

LITTLE FOLK'S BOOKS.

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THE STORY

OF

Mary
BEAUTY AND THE BEAST.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS.

LONDON.

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Little Folks' Books.

THE STORY
OF
Beauty and the Beast.



Edited by Madame de Chatelain.

Beauty and the Beast.

THERE was once a wealthy merchant who had three sons and three daughters. The latter were extremely pretty, especially the youngest, who, indeed, was called in childhood the little Beauty,—a nickname that clung to her ever after, much to the jealous annoyance of her sisters. Nor did she excel them more in beauty than in goodness. The two eldest sisters were so proud of their father's fortune that they would not condescend to herd with other merchants' daughters, but were always dangling after persons of quality, and frequenting balls and plays, and laughed at their youngest sister for spending her time in reading instructive books. As they were known to be rich, many wealthy merchants offered to marry them; but the two eldest replied, that they could not think of anybody below a Duke, or at least an Earl, while Beauty answered, that she thanked them for their good opinion, but that, being still very young, she wished to remain a few years longer with her father.

It happened that the merchant was suddenly ruined, and nothing was left of all his vast property but a

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small house in the country, whither, he informed his



children, they must now remove. The two eldest replied, that for their parts they need not leave town, as they had plenty of lovers who would be too happy to marry them even without a fortune. But here they were strangely mistaken. Their lovers would not even look upon them now; and, as they had made themselves odious by their pride, nobody pitied them for their fall, though every one felt sorry for Beauty. Indeed, several gentlemen offered to marry her, portionless as she was; but she told them she could not resolve to abandon her father in his misfortunes. The

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family now removed into the country, where the father and his sons tilled the ground, while Beauty rose daily at four o'clock, and did all the work in the house. At first this drudgery seemed very hard, but after a time she grew stronger, and her health improved. When her work was over she read, played on the harpsichord, or sang as she sat at her spinning-wheel. As to her two sisters, they were perfectly helpless, and a burden to themselves. They would rise at ten, and spend the live-long day fretting for the loss of their fine clothes and gay parties, and sneer at their sister for her low-born tastes, because she put up with their unfortunate position so cheerfully.

The family had spent about a year in their retreat, when the merchant received a letter, informing him that a ship freighted with goods belonging to him, that was thought to be lost, had just come into port. At this unexpected news the two eldest sisters were half wild for joy, as they now hoped they would soon leave the cottage; and when their father was about to go and settle his business, they begged him to bring them back all sorts of dresses and trinkets. When the father perceived that Beauty did not ask for anything, he inquired what he should bring her. "Why, since

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you ask me, dear father," said she, "I should like you to bring me a rose, as none grow in these parts." Now, it was not that Beauty particularly cared about his bringing a rose, only she would not appear to blame her sisters, or to seem superior to them, by saying she did not wish for anything. The good man set off, but when he reached the port, he was obliged to go to law about the cargo, and it ended in his returning as poor as he came. He was within thirty miles of home, when, on passing by night through a large forest, he was overtaken by a heavy fall of snow, and, having completely lost his way, he began to be afraid he should die of hunger and cold, when of a sudden he perceived a light at the end of a long long avenue of trees, and, on making for that direction, he reached a splendid palace, where, to his surprise, not a human being was stirring in any of the court-yards. His horse followed him, and, seeing a stable-door open, walked in, and here the poor jaded beast fed heartily on the hay and oats that filled the crib. The merchant then entered the house, where he still saw nobody, but found a good fire, and a table ready laid for one person, with the choicest viands. Being completely drenched, he drew near the fire to dry his clothes, saying to him-

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self: "I hope the master of the house or his servants will excuse the liberty I am taking, for no doubt it will not be long before they make their appearance." He then waited a considerable while, still no one came, and by the time the clock struck eleven, he was so exhausted with hunger that he took up a chicken, which he devoured in two mouthfuls, and in a perfect tremor. He next drank several glasses of wine, when, taking courage, he left the hall, and crossed several suites of rooms most magnificently furnished. At last he found a very nice chamber, and, as it was now past midnight, and he was excessively tired, he closed the door and went to bed.

The merchant did not wake till ten o'clock on the following morning, when he was surprised to find a new suit of clothes instead of his own, which were spoiled. He now concluded the palace belonged to some beneficent fairy; a notion which was completely confirmed on his looking out of window, and seeing that the snow had given place to flowery arbours and the most enchanting gardens. Having returned to the great hall, where he had supped on the previous night, he saw a small table, on which stood some chocolate ready for his breakfast. When his meal was

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finished, he went to look after his horse, and, as he happened to pass under a bower of roses, he bethought him of Beauty's request, and plucked a bunch to take home. No sooner had he done so than he heard a frightful roar, and saw such a horrible beast stalking up to him that he was ready to faint with alarm. "You are most ungrateful," cried the Beast, in a terrific voice. "I saved your life by admitting you into my palace, and you reward me by stealing my roses, which I love beyond everything else! You shall pay the forfeit



with your life's blood." The poor merchant threw himself on his knees before the Beast, saying: "Forgive

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me, my Lord, I did not know I should offend you by plucking a rose for one of my daughters, in compliance with her wishes." "I am not a lord, but a beast," answered the monster; "I hate flattery, and you will not come over me with any fine speeches; but, as you say you have daughters, I will forgive you, provided one of them comes willingly to die in your stead, but swear that, should they refuse, you will return in three months." The merchant had not the most distant intention of sacrificing one of his daughters, but wishing to see his children once more before he died, he swore to return, and the Beast dismissed him, telling him he need not go empty-handed, but that, if he returned to his bed-chamber, he would find a large trunk, which he was at liberty to fill with anything he fancied in the palace, and that it would be sent after him. Somewhat comforted at the idea of leaving his children provided for, the merchant returned to his room, where he found a quantity of gold pieces; and having filled the trunk, he left the palace in a far sadder mood than he had entered it. On reaching home, he gave the roses to his daughter, saying: "Take them, Beauty: you little think how dear they have cost your poor father." And thereupon, he related all that had befallen

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him. The two eldest sisters then began to rend the air with their lamentations, and to upbraid Beauty for being the cause of their father's death, because, forsooth, she didn't ask for dresses, as they did, in order to seem wiser than they; and now she had not even a tear for the mischief she had done. But Beauty replied, it were of little use to weep, for that she was quite resolved to go, and die in her father's stead. "No," cried the three brothers, "we will go and seek this monster, and either he or we shall perish." But the merchant assured them it was vain to attempt resisting the Beast's all-powerful will, and that it was their duty to live to protect their sisters, as it was his to sacrifice the few remaining years he could expect to enjoy. Meanwhile, the merchant, having forgotten all about the trunk, was much surprised to find it on retiring to his chamber; but he said nothing about it for the present to his eldest daughters, as he knew they would pester him to return to town.

When the day came that Beauty was to set out with her father, the two heartless sisters rubbed their eyes with an onion to appear as if they had cried a great deal, while her brothers shed real tears, as well as the father himself. The horse took the right road

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of his own accord, and, on reaching the palace, which



was illuminated as before, he went at once into the stable, while the father and daughter entered the great hall, where two covers were laid on a table loaded with the most dainty fare. After supper they heard a tremendous noise. Beauty shuddered on seeing the Beast enter, and when he inquired whether she had come willingly, she could not help trembling as she faltered out "Yes." "Then I am obliged for your kindness," growled the Beast; and, turning to the father, he added: "As for you—get you gone tomorrow, and never let me see you here again. Good

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night, Beauty." "Good night, Beast," answered she, and then the monster retired. The merchant again fell to entreating his daughter to leave him, but the next morning she prevailed on him to set out; which he, perhaps, would not have done, had he not felt a faint hope that the Beast might, after all, relent. When he was gone, Beauty could not help shedding some tears; after which she proceeded to examine the various rooms of the palace, when she was surprised to find written upon one of the doors, "BEAUTY'S APARTMENT." She opened it in haste, and found a magnificently furnished room, and was much struck on seeing an extensive library, a harpsichord, and music books; for she concluded that, if she had only a day to live, such amusements would not have been provided for her. Her surprise increased, on opening one of the books, and seeing written in golden letters, "*Your wishes and commands shall be obeyed: you are here the queen over everything.*" "Alas!" thought she, "my wish would be to see what my poor father is now about." No sooner had she expressed this desire in her own mind, than she saw depicted in a large looking-glass her father's arrival at home. Her sisters came out to meet him. and, in spite of their

affected sorrow, it was plain enough that they rejoiced in their hearts at his returning alone. This vision disappeared a moment afterwards, and Beauty felt grateful to the Beast for complying with her wishes. At noon she found dinner ready for her; and she was treated all the while to an excellent concert, though she saw nobody. At night the Beast came, and asked leave to sup with her, which of course she could not refuse, though she trembled from head to foot. Presently he inquired whether she did not think him very ugly. "Yes," said Beauty, "for I cannot tell a lie; but I think you very good." The supper passed off pleasantly enough, and Beauty had half recovered from her alarm, when he suddenly asked her whether she would marry him. Though afraid of irritating him, she faltered out: "No, Beast," when he sighed so as to shake the whole house, and saying: "Good night, Beauty," in a sorrowful tone, left the room, much to her relief, though she could not help pitying him from her soul.

Beauty lived in this manner for three months. The Beast came to supper every night; and, by degrees, as she grew accustomed to his ugliness, she esteemed him for his many amiable qualities. The only thing

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that pained her was, that he never failed to ask her whether she would marry him; and when, at last, she told him that she had the greatest friendship though no love for him, he begged her at least to promise never to leave him. Now Beauty had seen in her glass, that very morning, that her father lay sick with grief at her supposed death; and, as her sisters were married, and her brothers gone for soldiers, she had so great a wish to go and see him, that she told the Beast she should die if he refused her leave. "No," said the Beast, "I would much rather your poor Beast should die of grief for your absence. So you may go." But Beauty promised to return in a week; and the Beast having informed her that she need only lay her ring on her toilet table before she went to bed, when she meant to return, he wished her good night, and retired.

On awaking next morning, Beauty found herself in her father's cottage, and his delight on seeing her alive soon restored his health. He sent for her sisters, who presently came accompanied by their husbands, with whom they lived very unhappily, as one was so vain of his person that he thought nothing of his wife, and the other so sarcastic that he was playing off his wit all day long on everybody around him,

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and most of all on his lady. The sisters were so



jealous on finding Beauty magnificently dressed, and hearing how kind the Beast was to her, that they laid a plan for detaining her beyond the time allowed her to stay, in hopes he would be so angry as to devour her. Accordingly, when the week was over, they affected such grief at her departure, that Beauty agreed to a stay another week, though she could not help reproaching herself for so doing. But on the night of the tenth day, she dreamt she saw the Beast lying half dead on the grass in the palace garden, and waking all in tears, she got out of bed, laid her ring on

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the table, and then went to bed again, where she soon fell asleep. She was quite relieved, on waking, to find herself back in the palace, and waited impatiently till supper time, but nine o'clock struck, and no Beast appeared. Beauty then seriously feared she had caused his death, and running into the garden towards the spot she had dreamt of, she saw the poor Beast lying senseless on the grass. She threw herself upon his body in despair, when feeling that his heart still beat, she ran to fetch some water from a neighbouring stream,



and threw it into his face. The Beast opened his eyes

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saying in a faint voice: "You forgot your promise, and I determined to starve myself to death; but since you are come, I shall, at least, die happy." "No! you shall not die, dear Beast," cried Beauty, "you shall live to be my husband, for I now feel I really love you." No sooner had she spoken these words, than the palace was brilliantly illuminated, fireworks were displayed, and a band of music struck up. The Beast had disappeared, and in his place, a very handsome prince was at her feet, thanking her for having broken his enchantment. "But where is my poor Beast?" said Beauty anxiously. "He is now before you," said the prince. "A wicked fairy condemned me to retain that uncouth form till some beautiful maid had sufficient goodness to love me in spite of my ugliness." Beauty, most agreeably surprised, now helped the prince to rise, and they returned to the palace, where she found her father. The young pair were then married, and the prince and his beautiful bride were heartily welcomed by his subjects, who had mourned his absence, and over whom they reigned happily for many, many long years.

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$$180$$

LITTLE FOLK'S BOOKS.

THIRTY-SIX KINDS, ALL ILLUSTRATED.

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|--------------------------|------------------------|
| JACK AND THE BEAN-STALK. | THE BLUE BIRD. |
| JACK THE GIANT KILLER. | OLD MOTHER HUBBARD. |
| SIR GUY OF WARWICK. | LITTLE BO-PEEP, &C. |
| TOM HICKATHRIFT. | THE THREE BEARS. |
| BOLD ROBIN HOOD. | HOUSE THAT JACK BUILT. |
| TOM THUMB. | DEATH OF COCK ROBIN. |
| LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD. | LITTLE MAIA. |
| THE SLEEPING BEAUTY. | THE FAIRY FOREST. |
| FAIR ONE & GOLDEN LOCKS. | THE ELFIN PLOUGH. |
| BEAUTY AND THE BEAST. | THE NINE MOUNTAINS. |
| CINDERELLA. | JOHNNY AND LISBETH. |
| THE PRINCESS ROSETTA. | THE LITTLE FISHER BOY. |
| PUSS IN BOOTS. | HANS IN LUCK. |
| THE WHITE CAT. | THE GIANT AND TAILOR. |
| THE UGLY LITTLE DUCK. | THE GOATHERD. |
| THE CHARMED FAWN. | THE NOSE TREE. |
| THE ELEVEN WILD SWANS. | THREE GOLDEN HAIRS. |
| LITTLE GOODY TWO SHOES. | THE JEW IN THE BUSH. |

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