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Sleeping Beauty

Once upon a time there was a king and queen who had a baby girl. She was the most beautiful baby that had ever been born.

The king and queen invited every fairy in the land to the little girl's christening. When the christening was over everybody went back to the palace for a big party.

However, there was one bad fairy in the land that the king and queen did not invite. The bad fairy heard about the party and was very, very angry. She decided to go, even though she hadn't been invited.

The other fairies had just been giving the princess their gifts. There was only one little fairy left, waiting to give her gift.

The bad fairy stomped over to the cradle and looked at the little baby.

"It's time for my gift," said the bad fairy. "You shall prick your finger on a spinning wheel and die!"

Everybody was very upset by the bad fairy's gift. But the little fairy who had been waiting to give her gift said, "No, the princess shall not die. I cannot undo the bad fairy's gift, but I can change it." She turned to the baby and said, "You will prick your finger on a spinning wheel and fall asleep for a hundred years."

The king ordered that all the spinning wheels in the kingdom be burnt that very day.

The baby girl grew up into a beautiful princess. One day while she was playing in the castle she found a room at the top of a tower where an old woman lived. The old woman had never heard the king's order, and was using a spinning wheel. The princess went into the room and sat down to watch the old woman.

“What are you doing?” the princess asked.

“I am spinning, dear,” said the old woman, who didn’t know who the princess was. “Would you like to have a go?”

“Oh, yes please,” said the princess and she sat down at the spinning wheel. But the princess didn’t know how to spin and soon pricked her finger. She fell asleep and no one was able to wake her up.

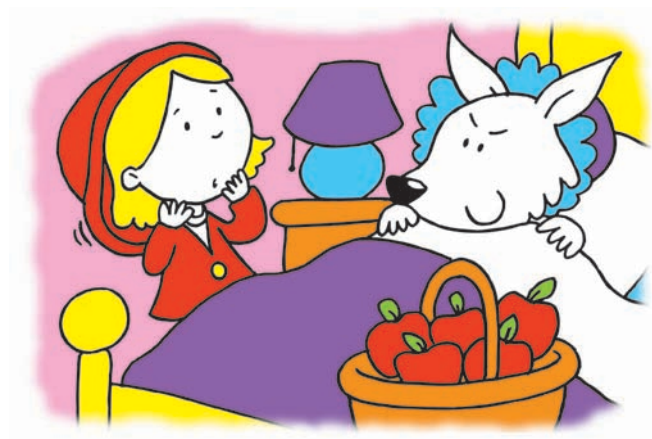
The princess was brought to her bedroom and laid on the bed. Then everybody left the palace.

The years passed and the bushes around the palace grew and grew. Soon they were so big that you would not even know that the palace was there.

When a hundred years were gone by, a handsome prince came to the forest. He could just see the top of a tower behind the bushes and he decided to see if there was a building in there. He took an axe and began to cut his way in.

Soon he came to the door of the palace. He went in and found the beautiful princess asleep on her bed. He leaned over and gave her a kiss.

The princess opened her eyes and woke up. She smiled at the handsome prince and thanked him for waking her. Then they left the palace and went to the prince’s castle, where they got married and lived happily ever after.



Little Red Riding Hood

Once upon a time there lived a little girl. The little girl's grandmother made her a red riding hood and she wore it all the time. Everybody called her Little Red Riding Hood.

One day her mother said to her, "Go and see how your grandmother is. She's not well. Take her these cakes."

Little Red Riding Hood set out through the wood.

As she was going through the wood, she met a wolf. The wolf asked her where she was going.

"I am going to see my grandmother to bring her some cakes," said Little Red Riding Hood.

The wolf ran off as fast as he could. Soon he arrived at Grandmother's house. He knocked at the door.

"Who's there?" said Grandmother.

"Little Red Riding Hood," said the wolf in a squeaky voice. "I have brought you some cakes."

"Come in, Little Red Riding Hood," called Grandmother.

The wolf opened the door and went in.

"Rrr," said the wolf.

"Eee!" said Grandmother.

And the wolf ate her all up!

Then the wolf shut the door and got into the grandmother's bed and pretended to be asleep.

Soon afterwards, Little Red Riding Hood arrived and knocked at the door.

"Who's there?" said the wolf in Grandmother's voice.

"Little Red Riding Hood," said Little Red Riding Hood. "I have brought you some cakes."

"Come in, Little Red Riding Hood," called the wolf.

Little Red Riding Hood opened the door and went in.

"Put the cakes on the table and come over and talk to me," said the wolf.

Little Red Riding Hood came over to the bed.

"Grandmother, what big eyes you have!" said Little Red Riding Hood.

"All the better to see you with, my dear," said the wolf.

"Grandmother, what big ears you have!" said Little Red Riding Hood.

"All the better to hear with, my dear," said the wolf.

"Grandmother, what big teeth you have!" said Little Red Riding Hood.

"All the better to eat you with," said the wolf as he jumped out of the bed!

Just then a woodcutter who was working in the forest passed by the house. He saw Little Red Riding Hood running away from the wolf.

"Help!" said Little Red Riding Hood.

The woodcutter took his axe and killed the wolf! Then he opened up the wolf's stomach, and out popped Grandmother, as good as new!

Everybody was happy that the wolf was gone and could never hurt them again.



The Three Little Pigs

Once upon a time there were three little pigs. One day their mother told them that the time had come for them to go and seek their fortunes. So they packed their things, kissed their mother goodbye and went off into the big wide world.

The pigs decided that they should build themselves somewhere to live. The first little pig built his house out of straw, because it was the easiest thing to do. Then he skipped off to play.

The second little pig built his house out of sticks. The stick house was a little bit stronger than a straw house, and took him a little longer. Then he skipped off to play.

The third little pig built his house out of bricks. The brick house was even stronger than the stick house and it took him a long time.

One night the big bad wolf came by the pigs' houses.

He went up to the first little pig's house of straw.

"Little pig, little pig, let me come in!" called the wolf.

"Not by the hair of my chinny chin chin," said the first little pig, "I'll not let you in."

"Then I'll huff and I'll puff and I'll blow your house in!" said the wolf.

And he huffed and he puffed and he blew down the house of straw. The little pig ran to his brother's house of sticks.

The wolf went up to the house of sticks.

"Little pig, little pig, let me come in," called the wolf.

"Not by the hair of my chinny chin chin," said the second little pig, "I'll not let you in."

"Then I'll huff and I'll puff and I'll blow your house in!" said the wolf.

And he huffed and he puffed and he blew down the house of sticks. The two little pigs ran into their brother's house of bricks.

The wolf went up to the house of bricks.

“Little pig, little pig, let me come in!” called the wolf.

“Not by the hair of my chinny chin chin,” said the third little pig, “I’ll not let you in.”

“Then I’ll huff and I’ll puff and I’ll blow your house in!” said the wolf.

And he huffed and he puffed and he huffed and he puffed – but the house didn’t fall down.

So the wolf climbed up on the roof to look for a way into the house of bricks.

The little pigs saw the wolf climb up on the roof. They lit a big fire in the fireplace and put a large pot of water on to boil.

The wolf got up on the chimney.

“Ha, ha, ha,” he thought. “I can get in this way.”

And with that he slipped down into the chimney and ...

Splash! He fell straight into the pot of boiling water!

“Ow!” the wolf yelled as he jumped straight back up the chimney and up into the sky! “Ow! Ow! Ow!” And he ran off into the woods and was never heard of again!

The three little pigs decided to stay together in the brick house and they lived happily ever after.



The Ugly Duckling

Once upon a time there was a family of ducks. One sunny morning, Mother Duck's eggs hatched and out popped six chirping ducklings.

However, one egg was bigger than the rest. The egg cracked open and a strange-looking duckling came out. He had grey feathers instead of yellow ones. He was quite simply the ugliest duckling that Mother Duck had ever seen.

As the days went by, the poor ugly duckling became more and more unhappy. His brothers didn't want to play with him because he was so clumsy, and all the animals in the farmyard laughed at him. He was sad and lonely.

"Nobody loves me, they all tease me! Why am I different from my brothers?" he asked.

One day the ugly duckling ran away from the farmyard. He stopped at a pond and began to talk to all the other birds.

"Do you know of any ducklings with grey feathers like mine?" he asked.

But everyone shook their heads.

"We don't know anyone as ugly as you," they said.

The ugly duckling went on his way. Every time he came to a pond he asked, "Do you know of any ducklings with grey feathers like mine?"

But he always got the same answer.

Then one day, he came to an old woman's cottage. The old woman ran out and caught him. She couldn't see very well, so she thought he was a goose!

"I'll put this goose in a hutch. I hope it lays plenty of eggs!" she said.

But the ugly duckling didn't lay any eggs.

"Well," thought the old woman, "if it won't lay eggs, I'll have to eat it!"

"Oh dear me!" moaned the duckling. "I just wanted someone to love me!"

Then one night he saw that the hutch door wasn't closed properly. He slipped out into the yard and escaped. Once again he was all alone. He ran as far away as he could, and found himself beside a pond.

"If nobody wants me, I'll hide here forever," he thought.

Winter came. The poor ugly duckling had to leave his home to look for food in the snow.

He had just fallen down, tired and hungry, when a farmer found him and put him in his big jacket pocket.

"I'll take him home to my children. They'll look after him. The poor thing is frozen!" said the farmer.

The duckling lived in the farmer's house all winter. The farmer's children loved him and looked after him.

When spring came, the farmer decided to set the ugly duckling free by the pond. The duckling saw himself in the water.

He had totally changed!

His grey feathers were gone and he now had beautiful white ones. His neck had grown long and graceful. He wasn't ugly any more!

Just then a group of swans landed on the pond.

"Hello," they said. "We're swans like you. Where have you been hiding?"

"It's a long story," replied the young swan.

"Never mind," said the swans. "Come with us."

The ugly duckling had a family at last!



Goldilocks and The Three Bears

Once upon a time, there was a little girl named Goldilocks. One day, Goldilocks went for a walk in the forest.

She hadn't been walking very long when she saw a house.

"I wonder who lives in this house?" she thought.

She knocked on the door, and when nobody answered, she walked right in!

On the table in the kitchen, there were three bowls of porridge – a great big bowl, a medium-sized bowl and a tiny little bowl. Goldilocks liked porridge. She picked up a spoon and tasted the porridge in the big bowl.

"Ow!" she said. "This porridge is too hot!"

She tasted the porridge in the medium-sized bowl.

"Yuck," she said. "This porridge is too cold."

Then she tasted the porridge in the little bowl.

"Ah, this porridge is just right," she sighed happily and she ate it all up!

After she'd eaten the porridge Goldilocks decided she was feeling a little tired. She walked into the sitting room where she saw three chairs – a great big chair, a medium-sized chair and a tiny little chair. Goldilocks sat down in the big chair.

"This chair is too hard!" she complained.

She sat in the medium-sized chair.

"This chair is too soft!" she whined.

Then she sat in the little chair.

"Ah, this chair is just right," she sighed happily. But just as she wriggled in to get comfortable, the chair broke into pieces!

Goldilocks was very tired, so she went upstairs to the bedroom. There were three beds in the bedroom – a great big bed, a medium-sized bed and a tiny little bed. Goldilocks lay down in the big bed.

“This bed’s too hard,” she complained.

Then she lay down in the medium-sized bed.

“This bed’s too soft,” she whined.

Then she lay down in the little bed

“Ah, this bed’s just right,” she sighed happily. Goldilocks snuggled down and fell fast asleep.

As Goldilocks was sleeping, the three bears came home. They went into the kitchen.

“Someone’s been eating my porridge,” growled Papa bear.

“Someone’s been eating my porridge,” said Mama bear.

“Someone’s been eating my porridge and ate it all up!” cried Baby bear, with tears streaming down his face.

Then the bears went into the sitting room.

“Someone’s been sitting in my chair,” growled Papa bear.

“Someone’s been sitting in my chair,” said Mama bear.

“Someone’s been sitting in my chair and broken it all to pieces,” cried Baby bear.

The bears decided to look around in case the person was still there. When they went upstairs to the bedroom – what do you think they saw?

“Someone’s been sleeping in my bed,” growled Papa bear.

“Someone’s been sleeping in my bed,” said Mama bear.

“Someone’s been sleeping in my bed and she’s still there!” shouted Baby bear.

Just then, Goldilocks woke up and saw the three bears.

“Rrr!” growled the bears.

“Aagh!” squealed Goldilocks. And she jumped up and ran out of the room.

Goldilocks ran down the stairs, out the door, into the forest and straight home. And she never, ever went back to the three bears’ house again.



The Gingerbread Man

Once upon a time there was a little old woman and a little old man, who lived in a little old house. One day, the little old woman made a man out of gingerbread; she gave him a chocolate jacket and put sweets on it for buttons. His eyes were made of currants and his mouth was made of sugar. The little old woman put him in a pan, put the pan in the oven and shut the door.

When the Gingerbread Man was done she opened the oven door and pulled out the pan. Out jumped the little Gingerbread Man onto the floor, and away he ran, out of the door and down the street! The little old woman and the little old man ran after him as fast as they could.

The little Gingerbread Man said,

“Run! Run! As fast as you can!

You can’t catch me, I’m the Gingerbread Man!”

And they couldn’t catch him.

The little Gingerbread Man ran on and on, until he met a cow.

“Mmm, a gingerbread man,” said the cow, “I’m going to eat it.”

The little Gingerbread Man said,

“Run! Run! As fast as you can!

You can’t catch me, I’m the Gingerbread Man!”

And the cow couldn’t catch him.

The little Gingerbread Man ran on and on, until he met a horse.

“Mmm, a gingerbread man,” said the horse, “I’m going to eat it.”

But the little Gingerbread Man said,

“Run! Run! As fast as you can!

You can't catch me, I'm the Gingerbread Man!"

And the horse couldn't catch him.

The little Gingerbread Man ran on and on, until he came to a river.

Just then a fox walked by.

"Mmm, a gingerbread man," said the fox, "I'm going to eat it."

The little Gingerbread Man said,

"Run! Run! As fast as you can!

You can't catch me! I'm the gingerbread man!"

"Maybe I can't catch you," said the fox, "but if you try to cross that river, you will surely get wet and crumble to pieces. Hop onto my tail and I'll carry you across."

So the Gingerbread Man hopped onto the fox's tail.

The fox began to swim. As he did, his tail dipped into the water.

"Oh dear," said the fox. "My tail is getting wet. Hop onto my back to stay dry."

So the Gingerbread Man hopped onto the fox's back.

"Oh dear," said the fox. "Now my back is getting wet. Hop onto my nose to stay dry."

So the Gingerbread Man hopped onto the fox's nose.

The Gingerbread Man looked back and saw the old man, the old woman, the cow and the horse standing at the bank of the river. He laughed and said,

"Run! Run! As fast as you can!

You can't catch me! I'm ..."

But before the Gingerbread Man could say another word, the fox flipped him into his mouth!

And that was the end of the little Gingerbread Man.

The Three Billy Goats Gruff

Once upon a time there were three Billy Goats called Gruff. In the winter they lived in a barn in the valley. When spring came they decided to go up to the mountains to eat the sweet grass.

On their way up to the mountains the three Billy Goats Gruff had to cross a dangerous river. There was only one bridge across. The bridge was made of wooden planks. An ugly troll lived underneath it. Nobody was allowed to cross the bridge unless the troll let them across. But the troll never let anyone cross the bridge. He always ate them up.

The smallest Billy Goat Gruff was first to reach the bridge. Trip-trap, trip-trap went his little hooves as he trotted over the wooden planks.

“Who’s that trip-trapping over my bridge?” growled the troll.

“Billy Goat Gruff,” squeaked the smallest goat in his little voice. “I’m only going up to the mountain to eat the sweet grass.”

“Oh no, you’re not!” said the troll. “I’m going to eat you for breakfast!”

“Oh no, Mr Troll,” pleaded the goat. “I’m much too tiny for you to eat, and I wouldn’t taste very good. Why don’t you wait for my brother, the middle-sized Billy Goat Gruff? He’s much bigger than me and would be much more tasty.”

The troll did not want to waste his time on the smallest goat if there was a bigger and better one to eat.

“All right, you can cross my bridge,” he grunted. “I’ll eat you on your way back!”

So the smallest Billy Goat Gruff skipped across to the other side.

The troll did not have to wait long for the second Billy Goat Gruff.

Trip-trap, trip-trap went his hooves as he trotted over the wooden planks.

“Who’s that trip-trapping across my bridge?” yelled the troll.

“Billy Goat Gruff,” said the middle-sized Billy Goat Gruff. “I’m going up to the mountain to eat the sweet grass.”

“Oh no you’re not!” said the troll. “I’m going to eat you for breakfast.”

“Oh no, Mr Troll,” said the second goat. “I may be bigger than the first Billy Goat Gruff, but I’m much smaller than my brother, the third Billy Goat Gruff. Why don’t you wait for him? He would be a much better meal than me.”

The troll was getting very hungry, but he did not want to waste his appetite on a middle-sized goat if there was an even bigger one to come.

“All right, you can cross my bridge,” grumbled the troll. “I’ll eat you on your way back!”

So the middle-sized Billy Goat Gruff scampered across to the other side.

The troll did not have to wait long for the third Billy Goat Gruff.

Trip-trap, trip-trap went his hooves as he trotted across the wooden planks.

“Who’s that trip-trapping over my bridge?” roared the troll.

“Billy Goat Gruff,” said the third goat in a deep voice. “I’m going up to the mountain to eat the sweet grass.”

“Oh no you’re not,” said the troll. “I’m going to eat you for breakfast!”

“That’s what you think,” said the biggest Billy Goat Gruff.

Then he lowered his horns, galloped along the bridge and butted the ugly troll.

Up, up, up went the troll into the air ...

Then down, down, down into the rushing river below.

He disappeared below the swirling waters, and was gone.

“So much for his breakfast,” thought the biggest Billy Goat Gruff. “Now, what about mine?”

And he walked over the bridge to join his two brothers on the mountain and eat the sweet grass.



Snow White

Once upon a time there was a king who had a daughter with hair as black as ebony, lips as red as blood and skin as white as snow. Everybody called her Snow White. Snow White's stepmother, the queen, was a wicked woman. She had a magic mirror, and every morning she would stand in front of the mirror and ask,

"Mirror, mirror, on the wall
Who is the fairest of them all?"
And the mirror always answered,
"You are the fairest of them all."

But as time passed, Snow White grew more and more beautiful. Then one day when the queen asked her mirror,

"Mirror, mirror, on the wall
Who is the fairest of them all?"
The mirror answered,
"Snow White is the fairest of them all."

The queen was very angry when she heard this. She decided to get rid of Snow White. She called a servant and told him to take the girl into the forest and kill her. The servant was scared of the queen, so he took Snow White into the forest. But he was also a kind man, so he did not kill her. Instead he told her what the queen had asked him to do and warned her never to go back to the palace.

Snow White began to run through the forest. She ran and ran until she came to a little house. She was very tired, so she went into the house to rest.

Everything in the little house was very small. Snow White lay down on a little bed and fell asleep.

Night came and the seven dwarfs, who owned the little house, came home. They were very surprised to find Snow White in their house.

Snow White woke up.

“Who are you?” the dwarfs asked.

“My name is Snow White,” Snow White answered, and she told them all about what her wicked stepmother had done. The dwarfs said that Snow White could live with them.

The next day, the queen, thinking that Snow White was dead, went and stood in front of her magic mirror and asked,

“Mirror, mirror, on the wall

Who is the fairest of them all?”

But the mirror answered

“Snow White is the fairest of them all.”

The queen was very, very angry. She decided to kill Snow White herself.

She went into her secret room and made a poisoned apple. Then she dressed up as an old woman and went into the forest to the seven dwarfs’ house.

She found Snow White working in the garden.

“Would you like a juicy apple, my dear?” she asked.

Snow White did not recognise the queen. She thought the apple looked very juicy and sweet. She took a big bite.

As soon as she bit the apple, she fell down dead.

When the dwarfs came home that night they found Snow White dead on the ground. They were very sad and cried a lot. Then they made her a glass coffin and put her in it.

One day a handsome prince came riding by the house.

He stopped to look at the glass coffin with Snow White inside it. He thought she was very beautiful. The prince asked the dwarfs to sell him the coffin, but they would not. Then he asked them to give the coffin to him, because he could not live without seeing Snow White every day. The dwarfs took pity on him and decided to give him the coffin.

The prince's servants came to move the coffin to his palace, but the servants were clumsy and the coffin fell over. The poisoned apple flew out of Snow White's throat and she began to breathe again.

The prince and the dwarfs opened the coffin and let her out. They were all very happy. The prince and Snow White were married and lived happily ever after.



Hansel and Gretel

Once upon a time, there was a poor woodcutter. He lived near a forest with his two children and their stepmother. The boy was called Hansel and the girl was called Gretel. The woodcutter was very poor and there wasn't even enough food to feed the four of them.

The stepmother was a wicked woman and she didn't like Hansel and Gretel at all. One night she said to the woodcutter, "Tomorrow morning you must take the children out into the forest and leave them there. They will not find the way home again, and we shall be rid of them."

"I can't do that!" said the man. "They would die in the forest!"

"If you don't get rid of them," said the wicked stepmother, "we will all die of hunger!"

The woodcutter decided that his wife was right.

Now the children had not been able to sleep and had heard everything their stepmother said. Hansel crept out into the yard and began to fill his pockets with stones. Then he lay down on his bed and waited for morning.

In the morning the woodcutter took the two children deep into the forest. Every now and then Hansel dropped one of the stones from his pockets onto the path. When they got to the deepest part of the forest, their father told them to stay there and he walked away.

Gretel was very frightened and began to cry.

“Don’t worry, Gretel,” said Hansel. “It’s all right, I’ve left a trail of stones. We can follow it home.”

The stepmother was not pleased when the children arrived home. That night she locked the door so Hansel could not get out to gather more stones.

The next day the stepmother told the woodcutter to take the children into the forest again. Hansel had no stones to lay a trail with, so he crumbled the bit of bread that he had been given for breakfast. Every now and then he threw some of the crumbs onto the ground. When they got to the deepest part of the forest, their father again told them to stay there and he walked away.

Gretel was very frightened and began to cry.

“Don’t worry, Gretel,” said Hansel. “It’s all right, I’ve left a trail of breadcrumbs. We can follow it home.”

But when they went to look for the trail they couldn’t find one crumb! The birds of the forest had eaten them all up!

Hansel and Gretel walked all day, trying to find their way out of the forest, but they could not find the way home. They were very hungry.

Suddenly they saw a little house between the trees. Hansel and Gretel went up to the house. It was made of cake! The walls were gingerbread, the roof was chocolate and the windows were made of sugar.

“We can eat this house,” said Hansel and he broke off a piece of the chocolate roof and began to chew.

Gretel broke off a piece of the gingerbread wall and began to eat it.

Just then the door opened and an old woman came out.

“Oh,” she said, “you look so hungry. Come in, come in.”

Hansel and Gretel followed the old woman into the house of cake.

But the old woman was really a wicked witch, and she had built the house to trap children. As soon as Hansel and Gretel were inside she put Hansel into a cage!

She said to Gretel, “You will do the housework, and when your brother is nice and fat I will cook him and eat him!”

Poor Hansel!

One day, the witch decided to eat Hansel for her dinner. She turned the oven on and waited for it to heat up.

“Go and see if the oven is hot enough,” she said to poor Gretel.

But Gretel was a clever girl and she had thought of a plan. She checked the oven and went back to the witch.

“I can’t tell if the oven is hot enough,” she said.

“Never mind, I’ll do it myself,” said the witch grumpily. And she opened the door and leaned in to see if the oven was hot enough.

Quick as a flash, Gretel pushed the witch into the oven and shut the door!

Then she ran to the cage and opened it up. Hansel climbed out and they both ran as far away from the witch’s house as they could.

They ran through the forest until they found the path that led to their father’s house. When their father saw them coming, he ran out to meet them.

“Oh, thank goodness!” he said. “You have come back to me. Your wicked stepmother is gone. I will never leave you alone again.”

And they all lived happily together from that day to this.



Cinderella

Once upon a time there was a beautiful young woman called Cinderella who lived with her mean, horrible stepmother and two ugly stepsisters. Her stepmother made her do all the hard, dirty work in the house while her two stepsisters lay around all day eating chocolate.

One day a message arrived from the king. The Prince was going to get married, and he was going to choose his wife at a ball in the palace! The ugly stepsisters were very excited. They were sure that the Prince would choose one of them!

The day of the ball arrived. The ugly stepsisters got into their best dresses and made Cinderella fix their hair so that it was all curly and sat on top of their heads like big towers. Then they and their mother set off for the ball.

Cinderella watched them drive off.

"I wish I could go to the ball," she whispered.

"Well," said a voice, "why don't you go?"

"Who are you?" asked Cinderella, looking at the beautiful fairy who had suddenly appeared.

"I'm your fairy godmother," said the fairy. "Do you want to go to the ball?"

"Oh, yes please," said Cinderella.

"Right, then. Run to the garden and get me a pumpkin."

Cinderella ran and picked the largest pumpkin in the garden. The fairy godmother waved her wand over it and – whoosh! The pumpkin turned into a beautiful coach!

"Good," said the fairy godmother. "Now, get me some mice."

Cinderella knew where there was a family of six mice living in the corner of the kitchen. She ran and scooped them up and brought them to the fairy godmother.

Poof! The fairy godmother turned the mice into six fine horses to pull the coach!

“We need a coachman,” said the fairy godmother. “Get me a rat.”

Cinderella ran and got a rat from the garden. Whish! The fairy godmother turned the rat into a jolly coachman.

“Now, we’re almost ready,” said the fairy godmother. “There’s just one more thing ...” And with that she tapped Cinderella’s dirty, ragged dress and turned it into the most beautiful ball dress you ever saw. And her shoes turned into wonderful glass slippers.

Cinderella climbed into the coach and turned to say thank you to her fairy godmother.

“You’re welcome,” said the fairy godmother, “but remember – it is very important that you leave the ball before the clock strikes midnight. All my magic will disappear at midnight. You must leave before that happens.”

“I will,” Cinderella promised. And off she went to the ball.

The ball was already started when Cinderella arrived. The Prince noticed her standing in the doorway.

“Who is that?” he asked.

But nobody knew who she was.

“I will ask her to dance,” he thought.

Cinderella and the Prince danced together all evening. Cinderella was enjoying herself so much that she forgot all about her fairy godmother’s warning. Suddenly the clock began to strike.

Midnight!

Cinderella ran out of the ballroom. She ran so fast that she didn’t notice when one of her glass slippers fell off. She ran and ran and ran until she was home.

The Prince ran after her, but he couldn’t see her anywhere. All he could find was one little glass slipper, lying on the ground.

The next day a message arrived from the palace. The Prince was going to visit every house in the kingdom to try to find the woman whose foot fit the glass slipper.

The ugly sisters were very excited. They were sure the slipper would fit one of them! Before long the Prince arrived. The first sister tried to squeeze her foot into the slipper.

“No,” said the Prince. “This is not your slipper. You are not the missing princess.”

The second sister tried to squash her foot into the little slipper.

“No,” said the Prince. “This is not your slipper. You are not the missing princess.”

Cinderella stepped forward.

“Please, may I try on the slipper?” she said.

“Of course,” said the Prince.

Cinderella put on the slipper and it fit perfectly.

“You are the missing princess!” smiled the Prince. “Will you marry me?”

“Oh yes,” said Cinderella.

And Cinderella and the Prince were married the very next day. And they lived happily ever after.



Jack and the Beanstalk

Once upon a time, there was a poor widow and her son, Jack. The widow and her son had one cow. One day, the widow told Jack to take the cow to market and sell it because they needed the money.

So Jack set off for the market. He hadn't gone far when he met a funny-looking old man.

"Good morning," said the man

"Good morning," said Jack.

"Where are you off to?" said the man.

"I'm going to market to sell our cow," said Jack.

"Oh, I'm looking for a cow," said the man.

"How much will you give me for her?" asked Jack.

"I'll give you these five beans," said the man, and he took five strange beans out of his pocket. "They are magic beans."

"Really?" said Jack. He thought he would like to have some magic beans. "All right, you can have the cow if you give me those beans."

"Here you are," said the man and he gave Jack the beans and took the cow.

Jack went home and showed his mother the magic beans. She was very, very cross with him. She threw the beans out of the window and sent Jack to bed with no supper.

The next day, the strangest thing happened. Right where his mother had thrown the magic beans, there was an enormous beanstalk! It was so high it stretched right up into the clouds!

Jack decided to climb the beanstalk. Up and up he went, higher and higher, until at last he reached the very top. And there at the top of the beanstalk was a road!

Jack walked along the road until he came to a house. He knocked on the door and a great, big, tall woman let him in.

“You had better go away,” the woman told him. “My husband is a giant and he likes to eat boys.”

Just then they heard the giant coming home.

“Goodness, gracious me!” said the giant’s wife. “Here he is. You had better hide in the oven.”

So Jack hopped into the oven and held the door closed.

The giant came into the kitchen. He stopped and sniffed the air.

“Fee, fi, fo, fum, I smell the blood of a boy, by gum!” he roared.

“No, you don’t,” said the giant’s wife. “Now sit down and eat your breakfast.”

Jack peeped out of the oven and saw the giant sitting at the table eating his breakfast.

Then the giant picked up a hen and put it on the table.

“Lay,” said the giant, and the hen laid an egg that was all gold!

“Oh,” thought Jack, “if we had that hen, we would never be hungry again!”

The giant finished his breakfast and fell asleep. Jack crept out of the oven and over to the table. Quick as a flash, he grabbed the hen and ran out the door.

But just as Jack got outside the hen squawked and the giant woke up!

Jack ran away as fast as he could, with the giant running after him. He got to the top of the beanstalk and began to climb down. Just as he reached the bottom, he felt the beanstalk begin to shake. The giant was climbing after him.

“Mother! Mother!” he shouted. “Bring me an axe.”

The widow ran out into the garden with an axe and Jack cut the beanstalk down.

The giant fell out of the sky. He landed with a crash and made a big hole in the ground. The beanstalk fell into the hole after him and they both disappeared for ever.

Jack and his mother and the hen that laid the golden eggs lived together and they were never poor again.



The Pied Piper of Hamelin

Once upon a time a long time ago, there was a town called Hamelin. The people in the town had a big problem. There were rats everywhere.

There were rats in the mills and rats in the houses. The rats chased the dogs and fought with the cats. Nobody could get anything done because of all the rats.

The people were at their wits' end. They complained to the Mayor, but the Mayor couldn't do anything. Then he had an idea. He would offer a reward to anyone who could get rid of the rats.

The people thought this was a pretty good idea.

One day a strange man arrived in the town. He was wearing a coat with lots of different colours on it. He had a silver pipe in his hand.

The man went straight to the Mayor.

"I have heard about the reward," he said. "I am a rat-catcher. I can get rid of the rats."

"Great!" said the Mayor. "That's just what we need."

The piper began to play a tune. At first everyone just stared at him. This did not seem to be a good way of catching rats. Then, something amazing happened. The rats began to come out of the buildings. They ran up to the piper. The piper began to walk out of town and the rats followed him!

The piper walked to the nearby river and splashed into the water. The rats all followed him and drowned.

The people saw that all the rats were dead. “Well,” they thought, “he can’t bring them back again now.” The Mayor got a crafty look on his face.

The piper came back to the town. “I would like my reward now,” he said.

“There is no reward,” said the Mayor. “Go away.”

“You will be sorry you said that,” the piper told the Mayor.

But the Mayor just laughed.

The piper went away and everyone forgot about him.

Then, a couple of days later, the piper came back. He stood in the street and began to play a tune on his pipe.

The doors opened and the children of Hamelin ran out into the streets. They ran up to the piper and began to dance to his tune. The piper turned and walked out of the town and the children all followed him.

The piper led the children towards the mountain. But there was one child who had hurt her foot and could not keep up with the rest. A little while later she came back to town alone.

The people asked her what had happened.

“We went up to the mountain,” she said, “and suddenly a door opened in the side of the mountain! The piper led them all inside and the door closed behind them.”

The people were stunned. The piper had taken away their children. And they never saw them again.



King Midas

Once upon a time there was a king called Midas. King Midas was very, very rich. He had everything a king could want. He lived in a huge castle that had lots of rose gardens around it. He had marvellous things to eat and drink. Best of all, he had a wonderful daughter named Zoe, who loved him very much.

But King Midas loved one thing more than anything else in the world. He loved gold.

One day, King Midas found a strange man asleep in his rose garden. The man's name was Silenus and he was a good friend of the god of celebration, Dionysus. King Midas took care of Silenus and brought him back to Dionysus.

Dionysus had been very worried about Silenus and was very glad that he had come back.

"You have done a kind thing," he told King Midas. "Please, let me grant you a wish. What does your heart desire?"

King Midas thought for about half a second, then he said, "I want everything I touch to turn into gold."

Dionysus didn't think this sounded like such a good idea. "Are you sure about this?" he asked.

"Oh, yes," said King Midas. "I really love gold."

“Very well,” said Dionysus. “From tomorrow, everything you touch will turn into gold.”

King Midas went home, very pleased with himself.

The next morning, King Midas woke up and remembered what Dionysus had said. He reached out and touched the table beside his bed. It turned into gold!

King Midas jumped out of bed. He touched the chair, the rug, the door, a picture and the mirror. They all turned to gold!

“It works! It works!” he shouted.

The king spent the whole morning running around turning things into gold. He was so happy. He had gold everywhere now! He was also very hungry.

King Midas went into the dining room and sat down. The food on the table looked delicious. He picked up a grape and put it in his mouth.

“Ow!”

The grape was hard as stone. It had turned into gold!

He tried to bite into a piece of bread. His teeth clanked onto a bread-shaped piece of gold.

This was not good.

King Midas picked up a goblet and tried to take a drink. He almost choked as the water turned into liquid gold.

This was very bad. If everything turned to gold, he might starve!

The king began to cry.

Zoe came running into the dining room to see what had upset her father. Before he could say anything she had given him a hug!

King Midas stared in horror. His daughter had been turned into a golden statue!

This was awful!

King Midas ran out into the garden.

“Please,” he shouted, “please take this away from me! I don’t want to turn everything to gold! I don’t love gold! I love my daughter! Please make everything go back to the way it was!”

Dionysus, who had been listening, took pity on the poor king.

“Go down to the river,” he told King Midas, “and wash your hands in the water there. Then bring some of the water back and pour it onto the things you turned to gold. They will turn back.”

King Midas didn’t wait for a second. He ran down to the river and put his hands in the water. The magic flowed out of them and turned the sand in the river bed to gold. Carefully, King Midas touched a blade of grass.

It stayed the same.

The king ran off and got a jug. He filled it with river water and ran to where the statue of his daughter was. He poured the water over her and she came back to life.

The king ran back to the river and got more water. He poured it over everything he had turned to gold. And when all the magic gold was gone, King Midas and Zoe left the palace and went to live in the forest, where they lived happily together.



Puss in Boots

Once upon a time there was a miller with three sons. When the miller died, he left his mill, his donkey and his cat. The eldest son got the mill, the middle son got the donkey and the youngest son got the cat.

The youngest son looked at the cat and sighed.

“Well, I suppose I could eat you,” he said.

“Don’t worry,” said the cat. “I won’t let you starve. All I need is a bag and a pair of boots and we will be all right.”

The young man knew that the cat was clever, so he bought him a pair of boots and a bag and the cat headed off.

The cat put some food in the bag and went and lay down beside a rabbit warren. The rabbits thought the cat was dead and soon enough one of them hopped into the bag to eat the food there. Quick as a flash, the cat closed the bag and trapped the rabbit.

Then the cat cleaned his whiskers and went to the palace to see the king.

The cat bowed to the king and said, “Sir, I have brought you this rabbit as a present from my master.”

“What is your master’s name?” asked the king.

“The Marquis of Carabas,” said the cat. He thought that sounded better than “the miller’s son”.

The king was pleased with his present. He told the cat to thank the Marquis of Carabas for him.

The cat went home, very pleased with himself.

Another time the cat caught a pair of partridges and brought them to the king as a present from the Marquis. The king was very pleased with them too.

One day, the cat learned that the king and his daughter were going for a ride in their carriage by the side of the river. He went to the miller's son.

"We are going to make our fortunes today," he said. "Go and bathe in the river where I tell you to. Then leave the rest to me."

The miller's son went down to the river and got in.

The cat waited until the king's carriage was just passing by, then he began to shout.

"Help! Help!" he yelled. "The Marquis of Carabas is going to drown!"

The king put his head out of the window and saw the cat.

"Quick," he said to his guards, "go and help the Marquis of Carabas."

The cat came up to the carriage.

"Oh, sir!" he said, "Such a terrible thing has happened. While my master was in the river, some bad men ran off with his clothes! I shouted as loud as I could, but nobody came to help us."

In truth, the cat had hidden the clothes under a big stone.

The king sent his servant running to the palace for some clothes for the Marquis of Carabas. When he had put them on, the marquis looked very fine, for he was a handsome young man and the clothes were very nice.

The princess began to fall in love with the marquis.

The king, the princess and the marquis went on with their drive. The cat marched on ahead of them.

Soon he met some men mowing a field.

"Listen to me," he told them, "the king is coming. If you don't tell him this field belongs to the Marquis of Carabas, I will chop you up."

Soon enough, the king's carriage passed the field. The king stuck his head out of the window and asked who the field belonged to.

"To the Marquis of Carabas," the men said. They were afraid of the cat.

"Is this your field?" the king asked the marquis.

"Yes," said the marquis. He hoped the cat knew what he was doing.

The cat met some people reaping grain.

"Listen to me," he told them, "the king is coming. If you don't tell him this grain belongs to the Marquis of Carabas, I will chop you up."

Soon enough, the king's carriage arrived. The king asked who the corn belonged to.

"To the Marquis of Carabas," the people said. They were afraid of the cat.

"Is this your corn?" the king asked the marquis.

"Yes," said the marquis. He really hoped the cat knew what he was doing.

The king was very pleased. Every field they passed belonged to the Marquis of Carabas!

Soon the cat came to a castle. A very rich ogre lived there. The ogre actually owned all the fields that the cat had said belonged to the marquis.

The cat went into the castle and asked to speak to the ogre. The ogre met him in a large room.

"I have heard people talking about you," said the cat. "They say you can turn yourself into all sorts of creatures, like a lion or an elephant."

"Yes, I can," said the ogre and turned himself into a lion to prove it.

The cat ran up the curtains to get away from the fierce lion – which was a little difficult while he was wearing boots.

The ogre turned himself back and the cat came down.

"That was very scary," said the cat. "You were a very big lion. You know, I have also heard that you can turn yourself into very small creatures, like a rat or a mouse. That must be impossible!"

"No, it's not!" said the ogre crossly. "I'll prove it!"

The ogre turned himself into a mouse.

The cat pounced on him and ate him up!

Just then, the cat heard the king's carriage coming. He went out to meet it.

"Welcome!" he called out. "Welcome to the Marquis of Carabas's castle!"

"Is this your castle?" the king asked the marquis.

"Yes," said the marquis.

The king, the princess and the marquis followed the cat inside and ate a meal together.

The next day, the king's daughter married the Marquis of Carabas. The cat became a great lord and never hunted mice again.



Thumbelina

Once upon a time there was a woman who had no children. One day she went to a fairy and said, “I would like to have a little child; can you tell me where I can find one?”

“Yes,” said the fairy. “Take this magic grain of barley and plant it in a flowerpot.”

“Thank you,” said the woman. Then she went home and planted the barley grain.

The next day, the grain had grown into a beautiful flower. Inside the flower sat a tiny girl, no bigger than a thumb.

The woman called the little girl Thumbelina because she was so tiny. Thumbelina lived happily with the woman. During the day she played on the table and sang to the woman in a lovely, sweet voice. At night she slept in a bed made out of a walnut shell with a rose petal for a blanket.

One night, while Thumbelina was fast asleep, a toad hopped in through a hole in the window. She saw Thumbelina and thought that she was very pretty.

“She will make a good wife for my son,” croaked the toad. With that, she picked up the walnut shell and hopped away with Thumbelina!

The toad carried Thumbelina back to the pond. She was afraid that Thumbelina would run away, so she put the little girl onto a lily pad in the middle of the river.

“She will not be able to escape from there!” said the toad.

Thumbelina sat down on the leaf and began to cry. She did not want to marry the toad!

Some fish who had been enjoying the shade under the lily leaf had heard what the toad had said. They heard Thumbelina crying and decided to help her. So they nibbled at the stem of the lily leaf until it broke and the leaf began to float off.

Thumbelina sat on the leaf and watched the river bank go by. A butterfly saw her there and asked her what had happened. Thumbelina told him everything.

“Throw me the end of your belt,” said the butterfly, “and I will tow you along.”

Thumbelina did that and soon the lily leaf was moving faster.

Suddenly a large beetle appeared. He saw Thumbelina and thought she was very pretty. He swooped down and picked her up with his strong feet. Then he flew away to his home in a leafy tree.

The beetle invited all his friends to see Thumbelina. But his friends didn’t think she was pretty at all! She only had two legs, and no feelers and her skin was soft and strange. The beetle decided that she was too different for him to marry her, so he set her free in the forest.

During the summer, Thumbelina lived in the forest. Then the winter came. Poor Thumbelina was cold and hungry. She could not find any food or shelter. She wandered into the fields, hoping to find some food.

Just then, she came across a little house in the field. She knocked at the door. It was opened by a field mouse.

“Oh, dear,” said the mouse, “you look so cold and hungry. Come in!”

So Thumbelina went inside and the mouse gave her some food and wrapped her in a blanket until she got warm again.

Thumbelina spent the winter in the mouse’s house. She kept the house clean and told the mouse stories.

One day, the mouse told Thumbelina that her friend the mole was coming to tea.

“My friend is very rich,” said the mouse. “He would make you a good husband.”

Thumbelina didn’t like the sound of that. However, when the mole came, she sang to him and told him stories, because he was the mouse’s friend.

The mole fell in love with Thumbelina. He made a tunnel between his house and the field mouse's home so that the field mouse and Thumbelina could visit him without going outside. The mole didn't like the outside.

Thumbelina, the field mouse and the mole walked down the tunnel. Thumbelina was horrified when they found a swallow lying in the tunnel, as still and cold as if it were dead. The mole pushed the swallow aside. "Birds are so useless," he said. "I'm glad I'm not a bird."

Thumbelina was shocked by the mole's words, because she loved the birds who had sung to her all summer.

Later, she crept back to where the swallow lay. She wanted to cover him up properly. After she had covered the swallow in warm hay, she gave him a kiss. Suddenly, the swallow moved!

"Oh, thank you," said the swallow. "I was so cold. I had hurt my wing on a thorn and I could not keep up with my family when they flew to the warm countries. I got so cold that I could not move, and I would have died if you had not made me warm."

Thumbelina nursed the swallow all that winter. In the spring, he flew away.

That summer, the mole decided to marry Thumbelina. Everyone started to get ready for the wedding. It would be in the autumn, and then Thumbelina would have to go and live with the mole and never see the outside world again.

Thumbelina was very sad.

The day before the wedding, she went outside to look at the sky one last time. Suddenly a swallow flew down from the sky. It was her friend!

"Why are you sad?" he asked.

Thumbelina told him all about her wedding.

"I am leaving for the warm countries today," said the swallow. "Why don't you hop on my back and come with me? Then you would not have to marry the mole."

So that is just what she did!

Thumbelina and the swallow flew over fields and hills and forests until at last they came to the warm countries where the swallow spent the winter.

The swallow landed in a beautiful meadow full of flowers. Thumbelina hopped off his back onto a broad leaf.

“Hello,” said a voice.

Thumbelina looked around. There, sitting in the middle of the flower, was a little man, no bigger than Thumbelina herself! He had a golden crown on his head and white wings on his back.

“Hello,” Thumbelina said. “Who are you?”

“I’m the King of the Fairies,” said the man.

Thumbelina and the king began to talk, and soon the king fell in love with Thumbelina.

“Will you marry me?” he asked.

“Yes, please,” said Thumbelina

Suddenly all the fairies who lived in the flowers came out to meet Thumbelina. They brought her presents and gave her some wings so that she could be a fairy too.

Thumbelina and the king were married that day and they lived happily ever after.