leathern wings to make my small elves coats; and some to drive away the hooting owl. You others, sing me now to sleep.

And in voices so sweet, that in their dreams the sleeping birds felt envious,

and the flowers woke up to listen, the fairies sang:—

'You spotted snakes, with double
tongue,
Thorny hedgehogs, be not seen;
Newts, and blind-worms, do no
wrong;
Come not near our fairy queen.
Lulla, lulla, lullaby; lulla, lulla,
lullaby;
Never harm, nor spell nor charm,
Come our lovely lady nigh;
So, good-night, with lullaby.

'Weaving spiders, come not here:
Hence, you long-legg'd spinners,
hence:
Beetles black, approach not near;
Worm, nor snail, do no offence.
Lulla, lulla, lullaby; lulla, lulla,
lullaby;
Never harm, nor spell nor charm,
Come our lovely lady nigh;
So, good-night, with lullaby.'

Soon the fairy voices sent Titania to sleep, with her tiny golden head amongst the wild thyme and the violets, and then Oberon crept forward with his purple flower. Gently squeezing it on her eyelids he said:—

'What thou seest, when thou dost wake,
Do it for thy true-love take.'

Then Oberon went away and left Puck to play the rest of the trick.

Wandering through the forest, Puck soon came on a big fat countryman, Nick Bottom by name. In one moment Puck had changed Bottom's stupid red face and shaggy head into the head of an donkey, and Bottom went singing amongst the trees in his donkey's voice, not knowing what had happened to him.

Now the sound of his bawling awoke Titania, and when she started, and



The fairy voices sent
Titania to sleep.

opened her sleepy eyes, she saw a great hairy face through the flowery branches of the wood-bine. As soon as her eyes fell on him, the spell of the little purple flower began its work. Titania thought that big, ugly Nick Bottom, with his donkey's head and long ears, was the most beautiful person she had ever seen, and she loved him at once.

'What angel wakes me from my flowery bed?' she asked. 'I pray thee, gentle mortal, sing again.'

When Bottom spoke to her, all the stupid things he said seemed to her to be more clever than anything that any one had ever said before.

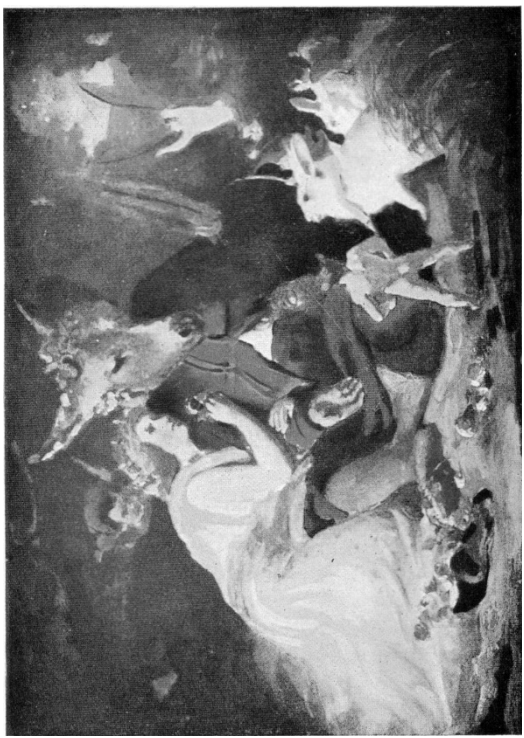
'Thou art as wise as thou art beautiful,' she said. 'Stay with me, for I do love thee. I'll give thee fairies to attend on thee.'

Then she called four of her fairies—'Peas-blossom! Cobweb! Moth! Mustard-

seed!'

'Be kind and courteous to this gentleman,' she said.
Hop in his walks, and gambol in his eyes;
Feed him with apricots and dewberries;
With purple grapes, green figs, and mulberries;
The honey-bags steal from the humble-bees…
And pluck the wings from painted butterflies,
To fan the moonbeams from his sleeping eyes:
Nod to him, elves, and do him courtesies.'

While the elves flew to do her bidding, Titania sat down beside Bottom on a flowery bank, and stroked his hairy face and decked his head with roses. Bottom, who was part man, part donkey, and



Titania sat down beside Bottom
on a flowery bank.

more of a donkey than a man, felt proud of having so many fairy servants.

'Where's Peas-blossom?' he called.

'Ready!' said Peas-blossom.

'Scratch my head, Peas-blossom. Where's Cobweb?'

'Ready!' said Cobweb.

'Good Cobweb, go kill me the red humble-bee on the top of that thistle, and bring me the honey-bag. Where's Mustard-seed?'

'Ready!' said Mustard-seed.

'Help Peas-blossom to scratch my head, good Mustard-seed. I must go to the barbers, for my face seems marvellous hairy.'

'What wilt thou have to eat, sweet love?' asked the fairy queen.

'I should like some hay, or some good dry oats,' said the donkey-man.

'I have a venturous fairy that shall seek the squirrel's hoard and fetch thee

new nuts,' said Titania.

'I had rather have a handful or two of dried peas,' said Bottom. 'But I pray you let none of your people stir me, for I have a mind to sleep.'

'Sleep then, and I will wind thee in my arms,' said Titania. 'Oh how I love thee! How I dote on thee!'

While Titania was thus loving a stupid man with the head of a donkey, Puck was searching the wood for Demetrius. But instead of Demetrius and Helena, he came on Lysander and Hermia, who had grown so tired with their wanderings that they had lain down to sleep until morning.

'This must surely be Demetrius!' said Puck when he saw Lysander, and joyfully he squeezed the flower juice on Lysander's eyes and flew off to tell his master.

If Lysander had first seen Hermia when he awoke, Puck's mistake would

not have mattered, but it happened that Demetrius and Helena passed that way, and Helena's sad voice awoke Lysander. The moment he saw Helena, the fairy charm began to work, and Lysander believed that it was Helena that he loved, and that he had never loved Hermia at all. When he told Helena this, she was very miserable, for she believed that Lysander mocked her, and when he followed her, telling her of his love, she tried to run away from him.

When Hermia awoke, she found her Lysander gone, but Demetrius was beside her, and at once began to tell her how much he loved her, and begged her to marry him.

Through the wood went these two pairs of unhappy lovers, in and out of shadow and moonlight, brushing the dew off the honeysuckles and roses as they hurried past, hearing no fairy music, and

seeing no fairy forms, full only of their own unhappiness—Demetrius telling Hermia of his love, and Hermia longing for Lysander; Lysander telling Helena of his love, and Helena breaking her heart for Demetrius.

But although they saw and heard no fairies, the little fairy king saw and heard them, and knew at once that Puck had made a mistake and had squeezed the juice into the eyes of the wrong man.

So when Demetrius at last was tired out and lay down to sleep, Oberon dropped some flower juice in his eyelids, and sent Puck flying through the wood to fetch Helena, that she might be beside him when he woke.

But when this was done, things seemed worse than before. For both Demetrius and Lysander now loved Helena, and when Hermia appeared, no one wanted her, and Lysander spoke so

cruelly to her that Oberon was full of pity for her, though roguish little Puck was delighted with all the mischief he had made. Demetrius and Lysander grew so angry with each other that they drew their swords to fight.

Then said Oberon to Puck— 'Overcast the night with a drooping black fog, and lead these two rivals so astray in it, that they cannot find each other. Imitate their voices, and call angry taunts now to Lysander, now to Demetrius, till they are so worn out with chasing each other that they lie down and sleep. When they sleep, take this herb and crush its juice into Lysander's eyes. When he awakes, the charm of Love-in-Idleness will have faded quite away, all that has passed will seem but a dream, and he will love his Hermia as much as ever.'

Gladly Puck darted off, singing as he went:—

'Up and down, up and down;
I will lead them up and down:
I am feared in field and town;
Goblin lead them up and down.'

The fog came black and thick, behind and before him, and through the fog Lysander and Demetrius, Hermia and Helena, angrily and miserably sought each other. At length, tired to death, bedabbled with dew, and torn with briers, they all lay down to rest, none of them knowing where the others were, although they all lay close together, near the flowery bank where Bottom snored and Titania lay asleep.

'On the ground
Sleep sound:
I'll apply
To your eye,
Gentle lover, remedy,'

twittered Puck like a little bird waking up

in the dawn. And he squeezed the herb on to Lysander's sleeping eyes, and flew back to Oberon.

Oberon had found Titania sitting beside Bottom, and had once more asked her to give him the Indian boy. Titania felt she cared no more for her little page. She loved no one, she wanted no one but her fat, stupid, ugly man, with his hairy face and hoarse voice and long donkey's ears. So she gave Oberon the boy, and then Oberon grew sorry and ashamed that Titania should be so silly, and should even think for a few hours that she loved a man with the head of an ass. When she fell asleep, he put some of the herb juice on her eyelids, and then gently woke her.

'My Oberon!' she said, when she saw her own beautiful little fairy king standing beside her, 'What dreams I have had! I thought I loved a donkey!'

'There he lies,' said Oberon.

'How I loathe the sight of him!' said Titania.

Then Oberon made Puck remove the donkey's head from Nick Bottom's shoulders, and left him snoring under the woodbine.

Fairy music began to play, and Oberon and Titania took hands and danced together till the sun roused himself up to look at a sight so pretty, and the sun's first beams woke the lark.

> 'Fairy king, attend and mark;
> I do hear the morning lark,'

sang Puck.

> 'Then, my queen, in silence sad,
> Trip we after the night's shade:
> We the globe can compass soon,
> Swifter than the wandering moon,'

said Oberon. And Titania answered:—

'Come, my lord, and in our flight,
Tell me how it came this night,
That I sleeping here was found
With these mortals on the ground.'

And, hand in hand, the fairies flew away into the west, while the moon-beams had scarcely ceased to turn the dew into silver, and while the rosy-fingered dawn had only touched with her finger-tips the eastern sky.

It chanced that morning that the Duke of Athens and Hermia's father came with their horses and hounds to hunt in the wood. The sound of their horns woke Hermia and Lysander and Helena and Demetrius, and when they awoke they found that things were all as they ought to be.

Lysander loved only Hermia, and loved her as much as she loved him. Demetrius loved only Helena, and believed he had always loved only her. All

that had happened to them in the wood seemed to them only a curious Midsummer Night's dream. They told their tale to the Duke and to Hermia's father, and the Duke was glad that the night had put the wrong to right. So they were all happy together, and together they went back to Athens and were married that very day with great feasting and rejoicing.

The Winter's Tale

Far away in the sunny sea that lies south of Italy is an island called Sicily.

When you go there some day you will wonder at the blue sky and blue sea and the great yellow pillars of ruined temples, so big that they look as if giants had made them. And you will almost fancy that the fairies have been there, when you see flaming scarlet geraniums growing wild by the road-sides, and trees with branches bowing down to the ground, so heavily are they laden with golden oranges.

Once, long ago, there was a king of Sicily called Leontes. He was a very happy king, for his queen, Hermione, was as good as she was beautiful, and he had a little boy called Mamillius, who was the prettiest and the bravest and the cleverest little prince that you could

possibly imagine.

Leontes had also a very good friend, Polixenes, king of Bohemia. When they had been tiny boys they had been always together, and when they grew up they were still the best of friends.

Polixenes came one year to stay with Leontes, and when he said he must go back to Bohemia, Leontes felt very sad and did all that he could to make him stay longer. When he found that nothing that he could say could make Polixenes change his mind, he told Hermione that she must try her best to make his friend remain in sunny Sicily. So Hermione did all that she could, and pled so well that Polixenes said he would not go away.

When Polixenes had made up his mind to stay, a dreadful thing happened to Leontes. He began to think that Hermione and Polixenes cared for each other more than they cared for him.

After this, everything that they did seemed to him wrong. He soon came to hate them both, and made up his mind to poison the King of Bohemia.

He asked a good old courtier, called Camillo, to help him in this; but Camillo would not help, and went instead to Polixenes and told him what Leontes was planning to do.

'My ships are ready to sail,' said Polixenes. 'I shall go back at once to Bohemia. Come with me, Camillo.' So together they sailed away from the beautiful island and its cruel king.

When Leontes found that they had escaped, he was more angry than ever with Polixenes, and even more angry still with Hermione.

In a great rage he went to Hermione's room, where little Prince Mamillius was beginning to tell his mother and her ladies-in-waiting a story.

'I shall tell you a tale of sprites and goblins,' said Mamillius, laughing to think how he would frighten them. 'I shall tell it so softly that the crickets shall not hear it.' Then he whispered, 'There was a man dwelt by a churchyard——'

Just then Leontes came in, and after saying many cruel things to Hermione he had her put in prison.

Poor little Mamillius was so unhappy when he saw his mother taken away by soldiers that he grew ill with unhappiness. He could not eat, nor sleep, and began to pine away. But Leontes was mad with foolish anger, and could think of nothing but his own rage against Hermione and Polixenes.

He sent two of his noblemen across the sea to Greece to ask a great magician if Hermione was a good queen or a bad one, and while they were gone, a baby girl came to Hermione in her prison.

'My poor little prisoner, I am as innocent as you are,' Hermione said to her baby, and Paulina, a kind lady whose husband was one of the greatest nobles in Sicily, knew that she spoke the truth.

'I shall take the pretty baby girl to her father,' said Paulina, 'and when he sees her, he can be angry no longer.'

So she carried the baby to the King's palace, and she begged him not to be so cruel, but to love his queen again and be good to their little daughter.

But Leontes hardened his heart. He spoke rudely and roughly to the kind lady, and when she went away and left the baby lying beside his throne, he told Paulina's husband, whose name was Antigonus, to take the child away and have it burned to death.

When Antigonus besought the King not to be so terribly wicked and cruel, he then said that instead of burning the

child he must at once take it to a far land, and leave it in a desert place where it would quickly die of cold and hunger.

'To kill it now would be more merciful,' said Antigonus. Yet, hoping that perhaps even the wild beasts might take pity on the tiny, helpless baby, and be kind to it, he obeyed the King and carried it away.

When the nobleman who had sailed to Greece to consult the magician returned, they found the Queen being tried by all the lords and nobles of Sicily.

Hermione begged for justice and for mercy. She told Leontes how weak and ill she was, and how her heart was nearly breaking because her baby girl had been taken away from her, and because she was not allowed to see little Mamillius.

Leontes would barely listen to her, and answered her more roughly and unkindly than ever.

Then the nobleman who had been to Greece came forward and gave the King a sealed letter from the magician.

Leontes opened it and read:— *'Hermione is innocent, Polixenes blameless, Camillo a true subject, Leontes a jealous tyrant, and the King shall live without an heir if that which is lost be not found.'*

But Leontes would not even believe the magician. 'This is mere falsehood,' he said. 'Let the trial proceed.'

Almost as he spoke, a messenger rushed in.

'My lord the King!' he cried, 'you will hate me for the news I bring. The Prince your son is gone!'

'How! gone?' said Leontes.

'He is dead,' said the messenger.

Then he told the King that the little Prince Mamillius was so weak and ill that when he knew that his mother was being tried and might be put to death, the sor-

row was too much for his big loving heart, and he died of grief.

When Hermione heard this, she dropped to the ground in a faint so dead that it seemed as if all life had left her.

'The Queen is dead! The news has killed her!' cried her friend Paulina.

Then, at last, Leontes felt sorry and ashamed. He made up his mind to do everything in his power to undo the evil he had done, though he knew that nothing that he could do could bring him back his merry, handsome little boy.

He told Paulina to take the Queen away, as he was sure that she was only in a faint, but in a little time Paulina returned.

'The Queen is dead!' she cried. 'The sweetest, dearest creature's dead!'

Then Paulina, who feared no one, told the King all she thought of his blind and foolish wickedness, and how terribly

she thought he deserved to be punished for it.

'Go on! Go on!' said the unhappy King. 'Thou canst not speak too much. I have deserved all tongues to talk their bitterest.'

For sixteen years from that day Leontes shut himself up like a poor prisoner, mourning for the dear wife and the little boy whom he had killed by his unkindness, and every day all through that time he went and wept alone by the grave of Mamillius and Hermione.

The ship in which Antigonus had sailed across the sea with the baby girl had never returned, and so the King felt sure that his baby too was dead, and blamed himself most bitterly.

When Antigonus reached the coast of Bohemia, a storm was beginning to make the waves toss furiously, and the sky was dark. Great white waves lashed

themselves on the rocks, and the captain of the ship told Antigonus that if he meant to land and leave the baby there, he himself must quickly return, lest the storm should wreck the ship and cast them on shore.

'It is going to be a terrible storm, and this place is famous for beasts of prey,' said the captain.

So Antigonus landed with the baby, whom he had named Perdita, and laid her on the cold rocks so near the sea that the spray dashed up and stung her little face. On a piece of paper he wrote 'PERDITA,' and pinned it on to her dress. By her side he placed a golden box full of money and jewels.

'Blossom, speed thee well,' he said, and hurried away, leaving her wailing with cold and fear. He had only gone a few paces from her when a bear which had been hiding behind the rocks rushed

after him. Antigonus ran as fast as he could, but the great savage bear ran faster than he could do. It caught him, tore him in pieces, and began to eat him up, so that he was very soon punished for his cruelty.

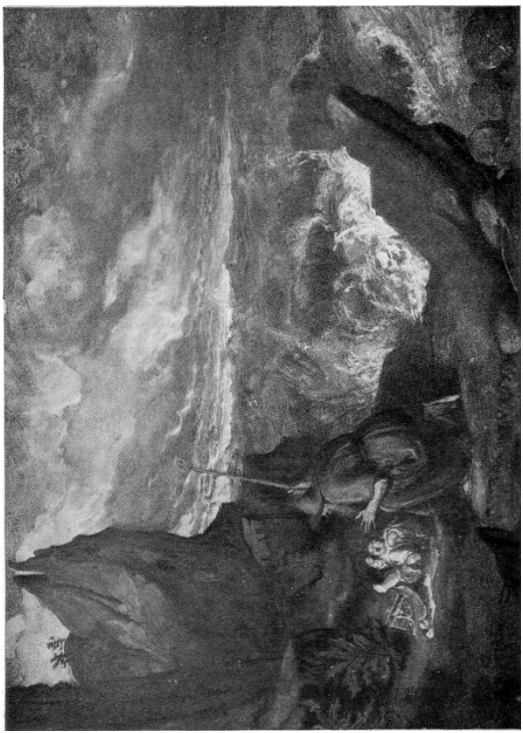
The thunder and waves and winds made such a noise that not even the wild beasts could hear Perdita's cries. But an old shepherd with his long crook came that way, looking for two lost sheep that he feared the wolves might get, and stopped amazed at the sight of the baby.

'Good luck! what have we here?' he said. 'A bairn! a very pretty bairn!'

Then he shouted very loud for his son, and a big rough lad came running up.

'If you want to see a sight to talk of when I am dead, look here!' said the shepherd.

But the boy was too much excited to



'Good luck! What have we here?' he said.

look.

'I have seen two such sights by sea and by land!' he said. 'On sea was a ship that was sometimes tossed up so high that its main-mast seemed to bore the moon, and then was swallowed up by the churning, frothing waves. The sailors roared, poor souls, and the sea seemed to mock them and roared louder than they did.

'Then the sea smashed the ship into wreckage, and drowned them all. On land I saw a bear tearing a man to pieces. He called to me to help him, and said he was a great nobleman called Antigonus. And he roared, and the bear mocked him and roared again, both roaring louder than wind or weather.'

'You tell me of things dying,' said the shepherd. 'Here have I a thing new-born. Look at its beautiful clothes. Open the box, boy; let's see what's in it.'

When the boy opened the box, their eyes were dazzled by the gold and lovely jewels.

'It is fairy gold!' cried the shepherd. 'The fairies have made me a rich man! Come, let us go home and tell no one.'

So Perdita, the princess, was carried to the shepherd's hut, and tenderly nursed by his wife. Soon they left that part of the country, that no one might know how he had come by his riches. With part of Perdita's gold he bought herds of sheep, and became a wealthy man.

Perdita was brought up as his own daughter. She thought the shepherd was her real father, and was always obedient and gentle, although she was very, very different in her face and mind and manners from him and the other rough country people that she grew up amongst.

When she was a lovely maiden of six-

teen, with the sweet and gracious manners of the princess that she really was, a handsome hunter happened to come that way. He was the brave Prince Florizel, son of that King Polixenes of Bohemia who had had to flee from Sicily sixteen years before.

Florizel at once fell in love with Perdita, and very often came to see her. He pretended that he was only a poor gentleman called Doricles, and very soon Perdita came to love him. So often did he come to the shepherd's cottage that the King began to miss him from his court and wonder where he went. He asked Camillo, the old Sicilian lord, if he knew, and Camillo told him of Perdita, the old shepherd's beautiful daughter.

'Let us disguise ourselves,' said King Polixenes, 'and go to the shepherd's house, and see for ourselves what this girl is like, and why Florizel goes there so

often.'

There was a great sheep-shearing party going on when they went to the cottage, and on that day the shepherd welcomed any strangers who might care to come to the feast.

Prince Florizel, or Doricles, as he called himself, was already there when they arrived. Some of the shepherds and shepherdesses were dancing on the green in front of the house, others were buying ribbons and laces and pretty things from a pedlar at the door who was loudly shouting, 'Come buy, come buy, come buy!'

The shepherd gave the King and Camillo a hearty welcome, and led them to where Perdita and Florizel sat apart from the merrymakers.

'Come and welcome your guests, said the shepherd to Perdita, who was looking lovelier than ever in a pretty new frock;

'my old wife, when she lived, used on this day to be cook and waiter, and butler too, and would sing and dance her turn till her face was as red as fire. You sit aside as if you were a guest and not my daughter.'

Then Perdita, blushing at the shepherd's words, came forward and prettily welcomed the two guests, giving them each a little bunch of flowers. To Polixenes she gave rue and rosemary, and to Camillo mint and lavender and marigolds. To Florizel she said: 'I have no flowers that I can offer to you. I should like to give you only sweet spring flowers —daffodils that come before the swallow dares, violets, pale primroses, oxlips, and lilies of all kinds.'

All that she did and all that she said was done so kindly and gracefully and sweetly and graciously, that the King said to Camillo: 'This is the prettiest low-born

lass that ever ran on the greensward; nothing she says or does but seems too noble for this place.'

'Good sooth, she is the very queen of curds and cream,' said Camillo.

When she danced with Florizel, she did it so beautifully that they admired her more even than before.

'How well she dances,' said the King to the shepherd.

'She does everything well,' said the shepherd, 'and if young Doricles marries her, he will be a lucky man, for she shall bring him that which he dreams not of.'

For the greater part of the gold, and all the jewels that had been found beside Perdita, were still carefully kept for her by the shepherd.

The King then spoke to Florizel, and he was so well disguised that Florizel did not guess that it was his father, and told him frankly how dearly he loved Perdita,

and that he meant to marry her.

'Come, Perdita, give me your hand, and let these worthy gentlemen be witnesses of my vows to marry you,' said the Prince, 'for I love you more than all the world.'

'Have you a father?' asked the King.

'I have, but what of him?' said Florizel.

'Knows he of this?' asked the King.

'He neither knows, nor shall know,' said Florizel.

'It is unkind and wrong not to tell him,' said the King.

'I feel that it is not kind,' said Florizel, 'yet there are good reasons why he cannot, must not know.'

Then, in a great rage, Polixenes pulled off the false white beard that had disguised him, and showed Florizel that he was speaking to his own father. He scolded and raged at his son and at

Perdita and the old shepherd, and called them all sorts of rude names.

'If ever you dare to see this girl again,' he said to Florizel, 'you shall never succeed me as King.'

To Perdita he said, 'If ever you suffer my son to look upon you again, I shall have your old father and you tortured and put to death.' In great wrath he then went home to his palace.

The shepherd was terribly frightened, but Perdita remained quiet and brave.

'I was not much afraid of him,' she said, when the King had gone. 'Once or twice I was about to speak and tell him plainly that the self-same sun that shines upon his court hides not his face from our cottage, but looks on both alike.'

'Please go away,' she said to Florizel, for she loved him too much to bring harm upon him. 'Now I have awakened from this dream, I will dream no more of

being a queen, but will milk my ewes and weep.'

Camillo, who had stayed behind the King, was so pleased with the way that Perdita behaved, and so sorry for her and Prince Florizel, that he thought of a plan to help them.

He told them that he would take them and the old shepherd with him in a ship to Sicily. Leontes, his former master, would receive them gladly, he knew, and let them stay there until the King of Bohemia had forgiven them.

They joyfully agreed to this, and in Sicily they received a warm welcome from the King. When he saw Perdita, he was amazed at her likeness to his dead queen, Hermione, and began afresh to mourn over her loss.

The old shepherd, hearing this, began to wonder whether the baby girl who could not be found might not be the

Perdita that he had come upon by the bleak shore with the spray dashing over her. He told the King the tale of how he found her, and showed him the rich mantle she was wrapped in, and the gold and jewels that were lying beside her. The scrap of paper, too, he showed, in what the King knew was the writing of Antigonus, and told about the shipwreck and of how his son had seen Antigonus slain by a bear.

Then Leontes was a happier man than he had been for sixteen long years. He kissed Perdita again and again, and embraced Prince Florizel, and when Polixenes arrived from Bohemia in angry pursuit of the Prince and the others and heard that the shepherd's lovely daughter was really the Princess Perdita, the two kings rejoiced together.

Yet although he was so glad to have his baby girl safely back again, the King

of Sicily's heart was still sore for his little boy, Mamillius, and for his beautiful queen, Hermione.

'Oh, thy mother! thy mother!' he would sigh, when he looked at the daughter who was so like what her mother had been.

Paulina, who was trying hard not to let her sorrow for her husband's death spoil the others' happiness, then told the King that in her house she had a statue of the Queen, so exactly like what she was in life that it seemed as if it were the Queen herself alive.

To her house went the two kings, Perdita, Florizel, Camillo, and some courtiers, to see the wonderful statue.

When Paulina drew the curtain from in front of it, the figure was indeed so like Queen Hermione that every one gasped with surprise and remained silent.

Then the King of Sicily spoke, 'Thus

she stood,' he said, 'when first I loved her. But yet, Paulina, Hermione was not so old as this statue seems.'

'So much the more our sculptor's excellence,' said Paulina; he has made her sixteen years older than she was when you saw her last.

'The colour is still wet,' she said, 'Shall I draw the curtain now?'

'Do not draw it!' cried Polixenes, 'I could gaze on for twenty years. It seems to me almost as though she breathed.'

Then Paulina said, 'My lord, I can make this statue move, but you might think I did so by using wicked magic, so perhaps you had rather that I did not.'

'What you can make her do, I am content to look on,' said the King.

Then Paulina said to the statue, ''Tis time: descend; be stone no more.'

At that the statue stepped down from her pedestal, and when King Leontes

rushed forward and took her in his arms, she kissed him fondly.

Then those who watched amazed heard from the Queen that she was no statue, but the real Queen Hermione. When Leontes was so cruel, Paulina had pretended to him that his queen was dead, and for sixteen years Hermione had lived in good Paulina's house and no one had known it.

That was indeed a happy day in sunny Sicily, for there was not only sunshine on the blue sea and the orange orchards, but in the heart of every one as well.

The two kings were friends once more, and Leontes and Hermione were together again, and to make their happiness perfect they had only to look at Prince Florizel and Princess Perdita, who got married at once and lived happily ever after.

The Comedy of Errors

Once on a time the states of Ephesus in Asia, and of Syracuse in Sicily, were at war.

While the war went on, a law was made that if any merchant from Syracuse was seen in Ephesus, he was to be fined a thousand marks, and if he could not pay the fine he was to be put to death.

To Ephesus there came one day an old merchant of Syracuse named Ægeon. For five years he had been roaming in distant lands, so that he knew nothing of the law that had been passed until he was seized by guards and taken before the Duke of Ephesus to be tried.

He had no money, so that he had no choice but to die, but before he condemned him, the Duke asked him to say

why he had been so foolish as to come to Ephesus.

Then Ægeon told his story:— 'I was born in Syracuse,' he said, 'and there married a wife with whom I was very, very happy. To Greece we voyaged, and while we were there my wife had twin boys, so exactly alike in every way that we gave them but one name between them. Antipholis was the name they shared. At the same hour at which they were born, and at the same inn, a poor woman also had twin sons who were as much alike as were our own babies. They also shared a name, and were called Dromio. Their father and mother were so poor that when I offered to buy their babies from them, they gladly took my gold. These little Dromios I brought up to be the servants of my own sons. When the four baby boys were old enough to travel we got on board a ship and sailed

for Syracuse. We were only a short distance out at sea when a fearful storm arose. Our ship soon began to sink, and the cowardly sailors took the only small boat and escaped in it, leaving my wife and me and the four baby boys to drown. We found a spare mast, and to one end of it I tied my wife, the younger twin and one of the Dromios. To the other I lashed the older twin, the other Dromio, and myself. On this mast we were swept by the current along the coast, and at last the storm ceased. When the sea had grown calm, we saw in the light of the sunrise two ships coming towards us from different directions. Ere these ships could meet, our mast struck on a rock, with such violence that it split in two. The wind drove the part of the mast with my wife and her two charges on in front of me, and a fishing boat that was driving swiftly along in the wind picked them up

and sailed away. Immediately after this, the other ship that we had seen picked up me and the two tiny boys beside me. I would have had it turn round and try to catch up the fishing boat with my wife and the two children on board, but it was very heavy and slow of sail, so that it was impossible for it to catch the swift-sailing little fishing boat. Never since that day have I seen my wife or younger son. When the elder twin, Antipholis of Syracuse, was eighteen years old, he begged me to allow him and his servant Dromio to go across the sea and search until he found his mother and brother. Unwillingly, for I could not bear to let him go out of my sight, I let them go. That is five years ago, and for five years have I sought in vain for the dear son who left me. I have sought in farthest Greece and through the bounds of Asia, till at length I wandered hither. And now that I have

lost my wife and both my sons, I have only my life left to lose, and I have no wish to live.'

This story made the Duke so sorry for Ægeon that he said:—'You are condemned to die, and I cannot change the sentence. Yet I will do for you all I can. I give you one day more to live. In that day you must go to every friend you have in Ephesus and beg or borrow the thousand marks that are to ransom you.'

'I have no hope of finding any one,' said Ægeon sadly, and went away with his gaoler.

Ægeon thought he knew no one in Ephesus, yet at that very minute his twin sons and their twin servants were in the city.

When the fishermen had saved Ægeon's wife and the baby Antipholis and baby Dromio, they put the poor lady ashore at one place and went on to

another where they sold the two little boys as slaves. They were bought by a great soldier, who took them to Ephesus where his nephew was Duke. The Duke took a great fancy to Antipholis. When he grew up, the Duke made him an officer in his army, and when Antipholis showed himself very brave, he rewarded him handsomely. Antipholis was now a rich man with a beautiful house in Ephesus. He had married a wealthy lady called Adriana, and Dromio was still his servant.

The other Antipholis, Antipholis of Syracuse, had arrived in Ephesus on the very day that his father got there, but a merchant that he knew had warned him that he must on no account tell any one that he came from Syracuse, else he would be put to death. Antipholis therefore pretended that he came from Greece.

When he parted from the merchant he gave his servant Dromio some money and sent him to an inn to order dinner.

'I shall wander round the town till it is time to dine,' he said, 'and see what manner of place it is.'

Dromio had only been a few minutes gone when his master saw him, as he thought, coming back. He was mistaken, for the Dromio he saw was not his own servant, but his brother's—Dromio of Ephesus.

'How do you chance to return so soon?' he asked in surprise.

'Return so soon!' said the man, who never doubted but that he addressed his master Antipholis of Ephesus; 'why, it is you who are late! My mistress is very angry with you for keeping her waiting, and has sent me to fetch you. The capon burns, the pig falls from the spit, and the meat will be cold if you do not come at

once.'

'Do not talk nonsense,' said Antipholis of Syracuse. 'What have you done with the money I gave you?'

'Do you mean the sixpence you gave me last Wednesday to pay the saddler?' said Dromio of Ephesus. 'I gave it to the saddler, sir.'

'I am not in a mood for your jests,' said Antipholis, annoyed with Dromio for being so silly; 'where did you leave the money?'

To this Dromio of Ephesus still replied that his mistress had sent him to fetch Antipholis to dinner.

'What mistress do you mean!' asked Antipholis angrily.

'Your worship's wife,' said Dromio of Ephesus. 'She and her sister wait dinner for you.'

Antipholis the merchant was very angry with Dromio for what he thought

were impudent jokes, and when Dromio could not tell him where the money was, and still persisted in talking of his wife, he lost all patience and beat him soundly. Dromio of Ephesus escaped as quickly as he could, and ran home to his mistress, while Antipholis, much disturbed, went on to the inn.

When Dromio reached the house of his master, Antipholis the soldier, his mistress, Adriana, asked him if his master would soon be there.

'I think my master is mad,' said the man. 'When I asked him to come home, for dinner was ready, he asked me for the money he had given me. He said he had no wife, and when I begged him to come home, he beat me till my ears ache.'

At this tale Adriana grew as angry as Antipholis of Syracuse had been.

'Go back at once and fetch your master home!' she said.

'Go back and be beaten again!' cried Dromio of Ephesus; 'I beg you send some other messenger.'

'Back, slave!' cried Adriana, in a rage, 'or I will break thy pate across!'

'They treat me as if I were a football,' moaned Dromio, as he ran off, 'my master kicks me to my mistress, and my mistress kicks me back again.'

'My husband loves me no longer,' said Adriana to her sister. 'He cannot love me, or he would not stay away.'

Her sister told her that she was very silly, but Adriana would not listen.

'He promised to bring me a lovely gold chain,' she said, 'and instead of bringing it he stays away and sends me rude and unkind messages by Dromio.'

She then got her sister to come with her, and together they went to look for Antipholis of Ephesus, the brave soldier.

Meantime Antipholis the merchant

had reached his inn, and just as he gladly found his money safe in the hands of the innkeeper, his own servant Dromio appeared.

At once Antipholis asked him if he still meant to talk nonsense, and why he had made such foolish jokes about the money and his mistress.

Dromio of Syracuse replied in amazement that he had never made any jokes at all, nor even seen Antipholis since he had sent him to the inn to order dinner. His master fancied he was joking again, and angrily beat him.

'I thank you, sir, for giving me something for nothing,' said Dromio, who loved a joke even when it was against himself.

Just then Adriana and her sister came to the door of the inn before which Antipholis of Syracuse and his Dromio were standing.

'How comes it now, my husband,' said Adriana, 'that I have lost your love?'

Antipholis replied in surprise that he did not know her. 'I have been only two hours in Ephesus, fair lady,' he said, 'and do not understand what you mean.'

Then Adriana's pretty sister spoke amazed, 'Fie, brother Antipholis!' she said. 'How the world is changed with you. You never used to use my sister so. Surely you must know that she sent Dromio to fetch you home to dinner?'

'Dromio!' said Antipholis.

'Me!' cried Dromio.

'Yes,' said Adriana, 'I sent Dromio, and he returned and told me that you said I was not your wife, and that you would not come.'

'Did you talk with this lady?' sternly asked Antipholis of his servant.

'I never spoke with her in all my life,' said Dromio.

But Antipholis remembered the message that Dromio of Ephesus had brought him, and began to think it was a plot in which his own servant was taking a share.

'How, then, does she know that your name is Dromio and mine Antipholis?' he asked. 'And how comes it that you came and told me that your mistress had sent you to fetch me home to dinner?'

'This is a fairy land,' said Dromio, much frightened.

> 'We talk with goblins, owls, and elvish sprites;
> If we obey them not, this will ensue,
> They'll suck our breath, or pinch us black and blue.'

'I must have been married in my sleep,' said Antipholis, in almost as great a fright as Dromio.

'Dromio, go bid the servants spread for dinner,' said Adriana. 'Come, Anti-

pholis, let us dine. We are already much too late.'

Believing themselves bewitched, and not knowing what else to do, Antipholis and Dromio then went home with Adriana and her sister.

'Keep the gate, Dromio,' said Adriana as they reached the house. 'Let no one enter.'

Scarcely had Antipholis the merchant sat down to dine with Adriana and her sister than there came a loud knock at the door.

Adriana's real husband, Antipholis the soldier, had arrived with a friend whom he had asked to dine, and with his servant Dromio, whom he had met in the street.

'This villain Dromio is drunk,' said Antipholis to his friend. 'When he met me he told me I had just beaten him, had said I had no wife, and had asked him for

some money. So then I did indeed beat the stupid fellow!'

Antipholis tried to open his door, but found it locked.

'Go, bid them let us in,' said he to Dromio.

Then Dromio, thumping on the door, bawled to each of the maidservants in turn, 'Maud, Bridget, Marian, Cicely, Gillian, Jen!'

But instead of a maid rushing, as he expected, to open the door, there came in reply the voice of Dromio of Syracuse.

'Go, get you from the door!' shouted the Dromio who was acting as porter.

Then the two Dromios began to quarrel, Dromio of Syracuse inside, and Dromio of Ephesus outside.

The maids, who believed that the one inside was the one they knew, and who thought they were rude boys or tipsy men outside, came and listened and



'Go, bid them let us in,'
said he to Dromio.

laughed, and told Dromio of Ephesus and his master to begone.

Presently the noise of banging and thumping and of quarrelling voices brought Adriana to see what was wrong.

'Who is that at the door who makes all this noise?' she asked.

'Are you there, wife? You might have come before,' said Antipholis of Ephesus, angry at being kept waiting so long on his own doorstep.

Then Adriana was very much annoyed at what she thought was impudence.

'Get you gone!' said she angrily, 'I am not your wife. Antipholis is within.'

Then Antipholis the soldier and his Dromio beat and thumped on the door in their rage and tried to break it in, until the passers-by stopped to watch, and laughed and mocked at them for being locked out of their own house.

'I shall wait no longer,' said Antipholis of Ephesus to his friend, in a towering passion.

'Come with me and dine with a lady who will treat us more civilly than my wife has done. To her I shall give the golden chain the goldsmith is making for Adriana.'

When Antipholis the merchant and his Dromio had dined in the house of Antipholis the soldier, they took the first chance that they could to get away. In the kitchen the fat cook, Dowsabel, had claimed Dromio as her husband, and he was more sure than before that he was in a land of witches.

In the street a goldsmith came up to Antipholis:— 'Here is the gold chain you ordered for your wife,' he said.

When Antipholis would have refused the chain, he forced him to take it, and when Antipholis wished to pay him

for it, he laughed and said, that they would meet later, and he could get the money then.

'We must escape by the first ship that sails,' said Antipholis, who was beginning to agree with Dromio that it was a bewitched land, and he sent Dromio to look for a ship.

Meantime, Antipholis the soldier, having dined with the lady, was walking along the street when he met the goldsmith from whom he had ordered the chain. The goldsmith, since parting from Antipholis the merchant, had been asked at once to pay some money that he owed. When he saw Antipholis he therefore asked him if he would pay for the chain now, as he was in urgent need of money.

'I have never had the chain,' said Antipholis. 'I shall not pay for what I have not had.'

Then the goldsmith felt that he was being very badly treated. He swore he had given the chain to Antipholis not an hour before, and when Antipholis persisted that he had never had it, he called for officers to take Antipholis to prison because he would not pay his debt.

On the way to prison Antipholis the soldier met Dromio of Syracuse.

'A ship is sailing at once, master,' said Dromio. 'I have taken all the luggage on board. The sails are trimmed, the merry wind blows fair from the land, they stay for nothing but for their owner, master, and yourself.'

'You madman! you drunken slave! what do I want with a ship?' furiously asked Antipholis. 'Go at once to Adriana my wife and tell her to send me at once the three hundred pieces of gold that this goldsmith says that I owe him.'

'To Adriana!' said Dromio to him-

self. 'Why, that is the house where we dined and where the fair lady says she is my master's wife, and fat cook Dowsabel says she is mine. But I must go, for servants must do what their masters tell them.'

Adriana, on hearing that her husband was in trouble, at once gave Dromio the money. As he ran back with it, he met his real master, Antipholis the merchant. The longer he stayed in Ephesus the more certain he was that the town was bewitched. Wherever he went people bowed to him as if they knew him, and called him by his name. Some invited him to dine or sup, others wished him to accept money which they said they owed him, and many thanked him for kindnesses which they said he had done them. A tailor made him come into his shop to look at some silks which he said Antipholis had ordered, and fitted

him for a suit of clothes. When Dromio met him, offered him the gold he had brought from Adriana, and asked him how he had escaped from the officers, Antipholis was more sure than ever that both he and his servant were bewitched.

He was still more sure when a lovely lady came up to him and gaily asked him for the chain he had promised her and for the ring she had lent him when he dined at her house that day. It was the married Antipholis who had dined with her, and it was to her that he had promised the gold chain he had had made for Adriana. But so sure was she that the man she spoke to was the man who had dined with her that when Antipholis of Syracuse angrily told her to begone, for he did not know her, she was sure he was mad.

'I shall go at once to his house and tell his wife that he is mad and has stolen my ring,' said she, and off she went.

When Adriana heard what she had to say, and thought how strangely her husband had behaved to her, she began to think that the lady must be right.

She took with her a doctor and went to where Antipholis, her real husband, was kept by the guards. Full of sorrow for his madness, she talked to him gently and kindly, and begged the doctor to cure him of his madness, and she would pay him anything he asked. She told him she had sent money for his release by Dromio, but Antipholis said he had never got it, and Dromio of Ephesus said she had never given it to him. So Adriana got more money and paid the goldsmith, and then got her servants to try and bind Antipholis, who fought and struggled and tried to escape, and Dromio, who tried to fight for his master.

'Why did you lock me out?' raged Antipholis. 'Why did you not send the

gold I asked for?'

'They are both mad,' said the doctor, 'bind them quickly and lay them in a dark room.'

'I did not lock thee forth, gentle husband,' wailed Adriana, 'I did send you the money,' and, weeping, she went away with her sister leaving Antipholis and Dromio struggling and raging against the doctor and his assistants.

Antipholis of Syracuse and his Dromio, meantime, had also been brawling. The goldsmith had met him with the gold chain, about which there had been so much fuss, round his neck. The man reproached him for saying he had never had the chain and refusing to pay for it, and Antipholis angrily said that the goldsmith had freely given it to him and refused to take money for it when it was offered. So angry did the goldsmith make Antipholis that he drew his sword, and

the man, in fear, ran away. At that minute, Adriana and her sister came round a corner and saw Antipholis of Syracuse with his sword drawn, and Dromio beside him.

Adriana's sister screamed, 'Mercy! they are loose again, and come with swords to kill us!'

And Adriana called to the city guards to seize Antipholis and take his sword from him, but not to hurt him, because he was a poor madman.

'Bind Dromio, too,' she said, 'and take them to my house.'

The thought of being taken again to the house where one of them was claimed as husband by Adriana, and the other by fat Dowsabel, was too much for Dromio and his master.

They took to their heels and ran, and, seeing a priory near at hand, they dashed in there for shelter.

The gates were shut on them at once, and while an excited crowd waited outside, wondering what would happen to the two madmen in the priory, a gentle and stately lady, who was the Abbess, came out.

The Abbess asked the people what was the meaning of all the uproar, and Adriana told her that she sought her mad husband who had just then escaped from her and rushed into the priory.

'What made your husband mad?' asked the Abbess.

When Adriana by her answers showed that she had constantly worried and nagged at him, and troubled him with the quarrels she tried to make, the Abbess told her how wrong she had been, and how it was she alone who had made Antipholis the brave soldier go mad.

'She never reproved him in any way

that was not gentle!' flared up her sister, 'even when he was rude and rough to her.'

But Adriana knew that what the Abbess said was true. She made no answer to the Abbess, but to her sister she said, 'All she says I deserve.'

Although she owned this, she longed the more to have her husband back, that she might nurse him and show him by the gentleness with which she tended him how sorry she was for having been unkind to him, and how truly she loved him.

But the Abbess refused to give up Antipholis and Dromio.

'They sought refuge in the priory,' she said, 'and they are mine to protect, and nurse, and cure.'

With that she went back to the priory and shut the door, and Adriana felt that her only hope of getting back her

husband was to complain to the Duke of Ephesus and ask for justice.

By that time it was nearly sunset, and at sunset, as his ransom was not paid, old Ægeon, the merchant of Syracuse, had to die.

Past the priory slowly came the sad procession. The Duke walked first, with his soldiers and attendants. Following him was old Ægeon, bareheaded and sad, and behind him came a grim headsman, carrying his shining axe.

Adriana ran forward, calling for justice, and stopped the procession.

The Duke, who knew her, asked what was wrong, and Adriana told him that the Abbess would not deliver up her husband to her. While she spoke, Antipholis of Ephesus and his Dromio broke loose from the house where they had been taken by the doctor, and also came to ask justice of the Duke.

Antipholis told him all the strange things that had happened to him that day, and blamed Adriana for everything.

When Ægeon saw Antipholis, he believed that he was the son that he had lost five years before, and with great joy greeted him.

'I have now a friend here who will pay my ransom and save my life,' said he to the Duke.

But Antipholis the soldier, who had been a baby of two when he last saw his father, said he had never seen Ægeon before.

The confusion was growing only the greater when the door of the priory opened and the Abbess came out with Antipholis the merchant and his Dromio.

Then, at last, was everything cleared up, for when the twins Antipholis and the twins Dromio stood together, no one

there, not even Ægeon or Adriana, could tell which were the brothers of Ephesus and which those of Syracuse.

An even greater happiness than the finding of his sons was still in store for Ægeon, for the wise and gentle lady Abbess was no other than his own lost wife.

When there was a lull in their explanations and greetings, Antipholis of Ephesus offered to pay his father's ransom, but the Duke refused the money and gave old Ægeon a free pardon.

So all these mistakes ended happily. Antipholis of Syracuse married Adriana's sister, whom, even in his greatest distraction, he had loved, and Adriana and her husband were better friends than they had ever been.

As for the Dromios, Dromio of Syracuse was very glad to find himself Dowsabel's brother-in-law instead of her

husband. He and Dromio of Ephesus grinned at each other's round faces in much content.

'Methinks you are my glass and not my brother,' said Dromio of Ephesus: 'I see by you I am a sweet-faced youth.'

And so, in peace and joyousness and contentment, closed a day that had been from beginning to end a Comedy of Errors.