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THE MAGIC LEGACY.



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THE MAGIC LEGACY.



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A KING had a son, named Alindor, whom he had made an accomplished prince. A few minutes before his death, he addressed him in the following words:—

“Son, it is time I should make room for thee. The crown has been a burden to my head. Thou wilt wear it with honour. I have long possessed a treasure which enchantment has prevented me from enjoying: but nothing restricts thee from the use of it. Open a chest that thou wilt find buried beneath the fountain. Possess thyself of this prize, and let justice guide thee in the application of it. Receive the last breath of thy expiring father in a prayer for thy prosperity.”

With these words the old king breathed

his last. Alindor hung long sorrowing over the lifeless corpse.

He caused his father to be interred, and then set fifty labourers to dig under the fountain, and a vault was discovered many feet under the earth.

The prince was present when it was found. All that it contained was a chest of ebony, which Alindor could carry without difficulty.

On opening the chest, he found an empty purse, a horn of metal, and a girdle of coarse hair! His disappointment was so great, that he stood motionless.

Alindor examined the chest with more attention, and in one corner discovered a parchment, on which he read these words:

“When thou hast need of gold, open the purse, and thou wilt find whatever thou hast occasion for.

“If soldiers be necessary to thee, blow the horn three times, and an army will stand at thy command, whom thou mayest dismiss with a word.

“Wouldst thou be transported from one place to another, gird thyself with the belt, and it will convey thee instantly to the place where thou wishest.

“These, wisely employed, may make thee the most powerful of monarchs; but be careful to preserve them, for they will possess the same virtues in the hands of another; and

what may conduce to thy prosperity may also be employed for thy destruction.”

The purse was required to do its office, and it swelled to such a weight, that he let it fall to the floor, which was covered with gold.

He then blowed the horn, and was surrounded with soldiers. These proofs satisfied him that his girdle would not fail when brought to the trial. He languished for Zenomia, the daughter of a calif. Zenomia was selfish and ambitious; at the same time an admirable creature. Her beauty held a crowd of young princes in her chains. Alindor sighed for her, while his richer rivals openly contended for her favour.

The treasure he possessed furnished him with the means of surpassing every competitor. His appearance at court awakened the jealousy of all the rival princes.

The calif and his consort encouraged the addresses of so rich a monarch, and Zenomia displayed a marked preference for him.

The violence of his passion drew from him a formal declaration.

“How canst thou expect acceptance of my love?” said the princess, “when thou hast reposed no confidence in me. The petty kingdom of which thou callest thyself the ruler, could never suffice to thy profusion. There is something mysterious in your appearance, which must be explained.”

Alindor protested that his name and title were what he professed them; but Zenomia still persisting to maintain the contrary, he revealed to his beloved fair the secret source of his riches.

Zenomonia was not content with this assurance; she would see the purse, and make experiment of its virtues.



No sooner was it in her power, than she flew out of the apartment.

After some time a slave came to thank him for his present, and announce to him, that Zenomia, in company of the calif and her mother, was about to set off for one of their country palaces.

The plot now stood revealed to the prince, and he saw, that the father, mother, and daughter, had been engaged in a conspiracy

to plunder him. He had no resource but to return to his kingdom for the most potent of his father's gifts, to revenge the injury. In two months he appeared before the capital of the calif provided with his horn and girdle. No sooner had he given three blasts, than an army of fifty thousand men stood at each of the four gates of the city, while a large body of horsemen scoured the country. The calif sought to save himself and his family by flight.

The fugitives were intercepted by the prince's cavalry, and brought captives into the tent of Alindor.



Zenomia wiped away her tears. "Scarcely can I trust my eyes," said she, "when I behold in thee, prince, the ravager of our city and empire. Alas! I see, that thy vows were words devoid of sentiment! Shame, who,

to avenge a woman's frolic, wastes kingdoms, and assails his mistress."

Zenomina concluded her address with such tenderness, that Alindor cast himself at her feet, and swore to disband his troops as soon as his purse was restored to him.

"Here, take it, and know that I feel no more pain in parting with it, than I do in flying a lover so impetuous and fatal!"

Alindor now turned to the calif, and conjured him to reconcile him with the princess. He dismissed his army. The calif besought him to accompany him to the city, where a banquet should consign all enmity to oblivion.

He now renewed his wish to possess the heart of the princess.

"Willingly would I obey a voice that speaks too eloquently for thee in my heart, were not thy powers too tremendous. Disclose to me the means by which thou hast brought so innumerable a host before our gates. Speak, prove thyself of a mortal nature like myself, and all within me shall be Alindor's."

He produced the magic horn, and informed Zenomia of the effect of its operation. The artful beauty soon found means to gain this instrument; and as soon as it was in her hands, she gave three blasts, and in an instant an army attended her orders. He requested her to dismiss the magic host into the air,

when to his amazement, the princess, instead of listening to his words, turned to the nearest soldiers, and bade them seize the prince and convey him to her father.

Fortunately Alindor had girded himself with the magic belt; and this with his first wish transported him instantly to his own kingdom. But what words can speak his frenzy, when, recurring to his purse to replenish his coffers, it remained empty! when, on inspection, he found it totally different from his own, and perceived the black fraud of Zenomia!

He was not long in inventing a plan of his revenge, and the means of executing it were found in the magic girdle. On this he reposed all his hopes of vengeance; and, waiting for midnight, he bound the girdle about his waist, and wished himself in the princess' apartment.

The belt fulfilled its office in an instant, and placed him beside the couch of his false mistress, who, sunk in sound sleep, apprehended nothing from her enraged lover.

The charms of his false Zenomia reclined before him, more enchanting than ever, he forgot his wrongs, and had no care but to excuse his temerity. A sigh disturbed her; she leaped from the sofa, and cried for help. Alindor embraced her, and besought her to be tranquil.

“Forgive my temerity, Zenomia, I conjure thee to banish every fear, and give me a patient audience.”

Zenomonia now recollected the voice of her injured lover, foreboded his design, by thus addressing him: “I am culpable, prince, I own. I urged too far the proud design of robbing you of every thing. You have mistaken my sentiments: I will not inquire by what new charm you have penetrated through the guards of my palace: I revere the mysterious powers that obey you. Yet you need not their assistance to recover your treasures; ere morning they shall be restored. But, prince, there is a reparation owing me, which thou wilt not scruple to acquit thyself of, thou hast exposed my name to calumny by this intrusion; from this hour thou art my husband.”

“Is it possible,” cried Alindor, “that thou canst return my rashness with such generosity? Yes, beloved Zenomia, I am thine, and nothing shall disturb our harmony.”

Zenomonia observed his girdle, whose shaggy texture rendered it perceptible on the robe which the prince wore, and she thought that some new magic was concerned with this uncouth ornament. Hoping to win the secret from her lover, she loosed the belt gradually, and when she had so far effected her purpose, that another touch would detach it, she drew

back, in the midst of a tender address of the prince, pretending to have been hurt by some part of his apparel. She now feigned to perceive the magic girdle, and ridiculing it for its ungraceful appearance, begged him to divest himself of so odious an ornament.

“Do not despise this belt; of all the wonders I possess, it is most precious. To it I owe all the happiness of my future life.”

To support his words, Alindor related how he had made a journey of many weeks in an instant, and informed her it had the virtue of transporting him whithersoever he would.

No sooner was Zenomia acquainted with the secret, than she approached the prince, threw him off his guard, and loosed from his body the girdle, which now scarcely hung to his side. Instantly binding it round her waist, she wished herself in the calif's apartment.

Alindor's astonishment was so great that he lost all consciousness, and was near falling into the hands of the guards, whom she had despatched to seize him. Fortunately the rattle of the gates awakened him from the stupefaction in which the perfidy of the princess had left him, and he saved himself by a staircase that led into the gardens.

For two days he wandered about a horrid wilderness, to meet that death which he could never find. Fatigued beyond sufferance, he

resolved to terminate all his miseries, and accordingly, mounting the steepest precipice, he threw himself headlong down. The fall must have proved death to him, had not his robe caught the branch of a fig-tree. This broke his fall, and let him down gently on a bed of thick moss, that preserved him from fracture; but he lay some time motionless on the ground.

When his reason returned, he found himself tormented by such a thirst, that he strove to raise himself, that he might search for some water; but his struggles were ineffectual, and he seemed held to the ground by some vast weight. Looking for what restrained him, he perceived a vast branch, which he had by the violence of his fall detached from the tree, lay under him, and was entangled with his garment. With joy he saw it covered with ripe figs of extraordinary size and beauty. He devoured them with avidity.

No sooner had the prince appeased his thirst, than he was disturbed by a frightful prodigy.

With every fig he had eaten, his nose extended itself the length of a thumb; He observed it with amazement, "Perhaps it is a brand of ignominy for my folly in losing the precious donations of my father."

During these reflections, he wandered about the valley in search of an outlet. Noontide

advanced, and Alindor's thirst returned on him with new fury. Happily, he heard the gushing of water, and perceiving a spring, he reclined beside it, to drink the clear liquid. He drank the cool water out of his palms, and observed that with every draught the monstrous exuberance of his nose diminished.

Meditating on the possibility of regaining all his treasures, the accident that had befallen his countenance suggested to him a stratagem which promised to restore his losses, and effect revenge on his false mistress.

He broke off a branch of the finest figs, and returning to the spring with an earthen vessel, he filled it with the water. He entered the city in the disguise of a peasant, and proceeded to the palace of the calif.

As the fruit was of uncommon beauty, they were immediately purchased for the table of the sultanness and her daughter.

Alindor retired from the palace, when the bargain was concluded, and, disguising himself anew, he hired a house in the suburbs, and assumed the character of a physician. The mother and daughter, allured by the delicious flavour of the fruit, devoured it with eagerness. Each perceived the alteration in herself and the other at the same moment, and both burst into exclamations of surprise and horror.

Both mother and daughter ran to a mirror,

and, seeing their faces thus hideously disfigured, brought all their attendants about them. The rumour of this miraculous event spread through the palace, and the calif came to satisfy himself of the extraordinary incident.

The calif summoned the most celebrated physicians, and promised a kingly recompense to him who should relieve his wife and daughter from their encumbrances. It was agreed, that the misfortune was not to be removed by medicine.

Alindor now thought it time to hasten the progress of his stratagem. He accordingly announced himself as a sage experienced in all the mysteries of medicine, and was received with every mark of respect.

The water from the fount effected on the sultanness all she could wish.

Alindor said to the princess: "Your aspect, princess, moves me at once to mirth and compassion."

Then, after pronouncing many strange words, he administered to her a cup of common water, which was without any consequence but to irritate the hopes of the princess.

The nose of the princess was not lessened a hair's breadth by this tantalizing process.

Alindor repeated three days successively this pantomime, till the anguish and tears of the princess had become almost insupportable.

He then appointed the hour of midnight for a grand and final attempt.

“ If the magnificent rewards promised by my father be insufficient to excite your diligence, know, that I possess treasures of inestimable value, and on the instant you effect my cure, I will demonstrate to you my gratitude.”

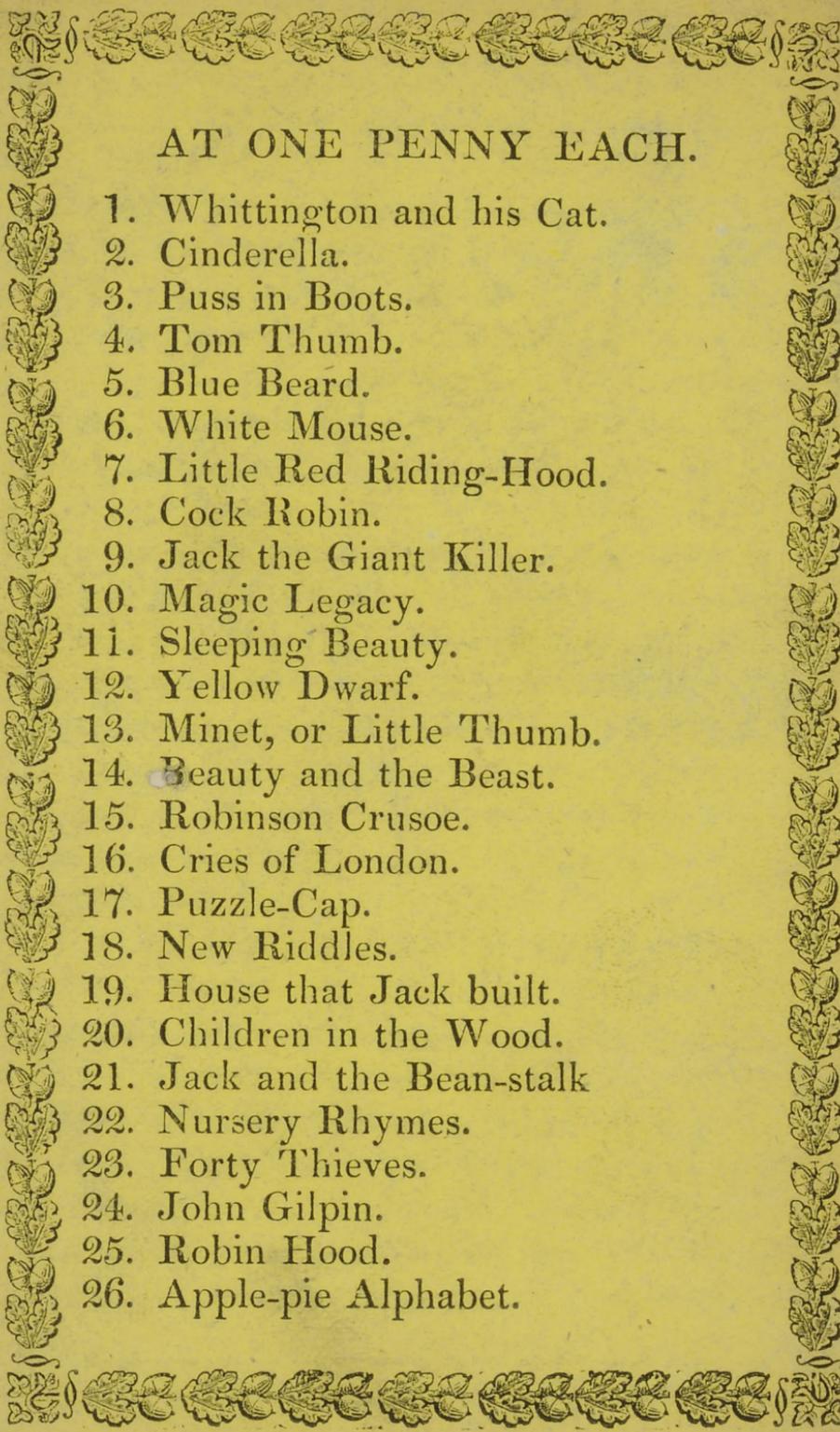
“ I am too familiar with the promises of the sick, and know how little sure they are of performance.”

Zenomina, without answering, stepped into her closet, and returned with her magic purse, together with the horn and girdle.

“ These three insignificant utensils possess such miraculous virtues, that it depends only on my use of them to become the richest and most powerful of mortals. From this instant they are your own, and I will instruct you how to employ them when you have restored me to my proportion of feature.”

“ I need not thy directions ; I resume what thou hast robbed me of, and leave thee thy false heart and thy monstrous nose.”

While he spoke these words, he girded himself in his magic belt, and, wishing himself, in his own kingdom, left the false fair one to deplore the loss of her ill-gotten gains and her beauty.



AT ONE PENNY EACH.

1. Whittington and his Cat.
2. Cinderella.
3. Puss in Boots.
4. Tom Thumb.
5. Blue Beard.
6. White Mouse.
7. Little Red Riding-Hood.
8. Cock Robin.
9. Jack the Giant Killer.
10. Magic Legacy.
11. Sleeping Beauty.
12. Yellow Dwarf.
13. Minet, or Little Thumb.
14. Beauty and the Beast.
15. Robinson Crusoe.
16. Cries of London.
17. Puzzle-Cap.
18. New Riddles.
19. House that Jack built.
20. Children in the Wood.
21. Jack and the Bean-stalk
22. Nursery Rhymes.
23. Forty Thieves.
24. John Gilpin.
25. Robin Hood.
26. Apple-pie Alphabet.