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King Thrushbeard

Brothers Grimm

Once upon a time there was a king with a beautiful daughter. Unfortunately, the girl was not only beautiful, but also terribly arrogant. She thought of herself as better than everyone else. She ridiculed every man who wanted to marry her. Some men she thought were too fat, others too thin. Some men were too tall, others too small.

The king wanted his daughter to marry, so he invited all the important men to a party. Here they all stood in a row, while the critical princess walked by. One by one she ridiculed the men. Especially the king of the neighbouring country who had to pay the price. The poor man had a bit of a crooked chin. Pfff, your chin looks just like a thrush's beak,' she said. From now on we'll call you Thrushbeard.

The king saw how terribly his daughter treated all the men and became angry. "You will marry the first beggar who comes to the door!" he cried. And so it happened. A few days later, a musician in dirty, frayed clothes came to the castle to sing songs. The king called him in and made him marry the princess on the spot.

The princess thought it was terrible, but had to do what her father said. She and her new husband were sent out of the castle. After all, that was no place for a beggar and his wife.



The beggar took the princess by the hand and took her outside. When she came to a large forest, the girl asked: "To whom does this beautiful forest belong?" and the beggar replied: 'All this belongs to King Thrush. At a green meadow and a big city, the same thing happened. When, after a long time, they came to a tiny house, the beggar said that this was to be their home. Oh, how the girl regretted not having married King Thrushbeard. If only she hadn't been so arrogant...

The king's daughter entered the cottage and did not know what hit her. There was only one room and no servants. She suddenly had to do everything herself. But the girl did not know how to make a fire, nor could she cook or spin. So her husband decided that she should go to the market and sell pots and pans. Then

she could at least earn some money to buy food.

The first day at the market went well and the princess sold some pots and pans. The next day, however, she sat down at the corner of the market. When a drunken man on his horse failed to pay attention, he rode right through all the pots and pans. The king's daughter had nothing left and went home crying. How afraid she was that her husband would be angry.

Her husband indeed became angry, but had already arranged another job for her. She would work as a kitchen maid in the king's castle. She had to do the dirtiest work, but she did it without complaining. She stuffed her pockets with food leftovers so she and her husband could have something to eat.

Well, that day the eldest son of the king happened to be getting married. The great ballroom was beautifully decorated and all the important people arrived in the finest clothes. Oh, how the Princess would have liked to be there. She cursed her arrogance, which meant that she now had to live in poverty.

While the girl was watching, the King's son came in. He saw the beautiful girl standing at the door and took her hand. The princess was startled and resisted, for she saw that it was King Thrushbeard. But he pulled her with him into the ballroom. As a result, her pockets were torn and all the food fell to the floor. How ashamed the girl was!

She immediately ran out of the room, but on the stairs she was overtaken by King Thrushbeard. "Don't be afraid," he said, "I am the musician with whom you lived in the little house, and I am also the drunk who broke your pottery. I wanted to punish you for your arrogance, which made you mock me." The princess began to cry and sobbed: "I am not worthy to be your wife!" But King Thrushbeard comforted her and gave her the most beautiful clothes. "Now we will really celebrate our wedding," he said. And so they did. And the princess never made fun of anyone else ever again.

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