

趣味英汉对照故事丛书

神奇的小磨

主编 李相玲 英妍



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责任编辑:梁春芳

装帧设计:安璐

责任校对:李春兰

责任印制:郭淑杰

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Shenqi De Xiaome

主编 李相玲 英妍

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Contents

目 录

The Little Magical Mill	(1)
神奇的小磨	
The Fish and the Ring	(17)
鱼和戒指	
The Story of Pretty Goldilocks	(49)
俏丽金发的故事	
The Golden Lads	(91)
金娃娃	
The Golden Mermaid	(111)
金美人鱼	
The War of the Wolf and the Fox	(139)
狼与狐狸之争	
The Twelve Huntsmen	(155)
十二个猎人	
Cornelia's Jewels	(168)
葛妮利亚的珠宝	

The Little Magical mill

Once upon a time, long, long ago, there were two brothers, the one rich and the other poor. When Christmas Eve came, the poor one had not a bite in the house, either of meat or bread. He went to his brother and begged him, in God's name, to give him something for Christmas Day. It was by no means the first time that the brother had been forced to give something to him, and he was not better pleased at being asked now than he generally was.

"If you will do what I ask you, you shall have a whole ham," said he. The poor one immediately thanked him, and promised this.

"Well, here is the ham, and now you must go straight to Dead Man's Hall," said the rich brother, throwing the ham to him.

"Well, I will do what I have promised," said the other, and he took the ham and set off. He

went on and on for the live-long day, and at night-fall he came to a place where there was a bright light.

“I have no doubt this is the place,” thought the man with the ham.

An old man with a long white beard was standing outside, chopping Yule logs.

“Good evening,” said the man with the ham.

“Good evening to you. Where are you going at this late hour?” said the man.

“I am going to Dead Man’s Hall, if only I am on the right track,” answered the poor man.

“Oh! yes, you are right enough, for it is here,” said the old man. “When you get inside they will all want to buy your ham, for they don’t get much meat to eat there; but you must not sell it unless you can get the hand mill which stands behind the door. When you come out again I will teach you how to stop the hand mill, which is useful for almost everything.”

So the man with the ham thanked the other for his good advice, and rapped at the door.

When he got in, everything happened just as

the old man had said it would. All the people, great and small came round him like ants on an ant hill, and each tried to outbid the other for the ham.

“By rights, my old woman and I ought to have it for our Christmas dinner, but since you have set your hearts upon it, I must just give it up to you,” said the man. “But, if I sell it, I will have the hand mill which is standing there behind the door.”

At first they would not hear of this, and hag-
gled and bargained with the man, but he stuck to what he had said, and the people were forced to give him the hand mill. When the man came out again into the yard, he asked the old wood-cutter how he was to stop the hand mill. When he had learned that he thanked him and set off home with all the speed he could, but did not get there until after the clock had struck twelve on Christmas Eve.

“But where in the world have you been?” said the old woman. “Here I have sat waiting hour after hour, and have not even two sticks to lay across

each other under the Christmas porridge pot."

"Oh! I could not come before, I had something of importance to see about, and a long way to go, too; but now you shall just see!" said the man, and then he set the hand mill on the table, and bade it first grind light, then a table cloth, and then meat and beer, and everything else that was good for a Christmas Eve's supper; and the mill ground all that he ordered. "Bless me!" said the old woman as one thing after another appeared. She wanted to know where her husband had got the mill, but he would not tell her that.

"Never mind where I got it; you can see that it is a good one, and the water that turns it will never freeze," said the man. So he ground meat and drink, and all kinds of good things, to last all Christmas-tide, and on the third day he invited all his friends to come to a feast.

Now when the rich brother saw all that there was at the banquet and in the house, he was both vexed and angry, for he grudged everything his brother had. "On Christmas Eve he was so poor that he came to me and begged for a trifle, for



God's sake, and now he gives a feast as if he were both a count and a king!" thought he. "But, for heaven's sake, tell me where you got your riches from," said he to his brother.

"From behind the door," said he who owned the mill, for he did not choose to satisfy his brother on that point. Later in the evening, when he had taken a drop too much, he could not refrain from telling how he had come by the hand mill. "There you see what has brought me all my wealth!" said he, and brought out the mill, and made it grind first one thing and then another. When the brother saw that he insisted on having the mill, and after a great deal of persuasion got it. He had to give three hundred dollars for it, and the poor brother was to keep it till the haymaking was over, for he thought, "If I keep it as long as that, I can make it grind meat and drink that will last many a long year." During that time you may imagine that the mill did not grow rusty, and when hay harvest came the rich brother got it, but the other had taken good care not to teach him how to stop it. It was evening when the rich man got the

mill home, and in the morning he bade the old woman go out and spread the hay after the mowers, and he would attend to the house himself that day.

So, when dinnertime drew near, he set the mill on the kitchen table, and said, "Grind herrings and milk pottage, and do it both quickly and well."

So the mill began to grind herrings and milk pottage. First all the dishes and tubs were filled, and then it came out all over the kitchen floor. The man twisted and turned it, and did all he could to make the mill stop; but, howsoever he turned it and screwed it, the mill went on grinding, and in a short time the pottage rose so high that the man was like to be drowned. So he threw open the parlour door, but it was not long before the mill had ground the parlour full too. It was with difficulty and danger that the man got through the stream of pottage and got hold of the doorlatch. When he got the door open, he did not stay long in the room, but ran out, and the herrings and pottage came after him, and it streamed out over both farm and field. Now the old woman, who was out spreading

the hay, began to think dinner was long in coming, and said to the women and the mowers, "Though the master does not call us home, we may as well go. It may be that he finds he is not good at making pottage, and I should do well to help him." So they began to straggle homewards, but when they had got a little way up the hill they met the herrings and pottage and bread, all pouring forth and winding about one over the other, and the man himself in front of the flood. "Would to heaven that each of you had a hundred stomachs! Take care that you are not drowned in the pottage!" he cried as he went by them as if Mischief were at his heels, down to where his brother dwelt. Then he begged him, for God's sake, to take the mill back again in an instant, for, said he, "If it grind one hour more the whole district will be destroyed by herrings and pottage." But the brother would not take it until the other paid him three hundred dollars, and that he was obliged to do. Now the poor brother had both the money and the mill again. So it was not long before he had a farmhouse much finer than that in which his broth-



er lived, and the mill ground him so much money that he covered it with plates of gold. The farmhouse lay close by the seashore, so it shone and glittered far out to sea. Everyone who sailed by there now had to put in to visit the rich man in the gold farmhouse, and everyone wanted to see the wonderful mill, for the report of it spread far and wide, and there was no one who had not heard tell of it.

After a long, long time came also a skipper who wished to see the mill. He asked if it could make salt. "Yes, it could make salt," said he who owned it. When the skipper heard that he wished with all his might and main to have the mill, let it cost what it might. For, he thought, if he had it, he would get off having to sail far away over the perilous sea for freights of salt. At first the man would not hear of parting with it, but the skipper begged and prayed, and at last the man sold it to him, and got many, many thousand dollars for it. When the skipper had got the mill on his back he did not long stay there, for he was so afraid that the man should change his mind, and

he had no time to ask how he was to stop it grinding, but got on board his ship as fast as he could.

When he had gone a little way out to sea he took the mill on deck. "Grind salt, and grind both quickly and well," said the skipper. So the mill began to grind salt, till it spouted out like water, and when the skipper had got the ship filled he wanted to stop the mill, but, whichsoever way he turned it, and how much soever he tried, it went on grinding. The heap of salt grew higher and higher, until at last the ship sank. There lies the mill at the bottom of the sea, and still, day by day, it grinds on. That is why the sea is salt.

神奇的小磨

在很久很久以前，有兄弟俩，一个富有，一个贫穷。当圣诞夜来临之际，穷弟弟家里一点食物也没有了，既没有肉，也没有面包，所以他去求他的哥哥看在上帝的面，给他一些食物过圣诞节。哥哥又一次很不情愿地送给弟弟一些东西，这种事儿已不是第一次发生了，他这一次也并不比以往更乐意施舍。

“如果你照我说的去做，你将得到一整只火腿。”哥哥说。穷弟弟立刻表示感谢，并答应照他说的做。

“好吧，给你火腿，现在你必须马上去死人殿堂。”富有的哥哥说着把火腿扔给了穷弟弟。

“好的，我会遵守诺言。”弟弟说完拿起火腿就出发了。他走啊走啊，走了整整一天。傍晚他来到了一座挂着一盏明亮的灯的房子前。

“一定是这儿。”背着火腿的弟弟想。

一个下巴上长着长长的白胡子的老人正在屋外劈圣诞柴。

“晚上好！”背着火腿的弟弟说。