



М. С. КУЛАКОВИЧ

**ЛЕКСИКО-ГРАММАТИЧЕСКИЕ И КОММУНИКАТИВНЫЕ
ЗАДАНИЯ ПО КНИГЕ «СКАЗКИ» ОСКАРА УАЙЛЬДА**

Учебно-практическое пособие

Челябинск

2024

Министерство просвещения Российской Федерации
Федеральное государственное бюджетное
образовательное учреждение высшего образования
«Южно-Уральский государственный
гуманитарно-педагогический университет»

М. С. КУЛАКОВИЧ

**ЛЕКСИКО-ГРАММАТИЧЕСКИЕ И КОММУНИКАТИВНЫЕ ЗАДАНИЯ
ПО КНИГЕ «СКАЗКИ» ОСКАРА УАЙЛЬДА**

Учебно-практическое пособие

Челябинск
2024

УДК 42-8 (076) (021)

ББК 81/432/1-923-3

К 90

Кулакович, М. С. Лексико-грамматические и коммуникативные задания по книге «Сказки» Оскара Уайльда: учебно-практическое пособие / М. С. Кулакович; Министерство просвещения РФ; Южно-Уральский государственный гуманитарно-педагогический университет. – Челябинск: Изд-во ЮУрГГПУ, 2024. – 81 с. – ISBN 978-5-907869-00-4. – Текст: непосредственный.

Учебно-практическое пособие содержит адаптированные тексты сказок Оскара Уайльда и задания к ним. Выполняя задания, студенты должны обратить внимание не только на сюжет текстов, но и на их лексическую и грамматическую составляющие.

Пособие может быть использовано студентами на занятиях с преподавателем, а также во внеаудиторной и самостоятельной работе.

Рецензенты

О. Ю. Павлова, канд. ист. наук, доцент

Т. А. Бояльская, канд. пед. наук, доцент

ISBN 978-5-907869-00-4

© М. С. Кулакович, 2024

© Издательство Южно-Уральского государственного гуманитарно-педагогического университета, 2024

СОДЕРЖАНИЕ

ВВЕДЕНИЕ	4
THE BIOGRAPHY OF OSCAR WILDE (16.10.1854 – 30.11.1900)	5
TEXTS OF OSCAR WILDE'S FAIRY TALES	7
The Happy Prince	7
The Nightingale and the Rose	17
The Selfish Giant	24
The Devoted Friend	29
The Remarkable Rocket	42
The Star-Child	54
TASKS ON THE TEXTS OF OSCAR WILDE'S FAIRY TALES	72
ЗАКЛЮЧЕНИЕ	78
БИБЛИОГРАФИЧЕСКИЙ СПИСОК	79

ВВЕДЕНИЕ



Данное учебно-практическое пособие предназначено для студентов старших курсов, углублённо изучающих английский язык в рамках своего профиля подготовки. В пособие включены адаптированные для уровней *Intermediate* и *Upper-Intermediate* тексты сказок британского писателя Оскара Уайльда. Данное пособие может быть использовано на групповых занятиях по дисциплинам «Чтение произведений английских писателей», «Чтение произведений писателей страны изучаемого языка», «Домашнее чтение», «Практический курс изучаемого иностранного языка», «Практический курс английского языка», «Практика устной и письменной речи» и курсах иностранных языков, а также для самостоятельной работы.

Пособие представляет адаптированные тексты сказок и задания к ним. Выполняя задания, студенты должны обратить внимание не только на сюжет текстов, но и на их лексическую и грамматическую составляющие. Отвечая на вопросы, связанные с сюжетом сказок, студенты развивают память, воображение и умение составлять логические высказывания по прочитанному материалу. Лексические и грамматические задания позволяют студентам расширить кругозор, а также лучше понять стиль и образность языка автора.

Учебно-практическое пособие может быть использовано на занятиях с преподавателем, а также во внеаудиторной и самостоятельной работе.

THE BIOGRAPHY OF OSCAR WILDE (16.10.1854 – 30.11.1900)



Oscar Wilde was born in Dublin on the 16th of October, 1854. His father was a famous Irish surgeon and his mother was a poetess and a highly educated woman. She did her best to make little Oscar be interested in literature. At school Wilde was good at art and humanities. Then he received a very good education at Trinity College in Dublin and Oxford University. While at the University, Wilde joined the young “aesthetic movement”, the members of which were against hypocrisy in the society.

After graduating from the University, Wilde turned his attention to writing, travelling and lecturing. In 1881 he went to America to lecture on the “aesthetic movement” in England. His lecture tours were very successful.

The next ten years saw the appearance of all his main works. In 1881 Oscar Wilde published his *Poems*. The beautiful fairytales *The Happy Prince and Other Tales* appeared in 1888, his only novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray* – in 1891. Oscar Wilde won his fame as a dramatist. The most significant of his comedies are: *Lady Windermere’s Fan* (1892); *An Ideal Husband* (1895); *The Importance of Being Earnest* (1895). These comedies reveal the selfishness, vanity and corruption of English higher society.

At the height of his popular success tragedy struck. He was accused of immorality and sentenced to two years’ imprisonment. In prison Oscar Wilde wrote his powerful poem *The Ballad of Reading Gaol* (1898). The main character of it is a young man who has killed his unfaithful sweetheart.

When released from prison Oscar Wilde went to France. He died in Paris on November 30, 1900 and is buried there.

Interesting facts:

1. Oscar Wilde was born with three middle names. His full name is Oscar Fingal O'Flahertie Wills Wilde.

2. He knew French, German, Italian and Ancient Greek.

3. He married Constance Lloyd on the 29th of May, 1884 and had two sons: Cyril and Vyvyan. Cyril fought and died in the World War I. Vyvyan was a translator for BBC and the author of the autobiography "Son of Oscar Wilde". Vyvyan's son Merlin published one more biography – "A Portrait of Oscar Wilde" (2008).

4. Oscar Wilde died because of cerebral meningitis.

5. His last words were "My wallpaper and I are fighting a duel to the death. One or other of us has got to go." He died in a cheap hotel room in Paris. Shabby-looking wallcovering upsetted him very much. In 2000 on the 100th anniversary of his death there was a symbolic ceremony of burying the wallpaper in honour of Oscar Wilde.

TEXTS OF OSCAR WILDE'S FAIRY TALES



The Happy Prince

High above the city, on a tall column, stood the statue of the Happy Prince. He was covered with thin leaves of fine gold, for eyes he had two bright sapphires, and a large red ruby shone brightly on his sword-hilt.

He was very much admired indeed. "He is as beautiful as a weathercock," said one of the Town Councillors, who wished to gain a reputation for having artistic tastes. 'Only not quite so useful,' he added because he was afraid that people may think him unpractical, which he really was not.

'Why can't you be like the Happy Prince?' asked a sensible mother of her little boy who was crying for the moon. 'The Happy Prince never dreams of crying for anything.'

'I am glad there is someone in the world who is quite happy,' said a disappointed man as he looked at the wonderful statue.

'He looks just like an angel,' said the Charity Children as they came out of the cathedral.

'How do you know?' said the Mathematical Master. 'You have never seen one.'

'Ah! But we have, in our dreams,' answered the children; and the Mathematical Master frowned and looked at them angrily, because he did not approve of children dreaming.

One night there flew over the city a little Swallow. His friends went away to Egypt six weeks before. But he stayed behind, because he was in love with the most beautiful Reed. He saw her early in the spring

as he was flying down the river after a big yellow moth. He was so attracted by her slender waist that he stopped to talk to her.

‘Shall I love you?’ asked the Swallow, who liked to come to the point at once, and the Reed made him a low bow. So he flew round and round her, touching the water with his wings. This was his courtship, and it lasted all through the summer.

‘It is a ridiculous attachment,’ twittered the other Swallows, ‘she has no money and far too many relations,’ and, indeed, the river was quite full of Reeds. Then, when the autumn came, they all flew away.

After they had gone, the Swallow felt lonely and began to think of his lady-love. ‘She has no conversation,’ he said, ‘and I am afraid that she is a coquette, for she is always flirting with the wind.’ And certainly, whenever the wind blew, the Reed made the most graceful curtsseys. ‘I admit that she is domestic,’ he continued, ‘but I love travelling, and my wife should also love travelling.’

‘Will you come away with me?’ he said finally to her, but the Reed shook her head, she was so attached to her home.

‘You have been trifling with me,’ he cried. ‘I am off to the Pyramids. Good-bye!’ and he flew away.

All day long he flew, and at night-time he arrived at the city. ‘Where shall I stay?’ he thought. ‘I hope the town has made preparations.’

Then he saw the statue on the tall column. ‘I will stay there,’ he cried, ‘it is a fine position, with plenty of fresh air.’ So he settled just between the feet of the Happy Prince.

‘I have a golden bedroom,’ he said softly to himself as he looked round, and he prepared to go to sleep. But just as he was putting his head under his wing, a large drop of water fell on him. ‘What a curious thing!’ he cried. ‘There is not a single cloud in the sky, the stars are quite clear and bright, and yet it is raining. The climate in the north of Europe

is really dreadful. The Reed used to like the rain, but there was only her selfishness.' Then another drop fell.

'What is the use of a statue if it cannot keep the rain off?' he said. 'I must look for a good chimney-cap,' and he decided to fly away.

But before he had spread his wings, a third drop fell, he looked up, and saw — Ah! What did he see?

The eyes of the Happy Prince were filled with tears, and the tears were running down his golden cheeks. His face was so beautiful in the moonlight that the little Swallow was filled with pity. 'Who are you?' he said. 'I am the Happy Prince.'

'Why are you weeping then?' asked the Swallow. 'You have made me thoroughly wet.'

'When I was alive and had a human heart,' answered the statue, 'I did not know what tears were, for I lived in the Palace of Sans-Souci, where sorrow is not allowed to enter. In the daytime I played with my companions in the garden, and in the evening I led the dance in the Great Hall. Round the garden ran a very high wall, but I never cared to ask what lay beyond it. Everything about me was so beautiful. My courtiers called me the Happy Prince, and happy, indeed, I was, if pleasure be happiness. So I lived, and so I died. And now that I am dead, they have put me up here so high that I can see all the ugliness and all the misery of my city. Though my heart is made of lead yet I cannot choose but weep.'

'What! Is he not solid gold?' said the Swallow to himself. He was too polite to make any personal remarks out loud.

'Far away,' continued the statue in a low musical voice, 'far away in a little street there is a poor house. One of the windows is open, and through it I can see a woman seated at a table. Her face is thin and worn. She has coarse, red hands, all pricked by the needle, for she is a seamstress. She is embroidering passionflowers on a satin gown for

the loveliest of the Queen's maids-of-honour to wear at the next Court-ball. In a bed in the corner of the room her little boy is lying ill. He has a fever, and is asking for oranges. His mother has nothing to give him but river water, so he is crying. Swallow, Swallow, little Swallow, will you not bring her the ruby out of my sword-hilt? My feet are fixed to this pedestal and I cannot move.'

'I am waited for in Egypt,' said the Swallow. 'My friends are flying up and down the Nile, and talking to the large lotus-flowers. Soon they will go to sleep in the tomb of the great King. The King is there himself in his painted coffin.'

'Swallow, Swallow, little Swallow,' said the Prince, 'can't you stay with me for one night, and be my messenger? The boy is so thirsty, and the mother is so sad.'

'I don't think I like boys,' answered the Swallow. 'Last summer, when I was staying on the river, there were two rude boys, the miller's sons, who were always throwing stones at me. They never hit me, of course; we, swallows, fly far too well for that, but still it was a mark of disrespect.'

But the Happy Prince looked so sad that the little Swallow was sorry. 'It is very cold here,' he said, 'but I will stay with you for one night, and be your messenger.'

'Thank you, little Swallow,' said the Prince.

So the Swallow picked out the great ruby from the Prince's sword, and flew away with it over the roofs of the town.

He passed by the cathedral tower, where the white marble angels were sculptured. He passed by the palace and heard the sound of dancing. A beautiful girl came out on the balcony with her lover. 'How wonderful the stars are,' he said to her, 'and how wonderful is the power of love!'

'I hope my dress will be ready in time for the Court-ball,' she answered. 'I have ordered passionflowers to be embroidered on it; but the seamstresses are so lazy.'

The Swallow passed over the river, and saw the lanterns hanging on the masts of the ships. He passed over the Ghetto, and saw the old Jews bargaining with each other, and weighing out money in copper scales. At last he reached the poor house and looked in. The boy was lying ill in bed. The mother was sleeping, she was so tired. The Swallow laid the great ruby on the table. Then he flew gently round the bed, fanning the boy's forehead with his wings. 'How cool I feel!' said the boy. 'I must be getting better,' and he fell asleep.

Then the Swallow flew back to the Happy Prince, and told him what he had done. 'It is curious,' he said, 'but I feel quite warm now, although it is so cold.'

'This is because you have done a good action,' said the Prince. And the little Swallow began to think, and then he fell asleep. Thinking always made him sleepy.

When day broke, he flew down to the river and had a bath. 'What a remarkable phenomenon!' said the Professor of Ornithology, as he was passing over the bridge. 'A swallow in winter!' And he wrote a long letter about it to the local newspaper. Every one quoted it, it was full of so many words that they could not understand.

'Tonight I go to Egypt,' said the Swallow, and he was in a good mood at the prospect. He visited all the public monuments, and sat a long time on the top of the church. Wherever he went, the Sparrows said to each other, 'What a distinguished stranger!' So he enjoyed himself very much.

When the moon rose, he flew back to the Happy Prince. 'Have you any messages for Egypt?' he cried. 'I am just starting.'

'Swallow, Swallow, little Swallow,' said the Prince, 'can't you stay with me one night longer?'

'I am waited for in Egypt,' answered the Swallow. 'Tomorrow my friends will fly up to the Second Cataract. The river-horse sits there among the bulrushes, and on a great granite throne sits the God Memnon. All night long he watches the stars, and when the morning star shines, he utters one cry of joy, and then he is silent. At noon the yellow lions come down to the water's edge to drink. They have eyes like green beryls, and their roar is louder than the roar of the cataract.'

'Swallow, Swallow, little Swallow,' said the Prince, 'far away across the city I see a young man in a small room. He is leaning over a desk covered with papers, and by his side there is a bunch of violets. His hair is brown and crisp, and his lips are as red as a pomegranate, and he has large dreamy eyes. He is trying to finish a play for the Director of the Theatre, but he is too cold to write any more. There is no fire in the grate, and hunger has made him weak.'

'I will wait with you one night longer,' agreed the Swallow, who really had a good heart. 'Shall I take him another ruby?'

'Alas! I have no ruby now,' sighed the Prince, 'my eyes are all that I have left. They are made of rare sapphires, which were brought out of India a thousand years ago. Pluck out one of them and take it to him. He will sell it to the jeweller and buy firewood, and finish his play.'

'Dear Prince,' said the Swallow, 'I cannot do that,' and he began to weep.

'Swallow, Swallow, little Swallow,' said the Prince, 'do as I command you.'

So the Swallow plucked out the Prince's eye, and flew away to the Student's small room. It was easy enough to get in, as there was a hole in the roof. Through this he quickly flew, and came into the room.

The young man had his head buried in his hands, so he did not hear the flutter of the bird's wings. When he looked up, he found the beautiful sapphire lying on the faded violets.

'I am beginning to be appreciated,' he cried, 'this is from some great admirer. Now I can finish my play,' and he looked quite happy.

The next day the Swallow flew down to the harbour. He sat and watched the sailors hauling big boxes out of the hold with ropes. 'Heave a-hoy!' they shouted as each box came up. 'I am going to Egypt!' cried the Swallow, but nobody paid much attention. When the moon rose, he flew back to the Happy Prince.

'I have come to say good-bye to you,' he cried.

'Swallow, Swallow, little Swallow,' pleaded the Prince, 'can't you stay with me one night longer?'

'It is winter,' answered the Swallow, 'and the chill snow will soon be here. In Egypt the sun is warm on the green palm-trees, and the crocodiles lie in the mud and look lazily about them. My companions are building a nest in the Temple of Baalbec, and the pink and white doves are watching them, and cooing to each other. Dear Prince, I must leave you, but I will never forget you. Next spring I will bring you back two beautiful jewels to replace those you have given away. The ruby shall be redder than a red rose, and the sapphire shall be as blue as the great sea.'

'In the square below,' said the Happy Prince, 'there stands a little girl who sells matches. She has let her matches fall in the gutter, and they are all spoiled. Her father will beat her, if she does not bring home some money, and she is crying. She has no shoes or stockings, and her little head is bare. Pluck out my other eye, and her father will not beat her.'

'I will stay with you one night longer,' whispered the Swallow, 'but I cannot pluck out your eye. You would be completely blind then.'

'Swallow, Swallow, little Swallow,' said the Prince, 'do as I command you.'

So he plucked out the Prince's other eye, and flew with it. He found the match-girl, and slipped the jewel into Her hand. 'What a lovely bit of glass!' cried the little girl, and she ran home, laughing.

Then the Swallow came back to the Prince. 'You are blind now,' he said, 'so I will stay with you always.'

'No, little Swallow,' answered the Poor Prince, 'you must go away to Egypt.'

'I will stay with you always,' said the Swallow, and he slept at the Prince's feet.

All the next day he sat on the Prince's shoulder, and told him stories of what he had seen in strange lands. He told him of the red ibises who stand in long rows on the banks of the Nile, and catch goldfish; of the Sphinx who is as old as the world itself, and lives in the desert, and knows everything; of the merchants who walk slowly by the side of their camels and carry amber beads in their hands; of the King of the Mountains of the Moon who is as black as ebony, and worships a large crystal; of the great green snake that sleeps in a palm-tree, and has twenty priests to feed it with honey cakes; and of the pigmies who sail over a big lake on large flat leaves, and are always at war with the butterflies.

'Dear little Swallow,' said the Prince, 'you tell me of marvellous things, but the most marvellous thing of all is the suffering of men and women. There is no Mystery so great as Misery. Fly over my city, little Swallow, and tell me what you see there.'

So the Swallow flew over the great city, and saw the rich making merry in their beautiful houses, while the beggars were sitting at the gates. He flew into dark lanes, and saw the white faces of starving children looking out at the black streets. Under a bridge two little boys

were lying in one another's arms to try and keep themselves warm. 'How hungry we are!' they said. 'You must not lie here,' shouted the watchman, and they went out into the rain.

Then he flew back and told the Prince what he had seen.

'I am covered with fine gold,' said the Prince, 'you must take it off, leaf by leaf, and give it to the poor; people always think that gold can make them happy.'

So the Swallow took off leaf after leaf of the fine gold, till the Happy Prince looked quite dull and grey. He brought leaf after leaf of the fine gold to the poor, and the children's faces grew rosier, and they laughed and played games in the street. 'We have bread now!' they cried.

Then the snow came, and after the snow was the frost. The streets looked as if they were made of silver, they were so bright and glistening; everybody walked about in furs, and the little boys wore scarlet caps and skated on the ice.

The poor little Swallow grew colder and colder, but he would not leave the Prince, he loved him too much. He picked up crumbs outside the baker's door, when the baker was not looking, and tried to keep himself warm by flapping his wings.

But at last he knew that he was going to die. He had just enough strength to fly up to the Prince's shoulder once more. 'Good-bye, dear Prince!' he said. 'Will you let me kiss your hand?'

'I am glad that you are going to Egypt at last, little Swallow,' said the Prince. 'You have stayed too long here; but you must kiss me on the lips, for I love you.'

'It is not to Egypt that I am going,' said the Swallow. 'I am going to the House of Death. Death is the brother of Sleep, is he not?' And he kissed the Happy Prince on the lips and fell down dead at his feet.

At that moment a curious crack sounded inside the statue as if something had broken. The fact was that the leaden heart had broken in two. It certainly was a dreadfully hard frost.

Early the next morning the Mayor was walking in the square below with the Town Councillors. As they passed the column, he looked up at the statue: 'Dear me! How shabby the Happy Prince looks!' he said.

'How shabby, indeed!' cried the Town Councillors who always agreed with the Mayor, and they went up to look at it.

'The ruby has fallen out of his sword, his eyes are gone, and he is golden no longer,' said the Mayor, 'in fact, he is little better than a beggar!'

'Little better than a beggar,' echoed the Town Councillors.

'And here is actually a dead bird at his feet!' continued the Mayor. 'We must issue a proclamation that birds are not to be allowed to die here.' And the Town Clerk made a note of the suggestion.

So they pulled down the statue of the Happy Prince.

'As he is no longer beautiful, he is no longer useful,' said the Art Professor at the University.

Then they melted the statue in a furnace, and the Mayor held a meeting of the Corporation to decide what was to be done with the metal. 'We must have another statue, of course,' he said, 'and it shall be a statue of myself.'

'Of myself,' repeated each of the Town Councillors, and they quarrelled. When I last heard of them, they were still quarrelling.

'What a strange thing!' said the supervisor of the workmen. 'This broken lead heart will not melt in the furnace. We must throw it away.' So they threw it in a pile of dust where the dead Swallow was also lying.

'Bring me the two most precious things in the city,' said God to one of His Angels, and the Angel brought Him the leaden heart and the dead bird.

'You have rightly chosen,' said God, 'for in my garden of Paradise this little bird shall sing for evermore, and in my city of gold the Happy Prince shall praise me.'

The Nightingale and the Rose

'She said that she would dance with me if I brought her red roses,' cried the young Student; 'but in all my garden there is no red rose.'

From her nest in the holm-oak tree the Nightingale heard him, and she looked out through the leaves, and wondered.

'No red rose in all my garden!' he cried, and his beautiful eyes filled with tears. 'Ah, on what little things does happiness depend! I have read all that the wise men have written, and all the secrets of philosophy are mine, yet for want of a red rose is my life made wretched.'

'Here at last is a true lover,' said the Nightingale. 'Night after night have I sung of him, though I knew him not: night after night have I told his story to the stars, and now I see him. His hair is dark as the hyacinth-blossom, and his lips are red as the rose of his desire; but passion has made his lace like pale Ivory, and sorrow has set her seal upon his brow.'

'The Prince gives a ball to-morrow night,' murmured the young Student, 'and my love will be of the company. If I bring her a red rose she will dance with me till dawn. If I bring her a red rose, I shall hold her in my arms, and she will lean her head upon my shoulder, and her hand will be clasped in mine. But there is no red rose in my garden, so I shall sit lonely, and she will pass me by. She will have no heed of me, and my heart will break.'

‘Here indeed is the true lover,’ said the Nightingale. ‘What I sing of he suffers: what is joy to me, to him is pain. Surely Love is a wonderful thing. It is more precious than emeralds, and dearer than fine opals. Pearls and pomegranates cannot buy it, nor is it set forth in the market-place. It may not be purchased of the merchants, or can it be weighed out in the balance for gold.’

‘The musicians will sit in their gallery,’ said the young Student, ‘and play upon their stringed instruments, and my love will dance to the sound of the harp and the violin. She will dance so lightly that her feet will not touch the floor, and the courtiers in their gay dresses will throng round her. But with me she will not dance, for I have no red rose to give her;’ and he flung himself down on the grass, and buried his face in his hands, and wept.

‘Why is he weeping?’ asked a little Green Lizard, as he ran past him with his tail in the air.

‘Why, indeed?’ said a Butterfly, who was fluttering about after a sunbeam.

‘Why, indeed?’ whispered a Daisy to his neighbour, in a soft, low voice.

‘He is weeping for a red rose,’ said the Nightingale.

‘For a red rose!’ they cried; ‘how very ridiculous!’ and the little Lizard, who was something of a cynic, laughed outright.

But the Nightingale understood the secret of the Student’s sorrow, and she sat silent in the oak-tree, and thought about the mystery of Love.

Suddenly she spread her brown wings for flight, and soared into the air. She passed through the grove like a shadow, and like a shadow she sailed across the garden.

In the centre of the grass-plot was standing a beautiful Rose-tree, and when she saw it, she flew over to it, and lit upon a spray.

'Give me a red rose,' she cried, 'and I will sing you my sweetest song.'

But the Tree shook its head.

'My roses are white,' it answered; 'as white as the foam of the sea, and whiter than the snow upon the mountain. But go to my brother who grows round the old sun-dial, and perhaps he will give you what you want.'

So the Nightingale flew over to the Rose-tree that was growing round the old sun-dial.

'Give me a red rose,' she cried, 'and I will sing you my sweetest song.'

But the Tree shook its head.

'My roses are yellow,' it answered; 'as yellow as the hair of the mermaid who sits upon an amber throne, and yellower than the daffodil that blooms in the meadow before the mower comes with his scythe. But go to my brother who grows beneath the Student's window, and perhaps he will give you what you want.'

So the Nightingale flew over to the Rose-tree that was growing beneath the Student's window.

'Give me a red rose,' she cried, 'and I will sing you my sweetest song.'

But the Tree shook its head.

'My roses are red,' it answered, 'as red as the feet of the dove, and redder than the great fans of coral that wave and wave in the ocean-cavern. But the winter has chilled my veins, and the frost has nipped my buds, and the storm has broken my branches, and I shall have no roses at all this year.'

'One red rose is all I want,' cried the Nightingale, 'only one red rose! Is there no way by which I can get it?'

‘There is a way,’ answered the Tree; ‘but it is so terrible that I dare not tell it to you.’

‘Tell it to me,’ said the Nightingale, ‘I am not afraid.’

‘If you want a red rose,’ said the Tree, ‘you must build it out of music by moonlight, and stain it with your own heart’s-blood. You must sing to me with your breast against a thorn. All night long you must sing to me, and the thorn must pierce your heart, and your life-blood must flow into my veins, and become mine.’

‘Death is a great price to pay for a red rose,’ cried the Nightingale, ‘and Life is very dear to all. It is pleasant to sit in the green wood, and to watch the Sun in his chariot of gold, and the Moon in her chariot of pearl. Sweet is the scent of the hawthorn, and sweet are the bluebells that hide in the valley, and the heather that blows on the hill. Yet Love is better than Life, and what is the heart of a bird compared to the heart of a man?’

So she spread her brown wings for flight, and soared into the air. She swept over the garden like a shadow, and like a shadow she sailed through the grove.

The young Student was still lying on the grass, where she had left him, and the tears were not yet dry in his beautiful eyes.

‘Be happy,’ cried the Nightingale, ‘be happy; you shall have your red rose. I will build it out of music by moonlight, and stain it with my own heart’s-blood. All that I ask of you in return is that you will be a true lover, for Love is wiser than Philosophy, though she is wise, and mightier than Power, though he is mighty. Flame-coloured are his wings, and coloured like flame is his body. His lips are sweet as honey, and his breath is like frankincense.’

The Student looked up from the grass, and listened, but he could not understand what the Nightingale was saying to him, for he only knew the things that are written down in books.

But the Oak-tree understood, and felt sad, for he was very fond of the little Nightingale who had built her nest in his branches.

‘Sing me one last song,’ he whispered; ‘I shall feel very lonely when you are gone.’

So the Nightingale sang to the Oak-tree, and her voice was like water bubbling from a silver jar.

When she had finished her song the Student got lip, and pulled a note-book and a lead-pencil out of his pocket.

‘She has form,’ he said to himself, as he walked away through the grove - ‘that cannot be denied to her; but has she got feeling? I am afraid not. In fact, she is like most artists; she is all style, without any sincerity. She would not sacrifice herself for others. She thinks merely of music, and everybody knows that the arts are selfish. Still, it must be admitted that she has some beautiful notes in her voice. What a pity it is that they do not mean anything, or do any practical good.’ And he went into his room, and lay down on his little pallet-bed, and began to think of his love; and, after a time, he fell asleep.

And when the Moon shone in the heavens the Nightingale flew to the Rose-tree, and set her breast against the thorn. All night long she sang with her breast against the thorn, and the cold crystal Moon leaned down and listened. All night long she sang, and the thorn went deeper and deeper into her breast, and her life-blood ebbed away from her.

She sang first of the birth of love in the heart of a boy and a girl. And on the topmost spray of the Rose-tree there blossomed a marvellous rose, petal following petal, as song followed song. Yale was it, at first, as the mist that hangs over the river - pale as the feet of the morning, and silver as the wings of the dawn. As the shadow of a rose in a mirror of silver, as the shadow of a rose in a water-pool, so was the rose that blossomed on the topmost spray of the Tree.

But the Tree cried to the Nightingale to press closer against the thorn. 'Press closer, little Nightingale,' cried the Tree, 'or the Day will come before the rose is finished.'

So the Nightingale pressed closer against the thorn, and louder and louder grew her song, for she sang of the birth of passion in the soul of a man and a maid.

And a delicate flush of pink came into the leaves of the rose, like the flush in the face of the bridegroom when he kisses the lips of the bride. But the thorn had not yet reached her heart, so the rose's heart remained white, for only a Nightingale's heart's-blood can crimson the heart of a rose.

And the Tree cried to the Nightingale to press closer against the thorn. 'Press closer, little Nightingale,' cried the Tree, 'or the Day will come before the rose is finished.'

So the Nightingale pressed closer against the thorn, and the thorn touched her heart, and a fierce pang of pain shot through her. Bitter, bitter was the pain, and wilder and wilder grew her song, for she sang of the Love that is perfected by Death, of the Love that dies not in the tomb.

And the marvellous rose became crimson, like the rose of the eastern sky. Crimson was the girdle of petals, and crimson as a ruby was the heart.

But the Nightingale's voice grew fainter, and her little wings began to beat, and a film came over her eyes. Fainter and fainter grew her song, and she felt something choking her in her throat.

Then she gave one last burst of music. The white Moon heard it, and she forgot the dawn, and lingered on in the sky. The red rose heard it, and it trembled all over with ecstasy, and opened its petals to the cold morning air. Echo bore it to her purple cavern in the hills, and

woke the sleeping shepherds from their dreams. It floated through the reeds of the river, and they carried its message to the sea.

'Look, look!' cried the Tree, 'the rose is finished now;' but the Nightingale made no answer, for she was lying dead in the long grass, with the thorn in her heart.

And at noon the Student opened his window and looked out.

'Why, what a wonderful piece of luck! he cried; 'here is a red rose! I have never seen any rose like it in all my life. It is so beautiful that I am sure it has a long Latin name;' and he leaned down and plucked it.

Then he put on his hat, and ran up to the Professor's house with the rose in his hand.

The daughter of the Professor was sitting in the doorway winding blue silk on a reel, and her little dog was lying at her feet.

'You said that you would dance with me if I brought you a red rose,' cried the Student. Here is the reddest rose in all the world. You will wear it to-night next your heart, and as we dance together it will tell you how I love you.'

But the girl frowned.

'I am afraid it will not go with my dress,' she answered; 'and, besides, the Chamberlain's nephew has sent me some real jewels, and everybody knows that jewels cost far more than flowers.'

'Well, upon my word, you are very ungrateful,' said the Student angrily; and he threw the rose into the street, where it fell into the gutter, and a cart-wheel went over it.

'Ungrateful!' said the girl. 'I tell you what, you are very rude; and, after all, who are you? Only a Student. Why, I don't believe you have even got silver buckles to your shoes as the Chamberlain's nephew has;' and she got up from her chair and went into the house.

'What a silly thing Love is,' said the Student as he walked away. 'It is not half as useful as Logic, for it does not prove anything, and it is

always telling one of things that are not going to happen, and making one believe things that are not true. In fact, it is quite unpractical, and, as in this age to be practical is everything, I shall go back to Philosophy and study Metaphysics.'

So he returned to his room and pulled out a great dusty book, and began to read.

The Selfish Giant

Every afternoon, as they were coming from school, the children used to go and play in the Giant's garden.

It was a large lovely garden, with soft green grass. Here and there over the grass stood beautiful flowers like stars, and there were twelve peach-trees that in the spring-time broke out into delicate blossoms of pink and pearl, and in the autumn bore rich fruit. The birds sat on the trees and sang so sweetly that the children used to stop their games in order to listen to them. 'How happy we are here!' they cried to each other.

One day the Giant came back. He had been to visit his friend the Cornish ogre, and had stayed with him for seven years. After the seven years were over he had said all that he had to say, for his conversation was limited, and he determined to return to his own castle. When he arrived he saw the children playing in the garden.

'What are you doing here?' he cried in a very gruff voice, and the children ran away.

'My own garden is my own garden,' said the Giant; 'any one can understand that, and I will allow nobody to play in it but myself.' So he built a high wall all round it, and put up a notice-board.

TRESPASSERS
WILL BE
PROSECUTED

He was a very selfish Giant.

The poor children had now nowhere to play. They tried to play on the road, but the road was very dusty and full of hard stones, and they did not like it. They used to wander round the high wall when their lessons were over, and talk about the beautiful garden inside.

‘How happy we were there,’ they said to each other.

Then the Spring came, and all over the country there were little blossoms and little birds. Only in the garden of the Selfish Giant it was still Winter. The birds did not care to sing in it as there were no children, and the trees forgot to blossom. Once a beautiful flower put its head out from the grass, but when it saw the notice-board it was so sorry for the children that it slipped back into the ground again, and went off to sleep. The only people who were pleased were the Snow and the Frost. ‘Spring has forgotten this garden,’ they cried, ‘so we will live here all the year round.’ The Snow covered up the grass with her great white cloak, and the Frost painted all the trees silver. Then they invited the North Wind to stay with them, and he came. He was wrapped in furs, and he roared all day about the garden, and blew the chimney-pots down. ‘This is a delightful spot,’ he said, ‘we must ask the Hail on a visit.’ So the Hail came. Every day for three hours he rattled on the roof of the castle till he broke most of the slates, and then he ran round and round the garden as fast as he could go. He was dressed in grey, and his breath was like ice.

‘I cannot understand why the Spring is so late in coming,’ said the Selfish Giant, as he sat at the window and looked out at his cold white garden; ‘I hope there will be a change in the weather.’

But the Spring never came, nor the Summer. The Autumn gave golden fruit to every garden, but to the Giant’s garden she gave none. ‘He is too selfish,’ she said. So it was always Winter there, and the North

Wind, and the Hail, and the Frost, and the Snow danced about through the trees.

One morning the Giant was lying awake in bed when he heard some lovely music. It sounded so sweet to his ears that he thought it must be the King's musicians passing by. It was really only a little linnet singing outside his window, but it was so long since he had heard a bird sing in his garden that it seemed to him to be the most beautiful music in the world. Then the Hail stopped dancing over his head, and the North Wind ceased roaring, and a delicious perfume came to him through the open casement. 'I believe the Spring has come at last,' said the Giant; and he jumped out of bed and looked out.

What did he see?

He saw a most wonderful sight. Through a little hole in the wall the children had crept in, and they were sitting in the branches of the trees. In every tree that he could see there was a little child. And the trees were so glad to have the children back again that they had covered themselves with blossoms, and were waving their arms gently above the children's heads. The birds were flying about and twittering with delight, and the flowers were looking up through the green grass and laughing. It was a lovely scene, only in one corner it was still Winter. It was the farthest corner of the garden, and in it was standing a little boy. He was so small that he could not reach up to the branches of the tree, and he was wandering all round it, crying bitterly. The poor tree was still quite covered with frost and snow, and the North Wind was blowing and roaring above it. 'Climb up! little boy,' said the Tree, and it bent its branches down as low as it could; but the little boy was too tiny.

And the Giant's heart melted as he looked out. 'How selfish I have been!' he said; 'now I know why the Spring would not come here. I will put that poor little boy on the top of the tree, and then I will knock

down the wall, and my garden shall be the children's playground for ever and ever.' He was really very sorry for what he had done.

So he crept downstairs and opened the front door quite softly, and went out into the garden. But when the children saw him they were so frightened that they all ran away, and the garden became Winter again. Only the little boy did not run, for his eyes were so full of tears that he did not see the Giant coming. And the Giant stole up behind him and took him gently in his hand, and put him up into the tree. And the tree broke at once into blossom, and the birds came and sang on it, and the little boy stretched out his two arms and flung them round the Giant's neck, and kissed him. And the other children, when they saw that the Giant was not wicked any longer, came running back, and with them came the Spring. 'It is your garden now, little children,' said the Giant, and he took a great axe and knocked down the wall. And when the people were going to market at twelve o'clock they found the Giant playing with the children in the most beautiful garden they had ever seen.

All day long they played, and in the evening they came to the Giant to bid him good-bye.

'But where is your little companion?' he said: 'the boy I put into the tree.' The Giant loved him the best because he had kissed him.

'We don't know,' answered the children; 'he has gone away.'

'You must tell him to be sure and come here to-morrow,' said the Giant. But the children said that they did not know where he lived, and had never seen him before; and the Giant felt very sad.

Every afternoon, when school was over, the children came and played with the Giant. But the little boy whom the Giant loved was never seen again. The Giant was very kind to all the children, yet he longed for his first little friend, and often spoke of him. 'How I would like to see him!' he used to say.

Years went over, and the Giant grew very old and feeble. He could not play about any more, so he sat in a huge armchair, and watched the children at their games, and admired his garden. 'I have many beautiful flowers,' he said; 'but the children are the most beautiful flowers of all.'

One winter morning he looked out of his window as he was dressing. He did not hate the Winter now, for he knew that it was merely the Spring asleep, and that the flowers were resting.

Suddenly he rubbed his eyes in wonder, and looked and looked. It certainly was a marvellous sight. In the farthest corner of the garden was a tree quite covered with lovely white blossoms. Its branches were all golden, and silver fruit hung down from them, and underneath it stood the little boy he had loved.

Downstairs ran the Giant in great joy, and out into the garden. He hastened across the grass, and came near to the child. And when he came quite close his face grew red with anger, and he said, 'Who hath dared to wound thee?' For on the palms of the child's hands were the prints of two nails, and the prints of two nails were on the little feet.

'Who hath dared to wound thee?' cried the Giant; 'tell me, that I may take my big sword and slay him.'

'Nay!' answered the child; 'but these are the wounds of Love.'

'Who art thou?' said the Giant, and a strange awe fell on him, and he knelt before the little child.

And the child smiled on the Giant, and said to him, 'You let me play once in your garden, to-day you shall come with me to my garden, which is Paradise.'

And when the children ran in that afternoon, they found the Giant lying dead under the tree, all covered with white blossoms.

The Devoted Friend

One morning the old Water-rat put his head out of his hole. He had bright beady eyes and stiff grey whiskers, and his tail was like a long bit of black india-rubber. The little ducks were swimming about in the pond, looking just like a lot of yellow canaries, and their mother, who was pure white with real red legs, was trying to teach them how to stand on their heads in the water.

‘You will never be in the best society unless you can stand on your heads,’ she kept saying to them; and every now and then she showed them how it was done. But the little ducks paid no attention to her. They were so young that they did not know what an advantage it is to be in society at all.

‘What disobedient children!’ cried the old Water-rat; ‘they really deserve to be drowned.’

‘Nothing of the kind,’ answered the Duck, ‘every one must make a beginning, and parents cannot be too patient.’

‘Ah! I know nothing about the feelings of parents,’ said the Water-rat; ‘I am not a family man. In fact, I have never been married, and I never intend to be. Love is all very well in its way, but friendship is much higher. Indeed, I know of nothing in the world that is either nobler or rarer than a devoted friendship.’

‘And what, pray, is your idea of the duties of a devoted friend?’ asked a Green Linnet, who was sitting in a willow-tree hard by, and had overheard the conversation.

‘Yes, that is just what I want to know,’ said the Duck, and she swam away to the end of the pond, and stood upon her head, in order to give her children a good example.

‘What a silly question!’ cried the Water-rat. ‘I should expect my devoted friend to be devoted to me, of course.’

‘And what would you do in return?’ said the little bird, swinging upon a silver spray, and flapping his tiny wings.

‘I don’t understand you,’ answered the Water-rat.

‘Let me tell you a story on the subject,’ said the Linnet.

‘Is the story about me?’ asked the Water-rat. If so, I will listen to it, for I am extremely fond of fiction.’

‘It is applicable to you,’ answered the Linnet; and he flew down, and alighting upon the bank, he told the story of The Devoted Friend.

‘Once upon a time,’ said the Linnet, ‘there was an honest little fellow named Hans.’

‘Was he very distinguished?’ asked the Water-rat.

‘No,’ answered the Linnet, ‘I don’t think he was distinguished at all, except for his kind heart, and his funny round good-humoured face. He lived in a tiny cottage all by himself, and every day he worked in his garden. In all the country-side there was no garden so lovely as his. Sweet-william grew there, and Gilly-flowers, and Shepherds’-purses, and Fair-maids of France. There were damask Roses, and yellow Roses, lilac Crocuses, and gold, purple Violets and white. Columbine and Ladysmock, Marjoram and Wild Basil, the Cowslip and the Flower-de-luce, the Daffodil and the Clove-Pink bloomed or blossomed in their proper order as the months went by, one flower taking another flower’s place, so that there were always beautiful things to look at, and pleasant odours to smell.

‘Little Hans had a great many friends, but the most devoted friend of all was big Hugh the Miller. Indeed, so devoted was the rich Miller to little Hans, that he [Hans] would never go by his garden without leaning over the wall and plucking a large nosegay, or a handful of sweet herbs, or filling his pockets with plums and cherries if it was the fruit season.

'Real friends should have everything in common,' the Miller used to say, and little Hans nodded and smiled, and felt very proud of having a friend with such noble ideas.

'Sometimes, indeed, the neighbours thought it strange that the rich Miller never gave little Hans anything in return, though he had a hundred sacks of flour stored away in his mill, and six milk cows, and a large stock of woolly sheep; but Hans never troubled his head about these things, and nothing gave him greater pleasure than to listen to all the wonderful things the Miller used to say about the unselfishness of true friendship.

'So little Hans worked away in his garden. During the spring, the summer, and the autumn he was very happy, but when the winter came, and he had no fruit or flowers to bring to the market, he suffered a good deal from cold and hunger, and often had to go to bed without any supper but a few dried pears or some hard nuts. In the winter, also, he was extremely lonely, as the Miller never came to see him then.

'There is no good in my going to see little Hans as long as the snow lasts,' the Miller used to say to his wife, 'for when people are in trouble they should be left alone, and not be bothered by visitors. That at least is my idea about friendship, and I am sure I am right. So I shall wait till the spring comes, and then I shall pay him a visit, and he will be able to give me a large basket of primroses, and that will make him so happy.'

'You are certainly very thoughtful about others,' answered the Wife, as she sat in her comfortable armchair by the big pinewood fire; 'very thoughtful indeed. It is quite a treat to hear you talk about friendship. I am sure the clergyman himself could not say such beautiful things as you do, though he does live in a three-storied house, and wears a gold ring on his little finger.'

‘But could we not ask little Hans up here?’ said the Miller’s youngest son. ‘If poor Hans is in trouble I will give him half my porridge, and show him my white rabbits.’

‘What a silly boy you are!’ cried the Miller; ‘I really don’t know what is the use of sending you to school. You seem not to learn anything. Why, if little Hans came up here, and saw our warm fire, and our good supper, and our great cask of red wine, he might get envious, and envy is a most terrible thing, and would spoil anybody’s nature. I certainly will not allow Hans’s nature to be spoiled. I am his best friend, and I will always watch over him, and see that he is not led into any temptations. Besides, if Hans came here, he might ask me to let him have some flour on credit, and that I could not do. Flour is one thing, and friendship is another, and they should not be confused. Why, the words are spelt differently, and mean quite different things. Everybody can see that.’

‘How well you talk!’ said the Miller’s Wife, pouring herself out a large glass of warm ale; ‘really I feel quite drowsy. It is just like being in church.’

‘Lots of people act well,’ answered the Miller; ‘but very few people talk well, which shows that talking is much the more difficult thing of the two, and much the finer thing also;’ and he looked sternly across the table at his little son, who felt so ashamed of himself that he hung his head down, and grew quite scarlet, and began to cry into his tea. However, he was so young that you must excuse him.’

‘Is that the end of the story?’ asked the Water-rat.

‘Certainly not,’ answered the Linnet, that is the beginning.

‘Then you are quite behind the age,’ said the Water-rat. ‘Every good story-teller nowadays starts with the end, and then goes on to the beginning, and concludes with the middle. That is the new method. I heard all about it the other day from a critic who was walking round

the pond with a young man. He spoke of the matter at great length, and I am sure he must have been right, for he had blue spectacles and a bald head, and whenever the young man made any remark, he always answered "Pooh!" But pray go on with your story. I like the Miller immensely. I have all kinds of beautiful sentiments myself, so there is a great sympathy between us.

'Well,' said the Linnet, hopping now on one leg and now on the other, 'as soon as the winter was over, and the primroses began to open their pale yellow stars, the Miller said to his wife that he would go down and see little Hans.

'Why, what a good heart you have!' cried his wife; 'you are always thinking of others. And mind you take the big basket with you for the flowers.'

'So the Miller tied the sails of the windmill together with a strong iron chain, and went down the hill with the basket on his arm.

'Good morning, little Hans,' said the Miller.

'Good morning,' said Hans, leaning on his spade, and smiling from ear to ear.

'And how have you been all the winter?' said the Miller. 'Well, really,' cried Hans, 'it is very good of you to ask, very good indeed. I am afraid I had rather a hard time of it, but now the spring has come, and I am quite happy, and all my flowers are doing well.'

'We often talked of you during the winter, Hans,' said the Miller, 'and wondered how you were getting on.'

'That was kind of you,' said Hans; 'I was half afraid you had forgotten me.'

'Hans, I am surprised at you,' said the Miller; 'friendship never forgets. That is the wonderful thing about it, but I am afraid you don't understand the poetry of life. How lovely your primroses are looking, by-the-by!'

'They are certainly very lovely,' said Hans, 'and it is a most lucky thing for me that I have so many. I am going to bring them into the market and sell them to the Burgomaster's daughter, and buy back my wheelbarrow with the money.'

'Buy back your wheelbarrow? You don't mean to say you have sold it? What a very stupid thing to do!'

'Well, the fact is,' said Hans, 'that I was obliged to. You see the winter was a very bad time for me, and I really had no money at all to buy bread with. So I first sold the silver buttons off my Sunday coat, and then I sold my silver chain, and then I sold my big pipe, and at last I sold my wheelbarrow. But I am going to buy them all back again now.'

'Hans,' said the Miller, 'I will give you my wheelbarrow. It is not in very good repair; indeed, one side is gone, and there is something wrong with the wheel-spokes; but in spite of that I will give it to you. I know it is very generous of me, and a great many people would think me extremely foolish for parting with it, but I am not like the rest of the world. I think that generosity is the essence of friendship, and, besides, I have got a new wheelbarrow for myself. Yes, you may set your mind at ease, I will give you my wheelbarrow.'

'Well, really, that is generous of you,' said little Hans, and his funny round face glowed all over with pleasure. 'I can easily put it in repair, as I have a plank of wood in the house.'

'A plank of wood' said the Miller; 'why, that is just what I want for the roof of my barn. There is a very large hole in it, and the corn will all get damp if I don't stop it up. How lucky you mentioned it! It is quite remarkable how one good action always breeds another. I have given you my wheelbarrow, and now you are going to give me your plank. Of course, the wheelbarrow is worth far more than the plank, but true friendship never notices things like that. Pray get it at once, and I will set to work at my barn this very day.'

‘Certainly,’ cried little Hans, and he ran into the shed and dragged the plank out.

‘It is not a very big plank,’ said the Miller, looking at it, ‘and I am afraid that after I have mended my barn-roof there won’t be any left for you to mend the wheelbarrow with; but, of course, that is not my fault. And now, as I have given you my wheelbarrow, I am sure you would like to give me some flowers in return. Here is the basket, and mind you fill it quite full.’

‘Quite full?’ said little Hans, rather sorrowfully, for it was really a very big basket, and he knew that if he filled it he would have no flowers left for the market, and he was very anxious to get his silver buttons back.

‘Well, really,’ answered the Miller, ‘as I have given you my wheelbarrow, I don’t think that it is much to ask you for a few flowers. I may be wrong, but I should have thought that friendship, true friendship, was quite free from selfishness of any kind.’

‘My dear friend, my best friend,’ cried little Hans, ‘you are welcome to all the flowers in my garden. I would much sooner have your good opinion than my silver buttons, any day;’ and he ran and plucked all his pretty primroses, and filled the Miller’s basket.

‘Good-bye, little Hans,’ said the Miller, as he went up the hill with the plank on his shoulder, and the big basket in his hand.

‘Good-bye,’ said little Hans, and he began to dig away quite merrily, he was so pleased about the wheelbarrow.

‘The next day he was nailing up some honeysuckle against the porch, when he heard the Miller’s voice calling to him from the road. So he jumped off the ladder, and ran down the garden, and looked over the wall.

‘There was the Miller with a large sack of flour on his back.

'Dear little Hans,' said the Miller, 'would you mind carrying this sack of flour for me to market?'

'Oh, I am so sorry,' said Hans, 'but I am really very busy to-day. I have got all my creepers to nail up, and all my flowers to water, and all my grass to roll.'

'Well, really,' said the Miller, 'I think that, considering that I am going to give you my wheelbarrow, it is rather unfriendly of you to refuse.'

'Oh, don't say that,' cried little Hans, 'I wouldn't be unfriendly for the whole world;' and he ran in for his cap, and trudged off with the big sack on his shoulders.

'It was a very hot day, and the road was terribly dusty, and before Hans had reached the sixth milestone he was so tired that he had to sit down and rest. However, he went on bravely, and at last he reached the market. After he had waited there some time, he sold the sack of flour for a very good price, and then he returned home at once, for he was afraid that if he stopped too late he might meet some robbers on the way.

'It has certainly been a hard day,' said little Hans to himself as he was going to bed, 'but I am glad I did not refuse the Miller, for he is my best friend, and, besides, he is going to give me his wheelbarrow.'

'Early the next morning the Miller came down to get the money for his sack of flour, but little Hans was so tired that he was still in bed.

'Upon my word,' said the Miller, 'you are very lazy. Really, considering that I am going to give you my wheelbarrow, I think you might work harder. Idleness is a great sin, and I certainly don't like any of my friends to be idle or sluggish. You must not mind my speaking quite plainly to you. Of course I should not dream of doing so if I were not your friend. But what is the good of friendship if one cannot say exactly what one means? Anybody can say charming things and try to

please and to flatter, but a true friend always says unpleasant things, and does not mind giving pain. Indeed, if he is a really true friend he prefers it, for he knows that then he is doing good.'

'I am very sorry,' said little Hans, rubbing his eyes and pulling off his night-cap, 'but I was so tired that I thought I would lie in bed for a little time, and listen to the birds singing. Do you know that I always work better after hearing the birds sing?'

'Well, I am glad of that,' said the Miller, clapping little Hans on the back, 'for I want you to come up to the mill as soon as you are dressed, and mend my barn-roof for me.'

'Poor little Hans was very anxious to go and work in his garden, for his flowers had not been watered for two days, but he did not like to refuse the Miller, as he was such a good friend to him.

'Do you think it would be unfriendly of me if I said I was busy?' he inquired in a shy and timid voice.

'Well, really,' answered the Miller, 'I do not think it is much to ask of you, considering that I am going to give you my wheelbarrow; but of course if you refuse I will go and do it myself.'

'Oh! on no account,' cried little Hans; and he jumped out of bed, and dressed himself, and went up to the barn.

'He worked there all day long, till sunset, and at sunset the Miller came to see how he was getting on.

'Have you mended the hole in the roof yet, little Hans?' cried the Miller in a cheery voice.

'It is quite mended,' answered little Hans, coming down the ladder.

'Ah!' said the Miller, 'there is no work so delightful as the work one does for others.'

'It is certainly a great privilege to hear you talk,' answered little Hans, sitting down and wiping his forehead, 'a very great privilege. But I am afraid I shall never have such beautiful ideas as you have.'

'Oh! they will come to you,' said the Miller, 'but you must take more pains. At present you have only the practice of friendship; some day you will have the theory also.'

'Do you really think I shall?' asked little Hans.

'I have no doubt of it,' answered the Miller; 'but now that you have mended the roof, you had better go home and rest, for I want you to drive my sheep to the mountain to-morrow.'

'Poor little Hans was afraid to say anything to this, and early the next morning the Miller brought his sheep round to the cottage, and Hans started off with them to the mountain. It took him the whole day to get there and back; and when he returned he was so tired that he went off to sleep in his chair, and did not wake up till it was broad daylight.

'What a delightful time I shall have in my garden,' he said, and he went to work at once.

'But somehow he was never able to look after his flowers at all, for his friend the Miller was always coming round and sending him off on long errands, or getting him to help at the mill. Little Hans was very much distressed at times, as he was afraid his flowers would think he had forgotten them, but he consoled himself by the reflection that the Miller was his best friend. 'Besides,' he used to say, 'he is going to give me his wheelbarrow, and that is an act of pure generosity.'

'So little Hans worked away for the Miller, and the Miller said all kinds of beautiful things about friendship, which Hans took down in a note-book, and used to read over at night, for he was a very good scholar.

'Now it happened that one evening little Hans was sitting by his fireside when a loud rap came at the door. It was a very wild night, and the wind was blowing and roaring round the house so terribly that at first he thought it was merely the storm. But a second rap came, and then a third, louder than either of the others.

'It is some poor traveller,' said little Hans to himself, and he ran to the door.

'There stood the Miller with a lantern in one hand and a big stick in the other.

'Dear little Hans,' cried the Miller, 'I am in great trouble. My little boy has fallen off a ladder and hurt himself, and I am going for the Doctor. But he lives so far away, and it is such a bad night, that it has just occurred to me that it would be much better if you went instead of me. You know I am going to give you my wheelbarrow, and so it is only fair that you should do something for me in return.'

'Certainly,' cried little Hans, 'I take it quite as a compliment your coming to me, and I will start off at once. But you must lend me your lantern, as the night is so dark that I am afraid I might fall into the ditch.'

'I am very sorry,' answered the Miller, 'but it is my new lantern, and it would be a great loss to me if anything happened to it.'

'Well, never mind, I will do without it,' cried little Hans, and he took down his great fur coat, and his warm scarlet cap, and tied a muffler round his throat, and started off.

What a dreadful storm it was! The night was so black that little Hans could hardly see, and the wind was so strong that he could scarcely stand. However, he was very courageous, and after he had been walking about three hours, he arrived at the Doctor's house, and knocked at the door.

'Who is there?' cried the Doctor, putting his head out of his bedroom window.

'Little Hans, Doctor.'

'What do you want, little Hans?'

'The Miller's son has fallen from a ladder, and has hurt himself, and the Miller wants you to come at once.'

'All right!' said the Doctor; and he ordered his horse, and his big boots, and his lantern, and came downstairs, and rode off in the direction of the Miller's house, little Hans trudging behind him.

But the storm grew worse and worse, and the rain fell in torrents, and little Hans could not see where he was going, or keep up with the horse. At last he lost his way, and wandered off on the moor, which was a very dangerous place, as it was full of deep holes, and there poor little Hans was drowned. His body was found the next day by some goatherds, floating in a great pool of water, and was brought back by them to the cottage. Everybody went to little Hans's funeral, as he was so popular, and the Miller was the chief mourner.

'As I was his best friend,' said the Miller, 'it is only fair that I should have the best place;' so he walked at the head of the procession in a long black cloak, and every now and then he wiped his eyes with a big pocket-handkerchief.

'Little Hans is certainly a great loss to every one,' said the Blacksmith, when the funeral was over, and they were all seated comfortably in the inn, drinking spiced wine and eating sweet cakes.

'A great loss to me at any rate,' answered the Miller; 'why, I had as good as given him my wheelbarrow, and now I really don't know what to do with it. It is very much in my way at home, and it is in such bad repair that I could not get anything for it if I sold it. I will certainly take care not to give away anything again. One always suffers for being generous.'

'Well?' said the Water-rat, after a long pause. 'Well, that is the end,' said the Linnet.

'But what became of the Miller?' asked the Water-rat. 'Oh! I really don't know,' replied the Linnet, 'and I am sure that I don't care.'

'It is quite evident then that you have no sympathy in your nature,' said the Water-rat.

'I am afraid you don't quite see the moral of the story,' remarked the Linnet.

'The what?' screamed the Water-rat.

'The moral.'

'Do you mean to say that the story has a moral?'

'Certainly,' said the Linnet.

'Well, really,' said the Water-rat, in a very angry manner, 'I think you should have told me that before you began. If you had done so, I certainly would not have listened to you; in fact, I should have said "Pooh," like the critic. However, I can say it now;' so he shouted out 'Pooh' at the top of his voice, gave a whisk with his tail, and went back into his hole.

'And how do you like the Water-rat?' asked the Duck, who came paddling up some minutes afterwards. 'He has a great many good points, but for my own part I have a mother's feelings, and I can never look at a confirmed bachelor without the tears coming into my eyes.'

'I am rather afraid that I have annoyed him,' answered the Linnet. 'The fact is, that I told him a story with a moral.'

'Ah! that is always a very dangerous thing to do,' said the Duck.

And I quite agree with her.

The Remarkable Rocket

The King's son was going to be married, so the whole court was happy to hear the news. He waited a whole year for his bride, and at last she arrived. She was a Russian Princess, and drove all the way from Finland in a sledge. The sledge was shaped like a great golden swan, and between the swan's wings lay the little Princess herself. Her long cloak reached down to her feet, on her head was a tiny cap of silver tissue. And she was as pale as the Snow Palace, in which she had always lived. So pale was she that as she drove through the streets, all the people wondered. 'She is like a white rose!' they cried, and they threw down flowers on her from the balconies.

At the gate of the Castle the Prince was waiting to receive her. He had dreamy violet eyes, and his hair was like fine gold. When he saw her, he sank upon one knee, and kissed her hand.

'Your picture was beautiful,' he said, 'but you are more beautiful than your picture,' and the little Princess blushed.

'She was like a white rose before,' said a young page to his neighbour, 'but she is like a red rose now,' and the whole Court was delighted.

For the next three days everybody went about saying, 'White rose, Red rose, Red rose, White rose,' and the King gave orders that the Page's salary was to be doubled. As he received no salary at all, this was not of much use to him. But it was considered a great honour, and was duly published in the Court Gazette.

When the three days were over, the marriage was celebrated. It was a magnificent ceremony. The bride and the bridegroom walked hand in hand under a canopy of purple velvet, embroidered with little pearls. Then there was a banquet which lasted for five hours. The Prince and the Princess sat at the top of the Great Hall and drank out of a cup

of clear crystal. Only true lovers could drink out of this cup. If false lips touched it, it grew grey, dull and cloudy.

'It is quite clear that they love each other,' said the Little Page, 'as clear as crystal!' and the King doubled his salary a second time.

'What an honour!' cried all the courtiers.

After the banquet there was to be a ball. The bride and the bridegroom were to dance the Rose-dance together, and the King had promised to play the flute. He played very badly, but no one had even dared to tell him so, because he was the King. Indeed, he knew only two airs, and was never quite certain which one he was

playing; but it made no matter, for, whatever he did, everybody cried out, 'Charming! Charming!'

The last item on the programme was a grand display of fireworks, to be let off exactly at midnight. The little Princess had never seen a firework in her life, so the King gave orders that the Royal Pyrotechnist should be in attendance on the day of her marriage.

'What are fireworks like?' she asked the Prince, as she was walking on the terrace.

'They are like the aurora borealis,' said the King, who always answered questions that were addressed to other people, 'only much more natural. I prefer them to stars myself, as you always know when they are going to appear, and they are as delightful as my own flute-playing. You must certainly see them.'

So at the end of the King's garden a great stand had been set up. And as soon as the Royal Pyrotechnist had put everything in its proper place, the fireworks began to talk to each other.

'The world is certainly very beautiful,' cried a little Squib. 'Just look at those yellow tulips. Why! If they were real crackers, they could not be lovelier. I am very glad I have travelled. Travel improves the mind wonderfully, and does away with all one's prejudices.'

'The King's garden is not the world, you foolish Squib,' said the Roman Candle. 'The world is an enormous place, and it would take you three days to see it thoroughly.'

'Any place you love is the world to you,' exclaimed the pensive Catherine Wheel, who had been attached to an old deal box in early life, and prided herself on her broken heart, 'but love is not fashionable any more, the poets have killed it. They wrote so much about it that nobody believed them, and I am not surprised. True love suffers, and is silent. I remember myself once... But no matter now. Romance is a thing of the past.'

'Nonsense!' said the Roman Candle. 'Romance never dies. It is like the moon, and lives forever. The bride and bridegroom, for instance, love each other very dearly. I heard all about them this morning from a brown paper cartridge, who happened to be staying in the same drawer as myself, and he knew the latest Court news.'

But the Catherine Wheel shook her head. 'Romance is dead, Romance is dead, Romance is dead,' she repeated. She was one of those who think that, if you say the same thing over and over a great many times, it becomes true in the end.

Suddenly, a sharp, dry cough was heard, and they all looked round.

It came from a tall, haughty Rocket, who was tied to the end of a long stick. He always coughed before he said anything, so as to attract attention.

'Ahem! Ahem!' he said, and everybody listened, except the poor Catherine Wheel, who was still shaking her head, and repeating, 'Romance is dead.'

'Order! Order!' cried out a Cracker. He was something of a politician, and always took a prominent part in the local elections, so he knew the proper parliamentary expressions to use.

'Quite dead,' whispered the Catherine Wheel, and she went off to sleep.

As soon as there was perfect silence, the Rocket coughed a third time and began. He spoke with a very slow, distinct voice, as if he were dictating his memoirs. He always looked over the shoulder of the person, to whom he was talking. In fact, he had a most distinguished manner.

'How fortunate it is for the King's son,' he said, 'that he is to be married on the very day, on which I am to be let off! Really, if it had not been arranged beforehand, it could not have turned out better for him. But Princes are always lucky.'

'Dear me!' said the Squib, 'I thought it was quite the other way, and that we were to be let off in the Prince's honour.'

'It may be so with you,' he answered, 'indeed, I have no doubt that it is, but with me it is different. I am a very remarkable Rocket, and come of remarkable parents. My mother was the most celebrated Catherine Wheel of her day, and was famous for her graceful dancing. When she made her great public appearance, she turned round nineteen times before she went out. And each time that she did so, she threw into the air seven pink stars. She was three feet and a half in diameter, and made of the very best gunpowder. My father was a Rocket like myself, and of French extraction. He flew so high that the people were afraid that he would never come down again. He did, though, for he was a kind-hearted person, and he made a most brilliant descent in a shower of golden rain. The newspapers wrote about his performance in very flattering terms. Indeed, the Court Gazette called him a triumph of Pylotechnic art.'

'Pyrotechnic, Pyrotechnic, you mean,' said a Bengal Light. 'I know it is Pyrotechnic. I saw it written on my own canister.'

'Well, I said Pylotechnic,' answered, the Rocket angrily. And the Bengal Light felt so crushed that he began at once to bully the little squibs, in order to show that he was still a person of some importance.

'I was saying,' continued the Rocket, 'I was saying... What was I saying?'

'You were talking about yourself,' replied the Roman Candle.

'Of course, I knew I was discussing some interesting subject, when I was so rudely interrupted. I hate rudeness and bad manners of every kind, because I am extremely sensitive. No one in the whole world is so sensitive as I am. I am quite sure of that.'

'What is a sensitive person?' said the Cracker to the Roman Candle.

'A person who, because he has corns himself, always treads on the other people's toes,' answered the Roman candle in a low whisper; and the Cracker nearly exploded with laughter.

'Pray, what are you laughing at?' inquired the Rocket, 'I am not laughing.'

'I am laughing because I am happy,' answered the Cracker.

'That is a very selfish reason,' said the Rocket angrily. 'What right have you to be happy? You should be thinking about others. In fact, you should be thinking about me. I am always thinking about myself, and I expect everybody else to do the same. That is what is called sympathy. It is a beautiful virtue, and I possess it in a high degree. Suppose, for instance, anything happened to me tonight, what a misfortune that would be for everyone! The Prince and Princess would never be happy again, their whole married life would be spoiled. As for the King, I know he would not get over it. Really, when I begin to reflect on the importance of my portion, I am almost moved to tears.'

'If you want to give pleasure to others,' cried the Roman Candle, 'you had better keep yourself dry.'

‘Certainly,’ exclaimed the Bengal Light, who was in better spirits; ‘that is only common sense.’

‘Common sense, indeed!’ said the Rocket indignantly, ‘You forget that I am very uncommon, and very remarkable. Why, anybody can have common sense, if they have no imagination. I never think of things as they really are. I always think of them as being quite different. But none of you have any hearts. Here you are laughing and making merry just as if the Prince and the Princess had not just been married.’

‘Well, really,’ exclaimed a small Fire-balloon. ‘Why not? It is a most joyful occasion. When I fly up into the air, I intend to tell the stars all about it. You will see them twinkle when I talk to them about the pretty bride.’

‘Ah! What a trivial view of life!’ said the Rocket. ‘But it is only what I expected. There is nothing in you. You are hollow and empty. Why, perhaps, the Prince and the Princess may go to live in a country where there is a deep river. Perhaps, they may have only one son, a little fair-haired boy with violet eyes like the Prince himself. Perhaps, some day he may go out to walk with his nurse. Perhaps, the nurse may go to sleep under a great elder-tree. And, perhaps, the little boy may fall into the deep river and be drowned. What a terrible misfortune! Poor people, to lose their only son! It is really too dreadful! I shall never get over it.’

‘But they have not lost their only son,’ said the Roman Candle, ‘no misfortune has happened to them at all.’

‘I never said that they had,’ answered the Rocket. ‘I said they might. If they had lost their only son, there would be no use in saying any more about the matter. I hate people who cry over spilt milk. But when I think they might lose their only son, I am very much affected,’ and he actually burst into real tears, which flew down his stick like raindrops.

'He must have a truly romantic nature,' said the Catherine Wheel. 'He weeps when there is nothing at all to weep about,' and she made a deep sigh and thought about the deal box.

Then the moon rose, and the stars began to shine, and a sound of music came from the palace.

The Prince and Princess were leading the dance. They danced so beautifully that the tall white lilies peeped in at the window and watched them. And the great red poppies nodded their heads and beat time.

Then ten o'clock struck, and then eleven, and then twelve, and at the last stroke of midnight every one came out on the terrace. And the King sent for the Royal Pyrotechnist.

'Let the fireworks begin,' said the King; and the Royal Pyrotechnist made a low bow, and marched down to the end of the garden. He had six attendants with him, each of whom carried a lighted torch at the end of a long pole.

It was certainly a magnificent display.

Whizz! Whizz! went the Catherine Wheel, as she turned round and round. Boom! Boom! went the Roman Candle. Then the Squibs danced all over the place, and the Bengal Lights made everything look scarlet. 'Good-bye,' cried the Fire-balloon, as he flew away, dropping tiny blue sparks. Bang! Bang! answered the Crackers, who were enjoying themselves immensely. Every one was a great success except the Remarkable Rocket. He was so wet with crying that he could not go off at all. The best thing in him was the gunpowder, and that was so wet with tears that it was of no use. All his poor relations, to whom he would never speak, except with a sneer, shot up into the sky like wonderful golden flowers with blossoms of fire. Huzza! Huzza! cried the Court; and the Princess laughed with pleasure.

'I suppose they are reserving me for some grand occasion,' said the Rocket, 'no doubt that is what it means,' and he looked more arrogant than ever.

The next day the workmen came to put everything tidy. 'This is evidently a deputation,' said the Rocket. 'I will receive them with becoming dignity,' so he put his nose in the air, and began to frown severely, as if he were thinking about some important subject. But they took no notice of him at all till they were just going away. Then one of them caught sight of him. 'Hallo!' he cried. 'What a bad rocket!' and he threw him over the wall into the ditch.

'Bad rocket? Bad rocket?' he said, as he moved round and round very fast through the air. 'Impossible! Grand rocket, that is what the man said. Bad and grand sound very much the same, indeed, then they often are the same,' and he fell into the mud.

'It is not comfortable here,' he said, 'but no doubt it is some fashionable watering-place, and they have sent me away to recruit my health. My nerves are certainly very much affected, and I need rest.'

Then a little Frog with bright jewelled eyes, and a green coat, swam up to him.

'A new arrival, I see!' said the Frog. 'Well, after all there is nothing like mud. Give me rainy weather and a ditch, and I am quite happy. Do you think it will be a wet afternoon? I am sure, I hope so, but the sky is quite blue and cloudless. What a pity!'

'Ahem! Ahem!' said the Rocket, and began to cough.

'What a delightful voice you have!' cried the Frog. 'Really it is quite like a croak. Croaking is, of course, the most musical sound in the world. You will hear our

glee-club this evening. We sit in the old duck-pond lose by the farmer's house, and as soon as the moon rises we begin. It is so charming that everybody lies awake to listen to us. In fact, it was only

yesterday that I heard the farmer's wife say to her mother that she could not get a wink of sleep at night on account of us. It is most gratifying to find oneself so popular.'

'Ahem! Ahem!' said the Rocket angrily. He was very much annoyed that he could not get a word in.

'A delightful voice, certainly,' continued the Frog. 'I hope you will come over to the duck-pond. I am off to look for my daughters. I have six beautiful daughters. I am so afraid the Pike may meet them. He is a perfect monster, and would have no hesitation in breakfasting off them. Well, good-bye; I have enjoyed our conversation very much, I assure you.'

'Conversation, indeed!' said the Rocket. 'You have talked the whole time yourself. That is not a conversation.'

'Somebody must listen,' answered the Frog, 'and I like to do all the talking myself. It saves time, prevents arguments.'

'But I like arguments,' uttered the Rocket.

'I hope not,' said the Frog. 'Arguments are extremely vulgar, because everybody in good society has exactly the same opinions. Good-bye a second time; I see my daughters in the distance,' and the Frog swam away.

'You are a very irritating person,' said the Rocket, 'and very ill-bred. I hate people, who talk about themselves, as you do, when one wants to talk about oneself, as I do. It is what I call selfishness. Selfishness is the most hateful thing, especially to anyone with my temperament, because I am well-known for my sympathetic nature. In fact, you should take example by me; you could not possibly have a better model. Now that you have the chance you had better avail yourself of it. You know I am going back to Court almost immediately. I am a great favourite at Court. In fact, the Prince and the Princess were

married yesterday in my honour. Of course, you know nothing of these matters, for you are a provincial.'

'There is no good talking to him,' remarked a Dragon-fly, who was sitting on the top of a large brown bulrush, 'no good at all, because he has gone away.'

'Well, that is his loss, not mine,' answered the Rocket. 'I am not going to stop talking to him merely, because he pays no attention. I like hearing myself talk. It is one of my greatest pleasures. I often have long conversations all by myself, and I am so clever that sometimes I don't understand a single word of what I am saying.'

'Then you should certainly lecture on Philosophy,' said the Dragon-fly. He spread a pair of lovely wings and flew away into the sky.

'How very silly of him not to stay here!' cried the Rocket. 'I am sure that he has not often got such a chance of improving his mind. However, I don't care a bit. Genius like mine is sure to be appreciated some day,' and he sank down a little deeper into the mud.

After some time a large White Duck swam up to him. She had yellow legs, and webbed feet, and was considered a great beauty on account of her waddle.

'Quack, quack, quack,' she said. 'What a curious shape you are! May I ask were you born like that, or is it the result of an accident?'

'It is quite evident that you have always lived in the country,' answered the Rocket, 'otherwise you would know who I am. However, I excuse your ignorance. It would be unfair to expect other people to be as remarkable as oneself. You will no doubt be surprised to that I can fly up into the sky, and come down in a shower of golden rain.'

'I don't think much of that,' said the Duck, 'as I cannot see what use it is to anyone. Now, if you could plough the fields like the ox, or

draw a cart like the horse, look after the sheep like the collie-dog, that would be something.'

'My good creature,' cried the Rocket, 'I see that you belong to the lower orders. A person of my position is never useful. We have certain merits, and that is more than sufficient. I have no sympathy myself with industry of any kind, least of all with such industries as you seem to recommend. Indeed, I have always been of the opinion that hard work is simply the refuge of people, who have nothing whatever to do.'

'Well, well,' said the Duck, who was a very peaceful creature, and never quarrelled with anyone, 'everybody has different tastes. I hope, at any rate, that you are going to take up your residence here.'

'Oh! Dear no,' cried the Rocket. 'I am merely a visitor. The fact is that I find this place tiring. There is neither society here, nor solitude. I shall probably go back to Court, for I know that I am destined to make a sensation in the world.'

'I had thoughts of entering public life once myself,' said the Duck. 'There are so many things that need reforming. Indeed, I took the chair at a meeting some time ago, and we passed resolutions criticizing everything that we did not like. However, they did not seem to have much effect. Now I prefer 'domesticity, and look after my family.'

'I am made for public life,' said the Rocket, 'and so are all my relations, even the humblest of them. Whenever we appear we attract great attention. I have not actually appeared myself, but when I do so, it will be a magnificent sight. As for domesticity, it ages one quickly, and distracts one's mind from higher things.'

'Ah! the higher things of life, how fine they are!' said the Duck. 'And that reminds me of how hungry I feel,' and she swam away down the stream, saying, 'Quack, quack, quack.'

'Come back! Come back!' screamed the Rocket, 'I have a great deal to say to you!' but the Duck paid no attention to him. 'I am glad that she

has gone,' he said to himself, 'she has a decidedly middle-class mind.' And he sank a little deeper still into the mud, and began to think about the loneliness of genius, when suddenly two little boys in white smocks came running down the bank, with a kettle and some faggots.

'This must be the deputation,' said the Rocket, and he tried to look very dignified.

'Hallo!' cried one of the boys, 'look at this old stick; I wonder how it came here,' and he picked the rocket out of the ditch.

'Old stick!' said the Rocket. 'Impossible! Gold stick, that is very complimentary. In fact, he mistakes me for one of the Court dignitaries!'

'Let us put it into the fire!' said the other boy, 'it will help to boil the kettle.'

So they piled the faggots together, and put the Rocket on top, and lit the fire.

'This is magnificent,' cried the Rocket, 'they are going to let me off in broad daylight, so that everyone can see me.'

'We will go to sleep now,' they said, 'and when we wake up, the kettle will be boiled,' and they lay down on the grass, and shut their eyes.

The Rocket was very damp, so he took a long time to burn. At last, however, the fire caught him.

'Now I am going off!' he cried, and he made himself very stiff and straight. 'I know I shall go much higher than the stars, much higher than the moon, much higher than the sun. In fact, I shall go so high that!..'

Fizz! Fizz! Fizz! and he went straight into the air.

'Delightful!' he cried. 'I shall go on like this for ever. What a success I am!'

But nobody saw him.

Then he began to feel a curious sensation all over him.

'Now I am going to explode,' he cried. 'I shall set the whole world on fire, and make such a noise that nobody will talk about anything for a whole year.' And he certainly did explode. Bang! Bang!

Bang! went the gunpowder. There was no doubt about it.

But nobody heard him, not even the two little boys, because they were sound asleep.

Then all that was left of him was the stick, and this fell down on the back of a Goose, who was taking a walk by the side of the ditch.

'Good heavens!' cried the Goose. 'It is going to rain sticks,' and she rushed into the water.

'I knew I should create a great sensation,' said the Rocket, and he went out.

The Star-Child

Once upon a time two poor Woodcutters were making their way home through a great pine forest. It was winter, and a night of bitter cold. The snow lay thick upon the ground. And upon the branches of the trees the frost kept snapping the little twigs on either side of, as they passed. And when they came to the mountain torrent, she was hanging motionless in the air, for the Ice-King had kissed her.

So cold was it that even the animals and the birds did not know what to make of it.

'Ugh!' growled the Wolf, as he ran through the wood with his tail between his legs, 'this is perfectly terrible weather. Why doesn't the Government look

to it?'

'Weet! Weet! Weet!' twittered the green Linnets, 'the old Earth is dead, and they have covered her with white snow.'

'The Earth is going to be married, and this is her bridal dress,' whispered the Turtledoves to each other. Their little pink feet were

quite frost-bitten. But they felt that it was their duty to take a romantic view of the situation.

'Nonsense!' said the Wolf angrily. 'I tell you that it is all the fault of the Government. If you don't believe me, I shall eat you.' The Wolf had a thoroughly practical mind, and was never at a loss for a good argument.

'Well, for my own part,' said the Woodpecker, who was a born philosopher, 'I don't care an atomic theory for explanations. If a thing is so, it is so. At present it is terribly cold.'

Terribly cold it certainly was. The little Squirrels, who lived inside the tall fir-tree, kept rubbing each other's noses to keep themselves warm. The Rabbits curled themselves up in their holes, and dared not even look out of doors. The only ones who seemed to enjoy it were the great horned Owls. Their feathers got frozen, but they did not mind. They rolled their large yellow eyes and called out to each other across the forest, 'Tu-whit! Tu-who! Tu-whit! Tu-who! What delightful weather we are having!'

On and on went the two Woodcutters, blowing upon their fingers, and stamping with their huge boots upon the icy snow. Once they sank into a deep drift. They came out as white as millers are, when they stand at grindstones. And once they slipped on the hard smooth ice, where the marsh water was frozen. So their faggots fell out of their bundles, and they had to pick them up and bind them together again. And once they thought they had lost their way. They were terribly frightened, because they knew that the Snow is cruel to those who sleep in her arms. But they put their trust in the good Saint Martin who watches over all travellers. They retraced their steps and went with caution. At last they reached the edge of the forest, and saw the lights of their village far down in the valley beneath them.

So happy were they, when they came out of the forest that they laughed out loud. The Earth seemed to them like a flower of silver. And the Moon like a flower of gold.

Yet, after that they had laughed they became sad, as they remembered their poverty, and one of them said to the other, 'Why did we make merry, seeing that life is for the rich, and not for such as we are? Better that we had died of cold in the forest, or that some wild beast had fallen upon us and eaten us.'

'Truly,' answered his companion, 'much is given to some, and little is given to others.'

But as they were complaining about their misery to each other, this strange thing happened. There fell from heaven a very bright and beautiful star. It slipped down the side of the sky, passing by the other stars in its course. And, as they watched it wondering, it seemed to them to sink behind the willow trees that stood near a little sheepfold, not far from them.

'There is a piece of gold for whoever finds it,' they cried, and they ran, so eager were they for the gold.

And one of them ran faster than his mate, and outran him, and forced his way through the willows, and came out on the other side. And, indeed, there was a thing of gold lying on the white snow. So he hurried to it, and leaning over it placed his hands upon it. It was a cloak of golden tissue, curiously wrought with stars, and wrapped in many folds. And then he shouted to his comrade that he had found the treasure that had fallen from the sky. When his comrade had come up, they sat down in the snow, and loosened the folds of the cloak so that they might divide the pieces of gold. But no gold was in it, nor silver, nor indeed, treasure of any kind, but only a little child who was asleep.

And one of them said to the other, 'This is a bitter ending to our hope. How unlucky we are! For what good does a child bring a man? Let

us leave it here and go on our way. We are poor men and have children of our own whose bread we may not give to another.'

But his companion answered him, 'No, but it is an evil thing to leave the child to die here in the snow. Though I am as poor as you are and have many mouths to feed, yet I will bring it home with me. My wife shall take care of it.'

So very tenderly he took up the child, and wrapped the cloak around it to protect it from the bitter cold. He made his way down the hill to the village. His comrade was very much surprised at his foolishness and softness of heart.

And when they came to the village, his comrade said to him, 'You have the child, therefore give me the cloak, because we should share what we have found.'

But he answered him, 'No, the cloak is neither mine nor yours, but the child's only,' and saying good-bye to him, he went to his own house and knocked.

And when his wife opened the door and saw that her husband had returned safe to her, she put her arms round his neck and kissed him. She took from his back

the bundle of faggots, and brushed the snow off his boots, and asked him to come in.

But he said to her, 'I have found something in the forest, and I have brought it to you to take care of it,' and he stirred not from the threshold.

'What is it?' she cried. 'Show it to me. The house is bare, and we need many things.' He drew the cloak back and showed her the sleeping child.

'My good, dearest husband!' she said uncertainly, 'have we not enough children of our own, that you must bring the child of another?'

And who knows if it brings us bad fortune? And how shall we look after it?' And she got very angry with him.

'No, but it is a Star-Child,' he answered; and he told her the strange way they found it.

But she would not listen, but mocked at him, and spoke angrily, and cried, 'Our children have no bread, and shall we feed the child of another? Who is there who cares for us? And who gives us food?'

'No, but God cares even for the sparrows and feeds them,' he answered.

'Do not the sparrows die of hunger in the winter?' she asked. 'And is it not winter now?' And the man said nothing, but did not move from the threshold.

And a bitter wind from the forest came in through the open door, and made her tremble. She said to him, 'Will you close the door? There comes a bitter wind into the house, and I am cold.'

'Into a house, where a heart is hard, a bitter wind always comes,' he said. And the woman gave no answer but moved closer to the fire.

And after a time she turned round and looked at him. Her eyes were full of tears. And he came in swiftly, and placed the child in her arms. She kissed it, and laid it in a little bed, where the youngest of their own children was lying. And on the next morning the Woodcutter took the curious cloak of gold and placed it in a big box. A chain of amber that was round the child's neck his wife took and put in the box also.

So the Star-Child was brought up with the children of the Woodcutter. He sat at the same board with them, and was their playmate. And every year he became more beautiful to look at. All the villagers were filled with wonder, while the Woodcutter's children were dark and black-haired, he was white and delicate as sawn ivory. His curls were like the rings of the daffodil. His lips, also, were like

the petals of a red flower. His eyes were like violets by a river of pure water. And his body was like the narcissus of a field, where the mower comes not.

Yet, his beauty did work evil, because he grew proud, cruel and selfish. He despised the children of the Woodcutter and the other children of the village. He said that they were common, while he was of noble birth, being sprung from a Star. He made himself master over them, and called them his servants. No pity had he for the poor. He would throw stones at them and drive them away, and say to them to beg their bread elsewhere. So none of them dared come twice to that village to ask for help. Indeed, he was so charmed by his beauty, and would mock at the weakly and ill-favoured, and make fun of them. Himself he loved, and in summer, when the winds were still, he would lie by the well in the priest's orchard and look down at the marvel of his own face, and laugh for the pleasure, he had in his fairness.

Often the Woodcutter and his wife said to him, 'We did not treat you as you do those who are left alone, and have none to help them. Why are you so cruel to all who need pity?'

Often the old priest sent for him, and taught him the love of living things, saying to him, 'The fly is your brother. Do it no harm. The wild birds that live in the forest have their freedom. Catch them not for your pleasure. God made the blind-worm and the mole, and each has its place. Who are you to bring pain into God's world?'

But the Star-Child needed not their words, but would frown and mock, go back to his companions and lead them. And his companions followed him, because he was fair, could run fast and dance, play the pipe and make music. And wherever the Star-Child led them, they followed him, and whatever the Star-Child ordered them to do, they did. And when he blinded the eyes of the mole, they laughed. And when he

threw stones at the leper, they laughed also. And in all things he ruled over them, and they became hard of heart even, as he was.

One day there passed a poor beggar-woman through the village. She was in rags, and her feet were bleeding from the rough road, on which she had travelled, and she was very poor, indeed. And being very tired, she sat down under a chestnut-tree to rest.

But when the Star-Child saw her, he said to his companions, 'Look! There sits an evil beggar-woman under that fair and green-leaved tree. Let us drive her away, because she is ugly and ill-favoured.'

So he came near, threw stones at her and mocked at her. She looked at him with terror in her eyes, and she could not move her gaze from him. And when the Woodcutter saw what the Star-Child was doing, he ran up and said to him, 'Surely you are hard of heart and know no mercy. What evil has this poor woman done to you that you should treat her this way?'

And the Star-Child grew red with anger, and stamped his foot upon the ground, and said, 'Who are you to question me what I do? I am no son of yours to obey you.'

'That is true,' answered the Woodcutter. 'Yet, I did show you pity, when I found you in the forest.'

And when the woman heard these words, she gave a loud cry and fell down in a faint. And the Woodcutter carried her to his own house, and his wife took care of her. When she came to herself, they set meat and drink before her.

But she would neither eat nor drink, but said to the Woodcutter, 'Did not you say that the child was found in the forest? And it *is* ten years from this day, is it not?'

And the Woodcutter answered, 'Yes, it was in the forest that I found him, and it is ten years from this day.'

‘And what else did you find with him?’ she cried. ‘Had not he upon his neck a chain of amber? Was not round him a cloak of gold tissue broidered with stars?’

‘Truly,’ answered the Woodcutter, ‘it was eyen, as you say.’ And he took the cloak and the amber from the box, where they lay, and showed them to her.

And when she saw them she wept for joy, and said, ‘He is my little son, whom I lost in the forest. I pray you to send for him quickly. In search of him I have wandered over the whole world.’

So the Woodcutter and his wife went out and called to the Star-Child, and said to him, ‘Go into the house, and there you will find your mother who is waiting for you.’

So he ran in, filled with wonder and great gladness. But when he saw who was waiting there, he laughed scornfully and said, ‘Why, where is my mother? I see nobody here but this evil beggar-woman.’

And the woman answered him, ‘I am your mother.’ ‘You are mad to say so,’ cried the Star-Child angrily. ‘I am no son of yours, because you are a beggar, and ugly, and in rags. Therefore get away, and let me see your ugly face no more.’

‘No, but you are, indeed, my little son, to whom I gave birth in the forest,’ she cried, and she fell on her knees, and held out her arms to him. ‘The robbers stole you from me, and left you to die,’ she said, ‘but I recognized you, when I saw you, and I also recognized the cloak of golden tissue and the amber chain. Therefore, I pray you to come with me, because over the whole world I have wandered in search of you. Come with me, my son, because I need your love.’

But the Star-Child did not move from his place, but shut the doors of his heart against her, and there was no sound heard, except the sound of the woman weeping for pain.

And at last he spoke to her, and his voice was hard and bitter. 'If in very truth you are my mother,' he said, 'it had been better, if you had stayed away, and had not come here to bring me to shame. I thought I was the child of some Star, and not a beggar's child, as you tell me that I am. Therefore get away, and let me see you no more.'

'Oh! My son,' she cried, 'will you not kiss me before I go? I have suffered much to find you.'

'No,' said the Star-Child, 'you are too ugly to look at, and I would rather kiss the adder or the toad than you.'

So the woman rose up, and went away into the forest weeping bitterly. When the Star-Child saw that she had gone, he was glad, and ran back to his playmates. But when they saw him coming, they mocked at him and said, 'You are as ugly as the toad, and as disgusting as the adder. Get away, because we do not want to play with you,' and they drove him out of the garden.

And the Star-Child frowned and said to himself, 'What is this that they say to me? I will go to the well of water and look into it, and it shall tell me of my beauty.'

So he went to the well of water and looked into it. His face was as the face of a toad, and his body was scaled like an adder. And he threw himself down on the grass and wept, and said to himself, 'Surely this has come upon me by reason of my sin. I have denied my mother, and driven her away. I have been proud and cruel to her. Therefore I will not go and seek her through the whole world, nor will I rest till I have found her.'

And there came to him the little daughter of the Woodcutter, and she put her hand upon his shoulder and said, 'What does it matter, if you have lost your beauty? Stay with us, and I will not mock at you.'

And he said to her, 'No, but I have been cruel to my mother, and as a punishment this evil has been sent to me. Therefore I must go and wander through the world till I find her, and she gives me forgiveness.'

So he ran away into the forest and called out to his mother to come to him, but there was no answer. All day long he called to her. When the sun set he lay down to sleep on a bed of leaves, and the birds and the animals fled from him, because they remembered his cruelty. And he was alone, except the toad that watched him, and the slow adder that crawled past.

And in the morning he rose up, and plucked some bitter berries from the trees and ate them, and took his way through the great wood, weeping bitterly. And of everything that he met he made inquiry, if they had seen his mother by chance.

He said to the Mole, 'You can go beneath the earth. Tell me, is my mother there?'

And the Mole answered, 'You have blinded my eyes. How should I know?'

He said to the Linnet, 'You can fly over the tops of the tall trees, and can see the whole world. Tell me, can you see my mother?'

And the Linnet answered, 'You have cut my wings for your pleasure. How should I fly?'

And to the little Squirrel, who lived in the fir-tree, and was lonely, he said, 'Where is my mother?'

And the Squirrel answered, 'You have killed mine. Do you seek to kill yours also?'

And the Star-Child wept and bowed his head, and prayed forgiveness of God's things, and went on through the forest, seeking for the beggar-woman. And on the third day he came to the other side of the forest and went down into the plain.

And when he passed through the villages the children mocked at him, and threw stones at him. The peasants would not allow him even to sleep in the byres, fearing he might bring mildew on the stored corn. There was none who had pity on him. Nor could he hear anywhere of the beggar-woman, who was his mother, though for the space of three years he wandered over the world. Often he seemed to see her on the road in front of him, and would call to her, and run after her till the rough stones made his feet bleed. But he could not find her, and those who lived near denied that they had seen her, and they mocked at his sorrow.

For the space of three years he wandered over the world, and in the world there was neither love nor kindness, nor charity for him. But it was just such a world as he had made for himself in the days of his great pride.

And one evening he came to the gate of a strong-walled city that stood by a river, and, though he was tired and his feet ached, he wanted to enter. But the soldiers who stood on guard dropped their halberds across the entrance, and said roughly to him, 'What is your business in the city?'

'I am seeking for my mother,' he answered, 'and pray you to allow me to pass, because it may be that she is in this city.'

But they mocked at him, and one of them cried, 'Of a truth, your mother will not be merry when she sees you. You are more ill-favoured than the toad of the marsh, or the adder that crawls in the fen. Go away! Go away! Your mother does not live in this city.'

And another who held a yellow banner in his hand said to him, 'Who is your mother, and why are you looking for her?'

And he answered, 'My mother is a beggar even as I am, and I have treated her evilly, and I pray you to allow me to pass that she may give me her forgiveness, if she lives in this city.' But they would not.

And, as he turned away weeping, one, whose armour was inlaid with gilt flowers, and on whose helmet couched a lion that had wings, came up and made inquiry of the soldiers who it was, who had sought entrance. And they said to him, 'It is a beggar and the child of a beggar, and we have driven him away.'

'No,' he cried, laughing, 'but we will sell him for a slave, and his price shall be the price of a bowl of sweet wine.'

And an old and evil-looking man who was passing by called out and said, 'I will buy him for that price.' Then he took the Star-Child by the hand and led him into the city.

And after they had gone through many streets, they came to a little door. It was set in a wall that was covered with a pomegranate tree. And the old man touched the door with a ring of graven jasper, and it opened. They went down five steps of brass into a garden filled with black poppies and green jars of burnt clay. Then the old man took from his turban a scarf of figured silk, and bound with it the eyes of the Star-Child, and pushed him in front of him. And when the scarf was taken off his eyes, the Star-Child found himself in a dungeon, that was lit by a lantern of horn.

And the old man set before him some mouldy bread on a plate and said, 'Eat,' and some brackish water in a cup and said, 'Drink.' And when he had eaten and drunk, the old man went out, locking the door behind him and fastening it with an iron chain.

And on the next morning the old man, who was, indeed, the subtlest of the magicians of Libya and had learned his art from one who lived in the tombs of the Nile came in to him and frowned at him, and said, 'In a wood, that is near to the gate of this city of Giaours, there are three pieces of gold. One is of white gold, and another of yellow gold, and the gold of the third one is red. Today you shall bring me the piece of white gold. If you do not bring it, I will beat you with

a hundred stripes. Get away quickly! At sunset I will be waiting for you at the door of the garden. See that you bring the white gold, or it shall go ill with you, because you are my slave. I have bought you for the price of a bowl of sweet wine.' And he bound the eyes of the Star-Child with the scarf of figured silk, and led him through the house, and through the garden of poppies, and up the five steps of brass. And having opened the little door with his ring, he left him in the street.

And the Star-Child went out of the gate of the city, and came to the wood, of which the Magician had spoken to him.

Now this wood was very fair to look at from outside, and seemed full of singing birds and sweet-scented flowers. The Star-Child entered it gladly. Yet its beauty did him little good, because wherever he went harsh briars and thorns shot up from the ground and encompassed him, and evil nettles stung him, and the thistle pierced him with her daggers. So he was in distress. Nor could he anywhere find the piece of white gold of which the Magician had spoken, though he sought for it from morning to noon, and from noon to sunset. And at sunset he set his face towards home, weeping bitterly, because he knew what evil fate awaited him.

But when he reached the edge of the wood, he heard a cry as of someone in pain from a thicket. And forgetting his sorrow, he ran back to the place, and saw there a little Hare caught in a trap that some hunter had set for it.

And the Star-Child had pity on it, and released it, and said to it, 'I am myself but a slave, yet I may give you your freedom.'

And the Hare answered him, and said, 'Surely you have given me freedom, and what shall I give you in return?'

And the Star-Child said to it, 'I am looking for a piece of white gold, but I can not find it anywhere and if I don't bring it to my master, he will beat me.'

'Come with me,' said the Hare, 'and I will lead you to it, because I know where it is hidden, and for what purpose.'

So the Star-Child went with the Hare. In a hole in the side of a great oak-tree he saw the piece of white gold that he was seeking. And he was filled with joy, and took it, and said to the Hare, 'The service that I did to you, you have rendered back again many times over, and the kindness that I showed you, you have repaid a hundredfold.'

'No,' answered the Hare, 'but as you dealt with me, so I did deal with you,' and it ran away swiftly, and the Star-Child went towards the city.

Now at the gate of the city there was seated one, who was a leper. Over his face hung a cowl of grey linen, and through the eyelet his eyes gleamed like red coals. And when he saw the Star-Child coming, he struck upon a wooden bowl, and clattered his bell, and called out to him, and said, 'Give me a piece of money, or I must die of hunger. They have driven me out of the city, and there is no one who has pity on me.'

'Ah!' cried the Star-Child, 'I have but one piece of money in my wallet, and if I bring it not to my master, he will beat me, because I am his slave,'

But the leper entreated him, and prayed of him, till the Star-Child had pity, and gave him the piece of white gold.

And when he came to the Magician's house, the Magician opened the door to him, and brought him in, and said to him, 'Have you the piece of white gold?' And the Star-Child answered, 'I have not.' So the Magician fell upon him, and beat him, and set before him an empty plate, and said, 'Eat,' and an empty cup, and said, 'Drink,' and put him again into the dungeon.

And on the next morning the Magician came to him, and said, 'If today you do not bring me the piece of yellow gold, I will surely keep you as my slave, and give you a hundred stripes.'

So the Star-Child went to the wood, and all day long he searched for the piece of yellow gold, but nowhere could he find it. And at sunset he sat down and began to weep. As he was weeping, there came to him the little Hare, he had released from the trap.

And the Hare said to him, 'Why are you weeping? And what do you seek in the wood?'

And the Star-Child answered, 'I am seeking for a piece of yellow gold that is hidden here, and if I find it not, my master will beat me, and keep me as a slave.'

'Follow me,' cried the Hare, and it ran through the wood till it came to a pool of water. And at the bottom of the pool the piece of yellow gold was lying.

'How shall I thank you?' said the Star-Child. 'It is the second time that you have helped me.'

'No, but you had pity on me first,' said the Hare, and it ran away swiftly.

And the Star-Child took the piece of yellow gold, and put it in his wallet, and hurried to the city. But the leper saw him coming, and ran to meet him, and knelt down and cried, 'Give me a piece of money, or I shall die of hunger.'

And the Star-Child said to him, 'I have in my wallet but one piece of yellow gold, and if I bring it not to my master, he will beat me and keep me as his slave.'

But the leper entreated him, so that the Star-Child had pity on him, and gave him the piece of yellow gold.

And when he came to the Magician's house, the Magician opened the door to him, and brought him in, and asked him, 'Have got you the piece of gold?' And the Star-Child said to him, 'I have not.' So the Magician fell upon him, and beat him, and fastened him with chains, and put him again into the dungeon.

And on the next morning the Magician came to him, and said, 'If today you bring me the piece of red gold, I will set you free, but if you do not bring it, I will surely kill you.'

So the Star-Child went to the wood, and all day long he searched for the piece of red gold, but nowhere could he find it. And in the evening he sat down and wept. As he was weeping, there came to him the little Hare.

And the Hare said to him, 'The piece of red gold that you seek is in the cavern that is behind you. Therefore weep no more but be glad.'

'How shall I thank you?' cried the Star-Child. 'This is the third time you have helped me.'

'No, but you had pity on me first,' said the Hare, and it ran away swiftly.

And the Star-Child entered the cavern, and in its farthest corner he found the piece of red gold. So he put it in his wallet, and hurried to the city. And the leper seeing him coming, stood in the centre of the road, and cried out, and said to him, 'Give me the piece of red money, or I must die,' and the Star-Child had pity on him again, and gave him the piece of red gold, saying, 'Your need is greater than mine.' Yet, his heart was heavy, because he knew what evil fate awaited him.

As he passed through the gate, the guards knelt down and said, 'How beautiful is our lord!' A crowd of citizens followed him, and cried out, 'Surely there is none so beautiful in the whole world!' so that the Star-Child wept, and said to himself, 'They are mocking at me, and laughing at my misery.' And so large was the crowd of the people, that he lost his way, and found himself at last in a great square, in which there was the palace of a King.

And the gate of the palace opened, and the priest and the high officers of the city ran to meet him, and they knelt down, and said, 'You are our lord, for whom we have been waiting, and the son of our King.'

And the Star-Child answered them, 'I am no king's son, but the child of a poor beggar-woman. And how can you say that I am beautiful, because I know that I am evil to look at?'

Then he, whose armour was inlaid with gilt flowers, and on whose helmet crouched a lion that had wings, held up a shield, and cried, 'Why does not my lord believe me that he is beautiful?'

And the Star-Child looked. His face was just as it had been, and his beauty had come back to him. But he noticed that there was something in his eyes which he had not seen before.

And the priests and the high officers knelt down and said to him, 'It was prophesied of old that on this day should come he who was to rule over us. Therefore, let your lord take this crown and this sceptre, and be in his justice and mercy our King over us.'

But he said to them, 'I am not worthy, because I have denied the mother who gave me birth. I may not rest till I have found her, and known her forgiveness. Therefore, let me go, for I must wander again over the world, and may not stay here, though yet you bring me the crown and the sceptre.'

And as he spoke, he turned his face from them towards the street, that led to the gate of the city. Among the crowd that pressed round the soldiers he saw the beggar-woman who was his mother, and at her side stood the leper who had set by the road.

And a cry of joy broke from his lips, and he ran over her, and kneeling down, he kissed the wounds on his mother's feet, and wet them with his tears. He bowed his head in the dust, and sobbing, as one whose heart might break, he said to her, 'Mother, I denied you in the hour of pride. Accept me in the hour of humility. Mother, I gave you hatred. Do give me your love. Mother, I rejected you. Receive the child now.' But the beggar-woman answered him not a word.

And he reached out his hands, and clasped the white feet of the leper, and said to him, 'Three times I did give you my mercy. Ask my mother to speak to me once.' But the leper answered him not a word.

And he sobbed again and said, 'Mother, my suffering is greater than I can bear. Give me the forgiveness, and let me go back to the forest.' And the beggar-woman put her hand on his head, and said to him, 'Rise,' and the leper put his hand on his head, and said to him, 'Rise,' also.

And he rose up from his feet, and looked at them. They were a King and a Queen.

And the Queen said to him, 'This is your father whom you have helped.'

And the King said, 'This is your mother whose feet you have washed with your tears.'

And they fell on his neck and kissed him, and brought him into the palace and dressed him in beautiful clothes, and set the crown upon his head, and the sceptre in his hand. Over the city that stood by the river he ruled, and was its lord. Much justice and mercy he did show to all. The evil Magician he drove away, and to the Woodcutter and his wife he sent many rich gifts, and to their children he gave high honour. He was not cruel to birds or beasts, but taught love and kindness, and charity. To the poor he gave bread, and to the naked he gave clothes. There was peace and plenty in the land.

Yet ruled he not long, so great had been his suffering, and so bitter the fire of his testing, for after the space of three years he died. And he who came after him ruled evilly.

TASKS ON THE TEXTS OF OSCAR WILDE'S FAIRY TALES



Tasks on the text 'The Happy Prince'

1. Retell the story.
2. Explain in English:
 - a weathercock;
 - cry for the moon;
 - come to the point;
 - to trifle with somebody;
 - a river-horse;
 - crisp hair;
 - a hold.
3. The Swallow's courtship to the Reed was flying around, touching the water with his wings. What is an ideal courtship for you?
4. Comment on the phrase '... if pleasure be happiness'. Do you agree that happiness lies in pleasure? Why/ why not?
5. The Swallow felt warm after he had done a good action. What can make you feel warm in your soul?
6. Although the Happy Prince lived in pleasure, he became empathic and compassionate. How will you bring up these qualities in your students when you are a teacher?
7. Why do you think the Swallow stayed with the Happy Prince?
8. Agree/ disagree with the statement '... people always think that gold can make them happy', explain your point of view.
9. Why do you think the Happy Prince asked the Swallow to stay with him?
10. Comment on the phrase 'As he is no longer beautiful, he is no longer useful'. Can only beautiful things be useful?

Tasks on the text 'The Nightingale and the Rose'

1. Retell the story.
2. Explain in English:
 - cynic;
 - a sundial;
 - a scythe;
 - frankincense;
 - a gutter;
 - metaphysics;
 - to ebb.
3. The Student worried that he had read all the wise books and he had known the secrets of philosophy but he was unhappy in love. Does it mean that knowledge has nothing to do with the happiness of a person?
4. The Nightingale called the Student a true lover. Do you agree with it?
5. Money can't buy the Student love. Do you agree that love can't be bought?
6. 'Yet Love is better than Life'. Comment on this phrase.
7. The Nightingale is she, the Lizard is he, the Daisy is he. Why do you think the author gave genders to these characters?
8. In fairy tales some moments are repeated three times. In this story the Nightingale visited three rose trees, she pressed closer against the thorn also three times. Why is number three important for such stories?
9. What did the Nightingale sacrifice to help the Student and why?
10. Agree or disagree with the Nightingale: 'Death is a great price for the rose.'
11. What is the moral of the story?

Tasks on the text 'The Selfish Giant'

1. Retell your favourite moment.
2. Describe the garden (one by one name a detail about the garden).
3. Imagine a story why the Giant had to visit his friend.
4. Explain the meaning of the number seven. (The Giant spent 7 years at his friend's).
5. Who was the little boy?
6. How do you understand the phrase '... these are the wounds of Love'?
7. How does the Giant's character develop through the story?
8. Agree/disagree with the statement 'The children are the most beautiful flowers of all.'
9. What is the moral of the tale?
10. The story contains many elements that we find in fairy tales. Can you give examples?
11. Are fairy tales just for children?

Tasks on the text 'The Devoted Friend'

1. Retell the favourite part of the story.
2. Explain:
 - a linnet;
 - a clergyman;
 - to bloom/blossom;
 - a nosegay;
 - burgomaster;
 - a wheelbarrow;
 - a ditch;
 - a goatherd.

3. 'They were so young that they did not know what an advantage it is to be in society at all.' So what is an advantage to be in society?

4. Agree/disagree with the statements:

- '... I know nothing in the world that is either nobler or rarer than a devoted friendship.'

- 'Anybody can say charming things and try to please and flatter, but a true friend always says unpleasant things, and does not mind giving pain.'

- 'One certainly suffers from being generous.'

5. Answer the Linnet's question: 'What is your idea of the duties of a devoted friend?'

6. 'When people are in trouble, they should be left alone and not be bothered by visitors.' Is it always a bad piece of advice?

7. 'Flour is one thing, and friendship is another, and they should not be confused.' Comment on it.

8. 'At present you have only the practice of friendship; some day you will also have the theory.' What is the theory of friendship?

9. 'I can never look at a confirmed bachelor without the tears coming into my eyes.' There is a conflict between married and unmarried. Can they understand each other?

10. Explain from the psychological point of view why Hans can't refuse the Miller.

11. What kind of a person do you think the Miller's son will become?

Tasks on the text 'The Remarkable Rocket'

1. Retell the story.

2. The Princess was Russian. How do you think the Prince got to know about her?

3. Answer the characters' questions:
 - What are fireworks like?
 - What is a sensitive person?
4. Agree/disagree with the statement
 - 'Travel improves the mind wonderfully, and does away with all one's prejudices.'
 - 'Any place you love is the world to you.'
 - 'Romance is dead.'
 - '... hard work is simply the refuge of people, who have nothing whatever to do.'
5. Explain in English:
 - squib;
 - Roman Candle;
 - Catherine Wheel;
 - Bengal Light.
6. Do you agree that 'everybody in good society should have exactly the same opinions'?
7. 'As for domesticity, it ages one quickly, and distracts one's mind from higher things.' What higher things do you think the Rocket means?
8. What is the moral of the tale?

Tasks on the text 'The Star-Child'

1. Retell the story.
2. Why do you think the Wolf has a practical mind and the Woodpecker is a philosopher?
3. Answer the Woodcutters' question: 'Why did we make merry, seeing that life is for the rich, and not for such as we are?'
4. Why do you think the Snow is she?
5. What other stories does this story remind you of?
6. Why does it often happen that people follow the evil leader?

7. Explain:

- a leper;
- the ill-favoured;
- to flee;
- a byre;
- to mock;
- a halberd;
- a marsh / a fen;
- to encompass;
- nettles;
- a thicket;
- to be prophesied.

8. Why do sometimes kind intelligent parents have cruel and selfish children?

9. Why do you think most characters of Oscar Wilde's stories are poor people?

ЗАКЛЮЧЕНИЕ



Оскар Уайльд известен, прежде всего, как автор своего единственного романа «Портрет Дориана Грея», но он писал также стихотворения, пьесы и сказки. В данном учебно-практическом пособии вниманию студентов представлены именно сказки британского писателя.

Но не следует думать, что эти сказки будут интересны только лишь детям. Несмотря на то, что персонажами являются говорящие животные и птицы, а приключения повторяются по три раза, в эти истории заложен глубокий философский смысл. Читатели рассуждают о добре и зле, дружбе и любви, порядочности и лицемерии — то есть о тех качествах, важность которых должен осознавать человек в любом возрасте. Кроме того, студенты учатся высказывать свою точку зрения на английском языке, используя лексику и речевые конструкции автора.

Таким образом, читая о приключениях сказочных персонажей, студенты не только должны задумываться о своём внутреннем мире в частности, и о жизни в целом, но и тренируют умения говорить и думать на английском языке.

БИБЛИОГРАФИЧЕСКИЙ СПИСОК

1. Балуян, С. Р. English Thematic Vocabulary Activities : учебное пособие / С. Р. Балуян, Я. Н. Минко. – Ростов-на-Дону; Таганрог : Издательство Южного федерального университета, 2022. – 258 с. – ISBN 978-5-9275-4198-0. – Текст : электронный // IPR SMART : [сайт]. – URL : <https://www.iprbookshop.ru/127081.html> (дата обращения: 5.12.2023).
2. Дроздова, Т. Ю. English Through Reading : учебное пособие / Т. Ю. Дроздова, В. Г. Маилова, В. С. Николаева. – Санкт-Петербург : Антология, 2020. – 336 с. – ISBN 978-5-9907622-5-1. – Текст : электронный // IPR SMART : [сайт]. – URL : <https://www.iprbookshop.ru/104037.html> (дата обращения: 16.10.2023).
3. Дроздова, Т. Ю. Read & Speak English : учебное пособие / Т. Ю. Дроздова, В. Г. Маилова, В. С. Николаева. – Санкт-Петербург : Антология, 2021. – 320 с. – ISBN 978-5-9909211-9-1. – Текст : электронный // IPR SMART : [сайт]. – URL : <https://www.iprbookshop.ru/104079.html> (дата обращения: 28.11.2023).
4. Журнал Speak Out. – 2003–2020.
5. История литературы стран изучаемого языка. *English and American Literature* : учеб. пособие. – Омск: Омский государственный университет им. Ф. М. Достоевского, 2010. – 166 с. – Текст : электронный. – URL : <http://www.iprbookshop.ru/24889.html> (дата обращения: 12.12.2023).
6. Кулакович, М. С. Литература англоязычных стран : учебно-практическое пособие / М. С. Кулакович. – Челябинск: Изд-во Южно-Урал. госуд. гуман.-педаг. ун-та, 2020. – 97 с. – Текст : непосредственный.
7. Симонова, К. Ю. *Crosscultural communications in English* : практикум / К. Ю. Симонова, Ю. С. Елисеева. – Омск : Сибирский государственный университет физической культуры и спорта, 2021. – 193 с. – Текст : электронный // IPR SMART : [сайт]. – URL : <https://www.iprbookshop.ru/121195.html> (дата обращения: 15.12.2023).

8. Юнёва, С. А. Открывая мир с английским языком. Современные темы для обсуждения / С. А. Юнёва. – Москва : Интеллект-центр, 2019. – 136 с. – Текст : непосредственный.
9. *Lectures on English Literature* = Лекции по английской литературе : учебно-метод. пособие. – Саратов : Вузовское образование, 2016. – 138 с. – Текст : электронный. – URL : <http://www.iprbookshop.ru/56284.html> (дата обращения: 25.12.2023).
10. Wilde, Oscar. *The Happy Prince and Other Tales* / Oscar Wilde. – Текст : электронный. – Москва: Т8RUGRAM, 2017. – 52 с. – URL : <http://www.iprbookshop.ru/84745.html> (дата обращения: 3.10.2023).

Учебное издание

Мария Сергеевна Кулакович

**ЛЕКСИКО-ГРАММАТИЧЕСКИЕ И КОММУНИКАТИВНЫЕ ЗАДАНИЯ
ПО КНИГЕ «СКАЗКИ» ОСКАРА УАЙЛЬДА**

Учебно-практическое пособие

ISBN 978-5-907869-00-4

Работа рекомендована РИС университета
Протокол № 30 от 2024 г.

Издательство ЮУрГГПУ
454080, г. Челябинск, пр. Ленина, 69

Редактор Е. М. Сапегина
Технический редактор Т. Н. Никитенко

Рисунок на обложке: *URL: <https://lubok.club>*

Подписано в печать 29.02.2024. Тираж 100 экз.
Формат 70×90/16. Объем 3,2 уч.-изд. л. (5,9 усл. п. л.)
Заказ №

Отпечатано с готового оригинал-макета в типографии ЮУрГГПУ
454080, г. Челябинск, пр. Ленина, 69