

fairy said with feeling; "Do you know, my little ones, that the fairies would come to the mountainfolk oftener if we could brave the cold weather? But we feel the ice and snow keenly, and have to remain where the temperature is more congenial. But there are so many little folks in need of the fairy's aid in the icebound mountains that it seems a pity there are no fairies that can brave the elements and stay near to those who need them. Ah, if only we had some hardy fairies among us—fairies who loved the ice and snow!" Hereupon the good little fairy sighed and stretched out her hands to the fire.

For a few minutes not a word was said, and Dado, who had been intently thinking, spoke: "Good fairy cannot you change my sister and me into fairies—SNOW FAIRIES? If you can we will remain here in the mountains and be of help to the poor children who need fairies' help."

"Brave, noble little boy!" exclaimed the fairy. "I shall try to perform the miracle you suggest. But"—and she turned to Pinto, who was listening eagerly to all that was being said—"perhaps the little maid does not wish to become a fairy."

Yes, yes, I wish to be a fairy, a SNOW FAIRY as brother says. I would not be anything else—if brother is one," Pinto declared enthusiastically.

The good fairy smiled and raised her tiny wand. Passing it slowly over the heads of the little orphans she murmured some strange words; then with a quick turn of the wand she cried: "Change lad and maid, from human to superhuman; from boy and girl to Snow Fairies."

A sudden darkness fell in the room, and when again the light of the fire defined the objects there Dado and Pinto had disappeared and in their place were two beautiful Snow Fairies, with happiness before them. "Ah, now we shall carry you, dear Cloud Fairy, to your own warm clime," said the Snow Fairy (who had been Dado) speaking to the little fairy whose charm had worked so marvelous a miracle.

"Yes, we will protect you from the snow—which we love—and see that you reach your own dominion soon," declared the Snow Fairy, who had been little Pinto a few minutes before.

And away flew the three fairies, happy as could be.

"Children Grazing on Hills."

It is told of a certain Queen of Denmark, who was visiting Iceland, that, in the course of some compliments to the Bishop, who had been showing her all that was to be seen, she asked him how many children he had. The Danish word for "children" happens to resemble very closely in sound the Icelandic word for "sheep," and the good Bishop, confusing the two, replied, "Two hundred."

"Two hundred!" cried the Queen. "How can you possibly maintain such a number?"

"Easily enough, please your Majesty," returned the Bishop. "In the summer I turn them out upon the hills to graze, and when winter comes I kill and eat them!"

A Lovesick Hippo.

Near the mouth of a large river in Africa there lived a young Miss Hippopotamus. She was not very proud of her looks, and she always wrote her name without the hyphen.

But one day as she was taking a sun bath, with just her nose and flat back above water, there came by that way a very wise professor of natural history, who, seeing Miss Hippo at her bath, seemed full of delight and cried out: "What a beauty! What a beauty! I'd like to take her with me." Poor Miss Hippo was greatly excited and ducked her head at once, as any well-mannered young lady would do at such a time. When she came back to the surface again the professor had gone, but his words had turned Miss Hippo's head.

"He meant me, of course," she said to herself. "Then I must be handsome after all, and he did say that he would like to take me with him. How nice it would be to go off with that handsome man! And he called me a beauty!" Poor Miss Hippo began to be vain. She dressed herself in her very best gown, she put on her Easter bonnet, and, taking her parasol, she waded out on the sandy bank.

"He is not here, but he will come back," she sighed. "I will leave a message for him." So she took a stick and wrote on the sand:

"Please, dear Mr. Man, come back. You can have me any time. I shall be here at this time tomorrow. Miss Hippopotamus." And this time she put in the hyphen.

But when she came back the next day the tide in the river had risen and washed out all her message. Each day she wrote, but each day the water washed out her writing.

The professor never came back, and the poor hippo grew thinner and thinner until her skirts got too big.

"I shall die for love of him," she said. And she did. Wasn't she foolish?



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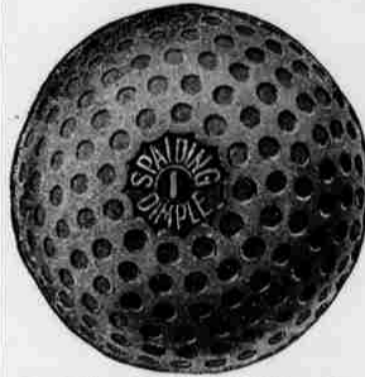
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