



Ririro

READ ANYWHERE, ANYTIME

Clever Gretel

Brothers Grimm

There was once a cook named Gretel. She liked to drink lemonade and as lemonade makes one hungry, she tasted the best of whatever she was cooking until she was satisfied, and said: 'The cook must know what the food is like.'

One day the master said to her: 'Gretel, there is a guest coming this evening; prepare two tasty chickens.' 'I will see to it, master,' answered Gretel. She bought two chickens, spiced them and put them on the spit, and towards evening set them before the fire, so they would roast. The chickens began to turn brown, and were nearly ready, but the guest had not yet arrived. Then Gretel called out to her master: 'If the guest does not come, I must take the chickens away from the fire, but it will be a sin and a shame if they are not eaten the moment they are at their juiciest.' The master said: 'I will run myself, and fetch the guest.' When the master had turned his back, Gretel laid the spit with the chickens on one side, and thought: 'Standing so long by the fire, makes one sweat and thirsty; who knows when they will come? Meanwhile, I will run into the cellar, and take a drink.' She ran down, set a jug and took a good drink.

Then she went and put the chickens down again to the fire and drove the spit merrily round. But as the roast meat smelt so good, Gretel thought: 'Something might be wrong, it must to be tasted!' She touched it with her finger, and said: 'It certainly is a sin and a shame that they are not eaten at the right time!' She ran to the window, to see if the master was not coming with his guest, but she saw no one, and went back to the chickens and thought: 'One of the wings is burning! I better eat it.' So she cut it off, ate it, and enjoyed it, and when she was done, she thought: 'The other wing must go too, or else master will observe that something is missing.' When the two wings were eaten, she went and looked for her master, and did not see him. It suddenly occurred to her: 'Who knows? They are perhaps not coming at all.' Then she said: 'Well, Gretel, enjoy yourself, one chicken has already been cut into, take another drink, and eat it up entirely; when it is eaten you will have some peace, why should good food be spoilt?' So she ran into the cellar again, took an enormous drink and ate up the one chicken in great glee. When one of the chickens was swallowed down, and still her master did not come, Gretel looked at the other chicken and she took another hearty drink, and let the second chicken follow the first.



While she was making the most of it, her master came and shouted: 'Hurry up, Gretel, the guest is coming directly after me!' 'Yes, sir, I will soon serve up,' answered Gretel. Meantime the master looked to see that the table was properly laid, and took the great knife, wherewith he was going to carve the chickens, and sharpened it on the steps. The guest came, and knocked politely on the door. Gretel ran, and looked to see who was there, and when she saw the guest, she put her finger to her lips and said: 'Hush! hush! go away as quickly as you can, if my master catches you it will be terrible for you; he did ask you for dinner, but his intention is to cut off your two ears. Just listen how he is sharpening the knife for it!' The guest heard the sharpening, and hurried down the steps again as fast as he could. Gretel was not stupid; she ran screaming to her master, and cried: 'You have invited a fine guest!' 'Why, Gretel? What do you mean by that?' 'Yes,' said she, 'he has taken the chickens which I was just going to serve up, off the dish, and has run away with them!' 'How rude!' said her master. 'He could have left me one, so that something remained for me to eat.' He yelled after the guest to stop, but the guest pretended not to hear. Then he ran after him with the knife still in his hand, crying: 'Just one, just one,' meaning that the guest should leave him just one chicken, and not take both. The guest, however, thought no otherwise than that he was to give up one of his ears, and ran as if fire were burning under him, in order to take them both with him.

Stories help us explore cultures, learn moral lessons, connect with nature — or simply have fun. That's why riri.ro.com offers 3,000+ free stories — fairy tales, fables, bedtime stories, myths and more — for every age, in 13 languages, with free printable PDFs and often audio. Reading should be a right, not a privilege. Share riri.ro.com and spread the joy of reading.

Instagram: @riri.ro_reading · Pinterest: [pinterest.com/riri.ro.com](https://www.pinterest.com/riri.ro.com)