

take to haul so far, when the way was so rough. As it fell at his feet, and its glossy, dark boughs lay quivering like some living thing, it looked so very beautiful, that Heinrich felt he might carry it a hundred miles. How it stretched out as it lay there! Heinrich loved his home dearly, and as thoughts of how happy they would all be there when he came tramping up to the door with his prize, bringing sweet visions to his mother of her old home in the fatherland, he was inspired with new and fresh vigor. He fastened his axe securely in the branches, and merrily trudged his way around the mountain, as he must reach the other side before he could get home. This was finally accomplished, and he was down nearly to the canyon, and the three miles home he was pretty well acquainted with. But as he looked across, he more than ever before noticed how much more level it was. Several hills were on this side; on the other it was level and more easy to get home, were he once across. He knew there was no bridge, but then the canyon was only ten feet wide, and he might lay the tree across and go over on it. It looked almost close enough to jump across. At one time he had thought he *could* jump across, but had barely escaped falling to the bed below, a distance of several hundred feet.

He cleared away the snow from the edge, lay down on the ground; and cautiously drew himself toward the brink. My! How it made his head swim as he looked down into its innermost depths! And how dark it looked! But, perhaps, he said to himself, it is because I am tired, and probably it is not so very deep down after all, and his resolution, which for a moment was vascillating, by this later thought, was steadied.

"It will save an hour's walk," said Heinrich, aloud, "and I can almost jump across. Fudge! It is all right!"

He threw his axe over to the other side, dragged the hemlock to his crossing place, and lifting it with a Herculean effort, stood it almost straight up. It was not quite close enough. By a great pull, which sent the blood tingling to all parts of his frame, and puffed out his cheeks till he looked like a stuffed Dutchman, he managed to get it nearer without danger to himself, and let it drop—cautiously, however, measuring beforehand the distance and direction to let it fall. Crash! and it rested securely upon the opposite bank. He tugged at it, to be certain it was lodged well. It seemed so. Only a step or two now and he would be across.

What a splendid bridge! He took a step, then another, and still another. What need was there for fear? Yet, as he looked down into the awful abyss, and remembered how frail his structure was, he wished he were back and had gone the longer way. He stepped again. Horrors! Were the branches on the other side giving way? They had slipped just a little—enough to make color leave poor Heinrich's face, and to make him clutch desperately at the tree, as with the clutch of a last hope. Slipping still! and with a plunge, boy and tree went down in the darkness, a wail of distress rending the air of that silent dungeon. A sudden halt—they struck something. The tree was caught and wedged between the jutting banks half way down. Heinrich climbed to the upper side of the tree and lay among the soft boughs, trembling with fear, and almost senseless. He was safe from going farther now, as the tree was held fast, and he was too much exhausted to care what became of him. Minutes flew by in hours. The light above was leaving, and dusk was coming on, and Heinrich began, little by little, to collect himself. Was it probable that he should be compelled to stay all night in such a lonely place? Must