



Ririro

READ ANYWHERE, ANYTIME

The Tinderbox

Hans Christian Andersen

A tough soldier was walking on the street. He was on his way home. On his way he met a witch. She asked him something special: "Do you want to make a lot of money, boy? Walk to that hollow tree over there and go inside." Well of course the soldier wanted to earn a lot of money. At the bottom of the tree the soldier discovered a long hallway with three doors. He opened the door and what did he see? A chest full of coins! On top of the chest was a dog with eyes as big as plates. Behind the second door he again discovered a chest with money, again with a dog on top. Behind the third door he found a chest with gold coins, that one was guarded by a dog with eyes as big as towers!



The witch, however, had given him an apron and had said: "If you put the dogs on the apron, they won't hurt you." "And", said the witch: "can you look if you can find my tinderbox in the tree?" The soldier stuffed his pockets with money and returned. "Where is my tinderbox?", asked the witch. "Oh, I forgot that", said the soldier. He walked back to get it. "What are you going to do with this box?", he asked. "I won't tell you", answered the witch. "You can have all the money, but the tinderbox is mine." The soldier chopped off her head and took the tinderbox.

Suddenly the soldier was filthy rich. He rented a gorgeous room, wore beautiful clothes and enjoyed delicious meals with his friends. But one day the money had run dry. He had to move to a small room in a bad area. And all his friends abandoned him. But he discovered something. With the tinderbox he could fetch the dogs. He quickly had enough money again and moved back to the luxurious room.

In the city lived a king with a beautiful daughter. This beautiful princess was locked up by her father in the castle. Nobody was allowed to go to her. Because it was once predicted that she would marry a simple soldier.

The soldier was dying to meet her. He asked the dog if he could take care of it. And the dog did. The dog brought the beautiful, sleeping princess to the soldier in the middle of the night. She was so beautiful! He kissed her.

The next morning the princess told her parents that she had dreamed of a dog and a soldier.



When it got dark, the dog got her again. This time he was followed. A court lady from the palace drew a cross on the door of the soldier. That way they could find his house. On the way back the dog noticed the cross and drew one on every door in the city.

The next night the princess had a bag with grains on her back. The queen had tied it there. There was a hole in the bag, so a track of grains would make a track. Quickly the house of the soldier was found. They threw him into prison and were planning on hanging him the next day.



“He”, said the soldier to a boy: “can you fetch my tinderbox? I will reward you with a lot of money!” With the tinderbox he called the three dogs. They came running to him immediately, grabbed the judges, the king and the queen and threw them into the air. They fell into pieces. The soldiers got scared and asked: “Do you want to be the new king and will you marry the princess?” Of course the soldier wanted that. At the party the dogs were at the table too. And they had big eyes.

Stories help us explore cultures, learn moral lessons, connect with nature — or simply have fun. That's why ririro.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 ririro.com and spread the joy of reading.

Instagram: @ririro_reading · Pinterest: pinterest.com/ririrocom