

HOW THE KING'S YOUNGEST SON CAME INTO HIS OWN

RETOLD FROM THE HUNGARIAN BY
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WHERE was it? Where was it not? Beyond the Operenz sea and even beyond my grandmother's house. Well, now, there was somewhere in the world living a king. This king had three sons.

He was already very old; indeed, so old that iron poles had to be put up to keep his eyelids open. Once he said to his sons:

"My sons, if you'd bring me the water of everlasting youth and the water of death, and, besides, if you were able to get me the finch with the golden voice, I'd be willing to give you my whole realm!"

More the princes needed not. Immediately they saddled their horses. The two oldest ones had magnificent stallions, while the youngest rode an ugly old gray mare. As you may well imagine, they rallied him about his miserable mare and asked him how he dared to start out upon a horse that might break down at any minute. Yet the king's little son did not care, but kept riding where his nose led the way.

He rode and rode and thus finally went through seven times seven kingdoms. His brothers invited him to join them, but as they had made fun of him at the start he preferred to go alone. On the way he found a miserable hut, inhabited by an old woman.

"Good morning, grandmother!" said the king's son.

"Thank you, sonny! What brought you here?"

He told her all, from beginning to end, and why he had gone into the world.

"I do not know a thing about it," said the old woman; "but on the other side of the wood another old woman is living; perhaps she can tell you something."

Thus saying she fetched a jug and handed it to the king's son.

"My dear son, fill me this jug with the water of life," she begged, "and bring it to me in passing; for your good deed expect good."

Then the lad went on. On the other side of the wood he really found the old woman, but she, too, understood as much of his affair as the hen does of the A B C. She also handed him a jug and informed him that not far from there lived a woman who was older still than herself; if he would seek her all would be straightened out. After a while he truly found this ancient woman also, and she, I tell you, was older than the star Sirius. The king's son greeted her.

"Good day, grandmother!"

"Thank you, my dear son," the old woman tried to say, but could not, so she just stammered. "What brought you here?"

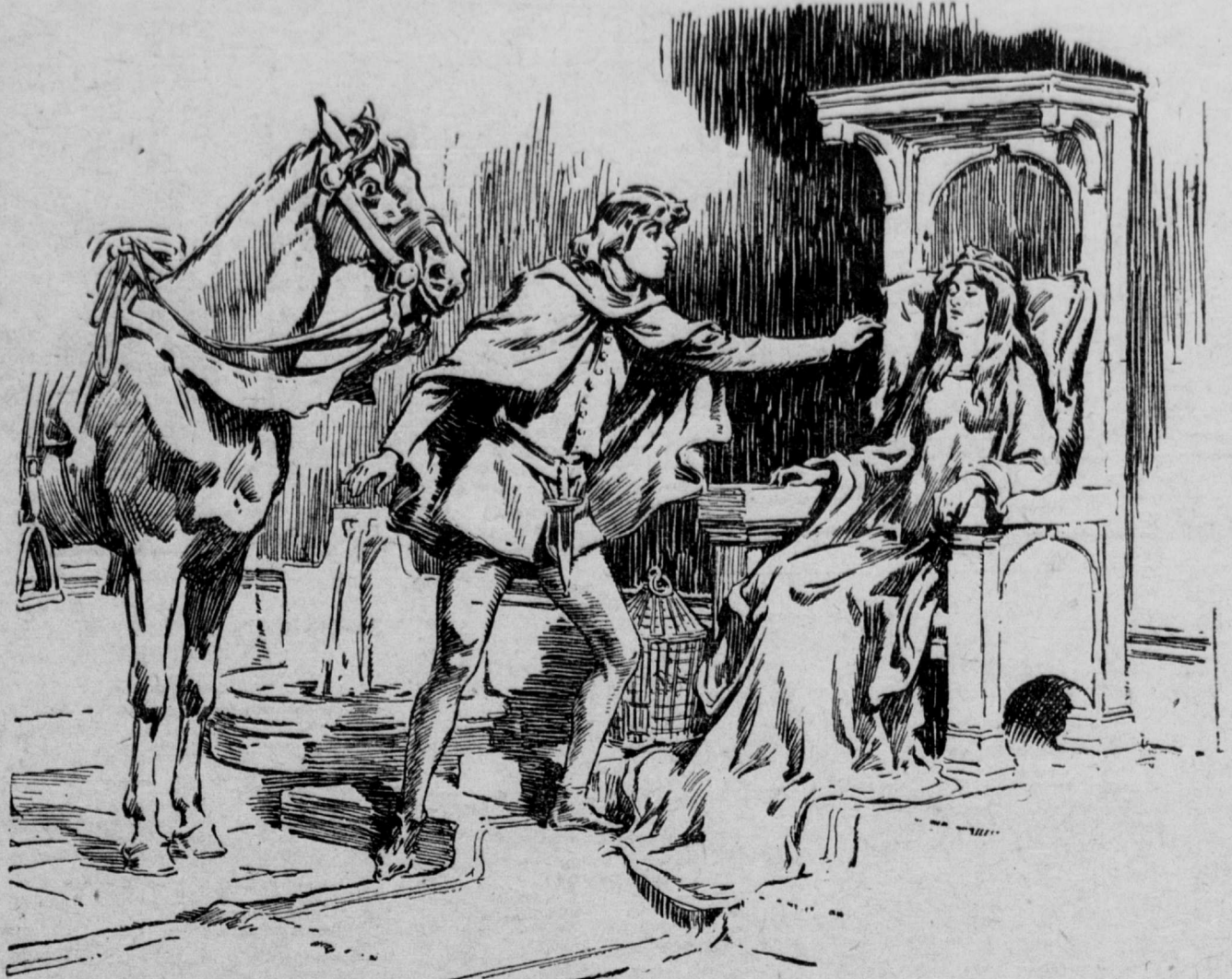
Again he told her the whole story from beginning to end, how he was to fetch the water of life and death and, if possible, get the finch with the golden voice which his father desired to have. But since he had had no success so far and did not know what to do, he begged for her advice. The ancient woman said:

"You drove your hatchet into a big tree, my son! But just go on trying; perhaps you will yet succeed. After leaving my house you'll soon come to a huge wood. In the middle of it you'll find a gold castle; one window is always open. Now, mind well what I am going to tell you. Tie your horse's tail up very carefully—indeed, not a single hair may remain untied—and then jump through the window. As soon as you are inside you will find the charmingly beautiful Ilona; but do not be tempted to kiss her, for then you are surely lost; rather tear out a hair from her head and with it bind up the beak of the golden finch, which is kept close to Ilona's side in a cage. At the right side of the room the water of life is flowing, and to the left the water of death; fill your jugs and then take to your heels. Look at this brush, this towel, this egg; they can be of help to you in time of need."

Upon that she fetched a jug, and, together with the brush, the towel and the egg, she gave it to the king's son.

The king's son started right away, and soon he reached the middle of the wood where the castle stood.

It was just noon. The sun shone upon the castle. How beautiful it was in its pure gold radiance! The king's son jumped from his horse's back, and the first thing he did was to tie up his horse's tail; then he mounted again and valuted through the open window. In the castle he opened not only his eyes but also his mouth, for anything like it he never had seen in all his life. In a chair sat the wonderfully beautiful Ilona, sound asleep, and beside her in a cage was the finch with the golden voice. Overwhelmed with so much beauty, the lad was just bending down to kiss her when the old woman's warning came to his mind. So he only took a golden hair from her head, and with it tied up the golden finch's beak; he then drew the water of life and



In a Chair Sat the Wondrously Beautiful Ilona Sound Asleep

death, and, taking the cage with the finch upon his saddle, he went through the window.

All would have been very well if he had not forgotten to tie up the horse's tail again; a hair hung down and touched the castle and instantly there was an awful, a terrible noise! All the fairies in the castle woke up at once and of course knew right away that somebody had been there. As many as there were, all chased after the king's son and had almost caught him, when suddenly he cast away the old woman's brush, which turned into a dense forest.

Well, even the fairies could not fly over a handicap of that sort. Instead, they had to work their way through it. In the meantime the king's son had been hurrying on and on. But of course fairies are fairies, and it did not take them long to come out of the wood; indeed, in no time they were on the fugitive's track. Suddenly the ground under the horse's hoofs commenced to burn, which meant that the fairies were near, and without losing a moment's time the lad hurried away the old woman's egg, which instantly became a large mountain, which the fairies had to cross on foot if they wanted to see the finch with the golden voice again.

But fairies travel very fast, and the third time the fairies were close behind

the king's son, when he threw the old woman's towel at them. The towel turned into an immense ocean, which not even fairies could wade through.

Soon afterward he reached the hut of the old woman who gave him the good advice. He gave her the jug, filled with the water of youth, and then went on to the other women and also returned them their jugs.

On his way home the young king's son met his brothers who had gone into the world also, but all in vain. Their eyes almost fell out of their heads when they saw the two jugs hanging around his neck and in his hand the cage with the golden voiced finch.

Immediately they took every single thing from him, ordered him to disguise himself as a servant and take a position as coachman in his father's house, and warned him not to utter a word about what had happened if life was dear to him. What else could the king's son do? Nothing. He did what the brothers ordered him to do and promised to say nothing. Thus they all three went home.

At home the old king rejoiced that his two elder sons were such brave men and readily gave each a third of his realm. The youngest son, whom he did not know in his disguise, he employed as coachman. The two elder sons never touched work again, while

the youngest had to do everything and also attend to the horses and plow the fields.

One morning, in awakening, they suddenly noticed a golden bridge in front of the palace, and upon it the wonderfully beautiful Ilona stood, calling:

"King, king, old king! Send me the son who robbed me in my castle!"

At first they marveled what the meaning of all this could be, but then it struck them who it was and what she came for. The eldest went out on horseback like the wonderfully beautiful Ilona and rode up to her on the bridge, and the girl asked:

"King's son, tell me where flows the water of death, to my right or to my left?"

Of course he knew not.

"If you don't know it send me your second brother. Perhaps he'll be able to tell."

The second brother then went out and was also asked about the water of death. Like his brother, he could not answer.

Again the wonderfully beautiful Ilona said:

"King, king, old king! Since nobody in your house is able to tell me, I'll war against you!"

Whereupon the coachman went to the king and said:

"Excellent king, grace to my head! Allow me to go out upon the bridge; perhaps I can spare you a war."

The king grasped for the rescuing straw, and replied:

"Just go and try your best; speak wisely."

Then the young prince mounted the old gray mare and without delay rode upon the bridge to the wonderfully beautiful Ilona.

"Tell me, O king's son, is the water of death flowing to my left or to my right?"

"To your right the water of life is flowing, and to your left the water of death."

"That's true!" cried the wonderfully beautiful Ilona; "and what happened to the finch with the golden voice?"

"I took a hair from your head and with it tied up his beak; thus I carried him away in his cage."

The old king almost fell from his chair in sheer surprise, and the brothers' eyes got bigger and bigger, for they knew that their stolen glory had come to an end.

Again the wonderfully beautiful Ilona asked:

"And myself, who am I?"

"You are the charmingly beautiful Ilona. Out of your castle I got the water of youth and of death and the finch with the golden voice."

"Well, now, if I am the one, then you are my sweetheart, and only spade and hatchet shall part us!"

They embraced and kissed one another and went into the palace. The old king immediately took back the portions of his kingdom he had given to the older brothers and gave all of it to the young couple. At the wedding feast the guests made such a noise that it was heard over seven times seven kingdoms. Maybe they are living still; who can tell?

"FOR A SONG"

It is not often that a thing is literally "sold for a song," but Mme. Sembrich, in the New Idea Woman's Magazine, relates that this was the price which she once paid a little dress maker in Dresden for a gown. In Germany it was the custom on the operatic stage to furnish the men with their costumes, and oblige the women to provide their own. Mme. Sembrich, then at the beginning of her career, could hardly afford to pay for a certain gown called for by her part.

"Bravely, however, I began my bargain hunting. The prices were beyond my fears. I was forced to resign myself to do the best I could with my own scant wardrobe. But no ingenuity could compass a suitable ball gown for the third act of 'Traviata.'"

"I started on another round of the shops. Good fortune bore me this time to a smart looking little place. The proprietress recognized me and was most courteous. The first dress she produced was just the gown I wanted. My voice trembled as I asked the price.

"She named a figure that put it as effectually beyond my reach as the top of Mont Blanc.

"What can you pay, madame?" she asked, gently, as she read the disappointment in my face.

"Hesitatingly I named a sum less than half the price she demanded.

"On one condition the gown is yours," she said.

"And what is that?" I asked breathlessly.

"I have a father who is bedridden," she said. "Never was there a greater

lover of music. Only last night he was fretting because he might never hear the little Sembrich, of whom I have told him so much since your debut here. Come and sing an aria for him and the gown is yours at your own price."

"I kissed her with brimming eyes and the bargain was struck. That night, with my husband as accompanist, I went to the home of the old gentleman and sang for him, not one but many arias. That was the first and only time I ever got a stage gown for a song."

A Maine Man's Pet

Joseph Pinkham, a fisherman of Bath, Me., has taken under his protection a baby seal with which he got acquainted while fishing in Hockomock bay.

The seal evidently strayed away from his parents and sought companionship by playing around Pinkham's fishing boat. Pinkham fed it and the seal would not be driven away, and Pinkham brought it home.

The seal is now enjoying life in a large tub of water, and is as affectionate as a child.

Auntie Lou had just returned from a ride on her new pony, Dick. She removed the girth and threw it on the ground, then removed the saddle and started to hang it up, when little 3 year old Lulu picked up the girth and followed her, saying: "I'll carry Dick's corset."