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Poetry.

THE EARLY GALLOP.

(Written in the saddle on the crown of my hat.)

At five on a dewy morning,
Before the blazing day,
To be up and off on a high mettled horse
Over the hills away,
To drink the sweet breath of the gorse
And bathe in the breeze of the Downs,
Ha! man, if you can, match bliss like this
In all the joys of towns!

With glad and grateful tongue to join
The lark at his matin hymn,
And thence on faith's own wing to spring
And sing with Cherubim!
To pray from a deep and tender heart,
With all things praying anew,
The birds and the bees, and the whispering trees,
And feather bedropt with dew,
To be one with those early worshippers
And pour the psalm too!

And a bounding heart within,
To dash at a gallop over the plain,
Health's golden cup to win!
This, this is the race for gain and grace
Richer than vases and crowns;
And you that boast your pleasures the most
Amid the steam of towns,
Come taste true bliss in a morning like this,
Galloping over the Downs!

MISTE, PRINCE OF FOGGE.

The fairy Myrtila was getting ready for a trip to Fairy-land. Her mouse-skin cloak was warming by the fire, her chariot was before the door, and her team of blood-beetles stamping themselves nearly out of the harness in their impatience, while she herself was putting on her mullen-leaf leggings, for it was as yet early spring, and the weather was somewhat cool.

Quoth Lilla, her god-daughter, pointing, "Every one goes to Fairy-land.—Not a paltry flower or vagabond sunbeam but has something to tell of its rosy gates and diamond palaces: only I must mope at home."

But answered her godmother, "Patience! There are people who go to Fairy-land, and there are those to whom it comes. Keep the doors fast and let no one in; for the sprites of the forest are ever ready for mischief; and have an eye on those spider spinners. They are so long about the coverlets that the Queen is getting impatient. If you are lonely, talk to the birds or practice your dancing, and we shall see what we shall see."

Now Myrtila's eloquence, like that of mortals, was very satisfactory to herself; and, putting on her mouse-skin cloak, she whirled away over the tree-tops, so well satisfied with herself that she must needs stop the goblin of the brook and a sprite or two of the mist, that she happened to meet, to tell them how "Steina's god-daughter ruled her house, and Muta had run away with a gay young Northern Light, while Lilla was content to stay at home and spin, and never even guessed that she was fair."

But Lilla sat looking into the cedar-wood fire, and saying, "I am tired of talking to the birds, who tell me nothing

but how the young Robins are coming on, and what little eaves-droppers are the Wrens, and what airs the Oriole takes; and as for my dancing, the very mention reminds me of that ridiculous old Grass-hopper, with his green tights, and his little fiddle, and his everlasting whirr, ma'm'selle, that is the very air of the Fairy Queen; and as for the Spiders, I am afraid of them. They look as if they could eat me up."

And the fire roared the words up the chimney, and the pines that stood thick about the old castle caught it up, and whispered about it till the zephyrs got hold of it, and these told it to the brooks, and presently there wasn't so much as a violet in the forest that had not heard how Lilla was discontented and moping in the old castle; and there arose such a buzzing, and humming, and whispering on the subject, that Lilla, hearing it, began to wonder what it was all about.

So she called to a Sparrow, passing by; and said the Sparrow,

"There is a Fairy Prince coming hither."

But Lilla answered,
"The Prince whatever that may be, must go further, then; for godmother bade me open the doors to none."

And sitting down at the golden wheel, she began to spin stuff for pansy-leaves, singing the while the Song of the Giants of Fire; yet ever and anon she caught herself wondering what like was this Fairy Prince; for in her whole life she had seen no one but her godmother; and while she was singing came hosts of wild sunbeams and tittering flower-sprites, tapping at the window; but Lilla hardly stopped to shake her head at them, for she knew their tricks of old; and then the wind went about the castle, trying every door and casement, and threatening to blow the roof off; but Lilla stinted her song none the more for that, for the castle was charmed with a fairy spell, and would open to none without her will.

The day went on and drew toward the close; and though there are five hundred verses in the Song of the Giants, Lilla had sung them all; and though there was stuff for six hundred thousand pansies, she spun so fast that now, at twilight, they were done. The stir and whisper, too, in the forest had quite died away; and, as Lilla sat before the fire, she began once more to wonder what the Sparrow meant by his Fairy Prince.

Came just then a soft tap at the door.

"Who is there?" cried Lilla.

"Miste, Prince of Fogge" answered a voice, "who has traveled thither from Fairy-land for love of you."

"Alas!" returned Lilla, "you must go away. I am bidden to keep the doors fast."

"I saw your godmother in Fairy-land," pursued the sweet voice. "The Fairy Queen has taken to violet stockings of late, and none but Myrtila can shape them. She has three days' work before her."

"I dare not," sighed Lilla.

"Then I must die," Fairy princes, and specially the children of the mist, always die for love."

"Why do you love me?"

"Because you have hair like sunbeams, and eyes like a June heaven at noon, and a sweeter voice than any Fay in Fairy-land."

Now Lilla knew all the tales in the book of the Sages, and the Song of the Giants, and the Fables of the Birds; but none of these were half so witty and interesting as a prince (whatever that might be) who could tell her, "You are so lovely that all must love you. How then can you blame me?" And if she were only quite sure that her godmother was busy with violet stockings and thinking nothing of her—

It was very still without: what if he were dead! He had said that he should

die of love for me! If she could be certain that her godmother wouldn't find her out and shut her up for a thousand years with the Witch of the Sea, or Jack Frost!

Just then an owl began with his great coarse voice

"Towhit! towho! Here is a fine fool of a Fairy Prince dying for a girl who hasn't the spirit to open a door and take a look at her."

"I am going to open the door!" cried Lilla, angrily.

But the words were hardly uttered when a handsome young man stood before her.

"Your will, not the door, was between us," he said, with a cold smile that made Lilla (though she could hardly tell why) wish him well outside again. She had not time, however, for a word, for just then came a tremendous prancing of beetles, and a bouncing at the door. Myrtila had come back.

Then Lilla wrung her hands and cried to the fire, "Hide him!" but, "No," said the fire, "I should burn him."

And she ran to the fountain and prayed it to shelter him; but, "No," gurgled the nymph, "I should drown him!"—"Then," said the Prince, "have no fear;" and, wrapping his cloak about him, became invisible.

Myrtila meanwhile was in a rage.

"Let me in!" she cried, thumping at the door. "I hear you whispering within."

Lilla went trembling and undid the door.

"Now I've caught you!" exclaimed her godmother, bouncing in, but stopped short in surprise at seeing Lilla quite alone. "Some one has been here," she said, "and yet the door has not been drawn. The door-stone was charmed, and it was echoing with a strange foot-step, and yet I see no prints on the floor, which is like snow for every foot but yours and mine."

"I know nothing of your birds, and brooks, and charmed door-stones," answered Lilla. "For all company I have had the hooting of an old owl who lives in the pine yonder. Perhaps, however, he is a Prince in disguise."

"Prince? how know you that there is such a thing?" asked the fairy, sharply.

Lilla sat down at her empty wheel and began to spin in a violent hurry.

"What are you doing there?" demanded Myrtila. "Spinning air?"

"I want to keep in practice."

Here the Prince, who, though invisible, hovered about her, gave her hand a gentle squeeze, at which she cried out, "Oh!"

"What is the matter now?" said her godmother.

"Nothing; I was only thinking of the Spiders, who have droned all day."

"But what made you blush?"

"What is that?" said Lilla. "I have never heard the word."

"Humph!" returned the fairy; it is a word that goes with princes; and, sitting down, she began to pull off her mullen-leaf leggings.

"Dear Lilla," whispered Prince Miste, "will you come with me?"

"Help me off with these," cried Myrtila, at the same moment.

"Yes, love," answered Lilla, aloud, quite forgetting what she was about; on which her godmother jumped up in a passion and boxed her ears.

"Are you out of your wits? Go to your room and stay there. Yes, love, indeed!"

Lilla obeyed, weeping; but hardly had she closed the door when Miste, who had followed her, took shape again and stood before her.

"Are you ready to come?" he asked.

"Alas!" sighed Lilla, "the doors are fast, and I have no wings that I can escape through the windows. I must now dim my eyes with weeping, and spin prickly thistle sheets, or mullen leaves,

that are more hateful still. Since, however, I shall see you no more, my Prince, it hardly matters. No one else will ever love me, or know that I have hair, and eyes at all."

At this the owl commenced again,

"Lilla has had her ears boxed, and is going to bed like a great school-girl."

"I wish I were dead!" she sobbed, pulling at her golden hair for spite.

"Better become as I am," said the Prince.

On Lilla's finger was an opal holding a jet of flame, that quivered and leaped continually, and paled only at the approach of danger. Looking at it now she saw that it had grown dim, and drew back.

"Oh! you believe in stones rather than in me," said Miste, scornfully, floating out at the window.

"Hoo! hoo!" cried the owl, "leave her, Prince Miste, to spin and get her ears boxed. It is what she is fit for."

"Stop!" exclaimed Lilla, "I will become as you are whatever that may be."

The cloud returned, it wrapped her round, it seemed to penetrate her with cold and dread. The flame in the opal had gone out and was dead, like her heart that seemed turning to ice. She herself was losing shape and outline; her rounded limbs, her bright hair, her lovely face, fading into mist, till, like a breath, she floated from the window into the forest, quivering all about her with ominous laughter.

Once there the winds seized her. They hunted her across wild moors and fearful wastes; she was shuddering with cold and terror, torn by jagged rocks and boughs, longing for rest.

"Let us stop here," she cried, "and give me back my shape!"

came as it were, and your mortal form once gone it is lost forever for the sprites of the mist change not in essence. They are always cold at heart; they find no rest; they are the sport of every breeze; and they flee before all things. You must abide by the choice you have made."

So Lilla wanders over desolate seas and barren hills, a mist wreath forever.

WHAT CAME OF A POCKET HANDKERCHIEF.

Within a few weeks there died in one of the towns of Bristol County, a man leaving property to the amount of sixty thousand dollars, who in his youthful days was the owner of a nine-penny cotton handkerchief, which, like many an object of more importance, has its own history. Upon one balmy day in August, when whortleberries were ripe and mosquitoes were plenty, he in company with other juveniles of either sex made an excursion for berries. Among them was one rosy lass who was exceedingly annoyed by the numerous bills presented, and whose white neck rebelled against their acceptance; but nevertheless the aforesaid cotton flag was offered and accepted as a protection; worn home that night, it was laid aside and forgotten. The girl grew into womanhood, married and was happy in her forgetfulness of the "cotton loan," and its embroidered and freckled owner. Not so with him.—As year succeeded year and his "pile" increased, that investment troubled him, until, not long since, he made a certain resolution. Next day there was at the lady's residence the miser's nervous knock, and without introduction or parley, he reminded her of the loan which forty years she had forgotten, and informed her that upon a careful calculation of the debt, he made the loan and interest amount to the exact sum of eighty-seven cents! which he suggested she would, perhaps, be willing to repay. In reply he was told that it would give her pleasure to discharge her indebtedness to him for even so small a sum; and that night an addition of eighty-seven cents was made to his "pile." The foregoing incident is true.