

3. 圣母玛利亚的孩子

Our Lady's Child



在一片大森林里，住着一个樵夫和他的妻子，他们只有一个三岁的女儿。但是，他们家里很贫穷，每天连肚子都填不饱。

一天早上，樵夫在森林里干活，一位高大、美丽的妇人，头戴一顶镶着闪闪发光的星星的花冠，对他说：“我是圣母，把你的孩子给我吧，我可以给她幸福。”

于是，圣母带着孩子去了天国。小姑娘在天国里生活得很幸福。

她十四岁时，圣母要出一趟远门，将天国里十三道门的钥匙交给她保管，并嘱咐她，其中十二道门可以打开，只是第十三道门不能打开，如果打开会给她带来不幸。

小姑娘每天打开一道门，每一道门里都坐着一个门徒，周围有强烈的光芒照射着。最后只剩下最后那道不能打开的门了，小姑娘忘记了圣母的话，打开了第十三道门，门里面圣父、圣母和圣婴一起端坐在火焰和光芒之中。她用手指触摸了一下那光芒，手指立刻变成了金色。那块金色沾在手指上，无论怎么洗、怎么搓，也去不掉。

圣母回来后，叫来小姑娘，向她要回钥匙，并问她是否打开过

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樵夫遇见了圣母

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第十三道门。

“没有，”姑娘回答。

圣母看到了她那只由于触摸了天堂的火焰而变成金色的手指，又问她是否打开过第十三道门。姑娘坚持说没有打开过。

于是，圣母说：“你没有听我的话，还撒了谎，你没有资格再在这里生活了。”小姑娘就陷入了沉睡。她醒来时，发现自己在一片荒野里，周围有茂密荆棘丛挡住了她，无法穿过。荒野中间有一棵古老的空心树，成了她的栖身之所。她想呼喊，却发不出声来。

有一天，这个国家的国王打猎，追逐一只小鹿进了这片灌木林。国王下了马，用自己的剑开出了一条路。当他穿过灌木丛时，看到了树下美丽的姑娘，姑娘秀丽的金发一直披到脚面，国王吃惊地问：“你是谁？为什么坐在荒野中？”

国王没有得到回答，国王又问：“你愿意跟我一起到我的宫殿去吗？”

姑娘点了点头，于是跟着国王到了宫殿。不久，国王便同她结婚了。一年后，王后生了一个男孩。就在这天夜里，当王后独自躺在床上时，圣母出现了，对她说：

“如果你愿意说真话，承认打开了那道禁开的门，我可以让你重新开口说话。否则，我就把你的新生儿带走。”

但是王后仍然否认自己打开了那扇门，于是圣母从她怀里抱走了新生儿，带着孩子一起消失了。

第二天，人们说是王后吃了自己的孩子。但国王不愿相信这样的事实，因为他非常爱王后。

一年后，王后又生了一个儿子。圣母又来到她的房间，问她同样的问题，她仍然否认自己打开过那扇门。于是，圣母从她的怀中抱走了孩子，一起升上了天堂。第二天，人们又开始议论起来，大

臣们纷纷要求审判王后。可是国王太爱王后了，他无法相信这件事，就严禁大臣们提及此事。

又过了一年，王后生下了一个漂亮的女儿。这天夜里，圣母又来到她的面前，将她带到天上，指着两个孩子对她说：“如果你承认自己打开了那扇门，我就把两个儿子还给你。”可是王后坚决否认，于是圣母把她降到地上，抱走了她的小女儿。第二天早上，当众人知道孩子不见后，要求处死王后，国王不能再拒绝大臣们的要求了，王后不能说话，无法为自己辩护，被判了死刑，将被烧死。当大火在她身边熊熊燃起时，她那坚冰般的自负心开始融化。她终于承认了自己打开了那扇门。于是，圣母把三个孩子还给了她，让她能开口说话。从此，王后一家幸福地生活着。

*H*ard by a great forest dwelt a wood-cutter with his wife, who had an only child, a little girl three years old. They were so poor, however, that they no longer had daily bread, and did not know how to get food for her. One morning the wood-cutter went out sorrowfully to his work in the forest, and while he was cutting wood, suddenly there stood before him a tall and beautiful woman with a crown of shining stars on her head, who said to him: “I am the Virgin Mary, mother of the child Jesus. You are poor and needy, bring your child to me, I will take her with me and be her mother, and care for her.” The wood-cutter obeyed, brought his child, and gave her to the Virgin Mary, who took her up to heaven with her. There the child fared well, ate sugar-cakes, and drank sweet milk,

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圣母问她是否承认打开了那扇门

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and her clothes were of gold, and the little angels played with her. And when she was fourteen year of age, the Virgin Mary called her one day and said: "Dear child, I am about to make a long journey, so take into your keeping the keys of the thirteen doors of heaven. Twelve of these you may open, and behold the glory which is within them, but the thirteenth, to which this little key belongs, is forbidden you. Take care not to open it, or you will be unhappy." The girl promised to be obedient, and when the Virgin Mary was gone, she began to examine the dwellings of the kingdom of heaven. Each day she opened one of them, until she had made the round of the twelve. In each of them sat one of the Apostles in the midst of a great light, and she rejoiced in all the magnificence and splendour, and the little angels who always accompanied her rejoiced with her. Then the forbidden door alone remained, and she felt a great desire to know what could be hidden behind it, and said to the angels: "I will not open it entirely, and I will not go inside, but I will unlock it so that we can see just a little through the opening." "Oh, no," said the little angels, "that would be a sin. The Virgin Mary has forbidden it, and it might easily cause your unhappiness." Then she was silent, but the desire in her heart was not stilled, but gnawed there and tormented her, and let her have no rest. And once when the angels had all gone out, she thought: "Now I am quite alone, and I could peep in. If I do, no one will ever know." She sought out the key, and when she had got it in her hand, she put it in the lock, and when



she had put it in, she turned it round as well. Then the door sprang open, and she saw there the Trinity sitting in fire and splendour. She stayed there a while, and looked at everything in amazement; then she touched the light a little with her finger, and her finger became quite golden. Immediately a great fear fell on her. She shut the door violently, and ran away. But her terror would not quit her let her do what she might, and her heart beat continually and would not be still; the gold too stayed on her finger, and would not go away, let her rub it and wash it never so much.

It was no long before the Virgin Mary came back from her journey. She called the girl before her, and asked to have the keys of heaven back. When the maiden gave her the bunch, the Virgin looked into her eyes and said: "Have you not opened the thirteenth door also?" "No," she replied. Then she laid her hand on the girl's heart, and felt how it beat and beat, and saw right well that she had disobeyed her order and had opened the door. Then she said once again: "Are you certain that you have not done it?" "Yes," said the girl, for the second time. Then she perceived the finger which had become golden from touching the fire of heaven, and saw well that the child had sinned, and said for the third time: "Have you not done it?" "No," said the girl for the third time. Then said the Virgin Mary: "You have not obeyed me, and besides that you have lied, you are no longer worthy to be in heaven."

Then the girl fell into a deep sleep, and when she awoke she lay

on the earth below, and in the midst of a wilderness. She wanted to cry out, but she could bring forth no sound. She sprang up and wanted to run away, but whithersoever she turned herself, she was continually held back by thick hedges of thorns through which she could not break. In the desert, in which she was imprisoned, there stood an old hollow tree, and this had to be her dwelling-place. Into this she crept when night came, and here she slept. Here, too, she found a shelter from storm and rain, but it was a miserable life, and bitterly did she weep when she remembered how happy she had been in heaven, and how the angels had played with her. Roots and wild berries were her only food, and for these she sought as far as she could go. In the autumn she picked up the fallen nuts and leaves, and carried them into the hole. The nuts were her food in winter, and when snow and ice came, she crept amongst the leaves like a poor little animal that she might not freeze. Before long her clothes were all torn, and one bit of them after another fell off her. As soon, however, as the sunshine warm again, she went out and sat in front of the tree, and her long hair covered her on all sides like a mantle. Thus she sat year after year, and felt the pain and the misery of the world.

One day, when the trees were one more clothed in fresh green, the King of the country was bunting in the forest, and followed a roe, and as it had fled into the thicket which shut in this part of the forest, he got off his horse, tore the bushes asunder, and cut himself

a path with his sword. When he had at last forced his way through, he saw a wonderfully beautiful maiden sitting under the tree; and she sat there and was entirely covered with her golden hair down to her very feet. He stood still and looked at her full of surprise, then he spoke to her and said: "Who are you? Why are you sitting here in the wilderness?" But she gave no answer, for she could not open her mouth. The King continued: "Will you go with me to my castle?" Then she just nodded her head a little. The King took her in his arms, carried her to his horse, and rode home with her, and when he reached the royal castle he caused her to be dressed in beautiful garments, and gave her all things in abundance. Although she could not speak, she was still so beautiful and charming that he began to love her with all his heart, and it was not long before he married her.

After a year or so had passed, the Queen brought a son into the world. Thereupon the Virgin Mary appeared to her in the night when she lay in her bed alone, and said: "If you will tell the truth and confess that you did unlock the forbidden door, I will open your mouth and give you back your speech, but if you persevere in your sin, and deny obstinately, I will take your new-born child away with me." Then the Queen was permitted to answer, but she remained hard, and said, "No, I did not open the forbidden door;" and the Virgin Mary took the new-born child from her arms, and vanished with it. Next morning, when the child was not to be found, it was whispered among the



people that the Queen was a man-eater, and had put her own child to death. She heard all this and could say nothing to the contrary, but the King would not believe it, for he loved her so much.

When a year had gone by the Queen again bore a son, and in the night the Virgin Mary again came to her, and said: "If you will confess that you opened the forbidden door, I will give you your child back and untie your tongue; but if you continue in sin and deny it, I will take away with me this new child also." Then the Queen again said: "No I did not open the forbidden door;" and the Virgin took the child out of her arms, and away with her to heaven. Next morning, when this child also had disappeared, the people declared quite loudly that the Queen had devoured it, and the King's councillors demanded that she should be brought to justice. The King, however, loved her so dearly that he would not believe it, and commanded the councillors under pain of death not to say any more about it.

The following year the Queen gave birth to a beautiful little daughter, and for the third time the Virgin Mary appeared to her in the night and said: "Follow me." She took the Queen by the hand and led her to heaven, and showed her there her two eldest children, who smiled at her and were playing with the ball of the world. When the Queen rejoiced thereat, the Virgin Mary said: "Is your heart not yet softened? If you will own that you opened the forbidden door, I will give you back your two little sons." But for the third time the Queen



answered: "No, I did not open the forbidden door." Then the Virgin let her sink down to earth once more, and took from her likewise her third child.

Next morning, when the loss was reported abroad, all the people cried loudly: "The Queen is a man-eater! She must be judged," and the King was no longer able to restrain his councillors. Thereupon a trial was held, and as she could not answer, and defend herself, she was condemned to be burnt at the stake. The wood was got together, and when she was fast bound to the stake, and the fire began to burn round about her, the hard ice of pride melted, her heart was moved by repentance, and she thought: "If I could but confess before my death that I opened the door." Then her voice came back to her, and she cried out loudly: "Yes, Mary, I did it;" and straight-way rain fell from the sky and extinguished the flames of fire, and a light broke forth above her, and the Virgin Mary descended with the two little sons by her side, and the new-born daughter in her arms. She spoke kindly to her, and said: "He who repents his sin and acknowledges it, is forgiven." Then she gave her the three children, untied her tongue, and granted her happiness for her whole life.