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IMAGINATION OVER KNOWLEDGE

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Mother Holle

Once upon a time there was a widow with two daughters. One daughter was ugly and lazy and the other daughter was beautiful and diligent. The mother loved the ugly daughter the most because she was the eldest. Because of this the youngest daughter had to do all the chores. And when she was done with all the chores at home, she had to sit by the front door and spin.

She worked so hard that her fingers often started bleeding. When she went to the well to clean the blood of the coil, it dropped from her hands and fell into the deep well. Without the coil she was scared to go home, so out of fear she jumped into the well. But when she hit the bottom she suddenly found herself standing in a green meadow.

After a while she smelled fresh bread, she saw an oven and heard a voice: "Please take me from the oven or else I'll burn." She took the fresh bread out of the oven and put it down to cool off. A little while later the apples on the tree started yelling: 'Please shake us from the tree, because we are nice and ripe now!'

And also that the diligent girl did. She shook the apples from the tree and neatly put them on a pile and continued looking for the coil. But she couldn't find it. She approached a little house. From the window an old woman with huge teeth was looking down on her. The

girl got startled and wanted to run away, she was so scared! But the old woman kindly called to her and said: 'Please enter, if you work hard for me, you will have a good life. I will take good care of you, like you're my own child.' 'It is particularly important to shake up my bed really well, because when the feathers fly around, the people will say: 'Look it's snowing!' and I love that, because I am Mother Holle.' The girl promised to work hard and stayed with the old woman. She did her work really well and Mother Holle kept her promise.



There was enough to eat and drink. It was always a feast! Still it didn't take long for the girl to long for her mother. So she asked the old woman if she could leave. Mother Holle agreed. 'Because', she said, 'those who long for home, have a sensitive heart and they won't last long in foreign places. And because you have been so loyal to me, I will reward you.' She took the girl by the hand and led her upstairs and they arrived at a big gate. When the gate opened and the girl walked through, a gold rain showered over the

surprised girl. And all that sparkling gold stayed stuck to her hair, so that the glow was seen from far and wide.

Mother Holle was standing at the gate, waved goodbye to the sweet child and went inside. The gate also closed. The girl walked up a beautiful marble staircase and soon found herself at her mother's front door. She was greeted with open arms and because she was covered in gold the rooster flapped its wings with joy and yelled: 'Cock-a-doodle-doo, our golden girl has returned!'

After the girl had told her mother about her adventure, the mother also wanted this kind of luck for her eldest daughter. She made her spin until her fingers bled, then she had to clean the coil and jump into the well. The lazy daughter tried, but she didn't work hard enough for her fingers to bleed. So she cut herself with the coil, threw it in the well and jumped after it.

Just like her sister she arrived at a green meadow. When the bread and the apples called to her, she pretended she didn't hear them. Cheekily she entered Mother Holle's home and offered her her services. The first day, she did as Mother Holle asked her to, but already on the second day she was having trouble and was complaining the whole day.

Then she didn't want to get up and making the bed was out of the question. She told Mother Holle to do it herself, if she liked it so much. The old woman was not pleased and told the girl she had to leave and go back to her mother and sister.

She took the girl by the hand and brought her to the big gate. When the lazy girl proudly walked through it and expected the gold rain, a black, sticky rain of tar fell on her. 'What goes around, comes around', said Mother Holle, 'and if you don't change your life, that filthy tar will stick to you forever.'

Then she closed the door and the girl had to walk up a filthy staircase to get home. 'Cock-a-doodle-doo, there is our lazy girl', the rooster crowed and the whole town came to laugh at the girl. And because she never changed and stayed lazy, the tar stuck to her for the rest of her life.