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Richard and Blondel

Unknown writer

In a gloomy prison, in a foreign land, lay Richard I, King of England. He had been with some other kings to a great war in the Holy Land, where he had won battles, and taken cities, and gained much honour. Men called him Richard Lion-heart, because he was as brave as a lion in fighting, and his soldiers loved him and would follow him into any danger. One strong city, called Acre, held out for nearly two years against the armies of the other kings, but when Richard arrived it gave way almost at once.

Because of his bravery, and his many victories, all men praised King Richard, and this made some of the other kings hate him, for they were jealous that he should have more honour than they. When he was on his way back to England, one of these envious men seized him secretly, and threw him into prison.

And now poor Richard could fight no more, nor could he see the blue sky, and the green fields which he loved. One day, as he sat sad and lonely in his prison, he heard a voice singing, beneath the window. He started. "Surely," said he, "that is the voice of my old friend Blondel, and that is the song we used to sing together." When the song was ended, the king sang it again in a low voice. Then there was a joyful cry from the man outside, and Richard knew that it was indeed his friend.

Blondel had journeyed many days seeking his lost master. Now he hastened to England, and told the people where to find their king, and very soon Richard was set free, and went back to his own land.



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