

Polly Evans' Story Page for Boys and Girls

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Wherover the Dove Rested

NOT at all was Pajub prospering. And Pajub railed at the evil fate which prevented him from having good crops, and from growing rich. Surely there must be some wicked spirit pursuing him.

He therefore sought the hermit priest who dwelt nearby, and to this sage did he unfold the tale of woe. A moment the sage reflected, and then made reply:

"Seek ye the place where the doves rest; there shalt thou find the cause of all that is unfortunate in thy life."

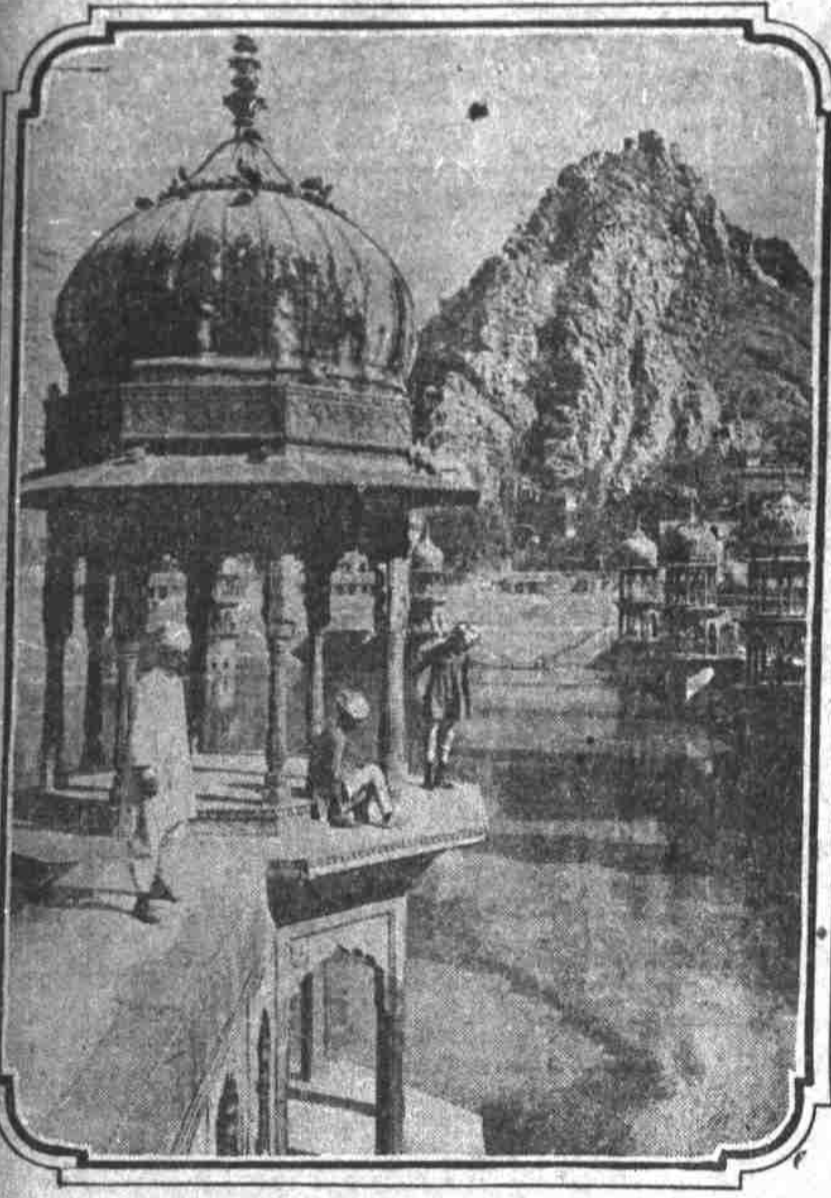
Deeply pondering, Pajub went upon his way. "Wherover the doves rest," repeated he. "Doves rest in countless number of places throughout India; how am I to know when I find the right spot?"

"Ganga! Ganga!" alone for the sins committed during three previous years.

Then, as he again looked into the water, whilst praying to Ganga to rid him of his burden, it seemed that his reflection there had a new meaning. It seemed that his image spoke, and these were the words the mouth framed:

"No evil spirit pursues thee other than thyself. Thou hast been idle, shiftless, worthless. This alone has been the cause of thy ill fortune. Be industrious at thy work and all will go well with thee."

Pajub started back, aghast. Could this, indeed, be true? It must be; for the god had spoken. Slowly he re-



PAJUB GAZED UPON THE SACRED WATERS

For many weary days Pajub wandered, seeking a solution to this problem. He bathed in the sacred waters of the Ganges; he made pilgrimages to the sacred cities of Gangotri, Haridwar, Allahabad, Benares and Sager island; and he attended the kumbh, that notable gathering of those devoted to right living, held every twelve years. "Here," thought he, "I should find the truth I seek." But he found it not.

RESTING DOVES

At last his travels brought him to Ulwar, which lay thirty leagues to the south of Delhi. He topped up the steep hill whereon the city was built, until he reached the fortress on its very summit. After an inspection of the magnificent palace of the maharajah, he made his way to the sacred tank of Ulwar, where was stored holy water, taken from the Ganges.

Pajub's heart beat quicker upon his arrival at the sacred tank. For there, covering the roof of a little pavilion overlooking the sacred water, was a flock of doves. But so had he been inspired with hope on many similar occasions; and always had he been disappointed. Hastening his steps, however, he soon gained the pavilion. Here he made adoration to the great god.

THE SECRET REVEALED

Gazing into the holy water, he thought of the legend in the Sacred Book of Ramayana. He thought of the story, told him while yet a child, of how Bhagirathi, after 30,000 years of pleading from his father and grandfather, besought Vishnu to create the Himalayas. Ganga was the daughter of the Himalayas, and with her waters could the dust of Bhagirathi's ancestors be baptized, in order that they might ascend to happiness in the company of the gods. There was much virtue in the Ganges, or Ganga, which had its source in a mountainous ice cavern, said to be the misted hair of Shiva. And as the water before him was of the Ganges, Pajub muttered the words taught him long ago:

"This sacred stream, heard of, desired, seen, touched, bathed in, or hymned day by day, sanctifies all beings; and those who, even at a distance of a hundred leagues, exclaim:

traced his steps to the bank, resolving to plan for himself a better course of living. Turning, for an instant, to watch the doves, he murmured:

"The sage spoke truly. My secret did I learn where the doves rested—and what a simple secret it was!"

Saved by a Spider

ON the ceiling of one of the rooms in Sans Souci, the world-renowned palace of Frederick the Great, is painted a great spider with its web. The origin of this strange decoration is as follows:

This apartment was the great king's breakfast room, and adjoined his bedroom. Every morning when his majesty entered the room he was accustomed to find a cup of chocolate, but on one occasion just as he was about to drink, he bethought himself of something he had forgotten, and returned to his bedroom.

When he again entered the breakfast room his majesty discovered that a great spider had dropped from the ceiling into the cup, and he naturally cried out for fresh chocolate to be prepared.

The next instant the king was startled by the report of a pistol. No sooner had the cook received the order than he blew out his brains. Not because the king had refused the chocolate did he do this, but because he had poisoned the cup and had thought himself discovered.

It was in remembrance of this narrow escape that his majesty ordered the spider with its web to be painted on the ceiling.

A Willing Martyr

JOHNNY'S mother one morning discovered a shortage in her supply of pies, baked the day before, and her suspicions fell upon Johnny.

"Johnny," she said, "do you know what became of that cherry pie that was on the second shelf in the pantry?"

"Yes," he replied, "I ate it. But I had to."

"You had to?" exclaimed his astonished mother. "What do you mean, child?"

"The teacher asked yesterday if any of us could tell her how many stones there are in a cherry pie, and I couldn't find out without eating the whole pie, could I? There's just 12."

Legend of the Enchanted Lake



"SO BUSY WAS HE THINKING OF THIS WEIRD MYSTERY."

ONE came upon the village of Trouvall only after ascending and descending numberless hills. Trouvall itself lay in a hollow, flanked on both sides by mountains. There was nothing extraordinary in its appearance. Its streets seemingly had lost all idea of direction, for they wandered hither and thither in an aimless fashion. And, although the houses were built in the self-same style—squat and compact, with red brick walls and overhanging eaves—some of them, out of sheer obstinacy, turned their backs upon the street and presented to it their rear entrance instead of the front door.

Indeed, there was nothing to redeem Trouvall from the commonplace save its wonderful lake. So close to its crystalline waters did many of the houses lay that their outlines were reflected upon its surface—clear and distinct, as though in a mirror. Yet true as was this reflection, when a human being stood upon its bank the result was different. The body of the person was always mirrored with the utmost fidelity, but instead of the face there appeared distorted and horribly ugly features. This lake, with its strange peculiarity, might have brought fame to the little town of Trouvall had the village not been situated far out of the beaten path of travel.

ARRIVAL OF THE PRINCE

By the merest chance it was that Prince Azel happened that way. Not long before this time his father, the king, had announced his intention of abdicating the throne in favor of the prince. But before he gave up his power he resolved to choose a heir for the prince, in order that an heir to the throne might be assured. The prince himself was too deeply interested in his studies to think of marrying, nor did he care a jot about being king. To escape being reproached for his neglect, he decided to travel a little while in out-of-the-way places, with but a few attendants. Thus he came upon Trouvall.

"'Tis more than passing strange!" murmured Prince Azel, as he stood upon the bank of the lake, scarcely repressing a shudder at the forbidding image reflected where his face should have been. Beside him were grouped his retainers, and a little way beyond stood a crowd of gaping townsfolk.

But the prince saw none of them, so busy was he thinking of this weird mystery.

"Who is there to explain this strange thing?" he demanded loudly.

No one answered. The villagers had become so used to the possession of their lake that they had long ceased to regard it as wonderful, and with their ancestors had died the secret of its mirrorings.

At last one old man spoke in a quavering voice. "Perchance Father Veillard may know. He is a very wise old man who dwells in a hut upon the mountain-side, and he is even older than we—yes, much older."

"Bring him to me!" impatiently commanded the prince.

When the sage stood before the prince he replied to his majesty's question in this wise:

"About the lake I myself know nothing; but among my forefathers there was a legend which declared that a powerful genie created the lake. An ally of the Evil One was he. For his amusement he filled this depression in the hills with the tears shed by those in agony, so that the lake might always stand as an enduring symbol of pain. And so long as the lake remains will the souls of these sorrowful ones continue to haunt its waters. When one stands beside its banks, the tortured spirits rise to the surface and hide the features of the person, according to the legend."

Here was an opportunity for the prince



"ROSE GRACEFULLY FROM THE WATER"

to apply the great knowledge he had gained through arduous study. He dismissed his courtiers, bidding them find lodgings in the town. He made known to them his intention of dwelling in

the house nearest the lake, where he resolved to stay until he had solved the mystery.

One day, as he reclined upon the mossy bank, sweet strains of music came faintly to his ears. From the lake itself the sound came, as though a spirit band of musicians were concealed in its watery depths. While the prince listened, fascinated, there slowly appeared near the shore the form of a beautiful nymph. She rose gracefully from the water and floated through the air toward where the prince rested.

Immediately the prince beheld the nymph, love entered the heart of him who never before had loved. And Azel sprang to his feet, crying:

"Oh, beautiful spirit! Thee I shall wed, or none!"



"Too great a price must one pay for my love, good prince," sweetly said the nymph, as she gazed with pitying eyes upon the young man. "I was appointed ages ago by a good genie to aid

Legend of a Faithful Hound

PRINCE LLEWELLYN once went out hunting, leaving his infant child in charge of Gelet. He was horrified to see upon his return an empty cradle and the floor bespattered with blood. Gelet sat on his haunches, looking joyously into his master's face, but the impetuous prince read the evidence wrongly, and slew the hound on the spot. In the next room he presently saw the child, alive and well, and in a dark corner a dead wolf. Overcome with grief at his mistake, the savage warrior mourned the loss of his only friend, and buried the dog near by with all honor. To this day the place is called "Beddgelert"—the Grave of Gelet—now a pleasant little village in North Wales.

To Imitate the Song of the Nightingale

TAKE a pear-tree leaf an inch long and half an inch thick. With the thumb-nail dig a semi-circular piece out of the middle, so as to leave only the white inside extremely thin, covered on the uncut side by the outer skin. This opening should be in the shape of a half threepenny piece; if you have not cut it clean out you will only be able to draw out the croaking of a raven. Double up the leaf and apply it to the palate, the bared part of the swell at the back of and above the roof of the tongue, not toward the hollow, and try to pronounce the following syllables, to imitate the nightingale: Eu-oo, eu-oo, eu-oo, eu, eu, eu, three, tshoo, tshce, tshoo, tshce, roo, roo, eu, eu, eu, roo, shee.

How Pussy was Punished for the Misdeeds of Two Wicked Doggies

Illustration showing a scene with a dog and a cat.

SEVERAL REASONS

"YOU ASK me why I like to go to school day after day; I'll tell you, if you wish to know."

Said Johnny's sister, May.

"It's all because I want to do my best to please mama. And also try my hardest to make glad my dear papa."

I so delight to take my place Among the girls in class;

I'd simply hate to miss one face Or lose a single lass.

"I always have a splendid chum For company; you see. At home it would be most humdrum," John's sister, Kate, told me.

"Such interesting things you learn," Replied John's sister, Prue; "And I am striving now to earn Bright fame and glory, too."

"It possible, I'd like to be As wise as father, and

I therefore must work busily So I can 'understand.'"

Of Johnny, then I made request For him to tell the reason— Since he did not appear depressed— Why he should like this season.

"I like school 'cause it always leads To bully, fine vacation! The faster," said he, "school term speeds, The greater my elation!"

The Mouse's Treasure

BY THE window of an old house in the Rue de la Huchette sat Madame Laury, repairing a fragment of delicate venetian lace. Nearby, her little grandson, Gabriel, a lad about 11 years old, coaxed from his violin strains of music as fine and fragile as the filmy, gossamer-like threads in madame's hands.

"Tomorrow is the day for your class in the conservatory, is it not?" asked madame.

"Yes, grandma," replied Gabriel.

"Then I shall leave you to your practice," said madame, "while I carry back my completed work."

No sooner had his grandmother departed than Gabriel called softly:

"Grisette! Grisette!"

Immediately a little gray mouse poked itself from a hole in the corner of the room. And as the lad commenced to play a soothing air the sharp nose protruded still further, until there came into view a mouse with silky moustaches, a fine, soft coat of gray and eyes like black pearls, which followed intently the course of the bow. The boy nodded in a friendly way to



HE PLAYED TO GRISETTE

the mouse and then continued the music which so delighted his tiny audience. Presently there was heard the sound of footsteps. Grisette vanished as the door opened and madame entered.

Observing the anxious frown upon his grandmother's brow, Gabriel beseeched:

"What is it that worries you, grandma?"

"My poor child, I do not wish to burden you with trouble," gently answered madame.

"I pray you, do not hide any secrets from me, grandma," Gabriel beseeched.

"I may as well tell you," replied the grandmother, with a sigh, "that they have complained about my work for the first time. You know my eyes are growing feeble, and I can no longer do such fine sewing as well as I should."

The lad ran to her and threw his arms around her, crying:

"You must not sew any more, grandma! I shall go out and earn sure I can earn enough for us both!"



BAGS OF MONEY

"No, my boy; I promised your mother I would have you finish your course at the conservatory. You already show much talent, nor would I have your career ruined," responded madame.

At this moment she caught sight of the mouse, which had come from its hole.

"A mouse! a mouse!" she cried, seizing a brush and quickly pursuing the daring little animal.

"It is gentle. It will not harm you, grandma," protested Gabriel. But madame did not heed his words. She ran to the hole into which the mouse had disappeared and pulled away a loose board in the wainscoting. What she saw below seemed to interest her; for without hesitation she reached down and drew forth two heavy bags covered with dust. Untying the cords which bound them, she emptied upon the table a stream of coins—gold louis bearing the figure of Napoleon III.

"It is a fortune!" she gasped.

"And Grisette is the fairy godmother who has given it to us!" exclaimed Gabriel.

After all, Gabriel did not have to go to work, nor was his grandmother compelled to sew for a living. With the money, left no doubt by a family which had to leave Paris hurriedly during the war of 1870, they were able to place themselves in comfortable circumstances. Gabriel finished his studies at the conservatory, while madame enjoyed the quiet she so well deserved.

Grisette, the fairy godmother, never again appeared—not even to be thanked. But you may be sure that neither Gabriel nor Madame Laury ever forgot their mouse benefactor.

How Pussy was Punished for the Misdeeds of Two Wicked Doggies

