



Ririro

READ ANYWHERE, ANYTIME

The Goblin at the Grocer's

Hans Christian Andersen

Once upon a time, there was a student who lived on the top floor of a building owned by a grocer. He didn't own anything himself. The shopkeeper lived downstairs, and the entire house belonged to him. There was also a shopgirl and a maid living there. In addition, a little goblin also lived in the house. Every Christmas Eve, he received a bowl of porridge with a large lump of butter on top. The shopkeeper gladly gave it to him. The little goblin loved to stay in the shop, where he could learn a lot.



One evening, the student entered through the back door to buy candles and cheese for himself. He had no one to do his shopping for him, so he did it himself. He bought what he needed and paid for it. The shopkeeper and the shopgirl nodded to him. The shopgirl was someone who could do more than just nod. She could talk very well. The student nodded back and then stood still to read the piece of paper that was wrapped around the cheese. The paper had been torn from an old book, which was full of poetry. Actually, this should not have happened, as it was a beautiful old book.

"There are more books like that," said the shopkeeper. "I paid an old woman a few coffee beans for them. If you give me eight cents, you can have the rest."

"Well, thank you very much," said the student. "Give me that book instead of the cheese. I can eat a sandwich without anything on it! It would be a shame if the entire book were to be torn to pieces. You are a wonderful person, grocer. You are also a practical shopkeeper, but even a bucket has more knowledge of poetry than you do."

What the student said was not very nice, especially not to the bucket. But the shopkeeper laughed, and the student laughed. It was just a joke, after all. The little goblin was quite annoyed that someone dared to say something like that to the shopkeeper. The shopkeeper was the owner of the house and sold the best butter. The little goblin decided to play a prank on the student.

When the evening had fallen, and the shop was closed, everyone was in bed.

Except for the student. The little goblin went upstairs and borrowed the shopgirl's tongue tie. She didn't need it when she was asleep. Now he could use it nicely to express his thoughts and feelings just as well as the shopgirl herself could. A tongue tie allows you to speak! It was a blessing that only one person at a time could borrow the tongue tie, otherwise they would all talk over each other!

The little goblin put the tongue tie on the bucket where the old newspapers and books were kept. He asked the bucket, "Is it true that you don't know what poetry is?"

"I do know something about it," said the bucket. "It's something that's printed at the bottom of the newspapers and cut out. I think I have more of it 'in me' than the student does. But I'm just a humble bucket compared to the student."

Then the little goblin put the tongue tie on the coffee grinder. Wow, it turned very fast, with a lot of chatter. He then put it on the butter dish and the money box. They also started to talk. Everyone completely agreed with the bucket. And when most people agree, it must be respected!

"So, now I'm going to play a trick on the student," said the little goblin to himself. He quietly climbed up the kitchen ladder to the attic floor, where the student lived. The light was on and the goblin looked through the keyhole. He saw that the student was reading the broken book from downstairs.

What a light it was inside! Suddenly a bright beam shot out of the book. The beam became a trunk and then a mighty tree with branches that stretched over the student. Each leaf was so fresh and each flower was so beautiful, like a girl's head. Some flowers were dark and radiant, other flowers were so blue and so wonderfully bright. Every fruit was like a shining star. Then the tree began to sing. It sounded deliciously beautiful.



No, the little goblin had never imagined anything so wonderful. He had never seen anything so wonderful and he had never been able to think of anything so wonderful. He remained on his tiptoes and looked and looked until the light inside went out. The student blew out his lamp and went to bed. But the goblin still remained there. The soft singing sounded so terribly beautiful. It was like a sweet lullaby for the student.

"How wonderful it is here," said the goblin. "I never expected this! I think I'll stay with the student." He thought deeply and wisely for a moment, then sighed: "The

student doesn't have any porridge..." So he decided to go back to the shopkeeper.

It was fortunate that he returned downstairs. The bucket had nearly exhausted the saleswoman's tongue by telling her everything it had inside with one side of it. It was about to turn the other side and do the same thing. As soon as the goblin saw this, he quickly returned the tongue tie to the saleswoman.

But from that moment on, the entire shop, from the cash register to the firewood, had the same opinion as the bucket. They all cherished such respect for the bucket and had so much confidence in the bucket that they truly believed that when the shopkeeper read the Art and Theatre section of the newspaper in the evening, it all came from the bucket.

The goblin no longer listened to all that wisdom and intelligence. No, as soon as the light shone from the attic room, it was as if the rays, strong as anchor ropes, were pulling him up. He had to and would go up and look through the keyhole.

He felt small. Like how we can feel small when we stand on the beach of the roaring sea and God lets it storm. The goblin even burst into tears, he didn't know why but it was blissful to cry like that!

It would be absolutely wonderful to sit under that beautiful tree with the student. Unfortunately, that was not possible, but he was already happy with the keyhole. Once, he stood on the cold hallway when the autumn storm blew through the skylight. It was cold, oh so cold. The little guy didn't feel it until the light in the attic room was extinguished and the music was drowned out by the wind. Oh, he got so cold. So he quickly crawled back into his warm corner, where it was nice and cozy. Then on Christmas Eve, when the porridge with butter came, he knew again that the shopkeeper was the most important boss.

In the middle of the night, the goblin woke up from a terrible commotion. The shutter was rattling, the people outside were banging on it. The night watchman blew his whistle. There was a big fire. The whole street was ablaze. Was it here in the house or at the neighbor's? Where was it? What a fright!

The shop assistant was so flustered by the fire that she took her gold rings out of her ears and put them in her pocket to save something. The shopkeeper paced back and forth, trying to save his money. The maid tried to grab her silk cloak. Everyone was trying to save something. The goblin wanted to save something too.

With a few jumps, he ran up the stairs and was inside with the student. The student sat calmly at the open window, watching the fire raging in the courtyard of the neighbors. The goblin grabbed the marvelous book from the table, put it in his red cap, and held it tightly with both hands. Fortunately, he had now saved

the most valuable treasure in the house!

Then he ran away, all the way up to the roof and even up the chimney. There he sat in the light of the burning house across the street. He held his red cap with both hands, containing the treasure. Now he knew what his heart desired and who he truly belonged to. But when the fire was extinguished, he came back to his senses...

"I will divide myself between the student and the shopkeeper from now on," he said. "I can't leave the shopkeeper behind, he always gives me delicious gruel."

And that was very human of the goblin. After all, we also go to the store to buy tasty food!

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