

Ririro

# Little Thumbling



Little Thumbling was the youngest of seven sons of a poor woodcutter's family. The time in which this story takes place was a sad time. There was not much food to eat. And if there was food, it costs a lot of money. And this poor woodcutter's family did not have any money.

One day, the parents decided to leave the children in the forest, because there was no food left. They would have starved to death at home. In the forest, they might still have a chance. If, for example, someone found them who could take care of them.

Little Thumbling heard his parents' plan. He rushed outside and put enough pebbles in his pocket to find his way back home.

The next day, the parents took the children far into the forest. The parents sneaked away and left the children by themselves. Little Thumbling had scattered pebbles on the way home. That is how the children found their way back home.



At home, they saw that the parents were very sad and sorry. But still there was no money for food. Again they would leave the children behind in the forest. Little Thumbling overheard them and that night when he wanted to collect pebbles again, the door was locked.

In the morning, the children were given a piece of bread crust. Little Thumbling was hungry, but did not eat the bread crust. Bread crumbs would ensure a safe journey back. If only the birds had not eaten the crumbs.

Despondent, the children wandered through the forest until they came to a house. A woman opened the door. 'May we please have something to eat and stay the night,' the children asked in their sweetest voice. 'It's pitch black outside and we are so hungry.' The woman was amazed by the sweet faces of the boys. 'Go on then,' she said, and let the children in. 'You will get something to eat, and you can sleep here too. But you must hide well! My husband is a giant. If he is hungry, he eats children.' Oh dear, that sounded





terribly dangerous. But they were hungry and tired. They took the gamble and hid under the sofa.

'I smell human flesh, woman!' roared the giant when he came home. 'Dear husband, you smell the chicken in the oven,' the wife responded. 'That's not it,' growled the giant, 'surely I know what I smell!' He followed his nose, which pointed to the bench. With a swing the bench flew aside. There sat seven boys shivering in a row. 'Ha, you see,' said the giant, 'you can't fool me.' Tomorrow I will eat them for breakfast.

The boys slept in the bedroom, where seven daughters were also lying. Everyone was asleep, but Little Thumbling was not. The girls were all wearing crowns.

After Little Tom Thumb had exchanged the crowns with the sleeping caps of his brothers, he tried to sleep. That night, the children's bedroom swung open. The giant stepped up to the bed and ate seven children in one go. Only he thought - it was very dark - that he had caught the boys and not his own daughters! When the giant found out, the boys had long since fled.

On seven-mile boots, the giant ran after the boys through the forest. But when he got tired of running and searching, he fell into a deep sleep. Little Thumbling tied him up and took the giant's boots. He sent his brothers home. With the seven-mile boots, he went to the giant's house. The woman opened the door. Little Thumbling cried: 'Brigands have tied up your husband. They ask for all his money in exchange for his freedom.' The woman did not know what had happened, but had seen that her daughters were no longer there. She gave all the money she had in the house to Little Thumbling.

Back home, the parents were overjoyed to see Little Thumbling again. With all that gold he had brought, they could eat well the rest of their lives. And the giant? The giant woke up and realized what he had done. He regretted it and decided never to eat another child again.

