



1. 打火匣

The Tinder-Box



一个士兵已经参加了很多次战争,现在要回家去了。在路上,他遇到了一个长得很可怕的老巫婆。巫婆叫住士兵,让他钻到一个树洞里,帮她把里面的打火匣取出来、并告诉士兵,只要他把打火匣取出来,树洞里的金钱他想拿多少都可以。

于是,士兵把绳子系在腰上,带上巫婆借给他的蓝格围裙,钻进了树洞。树洞下面是一个点着几百盏灯的大厅,厅里面有三个门,都可以打开。士兵走进第一个门,他看见一个箱子上面坐着一条大狗,眼睛有茶杯那么大。士兵一点儿也不怕,按照巫婆所说的那样把蓝格围裙铺在地上,把大狗抱到了围裙上,然后打开箱子,里面装满了铜钱。他就从箱子里面取出了很多铜钱,装满了他的衣袋。之后,他锁好了箱子,把大狗放回原位。士兵又走进了第二个门,这个箱子上的大狗,眼睛有水车轮那么大。同样,士兵也将它放在了围裙上面,当他看见满箱的银币时,就扔掉了所有的铜钱,把箱子里的银币装满了他的衣袋和行军袋。第三个门里的情景更是令他吃惊,箱子上的大狗,眼睛竟然有“圆塔”那么大!士兵照样把狗放到了蓝格围裙上面。这次,箱子里装的全是金子。可想而知,士兵扔了所有银币,在他的衣袋、行军袋、帽子和皮靴里都装满了金子。可是,当巫婆把他从树洞里拉上来的时候,士兵却不想把打火匣交给巫婆了。士兵砍死了巫婆,用蓝格围裙包起了所有的金子,并把打火匣装在衣袋里,向城里走去了。

现在的士兵是个有钱人了,他买了华美的衣服,住进了豪华的旅店,成为了一

名焕然一新的绅士。大家把城里的事情都告诉他，告诉他国王的女儿是一位十分美丽的公主，但是谁也不能见到她。士兵过着舒适的日子，每天去听戏、兜风，送许多钱给穷苦的人们，也结交了很多朋友。可是过了不久，他就入不敷出，仅剩下两个铜板了。他只好搬到小阁楼上，朋友们也不来看他了。

一个偶然的机，士兵发现了打火匣的秘密。他只要把打火匣擦一下，第一只狗就会出来听他的吩咐，擦两下，第二只狗就出来，擦三下，就是那只眼睛最大的狗了。这下，士兵重新富有起来，朋友们又都回来了。

士兵想起了人们对他提起过的公主，他很想见她一面。于是他把狗儿召唤出来，狗儿竟然真的带回来熟睡中的公主。可是很快王后就发现了这件事情，国王一怒之下把士兵抓进了牢里，要把他绞死。可是忠于主人的三只狗儿帮助了士兵，它们杀死了国王和他的随从们。士兵在打火匣的帮助下，终于成为了国王，和公主结婚了。

There came a soldier marching along the high road — *one, two! one, two!* He had his knapsack on his back and a sabre by his side, for he had been in the wars, and now he wanted to go home. And on the way he met with an old witch: she was very hideous, and her under lip hung down upon her breast. She said, "Good evening, soldier. What a fine sword you have, and what a big knapsack! You're a proper soldier! Now you shall have as much money as you like to have."

"I thank you, you old witch!" said the soldier.

"Do you see that great tree?" quoth the witch; and she pointed to a tree which stood beside them. "It's quite hollow inside. You must climb to the top, and then you'll see a hole, through which you can let yourself down and get deep into the tree. I'll tie a rope round your body, so that I can pull you up again when you call me."

"What am I to do down in the tree?" asked the soldier.

"Get money," replied the witch. "Listen to me. When you come down to the earth under the tree, you will find yourself in a great hall: it is quite light, for many hundred lamps are burning there. Then you will see three doors; these you can open, for the keys are in the locks. If you go into the first chamber, you'll see a great chest



in the middle of the floor; on this chest sits a dog, and he's got a pair of eyes as big as two tea-cups. But you need not care for that. I'll give you my blue-checked apron, and you can spread it out upon the floor; then go up quickly and take the dog, and set him on my apron; then open the chest, and take as many farthings as you like. They are of copper: if you prefer silver, you must go into the second chamber. But there sits a dog with a pair of eyes as big as mill-wheels. But do not you care for that. Set him upon my apron, and take some of the money. And if you want gold, you can have that too — in fact, as much as you can carry — if you go into the third chamber. But the dog that sits on the money-chest there has two eyes as big as the round tower of Copenhagen. He is a fierce dog, you may be sure; but you needn't be afraid, for all that. Only set him on my apron, and he won't hurt you; and take out of the chest as much gold as you like."

"That's not so bad," said the soldier. "But what am I to give you, you old witch? for you will not do it for nothing, I fancy."

"No," replied the witch, "not a single farthing will I have. You shall only bring me an old tinder-box which my grandmother forgot when she was down there last."

"Then tie the rope round my body," cried the soldier.

"Here it is," said the witch, "and here's my blue-checked apron."

Then the soldier climbed up into the tree, let himself slip down into the hole, and stood, as the witch had said, in the great hall where the many hundred lamps were burning.

Now he opened the first door. Ugh! There sat the dog with eyes as big as tea-cups, staring at him. "You're a nice fellow!" exclaimed the soldier; and he set him on the witch's apron, and took as many copper farthings as his pockets would hold, and then locked the chest, set the dog on it again, and went into the second chamber. Aha! There sat the dog with eyes as big as mill-wheels.

"You should not stare so hard at me," said the soldier; "you might strain your eyes." And he set the dog up on the witch's apron. When he saw the silver money in the chest, he threw away all the copper money he had, and filled his pockets and his knapsack with silver only. Then he went into the third chamber. Oh, but that was horrid! The dog there really had eyes as big as the round tower and they turned round

and round in his head like wheels.

“Good evening!” said the soldier; and he touched his cap, for he had never seen such a dog as that before. When he had looked at him a little more closely, he thought, “That will do,” and lifted him down to the floor, and opened the chest. Mercy! What a quantity of gold was there! He could buy with it the whole of Copenhagen, and the sugar pigs of the cake-woman, and all the tin soldiers, whips, and rocking-horses in the whole world. Yes, that was a quantity of money! Now the soldier threw away all the silver coin with which he had filled his pockets and his knapsack, and took gold instead: yes, all his pockets, his knapsack, his boots, and his cap were filled, so that he could scarcely walk. Now indeed he had plenty of money. He put the dog, on the chest, shut the door, and then called up through the tree, “Now pull me up, you old witch.”

“Have you the tinder-box?” asked the witch.

“Plague on it!” exclaimed the soldier, “I had clean forgotten that.” And he went and brought it.

The witch drew him up, and he stood on the high road again, with pockets, boots, knapsack, and cap full of gold.

“What are you going to do with the tinder-box?” asked the soldier.

“That’s nothing to you,” retorted the witch. “You’ve had your money—just give me the tinder-box.”

“Nonsense!” said the soldier. “Tell me directly what you’re going to do with it, or I’ll draw my sword and cut off your head.”

“No!” cried the witch.

So the soldier cut off her head. There she lay! But he tied up all his money in her apron, took it on his back like a bundle, put the tinder-box in his pocket, and went straight off towards the town.

That was a splendid town! He put up at the very best inn, asked for the finest rooms, and ordered his favourite dishes, for now he was rich, having got so much money. The servant who had to clean his boots certainly thought them a remarkably old pair for such a rich gentleman; but he had not bought any new ones yet. The next day he procured proper boots and handsome clothes. Now our soldier had become a



fine gentleman; and the people told him of all the splendid things which were in their city, and about the king, and what a pretty princess the king's daughter was.

"Where can one get to see her?" asked the soldier.

"She is not to be seen at all," said they all together; "she lives in a great copper castle, with a great many walls and towers round about it; no one but the king may go in and out there, for it has been prophesied that she shall marry a common soldier, and the king can't bear that."

"I should like to see her," thought the soldier; but he could not get leave to do so. Now he lived merrily, went to the theatre, drove in the king's garden, and gave much money to the poor; and this was very kind of him, for he knew from old times how hard it is when one has not a shilling. Now he was rich, had fine clothes, and gained many friends, who all said he was a rare one, a true cavalier; and that pleased the soldier well. But as he spent money every day and never earned any, he had at last only two shillings left; and he was obliged to turn out of the fine rooms in which he had dwelt, and had to live in a little garret under the roof, and clean his boots for himself, and mend them with a darning-needle. None of his friends came to see him, for there were too many stairs to climb.

It was quite dark one evening, and he could not even buy himself a candle, when it occurred to him that there was a candle-end in the tinder-box which he had taken out of the hollow tree into which the witch had helped him. He brought out the tinder-box and the candle-end; but as soon as he struck fire and the sparks rose up from the flint, the door flew open, and the dog who had eyes as big as a couple of tea-cups, and whom he had seen in the tree, stood before him, and said:

"What are my lord's commands?"

"What is this?" said the soldier. "That's a famous tinder-box, if I can get everything with it that I want! Bring me some money," said he to the dog; and *whisk!* the dog was gone, and *whisk!* he was back again, with a great bag full of shillings in his mouth.

Now the soldier knew what a capital tinder-box this was. If he struck it once, the dog came who sat upon the chest of copper money; if he struck it twice, the dog came who had the silver; and if he struck it three times, then appeared the dog who had the



gold. Now the soldier moved back into the fine rooms, and appeared again in handsome clothes; and all his friends knew him again, and cared very much for him indeed.

Once he thought to himself, "It is a very strange thing that one cannot get to see the princess. They all say she is very beautiful; but what is the use of that, if she has always to sit in the great copper castle with the many towers? Can I not get to see her at all? Where is my tinder box?" And so he struck a light, and *whisk!* came the dog with eyes as big as tea cups.

"It is midnight, certainly," said the soldier, "but I should very much like to see the princess, only for one little moment."

The dog was outside the door directly, and, before the soldier thought it, came back with the princess. She sat upon the dog's back and slept; and every one could see she was a real princess, for she was so lovely. The soldier could not refrain from kissing her, for he was a thorough soldier.

Then the dog ran back again with the princess. But when morning came, and the King and Queen were drinking tea, the princess said she had had a strange dream the night before, about a dog and a soldier — that she had ridden upon the dog, and the soldier had kissed her. "That would be a fine history!" said the Queen.

So one of the old court ladies had to watch the next night by the princess's bed, to see if this was really a dream, or what it might be.

The soldier had a great longing to see the lovely princess again; so the dog came in the night, took her away, and ran as fast as he could. But the old lady put on waterboots, and ran just as fast after him. When she saw that they both entered a great house, she thought; "Now I know where it is;" and with a bit of chalk she drew a great cross on the door. Then she went home and lay down, and the dog came up with the princess; but when he saw that there was a cross drawn on the door where the soldier lived, he took a piece of chalk too, and drew crosses on all the doors in the town. And that was cleverly done, for now the lady could not find the right door, because all the doors had crosses upon them.

In the morning early came the King and the Queen, the old court lady and all the officers, to see where it was the princess had been. "Here it is!" said the King, when he saw the first door with a cross upon it. "No, my dear husband, it is there!" said the



Queen, who descried another door which also showed a cross. “But *there* is one, and *there* is one!” said all, for wherever they looked there were crosses on the doors. So they saw that it would avail them nothing if they searched on.

But the Queen was an exceedingly clever woman, who could do more than ride in a coach. She took her great gold scissors, cut a piece of silk into pieces, and made a neat little bag; this bag she filled with fine wheat flour, and tied it on the princess’s back; and when that was done, she cut a little hole in the bag, so that the flour would be scattered along all the way which the princess should take.

In the night the dog came again, took the princess on his back, and ran with her to the soldier, who loved her very much, and would gladly have been a prince, so that he might have her for his wife. The dog did not notice at all how the flour ran out in a stream from the castle to the windows of the soldier’s house, where he ran up the wall with the princess. In the morning the King and the Queen saw well enough where their daughter had been, and they took the soldier and put him in prison.

There he sat. Oh, but it was dark and disagreeable there! And they said to him. “Tomorrow you shall be hanged.” That was not amusing to hear, and he had left his tinder-box at the inn. In the morning he could see, through the iron grating of the little window, how the people were hurrying out of the town to see him hanged. He heard the drums beat and saw the soldiers marching. All the people were running out, and among them was a shoemaker’s boy with leather apron and slippers, and he galloped so fast that one of his slippers flew off, and came right against the wall where the soldier sat looking through the iron grating.

“Halloo, you shoemaker’s boy! You needn’t be in such a hurry,” cried the soldier to him: “it will not begin till I come. But if you will run to where I lived, and bring me my tinder-box, you shall have four shillings; but you must put your best leg foremost.”

The shoemaker’s boy wanted to get the four shillings, so he went and brought the tinder-box, and — well, we shall hear now what happened.

Outside the town a great gallows had been built, and round it stood the soldiers and many hundred thousand people. The King and Queen sat on a splendid throne, opposite to the judges and the whole council. The soldier already stood upon the ladder; but as they were about to put the rope round his neck, he said that before a

poor criminal suffered his punishment an innocent request was always granted to him. He wanted very much to smoke a pipe of tobacco, and it would be the last pipe he should smoke in the world. The King would not say "No" to this; so the soldier took his tinder-box, and struck fire. One—two—three!—and there suddenly stood all the dogs—the one with eyes as big as tea-cups, the one with eyes as large as mill-wheels, and the one whose eyes were as big as the round tower.

"Help me now, so that I may not be hanged," said the soldier.

And the dogs fell upon the judge and all the council, seized one by the leg and another by the nose, and tossed them all many feet into the air, so that they fell down and were all broken to pieces.

"I won't!" cried the King; but the biggest dog took him and the Queen, and threw them after the others. Then the soldiers were afraid, and the people cried, "Little soldier, you shall be our king, and marry the beautiful princess!"

So they put the soldier into the king's coach, and all the three dogs danced in front and cried "Hurrah!" and the boys whistled through their fingers, and the soldiers presented arms. The princess came out of the copper castle, and became queen, and she liked that well enough. The wedding lasted a whole week, and the three dogs sat at the table too, and opened their eyes wider than ever at all they saw.