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Emborg And The Animals

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Emborg was going out into the world all by herself for the first time in her life. She wished to get a birthday present for her mother. "Mother is always so kind and good," she thought.

Emborg started out, a kerchief on her head, a small bag in one hand, and an umbrella in the other ("One should always be ready for rain," said Mother). On a string around her neck was a two-ore piece with a hole in it; "a luck penny" Mother called it. It was the first money Emborg had ever had.



"Can I buy everything I wish with it?" asked Emborg.

"Oh, perhaps so," said Mother, "if you have good luck."

Emborg's little cat followed her all the way to the gate, rubbing against her and begging to go with her.

"Mew, mew, I want to go, too," said Puss, but that she was not allowed to do.

Next came Emborg's little dog, wagging his tail and looking as if he were sure of going with her.

"No, no," said Emborg, "you and Puss must stay at home with Mother while I am away because you must look after the house."

"Bow-wow," said the little dog, "I am the one to take care of the house. If anyone comes here, I shall tell him that."

So now off went Emborg, after taking care to fasten the gate behind her. She had not gone far when she heard a charming sound. A boy was coming along the road blowing a whistle.

"Can I buy that whistle of yours with a two-ore piece?" called Emborg.

"Oh, you may have it for nothing," said the boy, "and when you learn to blow it, you will be happy whenever you whistle."

"Then I shall blow it every day," said Emborg as she took the whistle. She did not forget to thank the boy, and she curtsied nicely too. Yes, indeed, she knew how to behave herself, even when Mother was not with her.

After she had left the boy, Emborg came to a footpath, and here she met a sheep and a lamb. "Baa," went the sheep, and "Baa" went the lamb, exactly like its mother. Emborg stopped to speak to them.

"I have a two-ore piece which is a luck penny," said she, "and I should like to buy some wool with it."

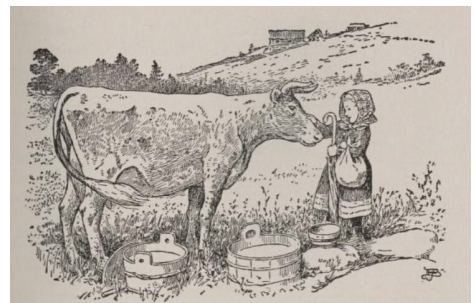
"Oh, you may have the wool, a whole sack full," said the sheep, "and if you have a luck penny, it is best that you should keep it yourself, for you will have more use for it than I shall."

"You are very kind," said Emborg. "Now we shall have new stockings and warm clothes for both Mother and me, and so we won't be cold when winter comes. So I thank you. But the sun is getting high, and I must hurry on."

Farther along, she came to a big cow that stood in a grassy field. "Moo, moo!" it called to her. "Come here! Come here!"

Did you ever see anything like it! If there wasn't a pail of fresh milk and a tub of newly-churned butter, and besides some cream in a bowl on which was printed "For a Little Girl." All these things were for Emborg, and without spending her luck penny, either, for the cow would not take it.

Oh, how sweet and good the cream tasted! After drinking it, Emborg really had



to go to the cow and pat it and scratch its forehead and say "Thank you" many times before she hurried on. Soon she came to a rail fence, on the top of which stood a hen calling with all its might:

"Cut, cut, cut, cadahcut! Every day an egg I lay
Cluck, cluck! Cluck, cluck! Cut, cut, cut,
cadahcut! Take from me the eggs you see Cluck,
cluck! Good luck!"

It kept cackling as if it would never stop, but Emborg thought she would try a little hen-talk herself, so she called:

"Thanks, thanks, thanks to you, Mother would like to thank you too." "Cut, cut! Cudahcut!"

Beside the fence stood a basket filled with great big white eggs. "Oh, what beautiful eggs!" said Emborg. And to think that the hen would not take so much as a single ore for them!

Now the path led into an old road, and there Emborg met a goat. He had a fine white beard and two pretty horns, and a bell was hung around his neck. The goat was very friendly. Before Emborg had a chance to ask if he had anything to sell, he said:

"Would you like some goat's-milk cheese? At the meadow up on the mountain, there is plenty already made, and it is rich and good, I can tell you. I'll hurry up there after it for you; and that cheese you may have without taking your luck penny off your neck, either."

"Thank you. That is cheap cheese," said Emborg. "It is well I met you." Oh, how kind all the animals were!

"I always mean to be kind, too," thought Emborg as she walked away.



Only think! Ahead of her in the road stood an animal that she had never seen before, and it had horns so big that she had never imagined anything like them. But Emborg was not the least bit afraid.

"Who are you that have such big horns? and where do you come from?" she asked.

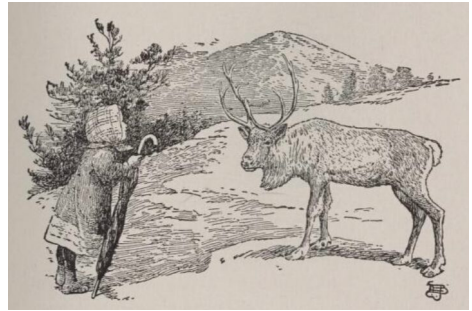
"I am a reindeer, and I usually live far up in the mountains, but I came down here to give you greeting," answered the reindeer.

"O my! Are you really a reindeer?" asked Emborg. Yes," said the reindeer. "I thought I would ask if you would like these horns of mine. Knife-handles and spoons can be made of them, and as for me, I won't need them any more, for every year new horns grow out on my head. And since you are a kind little girl willing to spend all your money for a birthday present for your mother, you shall not pay me anything."

"It seems almost too much for you to give me, but you have my best thanks," said Emborg; and as she trudged along she added to herself:

"I believe that everyone who gives something away is happy. Mother is, and the animals seem so, too."

By this time she had walked so far that she felt like sitting down to rest herself. There was much to see on all sides, and she amused herself watching the bees and butterflies flying about in the bright sunshine. Many flowers were blooming in the grass near the rock on which she sat, so when she had rested a while she plucked some of the prettiest ones and made a bouquet. Mother would certainly be pleased with a bunch of beautiful flowers.



But now a great question had come into her mind. How in the world could she take home to Mother all the good things that had been given her?

At that moment, a horse came along. Emborg could scarcely believe her eyes, but—yes,—wonder of wonders—loaded on his back were all the things the animals had given to her! The horse looked big and strong and kind, and it whinnied and neighed and then stood stock-still; and before Emborg knew what was happening—whisk, whirl—there she was, seated upon his back! Then home to Mother she went with the whistle, the butter and milk, the goat's-milk cheese, the eggs, the sack of wool, the big horns, and the bunch of flowers.

Well, well, think of that!



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