



Children's Stories That Never Grow Old.

CINDERELLA OR THE GLASS SLIPPER

THIS is the story of a beautiful, motherless young girl whose father married, for the second time, a haughty and proud widow who had two daughters of her own, both vain and selfish. No sooner was the wedding over than the wicked woman began to show herself in her true colors. She could not bear the good qualities of her pretty stepdaughter, and the more because they made her own daughters appear the less attractive. She made her wash dishes, scrub rooms and wait on her own daughters. She gave her a straw bed in the garret to sleep upon, while her own daughters slept in fine rooms and upon soft beds.

The poor girl bore all this very patiently, and dared not tell her father, who always sided with his wife. When she had done her work she used to go into the chimney corner and sit down among the cinders. They all called her "Cinderwench" except the youngest sister, who was less unkind than the eldest. She called her "Cinderella."



HOWEVER, Cinderella, in spite of her shabby clothes, was a hundred times more beautiful than her stepsisters, in spite of the fine gowns which they always wore.

One day the king's son gave a ball, and the three sisters were invited. The two selfish sisters were delighted, and talked all day long about what dresses they should wear. This made new trouble for poor little Cinderella, for it was she who had to iron her sisters' linen.

"For my part," said the eldest, "I will wear my red velvet."

"And I," said the youngest, "shall wear my golden-flowered silk and diamond belt."



"CINDERELLA, would you like to go to the ball?" the youngest asked.

"Alas!" said she, "you're only jeering at me."

"You are right," they both said; "it would only make the people laugh to see a Cinderwench at a ball."

At last the happy day came, and the two stepsisters went to court. Cinderella followed them with her eyes as long as she could, and when she had lost sight of them she began to cry.

"What is the matter?" asked her godmother, who saw her in tears.

"I wish I could—I wish I could"—but she could not speak for sobbing.

Now, Cinderella's godmother was a fairy, and she said to her:

"Do you wish to go to the ball?"

"Yes," cried Cinderella.



"WELL," said the godmother, "be a good girl, and you shall go. Run into the garden and bring me a pumpkin."

Cinderella got the biggest pumpkin she could find, though she could not see how this would help her to go to the ball.

The godmother struck the pumpkin with her wand, and it was instantly turned into a fine coach, gilded all over with gold. She then told Cinderella to bring her mouse trap, which had six live mice in it. Cinderella did as she was told, and her godmother lifted up the trapdoor a little, and as the mice came out she tapped them with her wand, and each mouse was at once turned into a fine horse. So now there were six beautiful mouse-colored, dapple-gray horses and a magnificent coach.

"And now for a coachman," said the fairy. "Bring me the rat trap."

CINDERELLA brought the trap, with three large rats in it. The biggest rat became a fat, jolly old coachman at the fairy's bidding.

"Go again into the garden and you will find six lizards behind the watering pot. Bring them to me," she said.

Cinderella had no sooner done so than her godmother turned them into six footmen, who jumped up behind the coach with their liveries of gold and silver. The fairy then touched Cinderella with her wand, and in an instant she was dressed in cloth of gold and silver, all set with jewels, and on her feet were a pair of glass slippers. Then Cinderella got up into her coach, and the fairy commanded her not to stay one moment after midnight, for if she did the coach would become a pumpkin again, her horses mice, her coachman a rat, her footmen lizards, and her clothes just as they were.



SHE promised to do as she was told, and away she drove to the ball.

The king's son was told that a great princess whom nobody knew was driving up to the palace, and he ran out to meet her. Everybody was astonished when they saw her great beauty. The prince fell in love with her at first sight, and he would dance with no one else.

When Cinderella was taking refreshments she sat down by her sisters and spoke to them, but they did not recognize her. In fact, they felt very proud to be noticed by such a princess.

Cinderella remembered what her godmother had said, and came home before 12 o'clock.

When the sisters came back from the ball later they could talk of nothing but the beautiful lady.



THE next night they went again to the ball at the palace. Cinderella waited until they had gone, and then she went, too, and she looked still more beautiful than the night before.

She was having such a fine time that she forgot what time it was until she saw the hands of the clock point to five minutes of 12. She hurried off, but as she reached the door it struck twelve. The guard wondered how such a shabby little girl could have gotten in, for she was back in her rags again. In her haste, however, she dropped one of her glass slippers on the stairs, and the prince, who ran after her, picked it up.

The prince next day sent out a herald with a trumpet, and a little page boy with the glass slipper on a velvet cushion, to proclaim that any lady whom the glass slipper should fit should become his wife. All the ladies begged to try it on, but their feet were all too large.



WHEN Cinderella's sisters heard of this they tried to force their feet into the tiny slipper, but it was all in vain. As they were angrily giving it up, Cinderella said:

"Let me try, please."

"Stupid girl!" said the sisters; "fancy you trying. Go and wash dishes."

But the herald said, "Let her try."

Cinderella sat down, and without any trouble put her foot into the slipper. Then she took its mate out of her pocket and put it on. Just at that moment her godmother came, and with a touch of her wand changed her rags into the most beautiful white satin gown that had ever been seen. She was the beautiful lady at the ball once more. Her wicked sisters were frightened, and begged on their knees to forgive them, for they knew she was soon to be queen.

Cinderella forgave them gladly, and asked them always to love her. She was then taken to the young prince, and he thought her more charming than ever, and a few days after married her.

Cinderella, who was no less good than beautiful, gave her sisters rooms in the palace, and married them to two great lords, and they all lived happy ever after.