

Polly Evans' Story Page for Boys and Girls

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The Fairy-tale Man



HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN, THE FAIRY TALE MAN

QUITE recently photographs were printed of scrap screens which the Fairy Tale Man made for the amusement of his boy and girl friends. Pictures were clipped from illustrated papers and then pasted together to complete one big artistic screen. So you may know that the Fairy Tale Man was very fond of children. But this is not all he did for them. He wrote the best kind of fairy stories—stories which are read the world over. American, English, German, French, Spanish and Italian children enjoy them no more than do the little pig-tailed children of far-off China or the swarthy-skinned boys and girls of India.

What kind of a person was this Fairy Tale Man, whose other name was Hans Christian Andersen? You shall hear the story of his life—a story which is the tale of the Ugly Duckling all over again.

On April 2, 1806, there was born in the Danish city of Odense, on the island of Funen, a baby who was finally to become the Fairy Tale Man. The building in which Hans was born was torn down shortly afterward, and the first home of which the great story-teller had recollection was a little house on Monk Mill's street. There were only two rooms on the ground floor. From the kitchen you climbed by means of a ladder to a tiny attic above, where upon the window sill was a garden box containing lettuce and garlic and a few flowers—the very same box you remember so well in the tale of the "Snow Queen."

And almost overshadowing the modest dwelling was the famous Church of St. Canute, whose pealing bells so often bewailed the fancy of little Hans. Hans' father was a cobbler, with the ambition to achieve fame under Napoleon. But his military career was short, for he got no farther than the neighboring duchy of Holstein before he came home to die. There remained to care for the lad his simple, industrious mother. His grandfather, though mad, was quite harmless, and the boy often went to see the old gentleman, who carved innumerable grotesque monsters out of wood. The grandfather and the grandmother—who now attended the madhouse gardens—were once in better circumstances. From the latter Hans heard stories of a certain great-grandmother, come of a noble family in Casse, who had run away with a theater player.

Perhaps it was the story of this ancestor that influenced Hans in his desire to become an actor and a writer of plays. Be that as it may, at a very early age he had a fondness for the theater. Indeed, while a tiny youngster he would set up his puppet playhouse and therein enact dramas with the little wooden dolls his father had carved for him.

Later, after his father died, Hans' mother wished him to learn a trade. But at the factory where he was sent the boys made such fun of this homely, gawky lad that the sensitive boy returned to his dolls and playthings. He was not as other lads were. For hours he would sit with the old ladies, while they spun, and listened to their strange tales and legends. He would stroll along the Odense river, dreaming of plans and stories which afterward brought forth the world's admiration.

When only fourteen years old, he started for the city of Copenhagen—twenty miles distant from Odense—to make his fortune. Then for two years the boy had a rough time of it. He failed in his ambition to become an actor, but many friends he found who tried to help him acquire learning. Many difficulties beset his way in his studies, but he surmounted them all. In 1828, after he had entered the University of Copenhagen, he published writings of great merit. At last he was recognized. In 1836 he was granted a pension by King Frederick VII. Then he set out on his travels through France, Switzerland and Italy. Later he went to Spain, Greece, Constantinople, and north to Sweden. Some time before this he had visited Germany, and now that fame had come to the

great writer, and he was loved throughout Denmark, he was just as modest and unassuming as ever. When he would espay an acquaintance on the street he would wave his umbrella or cane or whatever he had in hand, or shake hands and clap the person warmly on the back. Best of all was he loved by the children. One look into his kindly gray eyes made them forget the tall, homely, stooped figure. And they trooped around him, grasping his hands, and merrily asking him questions.

To his native town of Odense, the Fairy Tale Man ever remained true. He loved the town and its people, and they returned his love. When, in the year of his death (1875), he journeyed to Odense, the town was literally ablaze with decorations in his honor. In this way was there fulfilled a prophecy which an old woman made when Hans first left Copenhagen. "When he returns," said she, "Odense will be illuminated for him." And so it was. But who could help loving such a dear old man?

In truth, the Odense children of today seem to idolize the very statue of the Fairy Tale Man. It was erected through the contributions of the Danish children themselves, and it stands in the King's garden, on the banks of a miniature lake where swim majestic swans. Just such beautiful birds as the Fairy Tale Man liked to write about. Around this statue the boys and girls dance, and as it stands with arms outstretched toward them and with a kindly smile upon its face, it would almost seem that again the Fairy Tale Man was telling those entrancing stories of "The Nightingale," "Thumbelina," "The Old House," "The Shepherdess and the Chimney-Sweep," and ever so many others.

No one can imagine the Fairy Tale Man doing other than providing delights for girls and boys. I really think he must at this very moment be telling charming tales to little cherubs, hovering round about him. Don't you? And surely they must love him just as all of us here love him.

BRAVE HEART



"SAFE I feel, and well protected. While Brave Heart is guarding me." So says mother dear whenever I a soldier try to be. "Course, it isn't very brave; Or I'm very, very brave; For if just to me came danger I don't know how I'd behave. When I was a tiny fellow, Everything quite easy seemed:

I'd kill tigers and great lions, Bears and elephants—I dreamed. Now I'm big, I'm not so boastful, 'Cause I might as well own up—I'm not fond of inky darkness, And I hate Ted Jones' bull pup. But, if anything, whatever, To hurt mother dear would try, I would show that I'm her "Brave Heart"— I would fight until I'd die!

HAPPENINGS of a "CHILDREN'S DAY" in FRANCE



Hoop Race

"NO, MY SON," said Monsieur Dunois, firmly; "when I bought your diablo set I told you quite plainly that it must last you at least a month; nor will I reverse my decision."

Frederic sadly turned and walked away. Always careless with his toys, he had broken three diablo sets within the past two weeks. Now his father was determined to teach the boy a lesson. The punishment was just, Frederic knew, and at any ordinary time he would have borne it with fortitude. But tomorrow was the 14th day of July, when he was entered in the diablo contest. And he had no set!

As was usual for him, Frederic had also spent his week's pocket money. Unfortunately, too, his sister Christine had spent her all in the purchase of ribbons and other gewgaws for services on the morrow. There was apparently no way out of the difficulty. Frederic was inconsolable.

The weather for this joyous celebration was ideal. Not a cloud marred the sky. July 14, you know, is the French holiday which marks the falling of the Bastille. Paris, in particular, is in her gayest mood upon this day. In the morning there is speckmaking by great numbers of dignitaries, exercises and processions of the school children and military pageants. Then the afternoon is by custom devoted exclusively to the children, who participate in all manner of games and contests. At the close of the day there is a magnificent display of fireworks, and the rest of the evening is spent in mirth and revelry.

Frederic and Christine acquitted themselves well in the patriotic exercises, in which both had prominent parts. And Christine looked so nice in the procession, with her pretty new gown, that Frederic in his pride for her forgot temporarily his own dissatisfaction. Afterward the splendid procession of brightly uniformed soldiery was enough to stir any boy's blood.

When luncheon was over Christine and Frederic, accompanied by their father and mother, eagerly betook themselves to where the children's games were to be held. A great crowd had already gathered to witness the different events.

Promptly at half-past two o'clock, the master of ceremonies announced the beginning of the contests. First, there was a "three-legged" race for the boys.



Awarding the Prizes

Each lad had one leg tied up with a gay-colored scarf. This left him one leg and his hands to cover the stretch of pavement that lay between the starting-point and the goal. Frederic hobbled along the course with great vim, and he was roundly cheered by numerous friends when he came out in second place. Christine did well, also, in the bowl race which followed. In this, several little girls ran with bowls filled to the rim with water. She who reached the goal first, and without spilling any of the water, was awarded the prize.

Next came an egg race, in which boys ran along a stretch of ground with eggs balanced in spoons; then a candle race, and many other contests. The hoop

race for girls was announced as the event to follow. As Christine took her place in the line of girls who were competing, her neighbor whispered: "I hear there's going to be a delightful set of diablo for the winner of this race."

At once the thought came to Christine that here was an opportunity to win the set for Frederic, and thus enable him to enter the contest to be held later. Frederic, in the meantime, had given up all hope of his father relenting, and, as befitted a brave lad, was trying his best not to feel disappointed. It really was a great disappointment, because he was very skilful at diablo and had

A Race of Water Bowls

every chance of bearing off the honors. But the hoop race was on. Christine gritted her teeth. Swiftly she flew along the course, spinning her dainty hoop with an energy that soon brought her directly in line with the foremost girl. But try as she would she could not forge ahead of her rival. Suddenly the other girl slightly turned her head to note Christine's progress, the hoop was sent on a false spin to the right, and Christine in a breathless sprint reached the goal—the winner! And after the cheering for her plucky fight had subsided, she was presented with a splendid diablo set!

Monsieur Dunois was so proud of his little daughter's achievement that he finally consented to permit Frederic to use the diablo set. This event, as had been expected by the other contestants, was captured by Frederic, who went into the contest determined to do his best, as much to show his appreciation of Christine's generosity as for any other reason.

In all the jubilation which followed, however, Frederic did not lose sight of the lesson so painfully taught him. And although he is still careless and destructive with his toys at times, he now tries his level best to correct the fault, so that no one has any longer great cause for complaint.

Faculty of Observation

"HOW many seed compartments are there in an apple?" he queried.

No one knew. "And yet," said the school inspector, "all of you eat many apples in the course of a year, and see the fruit every day, probably. You must learn to notice the little things in nature."

The talk of the inspector impressed the children, and they earnestly discussed the matter at recess time. The teacher the next day overheard this conversation in the play yard. A little girl, getting some of her companions around her, gravely said: "Now, children, just suppose that I'm Mr. Inspector. You've got to know more about common things. If you don't you'll grow up to be fools. Now tell me," she said, looking sternly at a playmate, "how many feathers has a hen?"

How a Horse Gallops

A HORSE in full gallop places only one foot at a time upon the ground. Did you know that? This fact is more convincing to the ear than to the eye, for the human eye, after all, is a trifle slow. In listening to a horse galloping on a hard road, it will be found accurately exhibited by placing the little finger on a table or pane of glass, and causing the other three fingers to follow in rotation; by so doing the precise sound of a horse galloping will be produced. I remember it was a common practice for boys to cage all the empty tin cans and use them for galloping. Great sport. The bottom of the can was held in the hand, the opened top was on the ground. As we galloped through the streets, fifty strong, people thought they heard a regiment of cavalry coming.

Angler—"Is it against the law to fish in this stream, can you tell me?" Boy—"No, but it's again' common sense. Ther' ain't no fish in it!"

Daddy Stork's Mistake

FOR a long time Clarissa had prayed for a sister—a nice little baby sister, whom she could love and fondle. And now the mean old stork had brought her a baby brother that fretted and squalled and looked ever so crossly at her.

"Daddy Stork must have made a mistake. I'm sure he must; and I do wish he'd take this baby back," said Clarissa impatiently, as she frowned upon her baby brother.

Clarissa didn't know just how it came about, but suddenly she found beside her a radiant angel, clad in gleaming robes of white, and wearing a brilliant star above her brow. And the angel, though still smiling sweetly, said quite reprovingly to the little girl:

"There was no mistake. The queen of



"AN ANGEL BESIDE HER"

heaven heard your prayer, and immediately she bade a little cherub cease from playing, with the stars, and run across to the chamber of souls with a message. Now, this message directed that a delightful little girl baby be selected from among the souls, and be given to the stork messenger. But when we happened to tell the queen that a naughty boy baby was disturbing the little souls, she commanded this baby sent to you, in order that it might teach you patience and kindness."

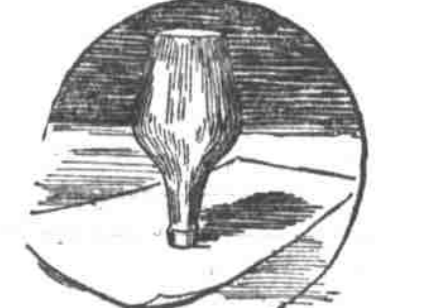
"I have just been too ugly for anything," murmured Clarissa through her teeth, "and won't you please tell the queen that I'll be as kind and patient as ever I can. And I really do feel that I love baby brother now."

Clarissa quickly proved that, after all, Daddy Stork had made no mistake.

Bottle "Stunt"

SPREAD a newspaper flat on the table and upon the paper stand a bottle, mouth downward.

You may then announce with perfect confidence that you can draw the



POSITION OF BOTTLE

newspaper from beneath the bottle without upsetting the latter.

Grasp firmly two ends of the paper. Ask a friend to pound gently upon the table. Before long your bottle will have "walked" off the newspaper.

Neighbory.

A few days after a farmer had sold a pig to a neighbor he chanced to pass the neighbor's place, where he saw their little boy sitting on the edge of the pigpen watching his new occupant.

"How d'ye do, Johnny?" said he; "how's your pig today?"

"Oh, pretty well, thank you," replied the boy. "How are your folks?"

"What became of Nineveh?" asked a Sunday school teacher.

"It was destroyed," said Johnny, promptly.

"And what became of Tyre?"

"Punctured."

SKINNY AND THE "PINEY"



SKINNY PATIENTLY WATCHED THE HOLE

WED never have lost that baseball game to Newtown if it hadn't been for the first two innings; and the first innings wouldn't have been bad if Skinny and Joe Stanton hadn't missed the 2:15 train. And Skinny says they wouldn't have missed the 2:15 train if it hadn't been for the "piney." That's just like Skinny—to blame a poor, harmless animal for losing our baseball game, and not give it a chance to defend itself.

As well as I can make out, Skinny left home 'bout 10 o'clock and went through Perkins' front gate ten minutes later. Then he said to Mrs. Perkins: "Mis' Perkins, ma says here is a half-dollar, an' she wants a nice, fat chicken."

"All right, Joseph," says Mrs. Perkins. (Joseph is Skinny's real name, but he's never called that by us fellows.) "All right, Joseph," says Mrs. Perkins; "suppose you catch one yourself."

So Skinny scouted out to the chicken yard, got his eye on a plump hen, and started to chase her. Now chasing hens is mighty warm work, an' after awhile Skinny thought he might as well rest a bit.

It was when Skinny was sitting on a chicken coop that he saw the "piney." That's what Farmer Perkins said it was

when Skinny told him about it, though Skinny said it looked exactly like a weasel. Anyway, the little beast, whatever it was, streaked across the chicken yard just like lightning and dived right down a little hole near the fence.

You can bet your life that Skinny wasn't long getting to that hole. You see, Jack Warner is so hefty proud over that groundhog skin he's got nailed to his pop's barn that every one of us fellers is trying to catch something that'll make Jack feel as humble as dirt.

Well, str, Skinny plugged up the hole, and then started to hunt like blazes for the other door of the "piney" home. He spent 'bout an hour at that, and then, not finding any, went to work to dig at the hole he'd stopped up. He dugged and dugged and dugged, till he had most of the yard dug up. But he began to find so many little galleries that branched off from the main hole that at last he made up his mind he'd have to dig until kingdom come. So he sat right down by the diggings and waited.

When we fellows got to the depot Skinny wasn't there. And when it was only about five minutes to train time, we began to get anxious. Joe Stanton started off at a run for Skinny's home, and from there traced him to Perkins'. There Joe found 'im.

"What is thunder are yuh doin'?" yells Joe. "Don't yuh know that yuh'll have to hustle like sixty to catch the train?"

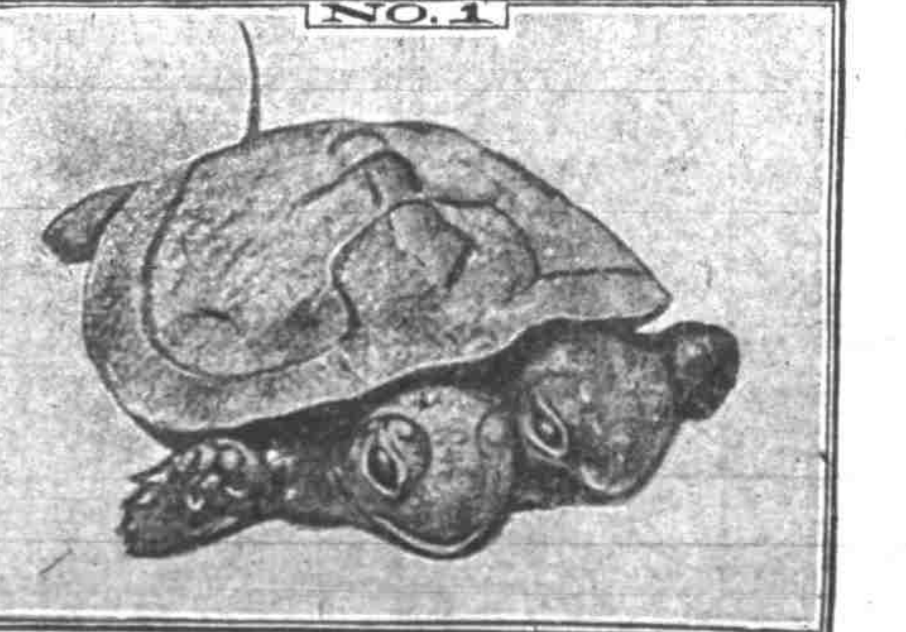
Skinny turned his head, and just then the "piney" skipped out from his hole and streaked it 'cross the yard. Skinny streaked it, too, but his path led toward the depot. As you know, he and Joe missed the train, and didn't get to Newtown till an hour and a half later.

Skinny got the Dickens all 'round. He's our best pitcher, and we gave it to 'im hot and heavy for losing the game. And then when he got home his ma told him a few things about not gettin' her chicken.

Skinny hasn't seen Mrs. Perkins yet, an' he's putting off writing her just as long as he can. She has it in for him, 'cause he dug up the chicken yard.

Now, I guess you know just how we lost the game. 'Course, those Newtown fellows can play ball a little, but ordinarily we'd kicked them all to hollow if it hadn't been for Skinny and that conarned "piney."

IN THE World of Curiosities



MR. TORTOISE would never have got his picture in the paper had he not been too busy quarreling with himself to observe the man's approach. That is how he was captured. An ordinary tortoise wouldn't have been taken in such a way. But this tortoise was different from his kindred, although unless you looked for a head, any dissimilarity was not apparent. The shell measured two by one and three-

quarter inches—a trifle larger than usual for this kind of box tortoise—but all other parts were normal; that is, all except the head. And this tortoise had not one, but two heads. You see now how he could readily fight with himself. The "Siamese twins" tortoise at the present time is probably about 5 months old, and is a native of Virginia. The two heads are perfectly formed. They never feed together, but do so separately and alternately.

LATEST HUNTING TRICK IN JUNGLETOWN

