

མོར་མེད་དམངས་ཁྱོད་སྒྱུར་གཏམ།

མི་ཐར་ཁྱུ་རི་མི་ནི་ཡེར་སྐྱ་དང་ཡེར་བྱིན་ཕྱ་གཉིས་བྱིས་བརྟུ་རྒྱབ་བྱས།

སྤྱན་བ་མེ་རིང་གིས་བརྟུར།

རི་མོ་འབྲི་མཁན་ཡི་རིག་ཁེ་སྤར་རིམ་ན་ཕེལ་དང་ཐེའུ་རི་ཁེ་ཐེལ་སེན།

དེབ་གཉིས་པ།

དཔེ་ཞིག་འགན་འཁུར་པ། ཉིང་འཛིན་བཟ་མེས།

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The Norwegian Folk Tales and their Illustrators

If Norway were to show the world a single work of art which would most truly express the Norwegian character, perhaps the best choice would be the folk tales, published for the first time more than a hundred years ago and later illustrated by Erik Werenskiöld and Theodor Kittelsen.

The folk tales of countries in more southern latitudes have preserved more of the romantic splendor that characterizes the folk tales which originated in the Far East and thence spread throughout the world. The Norwegian folk tales, however, contain an undertone of realism and folk humor that makes them unique. The Grimm brothers, collectors of some of the most famous folk tale classics, were aware of this. The Norwegian folk tales, said Jacob Grimm, have a freshness and a fullness that "surpass nearly all others".

The tales, or *eventyr* as they are called, wandered to Norway probably during the Middle Ages. They were absorbed into the existing lore, undergoing constant change through generations of storytelling. The storytellers themselves were highly esteemed if they were good, and each one had his own style of telling a story. It seems that there was a difference between the stories told by old men and old women. The old women usually kept to deep, mystic or eerie themes, while the men best related humorous, sometimes bawdy, stories.

Rural life in Norway has always been centered in the family farms — small isolated communities, often surrounded by great forests and high mountains. There, according to Werenskiöld's description of his childhood home, "one sat in the darkness by the oven door . . . from the time of the tallow candle and the rush light . . . in the endless, lonely winter evenings, where folk still saw the *nisse* and captured the sea-serpent, and swore that it was true." In the old days the Church was the sole authority in life and faith, but everyday problems were solved by *belief* — belief that was never questioned.

The folk tales reflect the tremendous imagination of the people as well as their independence and self-reliance. A Norse historian once complained that the tales always "belittle the king". He referred to the fact that the king was often depicted as a fat, genial farmer who could be approached as an equal. There is biting satire in the tales, and the humor is often broad and earthy. The representatives of the Church are treated rather irreverently. Nonetheless, standards of guilt and justice prevail, and

moral law is present, even in the world of the Trolls. The Trolls are awesome, but stupid, and are invariably outwitted and vanquished. The hero is *Askeladden* (literally, the Ash Lad, because he always sits by the fire and roots and pokes in the ashes). He is the youngest, the dreamer, the "ne'er-do-well", often despised by his parents and brothers. However, he is kind and honest, and possesses an open, unprejudiced mind. Of humble birth, he surmounts overwhelming obstacles to win the princess and half the kingdom.

Near the middle of the nineteenth century scholars began "discovering" a rich, native tradition that had lain fallow and almost forgotten during the years of foreign cultural influence. Ballads, painting and folk music were unearthed and revived in the "National Renaissance" that was sweeping through the greater part of Europe at that time. Among the Norwegian scholars of native culture were the two men responsible for the most extensive collection of Norwegian folk tales ever made — Peter Christen Asbjørnsen and Jørgen Moe.

Peter Christen Asbjørnsen was born in 1812, in Christiania (now Oslo), where his father was a glazier. In his childhood he heard *eventyr* from the workmen and apprentices in his father's workshop. These apprentices, who came from all parts of the country, often took Asbjørnsen along on their Sunday excursions while he was still very young, and, according to one of his friends, "thereby instilled in him a growing interest in the life of forest and field". In 1824 his father sent him to a school in Norderhov, north of Christiania. The two-year stay, in a rural community steeped in traditions, made a deep impression on him. But of the greatest importance was his meeting with Jørgen Moe, who was to become his closest friend and later his collaborator in writing down the folk tales.

Jørgen Moe was born on a farm at Hole in Ringerike. Jørgen evidenced his love for books at an early age and became a voracious reader. Asbjørnsen and Moe met at the Norderhov School in the summer of 1826. The two boys had many interests in common, especially their love for the outdoors. They spent every spare hour together hunting, fishing, or taking long hikes, and both dreamt of the day when they would be poets.

In 1834, Asbjørnsen went to Romerike in eastern Norway, where he remained for three years as a private tutor. During his student days he had begun writing down some of the folk tales he had heard in his childhood, and later in Norderhov. Once more surrounded by the living tradition, he kept up his avocation.

The first collection of Norwegian folklore, published in 1833, by a clergyman, Andreas Faye, aroused considerable public interest. Two years later, when it was rumored that Faye contemplated another collection, an assistant in the State Archives sent him some stories that had not appeared in his first book, including three "from one of my friends, student Asbjørnsen." Faye was most appreciative, and sent Asbjørnsen a letter of thanks in

which he concluded by saying, "I hereby appoint you Folk-Lore-Ambassador-Extraordinary". Accepting this challenge, Asbjørnsen soon submitted twelve legends and a folk song.

At this time he began thinking seriously of publishing a folk tale collection of his own, and discussed with Jørgen Moe the possibility of collaborating on such a project. They did not come to a serious agreement, however, until they had both read Grimm's *Kinder- und Hausmärchen*. In a joint letter to Jacob Grimm, written in 1844, they describe how "an early acquaintanceship with your honorable *Kinder- und Hausmärchen*, and an intimate knowledge of the lore and life of the people in our homeland, gave us the idea, eight years ago, of preparing a collection of Norwegian folk tales."

The first volume of *Norwegian Folk Tales*, collected by Peter Christen Asbjørnsen and Jørgen Moe, appeared in 1845. After the second edition in 1852, the book became exceedingly popular. The collaborators continued their research, one covering Gudbrandsdal and the other Telemark, districts rich in folk tradition. As the result of these and other trips, they published additional volumes as well as single stories in newspapers and magazines. However, as Jørgen Moe's clerical duties took up more and more of his time, he was gradually forced to abandon active collecting and research. His son, Moltke, had acquired an interest in the folk tradition at an early age, and it was not long before he had stepped into his father's shoes, and was collaborating with Asbjørnsen. He later became a distinguished folklorist in his own right, and his contributions to the Norwegian folk tradition are manifold.

For some time Asbjørnsen had contemplated an illustrated edition of the folk tales. This project was not realized, however, until 1879. Some of the most famous Norwegian painters of the time were selected to do the drawings, along with a young, unknown artist, Erik Werenskiöld.

Erik Werenskiöld was born in 1855, in Kongsvinger where his father was commander of the town fortress. Even in his childhood Werenskiöld was a keen observer of nature and people, and his father told him folk tales and read aloud from the ancient myths and sagas. At the age of seventeen Werenskiöld entered the University, but after a year he decided that he was more interested in studying art. In 1874, he enrolled at the Royal Norwegian Art School — much against his father's wishes. At that time Munich was a mecca for Norwegian art students. Werenskiöld arrived there in 1875, and remained for five years.

His first drawing for the folk tales was composed to illustrate the tale "Taper Tom Who Made the King's Daughter Laugh". In the summer of 1877, when plans were underway for the illustrated edition, this and others of his drawings were shown to Asbjørnsen. Delighted with Werenskiöld's work, Asbjørnsen invited him to participate in the project.

Realizing that he had seen very little of Norway, Werenskiöld went to

Vågå and Lom, in the Gudbrandsdal valley, to familiarize himself with the setting of the folk tales. On the large old farms he found the ancient patriarchal customs still alive. As he once remarked, "Here on the great farms there were still small kings, and the tenant farmers were their serfs. Behind this primitive life, behind these vigorous, strongly pronounced human types, and this unique architecture, one could sense the Middle Ages; and behind the large forest lay the Troll world of the Jotunheim mountains. I have never since found anything that seemed more Norwegian to me than Vågå!"

In Werenskiöld's drawings, the king appears as the farmers must have imagined him. He wears crown and scepter, and generally shuffles around in slippers, smoking a long pipe. Genial in appearance, he is also gruff and authoritative. Werenskiöld brings the *eventyr* world to life by using the valleys and forests and rural architecture of eastern Norway as a natural setting.

The drawings for the folk tales established Werenskiöld as one of Norway's foremost artists. Asbjørnsen realized that he had found the right man, and, when the second illustrated edition was planned, Werenskiöld alone of the original group was asked to carry on. He immediately requested that one of his friends, a completely unknown artist named Theodor Kittelsen, be invited to work with him.

Theodor Kittelsen was born in Kragerø in 1857. He started to draw at a very tender age, and was considered by his townspeople as somewhat of a prodigy. Having attended an art school in Christiania for about two years, he continued his studies in Munich, where he arrived in 1876, and where he met Werenskiöld.

Werenskiöld seemed to have sensed that Kittelsen's temperament was even closer to the folk tales than his own. In a letter to Asbjørnsen, Werenskiöld wrote, "Kittelsen has a wild, individual, inventive fantasy . . . For many years I have had the constant thought that he should be the man to do that side of your *eventyr* which none of the rest of us has yet been able to accomplish, namely the purely fantastic creations!"

At first, Asbjørnsen was shocked by the power and originality of these drawings, which bore no resemblance to the pale romanticism of contemporary art. When trying them out on children, however, he realized that they satisfied the unspoiled juvenile hunger for fantasy. Thus, Kittelsen was brought in on the project in 1881, and the happy collaboration began.

The tales, as illustrated by Werenskiöld and Kittelsen, quickly established themselves as a national treasure. There is no doubt that they have had a considerable impact upon Norway's cultural history, and they are cherished and read with as much enthusiasm today as when they were first published.

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Butterball

There was once an old woman who sat baking. She had a little boy, and he was so round and fat, and fond of good things to eat, that she called him 'Butterball'. And she had a dog called 'Goldtooth'. All at once the dog started to bark.

"Run out, my little Butterball," said the old woman, "and see who Goldtooth's barking at."

So the boy ran out, and came back in and said, "Oh, heaven help me! Here comes a big, tall Troll-hag, with her head under her arm and a sack on her back!"

"Run under the breadboard and hide!" said his mother.

Then in came the big Troll.

"Good day!" she said.

"God bless you!" said Butterball's mother.

"Isn't Butterball at home today?" asked the Troll.

"No, he's in the woods with his father bagging grouse," replied the mother.



"Is Butterball at home today?" asked the Troll.

"Devil take it!" said the Troll-hag. "I've got such a fine little silver knife I wanted to give 'im!"

"Pip, pip! Here I am!" said Butterball, from underneath the breadboard, and out he came.

"I'm so old and my back's so stiff," said the Troll. "You'll have to pop down into the sack and fetch it yourself."

When Butterball was well down inside, the Troll swung the sack on her back and rushed out through the door. But, when they had gone a bit on the way, the Troll grew tired and asked, "How far must I go to find a place to take a nap?"

"A furlong," said Butterball.

So the Troll put the sack down by the side of the road, and went off through the woods by herself, and lay down to sleep.

In the meantime, Butterball saw his chance. He took his knife, ripped a hole in the sack, and popped out. Then he put a large pine root in his place, and home he ran to his mother. When the Troll got home and laid eyes on what she had in the sack, she was beside herself with rage.

The next day the old woman sat baking again. All at once the dog started to bark.

"Run out, my little Butterball," she said, "and see what Goldtooth's barking at."

"Oh nay! Oh nay! That nasty beast!" said Butterball. "Now she's coming back, with her head under her arm and a big sack on her back!"

"Run under the breadboard and hide!" said his mother.

"Good day," said the Troll. "Is Butterball at home today?"

"Indeed he isn't," said the mother. "He's in the woods with his father bagging grouse."

"Devil take it!" said the Troll-hag. "I've got such a pretty little silver fork I wanted to give 'im."

"Pip, pip! Here I am!" said Butterball, and out he came.

"My back's so stiff," said the Troll. "You'll have to pop down into the sack and fetch it yourself."

When Butterball was well down inside the sack, the Troll flung it on her back and set off.

When they had gone a good bit on the way, she grew tired and asked, "How far off is it to where I can sleep?"

"Half a mile," replied Butterball.

So the Troll put the sack down by the side of the road, and went up through the woods, and lay down to sleep. While the Troll was away, Butterball made a hole in the sack, and when he was out he put a big stone inside. When the Troll-hag got home, she made a fire in the hearth, hung a huge pot over, and was going to stew Butterball. But when she took the sack, thinking it was Butterball she was going to shake out, down fell the stone, making a hole in the bottom of the pot, so the water ran out and put

out the fire. Now the Troll was terribly angry and said, "No matter how heavy he makes himself this time, I'll trick him just the same, I will!"

The third time was just like the others: Goldtooth started to bark, and so the mother said to Butterball, "Run out, my little Butterball, and see who Goldtooth's barking at."

So Butterball ran out, and came back in again and said, "Oh mercy me! It's that Troll again, with her head under her arm and a sack on her back!"

"Run under the breadboard and hide!" said his mother.

"Good day," said the Troll and stepped in through the door. "Is Butterball at home today?"

"Indeed he isn't!" said the mother. "He's out in the woods with his father bagging grouse."

"Devil take it!" said the Troll-hag. "I've got such a pretty little silver spoon I wanted to give 'im!"

"Pip, pip! Here I am!" said Butterball, and out he came from underneath the breadboard.

"My back's so stiff," said the Troll-hag. "You'll have to pop down into the sack and fetch it yourself."

When Butterball was well down inside, the Troll threw the sack on her back and set off on the way. This time she didn't go off by herself and lie down to sleep, but strode straight home with Butterball in the sack. And when they got there, it was a Sunday.

Then the Troll said to her daughter, "Now you must take Butterball, and cut 'im up, and make broth out of 'im by the time I come back. For now I'm going to church and invite my friends to a feast."

When the Troll had gone, the daughter was going to take Butterball and butcher him, but she didn't quite know how she was to set about it.

"Wait and I'll show you how to go about it, I will," said Butterball. "Lay your head on the stool and you'll see."

She did just so, poor thing, and Butterball took the axe and chopped off her head, just like a chicken's. Then he put the head in the bed and the carcass in the pot, and made broth of the Troll's daughter. And when that was done, he scrambled up over the door, dragging the pine root and the stone with him, and one he placed over the door and the other on the Troll's chimney pipe.

When the folks came home from church and saw the head in the bed, they thought the daughter was asleep; but then they went over to taste the broth.

"Tastes good, this Butterball broth!" said the Troll-hag.

"Tastes good, this daughter broth!" said Butterball, but they paid no attention to that.

Then the Mountain Troll took the spoon and was going to taste.

"Tastes good, this Butterball broth!" he said.



"Now she's coming back, with her head under her arm . . ."

"Tastes good, this daughter broth!" said Butterball, perched up on the chimney pipe.

Then they took to wondering who was talking, and wanted to go out and have a look. But when they got to the door, Butterball threw the pine root and the stone at their heads and killed them all. Then he took all the gold and silver there was in the house — and now he was rich indeed, if you please — and then home he went to his mother.

མར་ཤྲོད་རིལ།

གནའ་མ་མོ་ཨ་མ་ཀྱང་མོ་ཞིག་ཡོད་ཅིང་དེས་ལས་ཀ་མི་བྱེད་པར་རྟག་ཏུ་
ནང་དུ་སྡོད་ཀྱི་ཡོད། ཀྱང་མོར་སྤྱུ་གུ་ཞིག་ཡོད་པ་དེས་ན་མ་ཀྱན་ནས་ཟས་ཁོ་
ན་ཟ་བ་ལས་ལས་ཀ་བྱེད་ཀྱི་མེད་པས་ཁོའི་ལུས་པོ་ཤིན་ཏུ་རྒྱགས་ལ་རྒྱུ་པོ་ཞིག་
ཏུ་སྒྱུར། དེར་བརྟེན་ཁོའི་ཨ་མས་བྱ་དེར་མར་ཤྲོད་རིལ་ཞེས་འབོད་ཀྱི་ཡོད།
དེ་མིན་ཀྱང་མོར་ད་དུང་བྱི་གཅིག་ཡོད་པ་དེའི་མིང་ལ་སེང་སྤྱག་ཅེས་འབོད།

ཉིན་ཞིག་སློ་བུར་དུ་བྱི་དེས་འཕྱང་པས་ཀྱང་མོས། མར་ཤྲོད་རིལ་
མཆོག་སེའི་ཕྱི་དུ་ཕྱིན་ནས་སེང་སྤྱག་གིས་སྤྱ་ལ་འཕྱང་གི་འདུག་གམ་གཅིག་
སྤྲོས་ཤིག་ཅེས་བཤད། བྱ་དེས་ཕྱི་དུ་རྒྱགས་ཕྱིན་ཏེ་དེ་མ་ཉིད་དུ་ནང་དུ་ལོག་
ཡོང་ནས་ཨོ། དཀོན་མཆོག་གིས་མཆིན། ཕར་སྤྱགས་ནས་སློ་བོ་མི་གཟུགས་
སྤྲོབས་ཏེ་ཅང་ཆེ་བ་ཞིག་གིས་རང་གི་མགོ་མཆན་ཁྲུང་འོག་དུ་བཅུག་པ་དང་
རྒྱབ་དུ་རས་པད་ཅིག་འབྱེར་ནས་ཡོང་གི་འདུག་ཅེས་བཤད་པས། ཨ་མས་
བྱིང་མཆོག་སེའི་བང་བྲིའི་འོག་དུ་འཇུ་ལ་ནས་གབ་སྡོད་ཅེས་བཤད། དེ་ནས་
སློ་བོ་སྤྲོབས་ཆེན་སྤྱན་གཅིག་དེ་ནང་དུ་འཇུ་ལ་ཡོང་ནས་ཉིན་མོ་བདེ་ལེགས་
ཞེས་བཤད། ཨ་མས་དཀོན་མཆོག་གིས་བྱིང་ལ་གཟིགས་པར་ཤོག་ཅེས་བཤད།
སློ་བོས་དེ་རིང་མར་ཤྲོད་རིལ་ནང་ལ་བསྐྱད་ཨོ་ཡོད་ཅེས་དྲིས། ཨ་མས་བསྐྱད་
མེད་ཁོ་ཤིང་ནགས་སྤོང་དུ་པ་དང་མཉམ་དུ་ལྷ་བྱ་གོང་མོ་འཛིན་པར་ཕྱིན་སོང་
ཞེས་བཤད། སློ་བོས་ཨ་མའི་ཕྱོད་དེ་འདྲའི་སྐབས་མ་འཁེལ་བ་ལ་ཨང་། ང་