

中文导读英文版

The Happy Prince-Fairy Tales of Oscar Wilde

快乐王子

——王尔德童话故事全集

[英] 奥斯卡·王尔德 原著
王勋 等 编译

清华大学出版社



内 容 简 介

本书收录了英国著名作家、诗人、戏剧家王尔德的全部童话故事,包括:“快乐王子”、“夜莺与玫瑰”、“自私的巨人”、“真诚的朋友”、“神奇的火箭”、“少年国王”“小公主的生日”、“渔人和他的灵魂”和“星孩”。这些唯美、脍炙人口的故事伴随了一代又一代人的美丽童年、少年直至成年。无论作为语言学习的课本,还是作为通俗的文学读本,对当代中国的青少年学生都将产生积极的影响。为了使读者能够了解英文故事概况,进而提高阅读速度和阅读水平,在每篇英文传说故事的开始部分增加了中文导读。

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前言

奥斯卡·王尔德（Oscar Wilde，1854—1900），英国著名作家、诗人和戏剧家。

王尔德于1854年10月16日出生于爱尔兰都柏林的贵族之家，父亲是一名外科医生，母亲是一位诗人和作家。他从小就受到浓郁的文学熏陶，对写作怀有浓厚的兴趣。都柏林圣三一学院毕业后，王尔德于1874年进入牛津大学学习。从牛津大学毕业后，王尔德开始从事文学创作。1881年6月，王尔德出版了首本诗集，并开始文坛上崭露头角。

1888年，出版了童话故事集《快乐王子及其他故事》，该书一经出版便成为当时最受欢迎的童话故事书，不但受到广大青少年读者的欢迎，成人读者也对该书偏爱有加。1891年，王尔德唯一的长篇小说《道连·格雷的画像》问世。除此之外，还相继出版了童话故事《石榴屋》，诗集《斯芬克斯》、《瑞丁监狱之歌》，随笔集《意图集》，剧本《温德摩尔夫人的扇子》、《帕都瓦公爵夫人》、《莎乐美》、《无足轻重的女人》、《真诚最要紧》、《理想的丈夫》等。1895年4月，王尔德因“有伤风化”罪入狱，被判服苦役两年。1900年11月30日，王尔德病逝于巴黎。

王尔德被誉为“才子和戏剧家”，他是当之无愧的戏剧家，而使他扬名世界却是他的童话作品。一百多年来，他的童话作品畅销不衰，被译成世界上多种语言，是世界上公认的最经典的童话名著之一。

在中国，王尔德的童话故事也广受读者的欢迎。目前，在国内数量众多的王尔德的童话故事书籍中，一种是中文翻译版，另一种是中英文对照版。而其中的中英文对照读本比较受读者的欢迎，这主要是得益于中国人热衷于学习英文的大环境。而从英文学习的角度上来看，直接使用纯英文的学习资料更有利于英语学习。考虑到对英文内容背景的了解有助于英文阅读，使用中文导读应该是一种比较好的方式，也可以说是该类型书的第三种版本形式。采用中文导读而非中英文对照的方式进行编排，这样有利

前言



于国内读者摆脱对英文阅读依赖中文注释的习惯。在中文导读中，我们尽力使其贴近原作的精髓，也尽可能保留原作故事主线。我们希望能够编出当代中国读者所喜爱的经典读本。读者在阅读英文故事之前，可以先阅读中文导读内容，这样有利于了解故事背景，从而加快阅读速度。我们相信，该经典著作的引进对加强当代中国读者，特别是青少年读者的人文修养是非常有帮助的。

本书主要内容由王勋编译。参加本书故事素材搜集整理及编译工作的还有郑佳、刘乃亚、赵雪、左新杲、黄福成、冯洁、徐鑫、马启龙、王业伟、王旭敏、陈楠、王多多、邵舒丽、周丽萍、王晓旭、李永振、孟宪行、熊红华、胡国平、熊建国、徐平国、王小红等。限于我们的文学素养和英语水平，书中难免会有不当之处，我们衷心希望读者朋友批评指正。

译者

2009年3月



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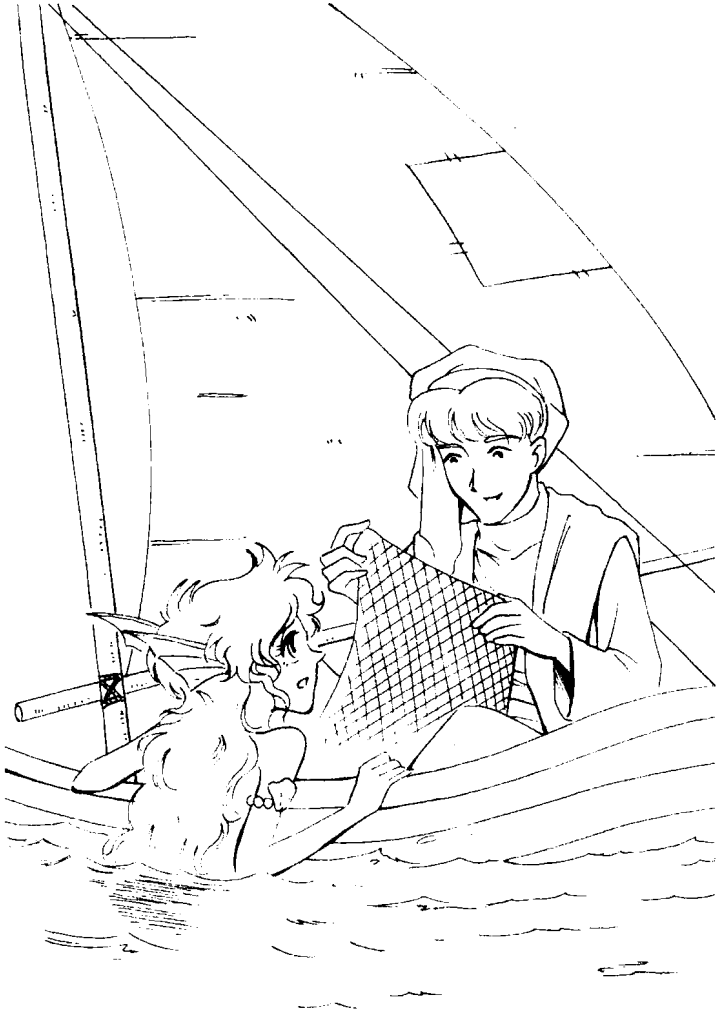
渔夫和他的灵魂

The Fisherman and His Soul



年轻的渔夫每天出海打鱼，然后将捕到的鱼拿到市场上卖掉。有一天收网的时候，他费了半天劲才拉上了网，网里除了一只熟睡的小美人鱼，其他什么都没有。渔夫细看美人鱼的美貌，感叹不已。美人鱼被惊醒后，吓得大叫了一声，挣扎着想逃，但渔夫紧紧地搂住她没有放开。美人鱼向他求饶，渔夫开出条件：以后每天都要美人鱼唱歌吸引来其他的鱼，这样自己的网就能装满。美人鱼发完毒誓，渔夫才肯放她离开。之后每一天美人鱼都应渔夫的要求唱歌，刚开始渔夫会将所有前来听歌的鱼一网打尽，美人鱼从来不愿意靠近他；后来他渐渐地被美人鱼的声音所吸引，甚至连捕鱼的任务都忘了，最后他竟然向美人鱼提出了求婚。美人鱼告诉他只有他没有灵魂的时候，他们才有可能在一起。

渔夫便去询问神父，当神父听说他不要灵魂的时候，气愤地捶着自己的胸膛，灵魂是人类最高贵的部分，世界上任何事物都不能与之相比拟；渔夫坚持为了美人鱼他可以连灵魂都不要，神父将他赶出门外，一句祝福的话都没有给他。渔夫沮丧地走在街上，遇到了两个商人。其中一个问他要卖什么东西，当听说是灵魂的时候，那些商人嘲笑着说灵魂是这个世界上最不值钱的东西，渔夫觉得很奇怪，这和神父的说法正好相反。他不知不觉地走到了海边，突然想起以前曾经听朋友说有个女巫很灵，他急忙跑到女巫的住处。女巫预感到他回来，大声地质问他所为何事，他缺少任何东西女巫都可以替他办到，可是听说渔夫想要送掉灵魂时，女巫的脸变得苍白，她呢喃着说送掉灵魂是一件非常可怕的事情。渔夫表示只要女巫告



诉自己如何送掉灵魂，他可以把自己的一切送给女巫，女巫提出了月圆夜到山顶跳舞的要求，她保证到时候一定会告诉他如何送走灵魂。

渔夫高兴地离开了，女巫看着他远去的背影，心里很不平衡，因为她觉得自己和美人鱼一样漂亮，而且也深爱着渔夫。到了约定的时间，一群女巫在空中飞翔，她们看到了不认识的渔夫，开始暗暗议论着，最后飞来了和渔夫约定好的女巫。她拉着渔夫开始跳舞，不停地转圈，渔夫听到一阵疾驰的马蹄声向自己冲来，可是却没有任何马的影子，听到女巫不停地叫快点，他感受到自己被什么东西压迫着，最后看到阴影处有个自己从来没见过的男人。女巫带着他走向那个男人，但渔夫不知不觉地叫着上帝，画了十字，那群女巫发出痛哭的尖叫，而那个奇怪的男人也悲伤地看着渔夫，转身离开。和渔夫约定好的女巫也想飞走，但被渔夫抓住不放，女巫死活都不肯说出送走灵魂的秘密，并且向渔夫表白自己对他的爱意，但却遭到了渔夫要杀死自己的威胁。女巫流下了眼泪，无奈地从腰间拿出一把绿色蛇皮手柄的小刀，她告诉了渔夫如何送走灵魂的方法，说完痛苦地大声哭泣。渔夫没有停留下来，立刻按照女巫的方法去做。灵魂刚开始死活不同意离开，后来甚至提出要带着心离开，渔夫已经把心留给了自己的爱人，他称自己不再需要灵魂，以后也不想再见到灵魂。送走灵魂后，他跳下了海，一群美人鱼出来迎接他，只剩下灵魂孤零零地站在海滩上哭泣。

第一年过后，灵魂再次到海滩上呼唤渔夫，它告诉渔夫这一年里，它游览了不少地方，亲眼看到了鞑靼人的战斗。它跟着一群商人走过了很长的路途，一路上逃过了很多次袭击，经过每一座城邦都要交纳税金，路过的村庄里的村民也想尽办法毒死它们；一路上也打过很多次仗，第四个月来到了伊勒尔市，在这座城市里那些商人们做着生意。灵魂在半夜无聊地走到了一座寺庙，说想见神，但僧侣一直不配合，后来灵魂用各种手段威逼利诱，最终见到了智慧镜子，现在只要渔夫允许灵魂回到他的身体里面，渔夫就可以成为世界上最聪明的人了。渔夫拒绝了灵魂的要求，在他心目中爱情比智慧更好。灵魂哭泣着离开了。

第二年过后，灵魂又来到了海滩上，这次它告诉渔夫它路过了一座有九个城门的城市，城市里什么都有，到处做着买卖。在这座城市里，它在新月节那天见到了年轻的皇帝，而正常人看到皇帝都要跪地朝拜，脸都不能抬起来。灵魂没有那样做，反而静静地站在那里，后来被卫兵带进了宫中。皇帝拿着一把钢刀冲着它刺过来，但是没伤到灵魂分毫，接着皇帝又不停地拿起了别的武器，都遭到灵魂的反击。后来皇帝被惊住了，他承认



只要灵魂在这座城市一天，他就不再是主人，最后答应给灵魂一半的财产让它离开。灵魂希望渔夫让自己回到身体里面，那样渔夫就是世界上最富有的人了。但渔夫同样拒绝了，他认为爱情比财富更重要，灵魂又哭泣着离开了。

第三年过后，灵魂又一次呼唤了渔夫。这次它看到了一个年轻漂亮的姑娘，赤着双脚在毯子上跳舞，希望渔夫能够和自己去看看。渔夫想到只有一天的路程，而且美人鱼也不能跳舞，便答应跟着让灵魂暂时进入身体前去那座城市。结果到达第一座城市的时候，灵魂说不是这座城，并且指使渔夫偷拿了一个银杯子；经过第二座城市时，灵魂指使渔夫痛打了站在路上的小孩；经过第三座城市时，渔夫碰到了商人，商人好心地带着他回家，提供了一间客房供他居住，但是灵魂再一次指使渔夫杀死商人，偷走金子，渔夫这一次没有能够平静下来，他痛斥灵魂的行为，灵魂的理由则是当初离开的时候渔夫并没有给自己一颗心，这一切都是它在这个世界上学会的。渔夫已经意识到灵魂让自己离开了心爱的人，并且引诱自己踏入了罪恶当中，他拿出了当初女巫送的小刀，想再次逼走灵魂，但是灵魂告诉他一生中一个人只能送走一次灵魂，这次是不可能再赶走它了。渔夫为了让自己不再听从灵魂的指使，绑住了自己的双手，封住了自己的嘴巴，灵魂继续引诱着他，但年轻的渔夫都没有动摇。等到来到大海边，渔夫把自己松绑，并且撕开了封条，他呼唤着美人鱼，但是美人鱼一直都没有出现。灵魂嘲笑着他，渔夫并没有放弃。他在海边建造了一间房子，一年中每天都呼唤美人鱼的名字，灵魂依旧没有放弃诱惑他，但是都没有成功。灵魂意识到邪恶已经不能够动摇渔夫，它试图用善来引诱渔夫。它开始讲所见到了世界上的痛苦事情，希望渔夫能够帮助那些穷苦的人们，不要停留在海边呼唤自己的爱人，可是渔夫的爱太坚定了，他依旧天天呼唤，这样又过了一年。灵魂决定不再引诱渔夫，但乞求他让自己进入到他的心中，渔夫虽然同意了，但他的心已经被爱缠得太紧，灵魂无法进入。当渔夫想帮助它的时候，突然听到了海洋中发出痛苦的哀叫声，渔夫跑到海边，看到了美人鱼的尸体，他痛苦地趴在她身边，不停地吻着美人鱼，可是美人鱼再也没有醒来。灵魂提醒渔夫快点离开，不然海水会杀死他的，但是渔夫并没有离开，他已经决定和美人鱼一同离去。

第二天早晨，神父到达海边祈福的时候看到了渔夫和美人鱼的尸体，渔夫仍然紧紧地抱着美人鱼。神父没有同情他们，他觉得渔夫为了美人鱼竟然抛弃了上帝，即使死后也是会受诅咒的。几年过去了，一天神父来到



礼拜堂，他看到祭坛上摆放着从没见过的奇异的花，这些花的美丽让他难受，可香的味道让他高兴。神父毫无意识地讲出了上帝的爱，而不是愤怒，人们听完之后都哭了，而神父却依旧像处于梦境一般。等到弄清楚花儿的来源之后，神父开始祷告起来。隔天他带着僧侣乐师以及其他一大群人来到海边，开始为大海祝福，对上帝创造的所有其他事物都一并祝福。

Every evening the young Fisherman went out upon the sea, and threw his nets into the water.

When the wind blew from the land he caught nothing, or but little at best, for it was a bitter and black-winged wind, and rough waves rose up to meet it. But when the wind blew to the shore, the fish came in from the deep, and swam into the meshes of his nets, and he took them to the market-place and sold them.

Every evening he went out upon the sea, and one evening the net was so heavy that hardly could he draw it into the boat. And he laughed, and said to himself, 'Surely I have caught all the fish that swim, or snared some dull monster that will be a marvel to men, or some thing of horror that the great Queen will desire,' and putting forth all his strength, he tugged at the coarse ropes till, like lines of blue enamel round a vase of bronze, the long veins rose up on his arms. He tugged at the thin ropes, and nearer and nearer came the circle of flat corks, and the net rose at last to the top of the water.

But no fish at all was in it, nor any monster or thing of horror, but only a little Mermaid lying fast asleep.

Her hair was as a wet fleece of gold, and each separate hair as a thread of fine gold in a cup of glass. Her body was as white ivory, and her tail was of silver and pearl. Silver and pearl was her tail, and the green weeds of the sea coiled round it; and like sea-shells were her ears, and her lips were like sea-coral, The cold waves dashed over her cold breasts, and the salt glistened upon her eyelids.

So beautiful was she that when the young Fisherman saw her he was filled with wonder, and he put out his hand and drew the net close to him, and leaning over the side he clasped her in his arms. And when he touched her, she gave a



cry like a startled sea-gull, and woke, and looked at him in terror with her mauve-amethyst eyes, and struggled that she might escape. But he held her tightly to him, and would not suffer her to depart.

And when she saw that she could in no way escape from him, she began to weep, and said, 'I pray thee let me go, for I am the only daughter of a King, and my father is aged and alone.'

But the young Fisherman answered, 'I will not let thee go save thou makest me a promise that whenever I call thee, thou wilt come and sing to me, for the fish delight to listen to the song of the Sea-folk, and so shall my nets be full.'

'Wilt thou in very truth let me go, if I promise thee this?' cried the Mermaid.

'In very truth I will let thee go,' said the young Fisherman.

So she made him the promise he desired, and swore it by the oath of the Sea-folk. And he loosened his arms from about her, and she sank down into the water, trembling with a strange fear.

Every evening the young Fisherman went out upon the sea, and called to the Mermaid, and she rose out of the water and sang to him. Round and round her swam the dolphins, and the wild gulls wheeled above her head.

And she sang a marvellous song. For she sang of the Sea-folk who drive their flocks from cave to cave, and carry the little calves on their shoulders; of the Tritons who have long green beards, and hairy breasts, and blow through twisted conchs when the King passes by; of the palace of the King which is all of amber, with a roof of clear emerald, and a pavement of bright pearl; and of the gardens of the sea where the great filigrane fans of coral wave all day long, and the fish dart about like silver birds, and the anemones cling to the rocks, and the pinks bourgeon in the ribbed yellow sand. She sang of the big whales that come down from the north seas and have sharp icicles hanging to their fins; of the Sirens who tell of such wonderful things that the merchants have to stop their ears with wax lest they should hear them, and leap into the water and be drowned; of the sunken galleys with their tall masts, and the frozen sailors clinging to the rigging, and the mackerel swimming in and out of the open portholes; of the little barnacles who are great travellers, and cling to the keels

of the ships and go round and round the world; and of the cuttlefish who live in the sides of the cliffs and stretch out their long black arms, and can make night come when they will it. She sang of the nautilus who has a boat of her own that is carved out of an opal and steered with a silken sail; of the happy Mermen who play upon harps and can charm the great Kraken to sleep; of the little children who catch hold of the slippery porpoises and ride laughing upon their backs; of the Mermaids who lie in the-white foam and hold out their arms to the mariners; and of the sea-lions with their curved tusks, and the sea-horses with their floating manes.

And as she sang, all the tunny-fish came in from the deep to listen to her, and the young Fisherman threw his nets round them and caught them, and others he took with a spear. And when his boat was well-laden, the Mermaid would sink down into the sea, smiling at him.

Yet would she never come near him that he might touch her. Oftentimes he called to her and prayed of her, but she would not; and when he sought to seize her she dived into the water as a seal might dive, nor did he see her again that day. And each day the sound of her voice became sweeter to his ears. So sweet was her voice that he forgot his nets and his cunning, and had no care of his craft. Vermilion-finned and with eyes of bossy gold, the tunnies went by in shoals, but he heeded them not. His spear lay by his side unused, and his baskets of plaited osier were empty. With lips parted, and eyes dim with wonder, he sat idle in his boat and listened, listening till the sea-mists crept round him, and the wandering moon stained his brown limbs with silver.

And one evening he called to her, and said: 'Little Mermaid, little Mermaid, I love thee. Take me for thy bridegroom, for I love thee.'

But the Mermaid shook her head. 'Thou hast a human soul,' she answered. 'If only thou wouldst send away thy soul, then could I love thee.'

And the young Fisherman said to himself, 'Of what use is my soul to me? I cannot see it. I may not touch it. I do not know it. Surely I will send it away from me, and much gladness shall be mine.' And a cry of joy broke from his lips, and standing up in the painted boat, he held out his arms to the Mermaid. 'I will send my soul away,' he cried, 'and you shall be my bride, and I will be thy bridegroom, and in the depth of the sea we will dwell together, and all that



thou hast sung of thou shalt show me, and all that thou desirest I will do, nor shall our lives be divided.'

And the little Mermaid laughed for pleasure and hid her face in her hands.

'But how shall I send my soul from me?' cried the young Fisherman. 'Tell me how I may do it, and lo! it shall be done.'

'Alas! I know not,' said the little Mermaid: 'the Sea-folk have no souls.' And she sank down into the deep, looking wistfully at him.

Now early on the next morning, before the sun was the span of a man's hand above the hill, the young Fisherman went to the house of the Priest and knocked three times at the door.

The novice looked out through the wicket, and when he saw who it was, he drew back the latch and said to him, 'Enter.'

And the young Fisherman passed in, and knelt down on the sweetsmelling rushes of the floor, and cried to the Priest who was reading out of the Holy Book and said to him, 'Father, I am in love with one of the Sea-folk, and my soul hindereth me from having my desire. Tell me how I can send my soul away from me, for in truth I have no need of it. Of what value is my soul to me? I cannot see it. I may not touch it. I do not know it.'

And the Priest beat his breast, and answered, 'Alack, alack, thou art mad, or hast eaten of some poisonous herb, for the soul is the noblest part of man, and was given to us by God that we should nobly use it. There is no thing more precious than a human soul, nor any earthly thing that can be weighed with it. It is worth all the gold that is in the world, and is more precious than the rubies of the kings. Therefore, my son, think not any more of this matter, for it is a sin that may not be forgiven. And as for the Sea-folk, they are lost, and they who would traffic with them are lost also. They are as the beasts of the field that know not good from evil, and for them the Lord has not died.'

The young Fisherman's eyes filled with tears when he heard the bitter words of the Priest, and he rose up from his knees and said to him, 'Father, the Fauns live in the forest and are glad, and on the rocks sit the Mermen with their harps of red gold. Let me be as they are, I beseech thee, for their days are as the days of flowers. And as for my soul, what doth my soul profit me, if it stand between me and the thing that I love?'

‘The love of the body is vile,’ cried the Priest, knitting his brows, ‘and vile and evil are the pagan things God suffers to wander through His world. Accursed be the Fauns of the woodland, and accursed be the singers of the sea! I have heard them at night-time, and they have sought to lure me from my beads. They tap at the window, and laugh. They whisper into my ears the tale of their perilous joys. They tempt me with temptations, and when I would pray they make mouths at me. They are lost, I tell thee, they are lost. For them there is no heaven nor hell, and in neither shall they praise God’s name.’

‘Father,’ cried the young Fisherman, ‘thou knowest not what thou sayest. Once in my net I snared the daughter of a King. She is fairer than the morning star, and whiter than the moon. For her body I would give my soul, and for her love I would surrender heaven. Tell me what I ask of thee, and let me go in peace.’

‘Away! Away!’ cried the Priest: ‘thy leman is lost, and thou shalt be lost with her.’

And he gave him no blessing, but drove him from his door.

And the young Fisherman went down into the market-place, and he walked slowly, and with bowed head, as one who is in sorrow.

And when the merchants saw him coming, they began to whisper to each other, and one of them came forth to meet him, and called him by name, and said to him, ‘What hast thou to sell?’

‘I will sell thee my soul,’ he answered. ‘I pray thee buy it of me, for I am weary of it. Of what use is my soul to me? I cannot see it. I may not touch it. I do not know it.’

But the merchants mocked at him, and said, ‘Of what use is a man’s soul to us? It is not worth a clipped piece of silver. Sell us thy body for a slave, and we will clothe thee in sea-purple, and put a ring upon thy finger, and make thee the minion of the great Queen. But talk not of the soul, for to us it is nought, nor has it any value for our service.’

And the young Fisherman said to himself: ‘How strange a thing this is! The Priest telleth me that the soul is worth all the gold in the world, and the merchants say that it is not worth a clipped piece of silver.’ And he passed out of the market-place, and went down to the shore of the sea, and began to



ponder on what he should do.

And at noon he remembered how one of his companions, who was a gatherer of samphire, had told him of a certain young Witch who dwelt in a cave at the head of the bay and was very cunning in her witcheries. And he set to and ran, so eager was he to get rid of his soul, and a cloud of dust followed him as he sped round the sand of the shore. By the itching of her palm the young Witch knew his coming, and she laughed and let down her red hair. With her red hair falling around her, she stood at the opening of the cave, and in her hand she had a spray of wild hemlock that was blossoming.

‘What d’ye lack? What d’ye lack?’ she cried, as he came panting up the steep, and bent down before her. ‘Fish for thy net, when the wind is foul? I have a little reed-pipe, and when I blow on it the mullet come sailing into the bay. But it has a price, pretty boy, it has a price. What d’ye lack? What d’ye lack? A storm to wreck the ships, and wash the chests of rich treasure ashore? I have more storms than the wind has, for I serve one who is stronger than the wind, and with a sieve and a pail of water I can send the great galleys to the bottom of the sea. But I have a price, pretty boy, I have a price. What d’ye lack? What d’ye lack? I know a flower that grows in the valley, none knows it but I. It has purple leaves, and a star in its heart, and its juice is as white as milk. Shouldst thou touch with this flower the hard lips of the Queen, she would follow thee all over the world. Out of the bed of the King she would rise, and over the whole world she would follow thee. And it has a price, pretty boy, it has a price. What d’ye lack? What d’ye lack? I can pound a toad in a mortar, and make broth of it, and stir the broth with a dead man’s hand. Sprinkle it on thine enemy while he sleeps, and he will turn into a black viper, and his own mother will slay him. With a wheel I can draw the Moon from heaven, and in a crystal I can show thee Death. What d’ye lack? What d’ye lack? Tell me thy desire, and I will give it thee, and thou shalt pay me a price, pretty boy, thou shalt pay me a price.’

‘My desire is but for a little thing,’ said the young Fisherman, ‘yet hath the Priest been wroth with me, and driven me forth. It is but for a little thing, and the merchants have mocked at me, and denied me. Therefore am I come to thee, though men call thee evil, and whatever be thy price I shall pay it.’

‘What wouldst thou?’ asked the Witch, coming near to him.

‘I would send my soul away from me,’ answered the young Fisherman.

The Witch grew pale, and shuddered, and hid her face in her blue mantle.

‘Pretty boy, pretty boy,’ she muttered, ‘that is a terrible thing to do.’

He tossed his blown curls and laughed. ‘My soul is nought to me,’ he answered. ‘I cannot see it. I may not touch it. I do not know it.’

‘What wilt thou give me if I tell thee?’ asked the Witch, looking down at him with her beautiful eyes.

‘Five pieces of gold,’ he said, ‘and my nets, and the wattled house where I live, and the painted boat in which I sail. Only tell me how to get rid of my soul, and I will give thee all that I possess.’

She laughed mockingly at him, and struck him with the spray of hemlock. ‘I can turn the autumn leaves into gold,’ she answered, ‘and I can weave the pale moonbeams into silver if I will it. He whom I serve is richer than all the kings of this world, and has their dominions.’

‘What then shall I give thee,’ he cried, ‘if thy price be neither gold nor silver?’

The Witch stroked his hair with her thin white hand. ‘Thou must dance with me, pretty boy,’ she murmured, and she smiled at him as she spoke.

‘Nought but that?’ cried the young Fisherman in wonder and he rose to his feet.

‘Nought but that,’ she answered, and she smiled at him again.

‘Then at sunset in some secret place we shall dance together,’ he said, ‘and after that we have danced thou shalt tell me the thing which I desire to know.’

She shook her head. ‘When the moon is full; when the moon is full,’ she muttered. Then she peered all round, and listened. A blue bird rose screaming from its nest and circled over the dunes, and three spotted birds rustled through the coarse grey grass and whistled to each other. There was no other sound save the sound of a wave fretting the smooth pebbles below. So she reached out her hand, and drew him near to her and put her dry lips close to his ear.

‘To-night thou must come to the top of the mountain,’ she whispered. ‘It is a Sabbath, and He will be there.’

The young Fisherman started and looked at her, and she showed her white

teeth and laughed. 'Who is He of whom thou speakest?' he asked.

'It matters not,' she answered. 'Go thou to-night, and stand under the branches of the hornbeam, and wait for my coming. If a black dog run towards thee, strike it with a rod of willow, and it will go away. If an owl speak to thee, make it no answer. When the moon is full I shall be with thee, and we will dance together on the grass.'

'But wilt thou swear to me to tell me how I may send my soul from me?' he made question.

She moved out into the sunlight, and through her red hair rippled the wind. 'By the hoofs of the goat I swear it,' she made answer.

'Thou art the best of the witches,' cried the young Fisherman, 'and I will surely dance with thee to-night on the top of the mountain. I would indeed that thou hadst asked of me either gold or silver. But such as thy price is thou shalt have it, for it is but a little thing.' And he doffed his cap to her, and bent his head low, and ran back to the town filled with a great joy.

And the Witch watched him as he went, and when he had passed from her sight she entered her cave, and having taken a mirror from a box of carved cedarwood, she set it up on a frame, and burned vervain on lighted charcoal before it, and peered through the coils of the smoke. And after a time she clenched her hands in anger. 'He should have been mine,' she muttered, 'I am as fair as she is.'

And that evening, when the moon had risen, the young Fisherman climbed up to the top of the mountain, and stood under the branches of the hornbeam. Like a targe of polished metal the round sea lay at his feet, and the shadows of the fishing-boats moved in the little bay. A great owl, with yellow sulphurous eyes, called to him by his name, but he made it no answer. A black dog ran towards him and snarled. He struck it with a rod of willow, and it went away whining.

At midnight the witches came flying through the air like bats. 'Phew!' they cried, as they lit upon the ground, 'there is some one here we know not!' and they sniffed about, and chattered to each other, and made signs. Last of all came the young Witch, with her red hair streaming in the wind. She wore a dress of gold tissue embroidered with peacocks' eyes, and a little cap of green