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The Golden Goose

Brothers Grimm

Once upon a time, a long, long time ago a family with three children lived by the edge of the woods. The youngest child was called Simpleton, because the family thought he was very dumb. One day the father asked the eldest son to go into the forest and chop some wood. His mother gave him cookies and a bottle of wine to bring along.

On his way the boy met a gnome. 'What do you say boy, will you give me some of those cookies?', asked the gnome. 'And maybe a drop of wine?' 'Are you crazy!' the boy answered, 'I'm going to eat and drink that all by myself! Get away!'

Shortly after the eldest son started chopping wood, until his arm started to hurt badly. He had to stop working and couldn't bring the wood home. The eldest son had returned home without wood, so the father send his middle son out to do the job. He also got cookies and a bottle of wine from his mother.

From a distance the son already saw the gnome. 'Good day', said the gnome, 'can I have a bit of your cookie? Maybe with a sip of wine?' 'Absolutely not!', said the boy, 'then I will have less to eat and drink. That won't happen!' The boy walked away. Suddenly his legs started cramping badly and he couldn't continue, he struggled to get home and didn't bring any wood.

Now the family didn't have any wood left to make a fire and cook food. So Simpleton asked his father: 'Shall I go out and chop some wood?' The father thought that Simpleton wouldn't be able to do it. But the youngest son kept insisting and his father let him go. His mother gave Simpleton some old, dry cookies and a small bottle of old beer.

'Good day', the gnome greeted Simpleton. 'Can you give me something to eat and maybe a little bit to drink? I'm so hungry and thirsty.' 'I only have some old cookies and a small bottle of beer', answered Simpleton, 'but if you don't mind, we can eat and drink it together.'

The cookies tasted good and the beer did too. 'Because you have such a kind heart and you were willing to share your food and drink with me, I shall give you luck', said the gnome. 'Chop down that old tree and between the roots you will find luck.' The gnome said his goodbyes and disappeared.

Simpleton chopped down the tree and between the roots he found a goose with gold feathers. He knew he couldn't bring the goose home, because his parents would take it from him. So he walked to an inn to spend the night there and to think about what he should do with the goose.

The innkeeper had three daughters. They were eager to pluck a gold feather from the goose. When the first daughter put her fingers on a feather, her hand got stuck to the goose. The two other daughters wanted to try as well and they also got stuck!



The next day Simpleton wanted to leave, but saw the three daughters stuck to the goose. Simpleton realized the inn wasn't safe, so he quickly left with the goose. He didn't care about the three daughters who were stuck to it.

On their way they met lots of people who all wanted to take a gold feather. All of them got stuck to each other and the goose. And so a long line of people was created who were all stuck to each other.

At some point Simpleton reached a city. In the city was a palace with a king who had a daughter who was always sad. When the princess saw the parade of stuck people she bursted out in laughter. The king had stated that he would give the person who could make his daughter happy again a reward. He had promised that that person would marry his daughter. Simpleton was eager to marry the girl, whom he had fallen deeply in love with. But Simpleton wasn't a prince and that made the king very unhappy.

So the king said: 'Simpleton, you are not a prince, that's why I have to ask you to bring someone who can drink all the wine in the wine cellar in one go and eat my entire stock of bread.'

Simpleton quickly thought of the gnome and hurried into the woods. He saw on old, sad man sitting there. 'I am so hungry and thirsty', said the old man, 'I already drank one barrel of wine, but it feels like I've only had one sip.'

Simpleton asked the man to come to the palace with him. The man drank all the wine in the wine cellar and ate all the bread.

But the king really didn't want Simpleton to marry his daughter. 'Come back with a ship that can sail on the water and drive over land', he said, which seemed to him impossible.

Then the old man changed into the gnome and said: 'I drank all the wine for you and I ate all the bread. Now I shall give you that ship. I do this because you have a kind heart.'

The ship appeared and the king had to agree to the marriage.

They married quickly. The goose had a nice life in the palace pond. The gnome came by every now and then to enjoy cookies and wine with Simpleton. Simpleton later turned king and the queen laughed often at his jokes. Together they lived happily ever after.



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