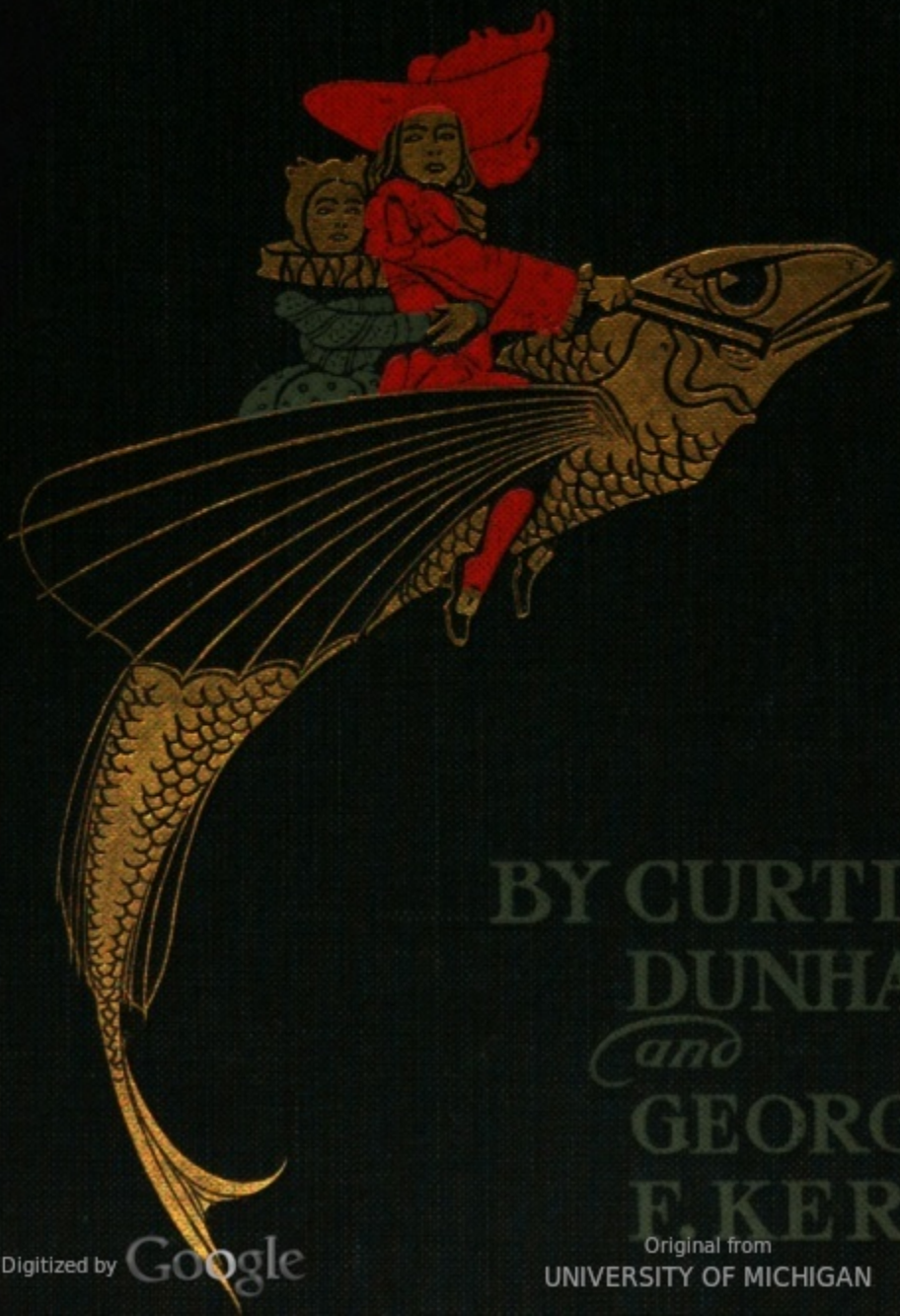
THE GOLDEN GOBLIN



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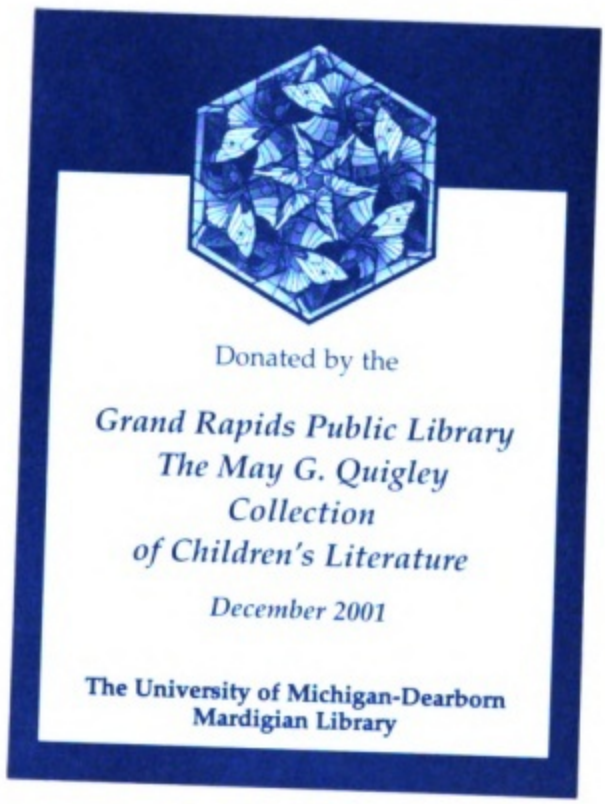

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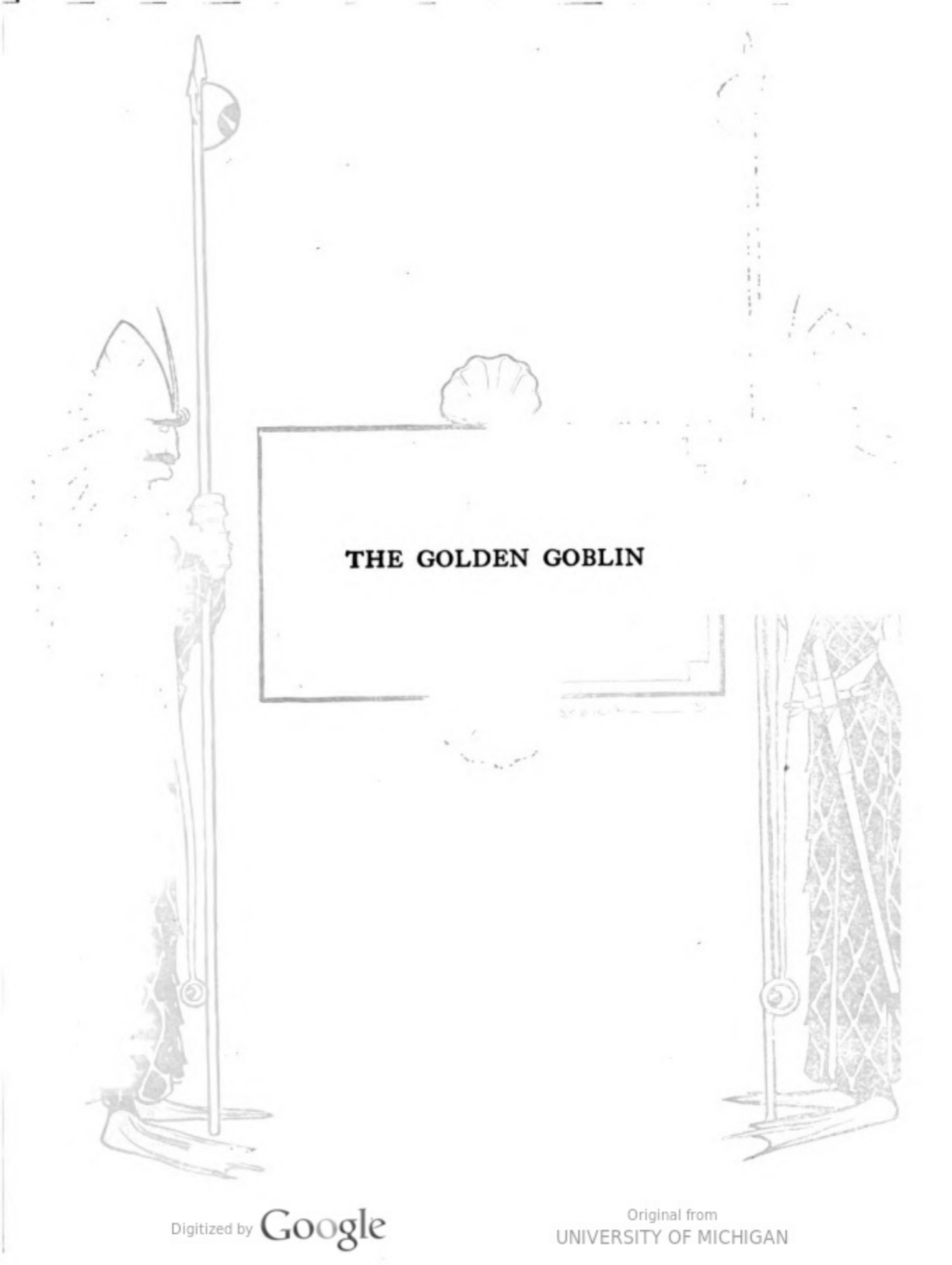

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Jan bowed low and Gurtruida made a deep curtsey. *See Page 64*

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THE GOLDEN GOBLIN

or The Flying Dutchman, Junior

A pleasant fantasy for children based on the most fascinating of all undying legends

TOLD IN PROSE AND VERSE

By

CURTIS DUNHAM

Author of TWO IN A ZOO

AND

IN PICTURES

By

GEORGE F. KERR

INDIANAPOLIS
THE BOBBS-MERRILL COMPANY
PUBLISHERS

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TO ALL manly little boys who are gentle and protecting in their attitude toward little girls; to all womanly little girls who encourage such little boys with their trustful friendship and sympathy; to all little boys and little girls who believe in the kind of enchantment that rewards good thoughts and kind deeds; and to all the happy fathers and mothers, uncles and aunts, grandfathers and grandmothers of such little boys and little girls, these adventures of Jan and Gurtruida are dedicated by their friends, the author and the illustrator.

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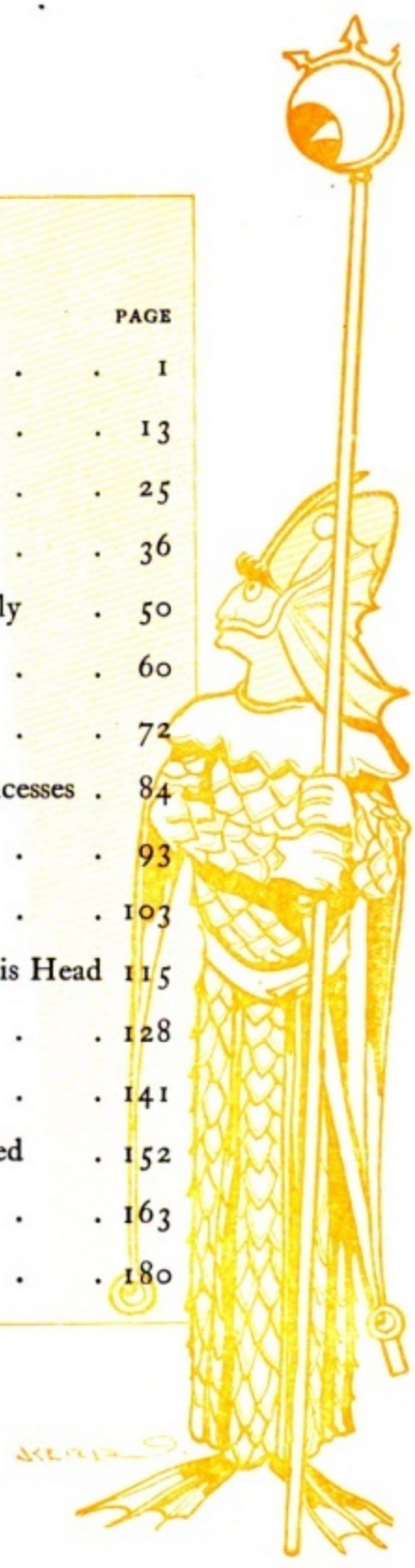

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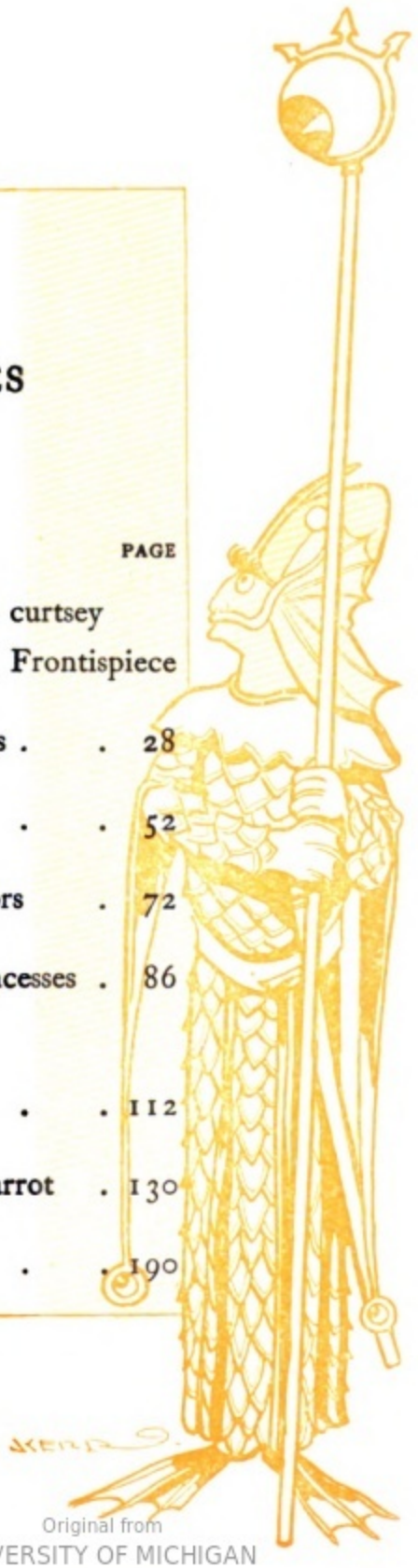

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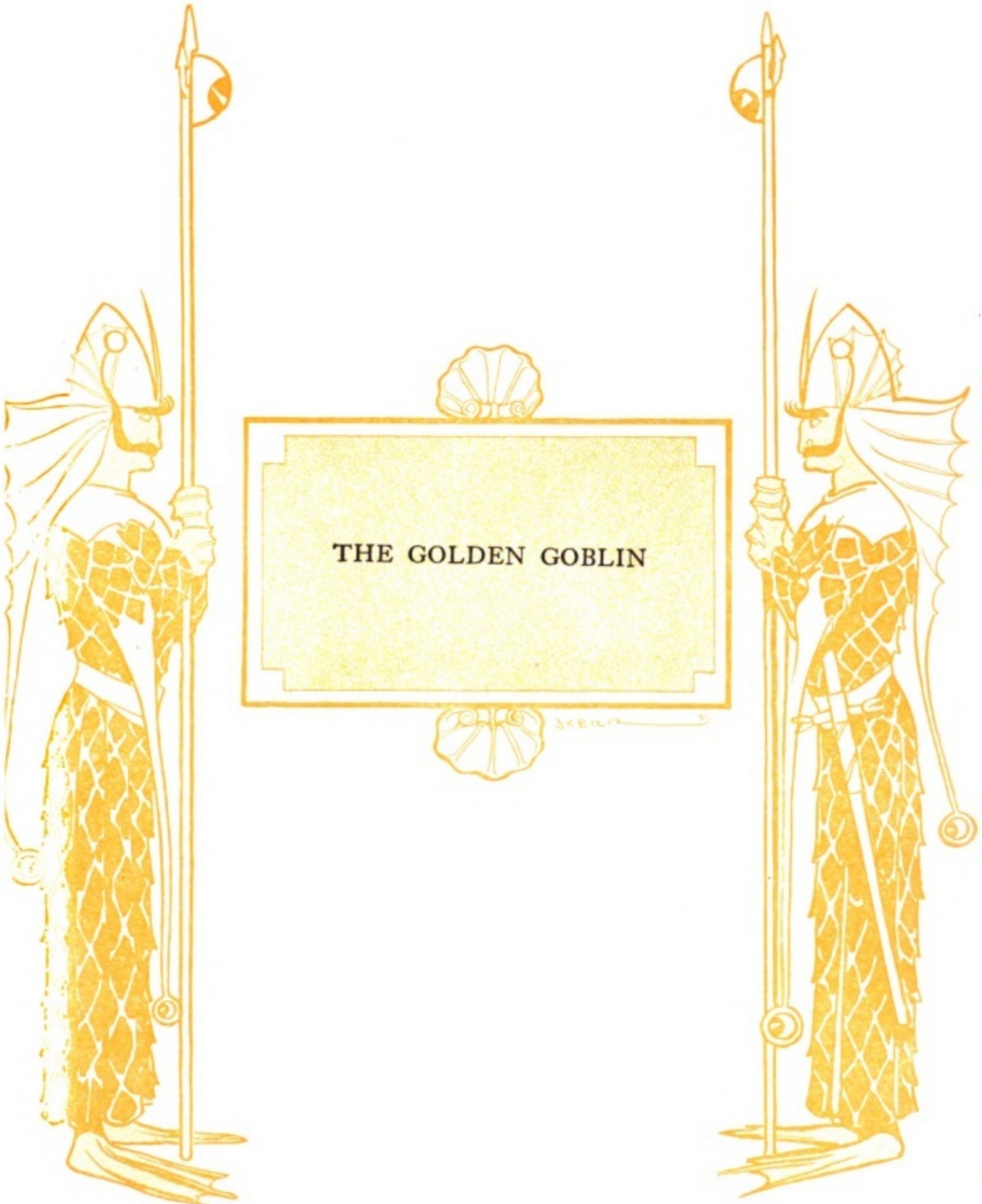

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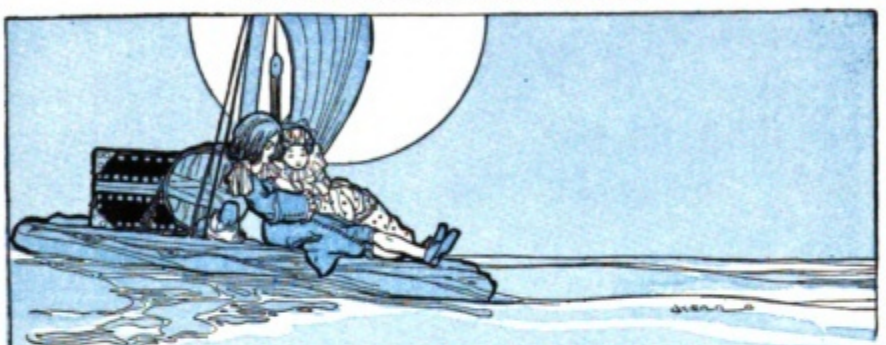
THE GOLDEN GOBLIN

CHAPTER I

MASTER SPRAY'S PROPHECY



ON the second night after the wreck of the Dutch barque, *Wilhelmina*, the bosom of the South Indian Ocean lay calm and silvery in the radiance of a full moon and countless stars. The breeze that came from the west was so gentle that only now and then did the blue of a wave-crest change into foaming white. The long swells, rising and falling, were like a cradle rocked by a kindly hand to invite sweet slumber. Indeed, as though

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this were the kindly mission of these waves a thousand miles from any land, two who were little more than children slept as peacefully on their raft of ship's spars as they would have done in their beds at home.

They were a girl and a boy. Both were fair, with round cheeks and shapely limbs, and both had yellow hair. His thick and waving locks fell upon the collar of his velvet-skirted coat, but her golden ringlets were confined by the quaint little Dutch cap, which, as they slumbered, rested on his shoulder as he leaned partly against a water-cask at the foot of the raft's short mast. His broad-brimmed, tall, black hat lay by his side. He wore black satin knee-breeches with white stockings, and his square-toed shoes were fastened with silver buckles.

She was dressed in a bodice and skirt of figured silk, with an old-fashioned ruff at her neck. The skirt reached barely to her ankles. Upon her little feet were slippers of buff

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leather. If there were any other articles of clothing upon the raft they must have been in the two square boxes with wrought brass trimmings and locks which stood near the mast. The air was so balmy under this southern sky that no outer wraps were needed.

Presently the girl stirred in her sleep, and soon her eyes opened. She sat up and rubbed her eyes, looking about as though frightened. Then she gazed upon the face of the sleeping youth, patted his cheek softly and smiled. His head seemed to rest uneasily against the mast; she raised herself and drew it down upon her shoulder, smoothing back strands of hair from his forehead. The youth breathed more deeply and evenly, and stretched out his limbs restfully. The girl heaved a sigh of contentment and fixed her gaze wonderingly upon the spangled heavens.

Strange thoughts came to her. The moon and the stars seemed so near and so friendly. The Southern Cross blazed down upon her as

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though to assure her that in all this vast waste of ocean and sky there was one fixed object upon which her eyes could rest in confidence that all ere long would be well.

The western breeze was freshening. She saw white crests pursuing each other, and in the moonlight they assumed the oddest shapes. Some were like ships in miniature; others seemed to be flocks of huge white birds barely resting on the surface of the ocean; yet others were like woolly lambs, greatly magnified, gamboling merrily. Forgetful of the sleeping youth whose head was on her shoulder she exclaimed:

"Oh, how charming!"

"Gurtruida," said her companion, raising his head, "did you call me? Do you see a sail?"

"Dear Jan," she answered conscience-smitten, "it was so forgetful of me! I did not mean to awaken you. Poor Jan, how tired you must be! I am rested. Come, put your head on my shoulder and sleep again."

Jan yawned and sat up straight.

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"I never felt finer in my life, Gurtruida. I've slept like a log. My! what a lovely night! Did you ever see such a moon, and such stars? And look at the waves! Look! There's a whole flock of lambs jumping about and challenging each other, just as they do at home in Holland!"

"Yes, Jan. They made me laugh, and that is what wakened you."

"Look, Gurtruida! And there is their shepherd. See! on the next wave—with his woolly white cloak and his blue leggings. But what a funny fellow! There he goes, head over heels!"

Gurtruida clapped her hands in delight. Every moment the odd figure grew more distinct, and its antics more laughable. It waved its long arms and turned a series of cart-wheels which brought it within a few yards of the raft. Then it stood upright and seemed to be gazing in wonder at the spectacle of two children on a frail raft in mid-ocean. But the outlines of his features were vague, because of the bits of

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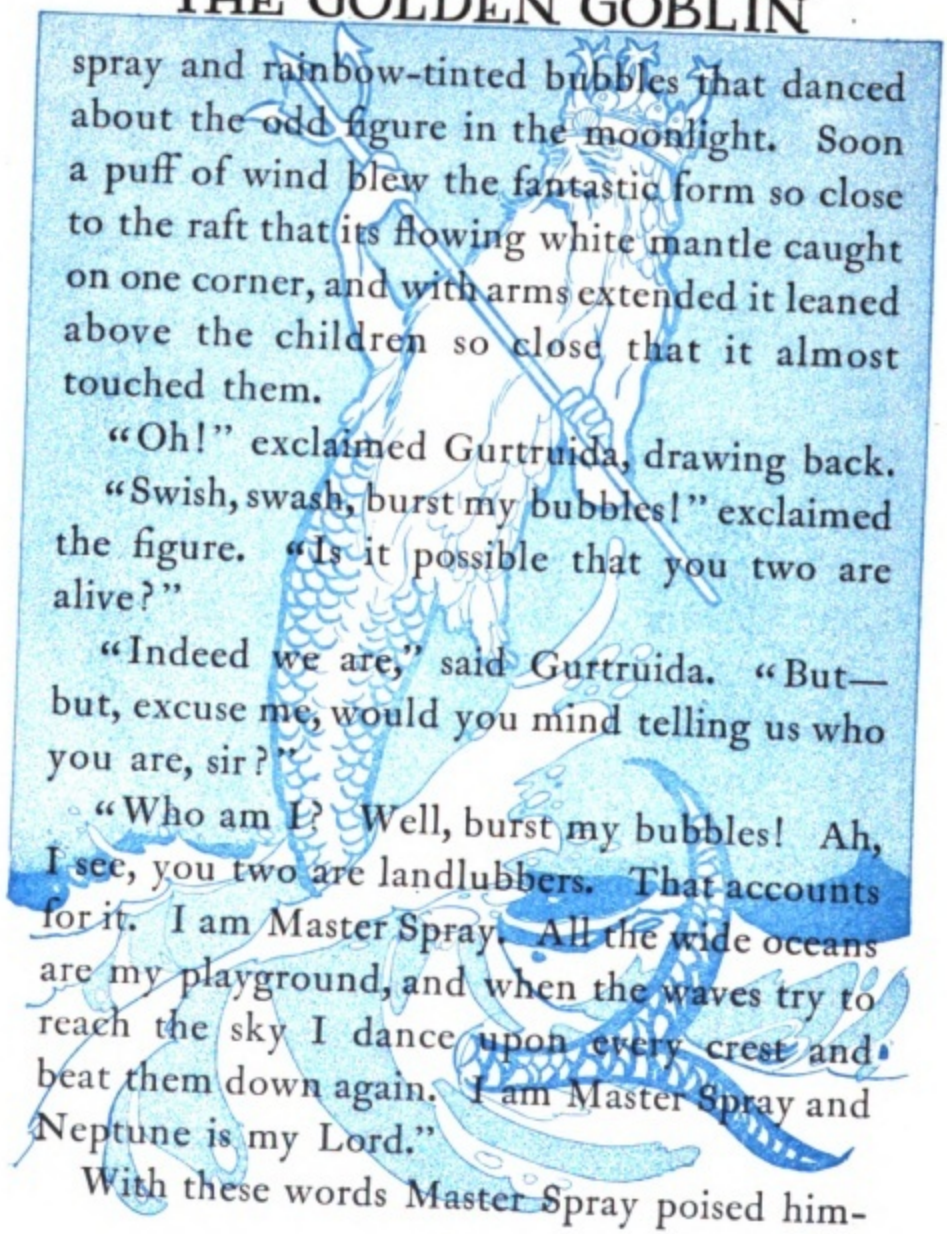

spray and rainbow-tinted bubbles that danced about the odd figure in the moonlight. Soon a puff of wind blew the fantastic form so close to the raft that its flowing white mantle caught on one corner, and with arms extended it leaned above the children so close that it almost touched them.

"Oh!" exclaimed Gurtruida, drawing back.

"Swish, swash, burst my bubbles!" exclaimed the figure. "Is it possible that you two are alive?"

"Indeed we are," said Gurtruida. "But—but, excuse me, would you mind telling us who you are, sir?"

"Who am I? Well, burst my bubbles! Ah, I see, you two are landlubbers. That accounts for it. I am Master Spray. All the wide oceans are my playground, and when the waves try to reach the sky I dance upon every crest and beat them down again. I am Master Spray and Neptune is my Lord."

With these words Master Spray poised him-

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self airily on the green top of a billow and sang a song with great spirit, in a deep barytone voice.

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MASTER SPRAY'S SONG

The tumbling tops of the sea, ho-ho!
And their lusty love, the wind,
Gave life to me in the long ago
When the seas were unconfined.
When the seas were unconfined, ho-ho!
And the land lay deep below,
No craggy shore could say me no,
For the land lay deep below, ho-ho!
For the land lay deep below!

I followed fast in the track, ho-ho!
Of the westward blazing sun,
Or met in the east the rosy glow
Of another day begun.
Of another day begun, ho-ho!
In that joyous long ago.
And never a shore to say me no,
For the land lay deep below, ho-ho!
For the land lay deep below!

Such monsters made my sport, ho-ho!
When the world was one great sea,
From out the deeps they came to show
Their terrible shapes to me.
Their terrible shapes to me, ho-ho!
Were an excellent joke, you know—
With never a shore to say me no,
For the land lay deep below, ho-ho!
For the land lay deep below!

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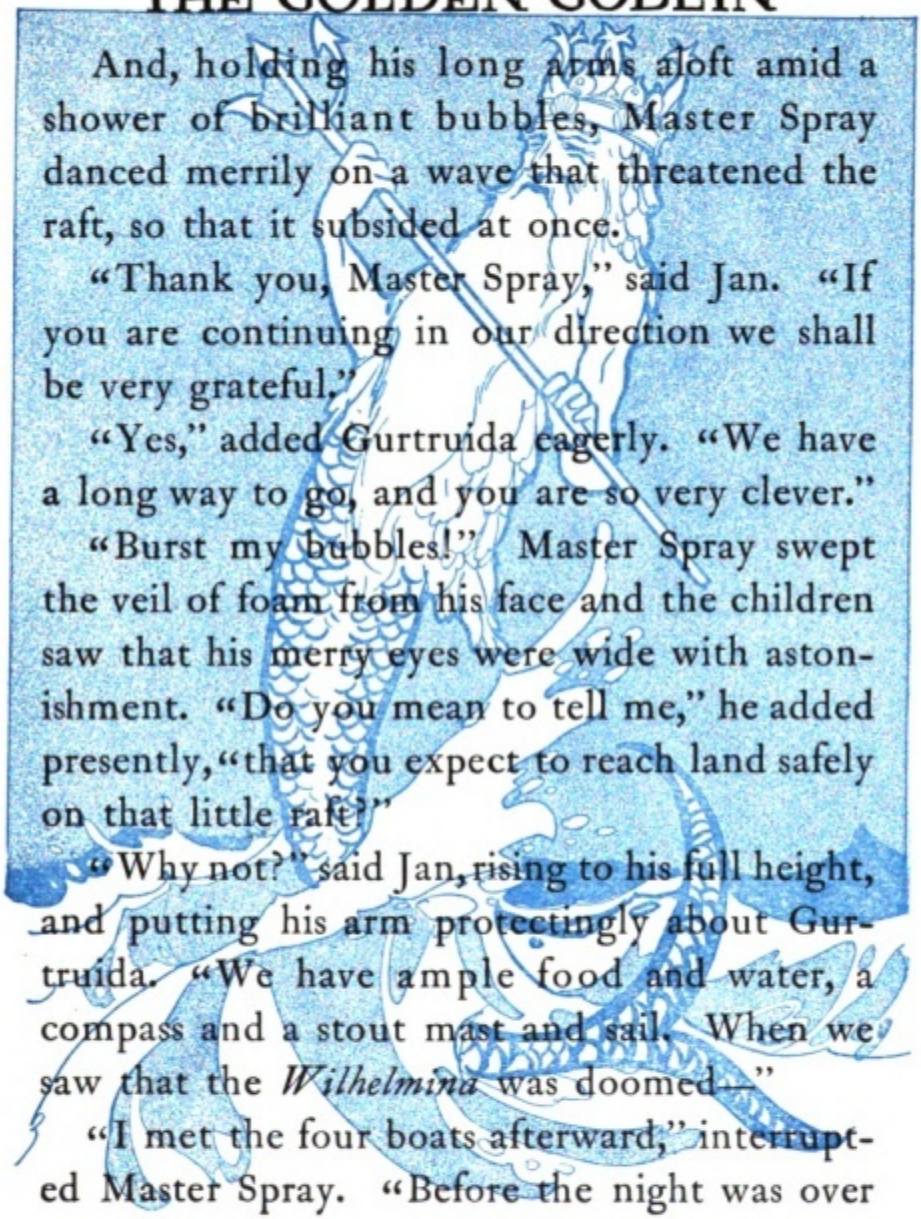

And, holding his long arms aloft amid a shower of brilliant bubbles, Master Spray danced merrily on a wave that threatened the raft, so that it subsided at once.

"Thank you, Master Spray," said Jan. "If you are continuing in our direction we shall be very grateful."

"Yes," added Gurtruida eagerly. "We have a long way to go, and you are so very clever."

"Burst my bubbles!" Master Spray swept the veil of foam from his face and the children saw that his merry eyes were wide with astonishment. "Do you mean to tell me," he added presently, "that you expect to reach land safely on that little raft?"

"Why not?" said Jan, rising to his full height, and putting his arm protectingly about Gurtruida. "We have ample food and water, a compass and a stout mast and sail. When we saw that the *Wilhelmina* was doomed—"

"I met the four boats afterward," interrupted Master Spray. "Before the night was over

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all in them were picked up by a barque westward bound. There was room in the boats. Why did you not go in the boats, you foolish children?"

"It was impossible," said Gurtruida; "they insisted on separating us. They ordered dear Jan to go in one boat and me in another."

"We have never been separated since Gurtruida was as tall as my knee," declared Jan, "and we never shall be. So here we are, and we ask your kind assistance, sir."

For several moments Master Spray could only gaze upon the children and request his bubbles to explode, which they kept on doing with great brilliancy. Finally he said to Jan: "But suppose the little girl should die of fright?"

"Oh," answered Gurtruida quickly, "I am never afraid when I am with dear Jan."

"Burst my bubbles! And you, my fine fellow! Does your courage never fail you?"

"If it were not for Gurtruida, sir," answered

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Jan frankly, "I should be the most wretched coward in the world. But how could I be a coward before dear Gurtruida?"

Master Spray put his hands on his hips and his shoulders shook until the outlines of his figure could not be seen for the myriad bubbles that danced about him. At length he swept the foam from his face and said:

"Bravo, my children! I can not go with you, for I have other duties; but now and then our paths will cross. And as I have the gift of prophecy I shall reassure you at once. Before you see your distant home again you will have the most marvelous experiences that ever fell to the lot of human beings. Often you will seem to be in deadly danger, but fear not. Remember the prophecy of Master Spray: In the end you will return safe and happy to your home."

"Oh, thank you, Master Spray!" exclaimed Gurtruida impulsively. "We shall not forget, and we shall watch for you always."

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"At present," replied the fantastic figure, with a sweep of his hand toward the west, "you had best watch that sail over there. Lower your own sail so that the other may overtake you. For the present, farewell."

Gazing in the direction indicated by Master Spray, Jan and Gurtruida saw plainly in the moonlight the sails of a large vessel, and its bow was toward them. When they turned to bid Godspeed to their fantastic friend he was far away, speeding over the waves with his mantle of foam wide spread to the breeze.

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THE GOLDEN GOBLIN

CHAPTER II

JAN IS AFRAID HE'S AFRAID

JAN and Gurtruida looked in each other's eyes, and then both laughed. They were used to reading each other's thoughts.

"No," said Gurtruida, "it's not a dream. It would be miraculous if two persons dreamed the same dream at the same time."

"Master Spray called our attention to the ship," said Jan, pointing toward the western horizon, "and there she is. At least we are not dreaming now."

The ship had now approached so near that her hull was visible to the children on the raft. She

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had a queer, uncanny look. She had old-fashioned sails, which seemed ragged and patched and yet were white and glistening in the moonlight. The ancient hull, too, with the overhanging deck of its stern high above the amidship section, had a luminous gray color unlike that of any ship Gurtruida had seen before.

"What a strange-looking ship! Look, Jan! She's the very image of that old ship in the print that hangs in our uncle's library."

No answer came from Jan. Gurtruida turned and saw him standing with his back toward her. His shoulders were shaking. Gurtruida did not notice that his knees were knocking together, and she could not see that his face was as white as her kerchief.

"O, Jan, what are you laughing at?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Jan. With a great effort he stiffened his knees to keep them from knocking together; but his voice was far from mirthful.

"Jan, look at me!"

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He summoned the ghost of a smile to his pale face and turned toward her.

"O Jan, how pale you are! Poor Jan! has the motion of the raft at last made you seasick?"

"No, Gurtruida, I'm not seasick—but—oh, I'm so ashamed, Gurtruida—I'm—I'm afraid I'm afraid!"

"You're not afraid, Jan. You're the bravest boy in all the world. Don't *I* know?"

"You've seen my knees knock together," said Jan, hiding his face in his arms. "You'll never believe in me again. I may as well confess, Gurtruida; I'm not brave, I only pretend to be; really I'm a coward."

"You're not a coward, Jan. You're only startled at the sight of the phantom ship. The *Flying Dutchman* is enough to—"

"Oh," said Jan, so much relieved that the color came back to his cheeks, "oh, I'm so glad you know. I was afraid to tell you. But aren't you afraid, Gurtruida?"

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"How could I be afraid, Jan dear, when I'm with you?"

"Not even of that awful, ghostly vessel with her crew of specters, cursed by God two hundred and fifty years ago, and condemned for ever to be blown back upon the homeward passage? Of all the ghosts that ever haunted the world, Gurtruida, these are the most fearful. Think of him who commands the ship, Gurtruida—old Vanderdecken, who, when the winds at the Cape of Storms in 1653 opposed him on the voyage home to Amsterdam, defied his Maker and brought this doom upon the ship and all her crew. Think of being picked up by such a ship, of all the ships that sail the oceans. Think of sharing the fate of that spectral crew—to sail the ocean for ever on a ghostly ship in the company of ghosts. Now aren't you afraid, Gurtruida?"

"Why, Jan! *you* will be with me."

"So I shall!" said Jan heartily. "And now I am no longer afraid."

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"Besides, Jan dear, Master Spray prophesied that all would be well with us in the end."

"So he did," said Jan.

He leaned against the raft's short mast with his arm protectingly about Gurtruida's waist, while her head rested on his breast, and together they watched the ship that was fast overhauling them. Presently Jan looked at the compass he carried in his pocket and uttered an exclamation of surprise.

"What is it, Jan?" asked Gurtruida.

"Why, the *Flying Dutchman* is sailing due east. Her course is always westward, of course, to round the cape. This breeze is not strong enough to drive her back."

"The crew must have sighted us, and changed the ship's course in order to pick us up," said

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Gurtruida. "Men who would do that can not be so bad, Jan."

"No," said Jan, "that can not be. All the tales of sailors shipwrecked in this ocean agree that Vanderdecken always keeps the westward course except when the cape winds, obeying the curse, drive him back eastward. There is some other reason. Something extraordinary has happened."

The ship was now so near that they could see quite plainly figures on her deck. They looked gray and luminous like the sails. They moved about, gesticulating and pointing at the raft. One of them stood apart beside the rail on the high poop-deck near the stern. He was inspecting the raft through a telescope. Presently, when he dropped the glass, Jan gave a long whistle of surprise.

"I told you something extraordinary had happened, Gurtruida. That is not Captain Vanderdecken with the telescope. Vanderdecken is tall and majestic in appearance."

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"Yes, I remember," said Gurtruida. "And if he were still in command he would allow no one else on the after-deck."

"Certainly not such a little, mean, villainous fellow as the one with the telescope. Look! he has a black patch over one eye."

Now, much to their surprise, the children could hear the tramp of sailors' big boots on the deck, and the voice of the man with the black patch and the telescope as he ordered them to lower a boat.

"They can not be ghosts," said Gurtruida. "Ghosts seldom talk, at least aloud; and when they move about their feet make no sound. It is very strange."

They could see a boat lowered. Four sailors jumped down into it, over the low rail of the vessel's waist, and rowed swiftly toward the raft. There was no doubt that it was a real boat, although it looked old and half-rotted. When it reached the side of the raft one of the rowers put out his hand and grasped one of the planks.

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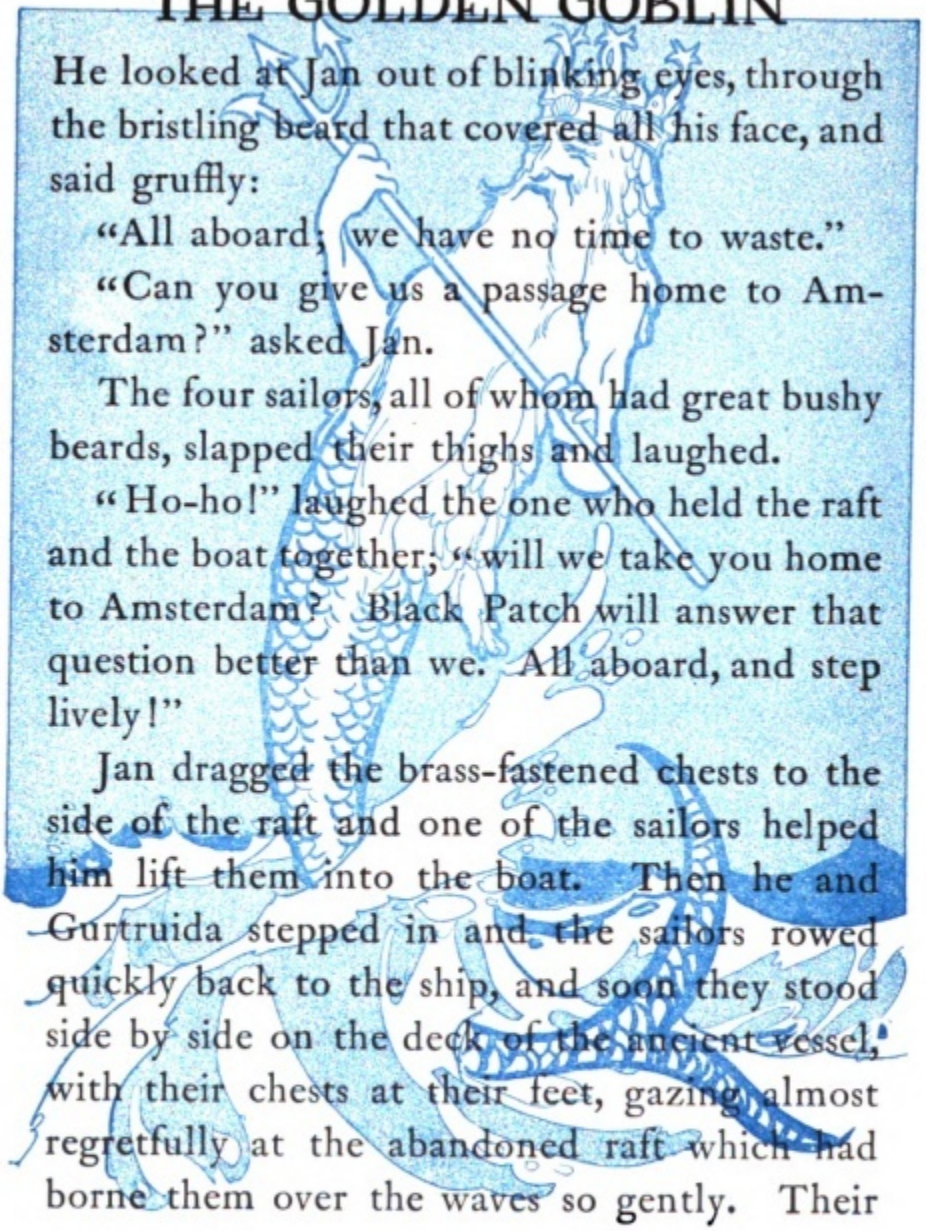

He looked at Jan out of blinking eyes, through the bristling beard that covered all his face, and said gruffly:

"All aboard; we have no time to waste."

"Can you give us a passage home to Amsterdam?" asked Jan.

The four sailors, all of whom had great bushy beards, slapped their thighs and laughed.

"Ho-ho!" laughed the one who held the raft and the boat together; "will we take you home to Amsterdam? Black Patch will answer that question better than we. All aboard, and step lively!"

Jan dragged the brass-fastened chests to the side of the raft and one of the sailors helped him lift them into the boat. Then he and Gurtruida stepped in and the sailors rowed quickly back to the ship, and soon they stood side by side on the deck of the ancient vessel, with their chests at their feet, gazing almost regretfully at the abandoned raft which had borne them over the waves so gently. Their

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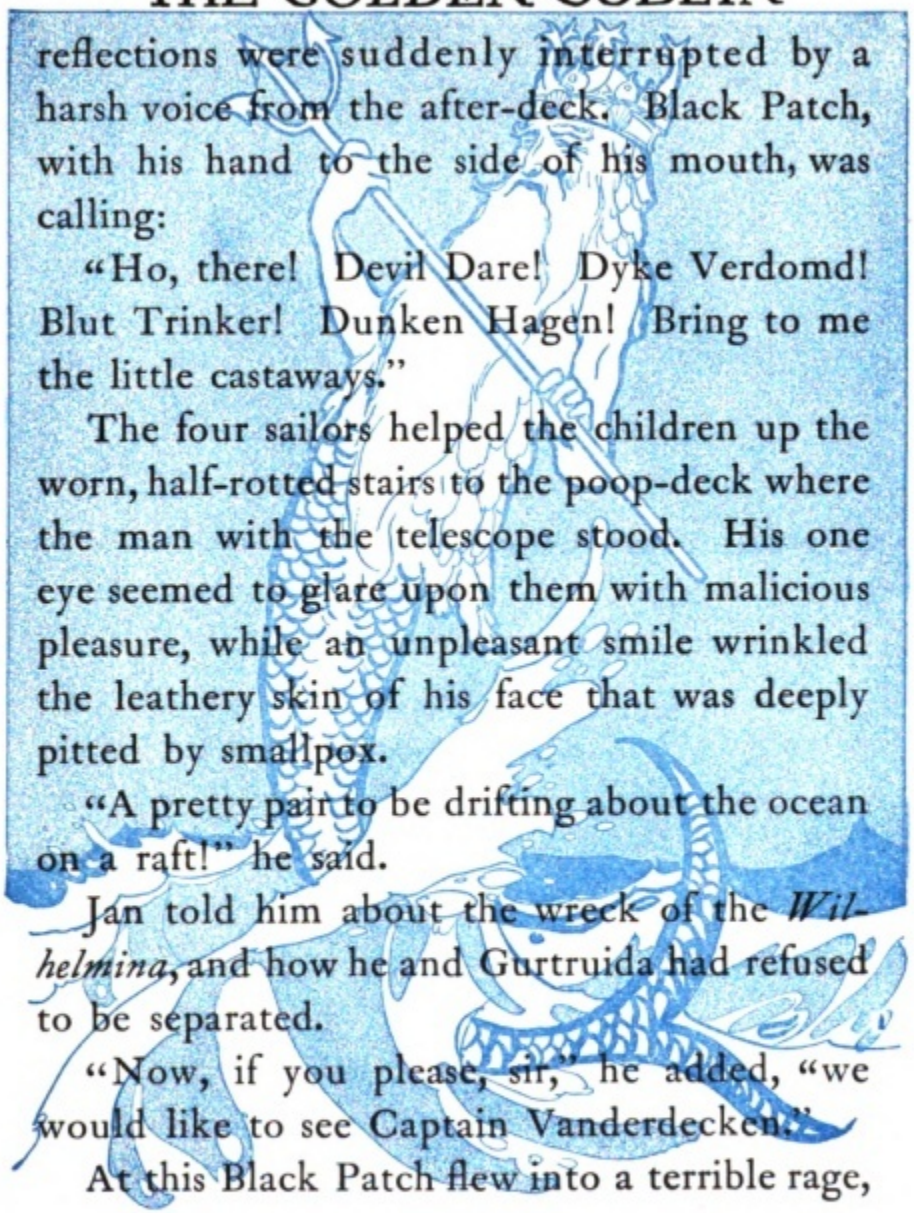

reflections were suddenly interrupted by a harsh voice from the after-deck. Black Patch, with his hand to the side of his mouth, was calling:

"Ho, there! Devil Dare! Dyke Verdomd! Blut Trinker! Dunken Hagen! Bring to me the little castaways."

The four sailors helped the children up the worn, half-rotted stairs to the poop-deck where the man with the telescope stood. His one eye seemed to glare upon them with malicious pleasure, while an unpleasant smile wrinkled the leathery skin of his face that was deeply pitted by smallpox.

"A pretty pair to be drifting about the ocean on a raft!" he said.

Jan told him about the wreck of the *Wilhelmina*, and how he and Gurtruida had refused to be separated.

"Now, if you please, sir," he added, "we would like to see Captain Vanderdecken."

At this Black Patch flew into a terrible rage,

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while the four sailors cast black looks upon the children.

"Vanderdecken!" screamed the ill-favored little man. "A double curse upon Vanderdecken. Two hundred and fifty years has Van-

derdecken tried and failed to return us to our homes in Holland. Vanderdecken is accursed!"

As he uttered these last words Black Patch, whose eyes were on the stairs leading up from the lower deck, turned pale and stepped back a pace. Jan and Gurtruida turned and saw

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an enormous green parrot, looking very aged and grave, hopping up the steps. The four sailors fell back as though in awe of the bird. The parrot strode to a clear space on the deck, cocked a solemn eye at Black Patch, and then, regarding the children gravely, croaked in a harsh voice:

"We're all accursed!"

Then the bird strode to the stairs, hopped down again and disappeared. Without a word the four sailors left the after-deck and began hoisting more sail. As they pulled at the ropes they shouted out this dismal chorus, never heard on board an honest ship:

THE FLYING DUTCHMAN SAILORS' CHORUS

Ye—eo, heave! Ye—eo!
Ye—eo! Ye—eo!
The ragged sail to the rotten mast
Ye—eo! Ye—eo!
No ship can sail with the wind that's past—
Ye—eo, heave! Ye—eo!
The rigging moans as a sick man groans,
We are merry mates of Davy Jones,
Bound for the port of dead men's bones—
Ye—eo, heave! Ye—eo!

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As the last gruff note of the chorus died away Jan and Gurtruida looked at each other and shuddered. They saw Black Patch shrug his shoulders, and then lift his telescope and gaze long and earnestly at the eastern horizon, just growing rosy with the coming dawn. After a while he turned to the children with a leer and said:

"In the cabin you will be comfortable. There you will find Vanderdecken—but he is no longer master of this ship."

Wonderingly Jan and Gurtruida left the deck and went in search of the strange being who, contrary to all the legends, could be deposed as captain of the *Flying Dutchman*.

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THE GOLDEN GOBLIN

CHAPTER III

THE MAN IN CHAINS

MIDWAY down the steps leading to the cabin of the *Flying Dutchman* the children stopped in delighted amazement. What they saw was enough to delight and amaze any one. Upon a carved oak table in the center of the room were heaps of dazzling gems, some pure white, others blood-red, many of exquisite green, blue and yellow tints, while all about the margin of the table were strings of great pearls. In every direction these jewels reflected the light from a single ancient oil lamp which swung above the table from the cross-beamed low ceiling. The lamp itself gave but a dim light; but the heaps of diamonds, rubies, emeralds and sap-

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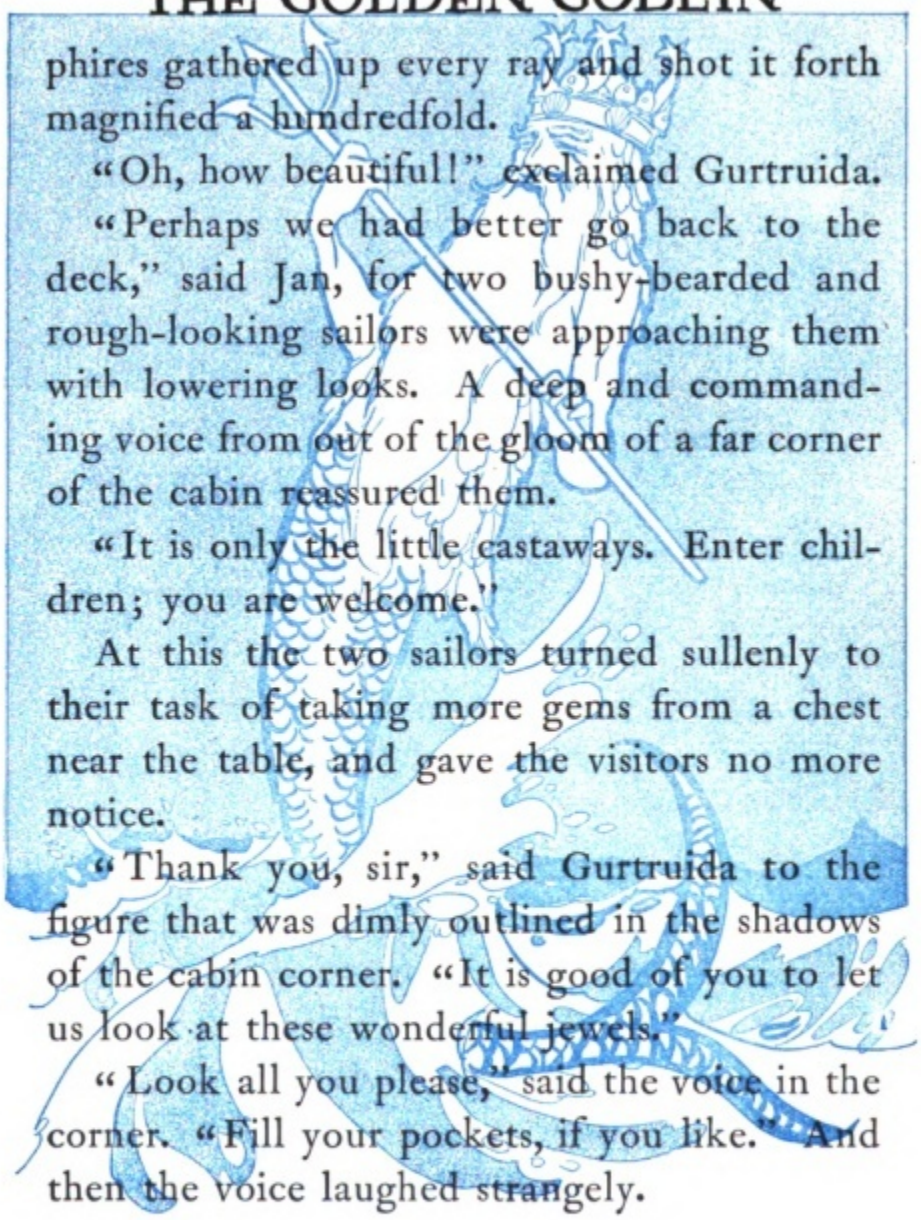

phires gathered up every ray and shot it forth magnified a hundredfold.

"Oh, how beautiful!" exclaimed Gurtruida.

"Perhaps we had better go back to the deck," said Jan, for two bushy-bearded and rough-looking sailors were approaching them with lowering looks. A deep and commanding voice from out of the gloom of a far corner of the cabin reassured them.

"It is only the little castaways. Enter children; you are welcome."

At this the two sailors turned sullenly to their task of taking more gems from a chest near the table, and gave the visitors no more notice.

"Thank you, sir," said Gurtruida to the figure that was dimly outlined in the shadows of the cabin corner. "It is good of you to let us look at these wonderful jewels."

"Look all you please," said the voice in the corner. "Fill your pockets, if you like." And then the voice laughed strangely.

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They went on emptying the chest of jewels. *Page 27*

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One of the sailors swore under his breath, but they went on emptying the chest of jewels till the stout oak table seemed to groan with its weight of priceless stones. Many of the stones were set in gold rings and bracelets of old-fashioned workmanship. There were necklaces, too, with enormous pendants of diamonds, pearls and rubies. There were gold cups filled with unset stones of all kinds, and antique medallions thickly incrusted with gems. The chest from which these dazzling jewels were being taken seemed to have no bottom.

As the children's eyes grew more accustomed to the shadows around the walls they saw other chests half emptied of their contents of richly-colored silk and velvet garments. These garments, all of a period long past, were spread upon the cushioned seat that ran along the side of the cabin. Some of them were embroidered in gold and silver, and others seemed to be made entirely of those metals. They were fashioned both for men and women.

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There were piles of silken hose of every imaginable hue; dainty, high-heeled slippers of white, red and buff leather, some having gold and others silver buckles; knee-breeches of white and black satin lay beside long, filmy skirts of pale pink and blue fabrics; there were piles of creamy lace, wide-brimmed black velvet hats with rich plumes, shawls and cloaks, and piles of linen and frilled white muslin under-garments.

As the children gazed in wonder at this array of gems and costumes of long ago the two sailors dragged from under the cabin stairs a large empty chest and a smaller one heavily bound with brass and with great brass locks. Into the former, one of the sailors began to pack a selection of the garments displayed on the long seat, while the other went to work filling the smaller chest with jewels from the table. As Jan and Gurtruida watched this operation they were presently startled by a harsh laugh from the far corner of the cabin.

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"Well, you are taking your time," said the voice. "Have you nearly finished, you robbers?"

The two sailors made no answer except to hasten with their task. In a few minutes they had filled the two chests and locked them securely. Then, without care or ceremony, they tumbled all the rest of the jewels and garments into the chests from which they had been taken, climbed up the cabin stairs and disappeared.

"Good riddance!" said the voice in the corner.

"Good riddance!" croaked another voice, so close behind Gurtruida that she seized Jan's hand in affright.

It was the great green parrot with the ancient and solemn visage which had greeted them so strangely on the deck. The parrot cocked one eye up at Jan and croaked harshly:

"We're all accursed!"

Then it hopped slowly into the corner whence the voice had come. The children's eyes were now so accustomed to the gloom of

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the cabin that they could see quite clearly, half reclining on the cushioned seat, a large, bearded man of majestic but very stern appearance. The parrot hopped up beside the man and he stroked its head, while gazing at Jan and Gurtruida, not unkindly.

"Are you Captain Vanderdecken?" asked Jan respectfully.

"Ha, ha!" laughed the man, and his mirth had a bitter note in it. "Aye, aye, Captain Vanderdecken I am, though at present not master. Come hither, lad."

Jan advanced to within a pace of where the

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man sat, with Gurtruida's hand tightly clasped in his own. Vanderdecken let his eyes rest upon the youthful faces, while a faint smile softened his stern features.

"I have heard your story," he said. "You are safe aboard my ship; rest easy. It is true that just now there is mutiny, but ere long the rascals will come to me on their knees."

He reflected for a moment and then asked:

"Did you observe the ship's course, lad?"

"Yes, Captain. It was dawn as we came aboard. The bowsprit pointed straight toward the rosiest point on the horizon. It seemed to me that the course was due east."

"You recognized my ship, and were not surprised?"

"I knew something must have happened on board, sir," Jan answered in a low voice.

Captain Vanderdecken's chin dropped on his breast. He seemed to be meditating on some other question.

"See how strong and hearty he looks,"

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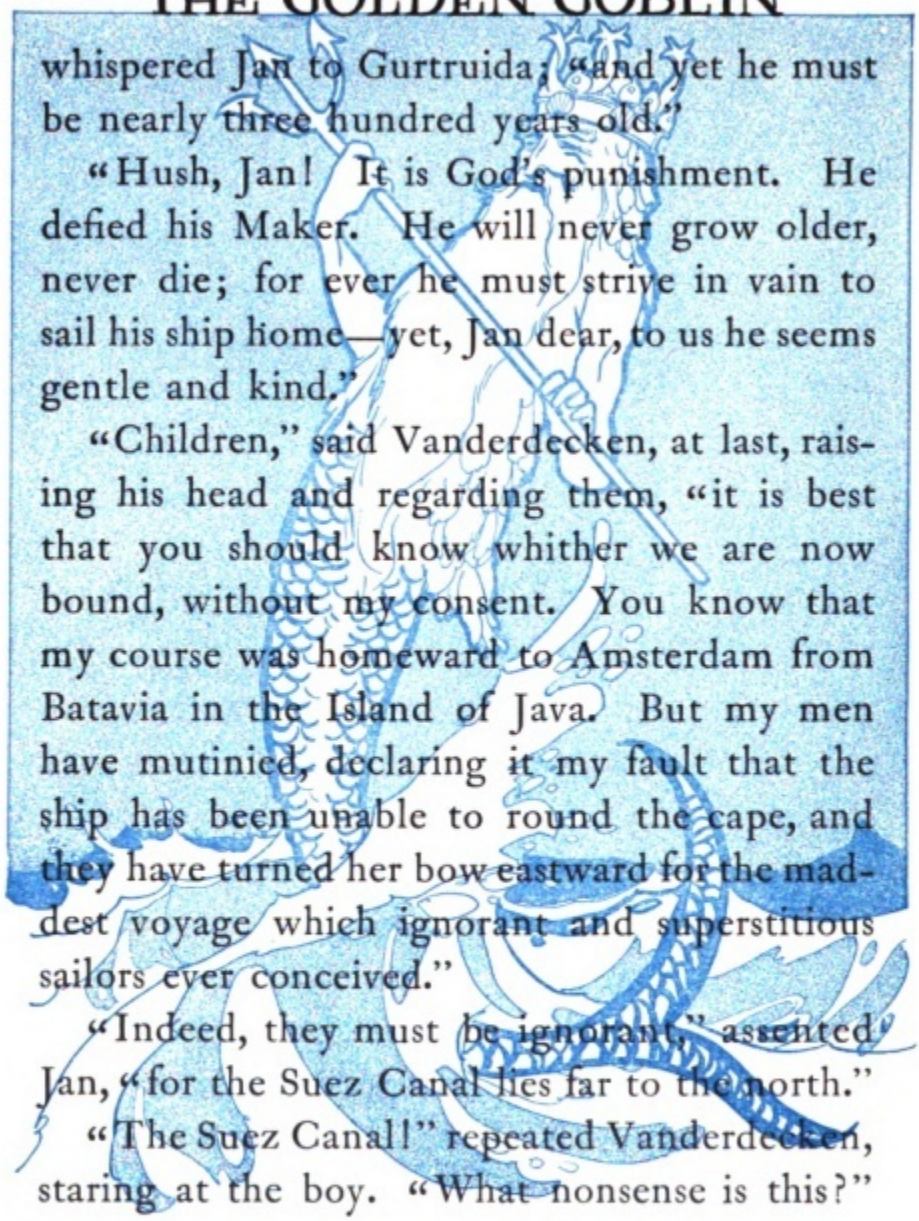

whispered Jan to Gurtruida; "and yet he must be nearly three hundred years old."

"Hush, Jan! It is God's punishment. He defied his Maker. He will never grow older, never die; for ever he must strive in vain to sail his ship home—yet, Jan dear, to us he seems gentle and kind."

"Children," said Vanderdecken, at last, raising his head and regarding them, "it is best that you should know whither we are now bound, without my consent. You know that my course was homeward to Amsterdam from Batavia in the Island of Java. But my men have mutinied, declaring it my fault that the ship has been unable to round the cape, and they have turned her bow eastward for the maddest voyage which ignorant and superstitious sailors ever conceived."

"Indeed, they must be ignorant," assented Jan, "for the Suez Canal lies far to the north."

"The Suez Canal!" repeated Vanderdecken, staring at the boy. "What nonsense is this?"

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"Why," said Jan in surprise, "through the canal of De Lesseps, which connects the Red Sea with the Mediterranean, is a much shorter route than around the cape. I—"

But, with a significant look, Gurtruida reminded Jan that the captain of the *Flying Dutchman* could know nothing of this great modern achievement. Jan hung his head, and Vanderdecken, after staring at him again, went on:

"This rascally crew of mine are fools enough to believe in enchantment. They have set the ship's course for the Enchanted Isle, where they believe the Golden Goblin's chimney emerges from the ocean's bottom into the outer world."

The children looked at each other in amazement. They had never heard of any "Golden Goblin." But Captain Vanderdecken was growing excited. He went on rapidly:

"This island lies at latitude 21:40 south, and longitude 83:20 east. We should reach it in a few hours. There is hardly room on it for

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the City of Amsterdam, but in its center there is the open crater of an extinct volcano, which these fools of sailors call the Golden Goblin's chimney. They expect to clamber down it into the palace of the Arch Enchanter, far below the sea, and Black Patch—the scoundrel!—expects him to enchant my ship so that it will sail quickly home, in return for the jewels and rich garments which I am carrying to their owners, Amsterdam merchants. Oh, the idiots! the scoundrels!"

Suddenly in his wrath Captain Vanderdecken rose to his feet and flung out his arms. There was a jangling of iron upon iron as he did so, and for the first time the children saw that long chains fastened to a ring in the ceiling and to his ankles and wrists, by manacles riveted fast, held him hopelessly a prisoner in the cabin of his own ship. At this sight Jan's eyes flashed.

"Tell me where to find a hammer and a chisel, sir," he said, "and it won't be long before you are master of your ship again!"

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But again Vanderdecken was reclining on the long seat.

"Thank you, my lad," he said. "It is not needful for me to risk embroiling you with these rascals. This mutiny is only a brief episode. Soon the scoundrels will be coming to me on their knees, and once again our course will be westward, toward home!"

The great green parrot had hopped to the top of the oak table. He flapped his wings three times and croaked:

"We're all accursed!"

At that moment Dunken Hagen and Blut Trinker came down the cabin stairs, doffed their hats, and, to the amazement of Jan and Gurtruida, bowed low to the two children. It was Dunken Hagen who spoke to them, and his tones were humbled, as though he stood in awe of the little castaways.

"Black Patch, the Master, begs that you will come on deck," he said.

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CHAPTER IV

THE GOLDEN GOBLIN'S CHIMNEY

"MY goodness!" whispered Gurtruida in Jan's ear; "how polite they are to us all of a sudden."

"I'm glad for your sake," answered Jan. "Come, we must not keep Black Patch waiting."

When they emerged upon the lower deck they saw the whole crew assembled in two rows at the foot of the stairs leading to the poop-deck, where Black Patch stood awaiting them. The sailors stood with their caps in their hands. As the children passed between the two lines to the foot of the stairs the sailors lifted their eyes humbly, casting admiring glances at them. Black Patch, with a smirk on his face that made him more villainous-looking than ever, met them at the top of the stairs. He, too, held his cap in his hand.

The sailors now gathered at the foot of the

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stairs and gave three cheers in the Dutch language. The children looked at Black Patch with questioning wonder in their eyes.

"You must excuse me," said the leader of the mutineers; "at first I did not realize who you were. Is there anything I can do to make you more comfortable?"

"I—I don't understand," stammered Jan.

"Don't try to deceive *me*," said Black Patch, laughing slyly. "You are godchildren of her Majesty the Queen of the Sea."

Gurtruida, who was very quick-witted, nudged Jan. As usual, he divined her meaning, and answered the villain with just the right amount of surprise in his voice.

"Why, how did you learn? I didn't say anything about it, and I'm sure Gurtruida didn't."

Black Patch, still smiling slyly, drew them to the stern of the ship and pointed meaningly over the rail. Now both Jan and Gurtruida required all their self-restraint to repress exclamations of astonishment. Only a few

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yards back of the rudder of the *Flying Dutchman*, dancing blithely along in her wake, with sail spread to the fresh breeze, was the little raft that had borne them so safely and from which they had lately parted with so much regret. The top of the short mast seemed to nod at them, as much as to say:

"Be of good cheer, children, I am still with you."

"There!" exclaimed Black Patch triumphantly, "now you see how I came to recognize you. Your godmother, her Majesty the Queen of the Sea, has enchanted your raft so that it will follow you in proof of her watchfulness over you. I am glad, for now you can be of great use to us." And the villainous little man adjusted the patch over his eye, smiled again, showing his broken yellow teeth,

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and resumed his inspection of the eastern horizon through the telescope.

The children leaned over the rail, watching the raft and its nodding masthead.

"It must be true," said Gurtruida. "Our dear little raft could not keep up with this great ship unless it were enchanted."

"I wish I could believe that about her Majesty the Queen of the Sea," said Jan wistfully. "I'd rather be enchanted by her than by this ghostly old ship."

"Oh!" exclaimed Gurtruida. "Do you believe that we are enchanted, too?"

"Of course," answered Jan. "Every one knows that the *Flying Dutchman* is enchanted, and all aboard of her."

Just then some flying bits of sea-foam moistened their faces and they heard a familiar voice:

"Swish, swash, burst my bubbles!"

"Jan, Jan! It's Master Spray!" said Gurtruida in delight. "But where is he?"

Before she had finished speaking a huge

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green wave rose to the level of the ship's rail, its crest broke fantastically and Master Spray stood within a yard of them, with his woolly white mantle wide-spread and a thousand rainbow-hued bubbles bursting about his face.

"Oh, Master Spray, how good of you to remember us!" said Gurtruida.

"It was about time," said the merry fellow as he danced on top of a wave to keep it from rising and drenching the children. "I don't care about those fellows on the ship having their own way with you entirely. So I sent your raft after you to let them know that my mistress has taken a hand in this affair."

"Do you mean her Majesty the Queen of the Sea?" asked Jan.

"Of course. Swish, swash, burst my bubbles! Whom did you think I meant?"

"Then we really *are* enchanted!" said Gurtruida.

"You're doubly enchanted," said Master Spray, who turned a handspring so close to the

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ship's rail that a corner of his mantle struck Jan's shoulder. "You were enchanted from the very moment you first saw me, and the *Flying Dutchman's* enchantment was upon you as soon as you saw her sails. Tell me, do you hear the sailor's voices, and the sound of their boots on the deck?"

"Why, of course we do," said Jan in surprise.

Master Spray laughed and shook a thousand bright bubbles out of his mantle. "Well, you wouldn't if you were not enchanted," he said. "They're ghosts, every one of them, and the ship is a ghost. If you don't mind my saying it, you're ghosts, too—for the present."

The children grasped each other's hands and gasped a little. They did not know that, grouped at a little distance behind them, listening, and even more impressed than themselves, were Black Patch and his mutinous crew. One of the sailors was so awestruck with what they all saw and heard that he dropped on his knees and was stretching out his hands to them.

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"But it's all right," continued Master Spray. "You can consider yourselves very fortunate. Trust my mistress and me. *We'll* see you through in first-class shape. Before the sun is straight over your heads, if you look to the east, you'll see the Golden Goblin's chimney. That's where her Majesty is going to give you an audience to-night."

"To-night? This very night?" said Gurtruida eagerly.

"Yes," said Master Spray, gathering his mantle about him. "Her Majesty's social engagements in the most exclusive circles under the sea occupy most of her time during the day. You'll have to excuse me now. I promised Neptune a sea-foam shampoo, and he hates to be kept waiting."

With these words Master Spray turned a few cartwheels and went skipping off eastward from the top of one wave to another.

Gurtruida leaned her head on Jan's shoulder. "I feel just a little faint, Jan, dear," she said.

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Jan supported her with one arm. He saw that she looked white and frightened. He was a bit frightened himself, but the sight of Gurtruida's pale face made him feel all at once as brave as a lion.

"It will be all right, dear," he said. "Really, I am an awful coward, but just now I have a feeling that I can take you safely through anything."

"I—I think, perhaps it's because I'm not accustomed to so much enchantment, all at once, dear Jan," said Gurtruida with a faint smile. "I can't help thinking about home. Do you remember, Jan, dear, the song we used to sing out in the lane under the poplars? I think if we sang the dear old song once I should feel quite cheerful again."

Jan hummed reflectively for a moment, and then their childish voices united sweetly in the old song of their home in Holland.

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THE GOLDEN GOBLIN

JAN AND GURTRUIDA'S DUET

Swiftly darting dragon-flies,
Humming-birds and bees,
Where the golden sunshine lies
Beyond the poplar trees.
On the shady bank we lie
Through the drowsy noon,
Cruel how the moments fly!
Bedtime comes so soon!
Under the poplars, dreaming by day,
Blissfully idling the bright hours away;
Buttercups nodding at daisies serene,
Busy bees hastening nectar to glean—
Oh, cloud-ships, whither sailing?

Homeward comes the lowing herd,
Milkmaids' voices call;
Silent every bee and bird,
As evening shadows fall.
Down the poplar lane we go
Beside a lowing cow,
Weary when the sun is low—
Bedtime's welcome now!
Whispering poplars, friends of the night,
Luring to slumber and dreams of delight—
Odors of jasmine, violet and rose,
Heavenly cities where gates never close—
Oh, dream-ships, whither sailing?

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THE GOLDEN GOBLIN

The words and melody of the old song—which the children sang in the Dutch language—seemed to affect Black Patch and the sailors deeply. It reminded them, too, of their Holland homes and the friends whom they had not seen for so many, many years. In rough, yet not unmusical chorus, they repeated the last refrain, Jan and Gurtruida quickly joining with their clear young voices.

Suddenly, as the closing cadence died away, one of the sailors shouted:

"Avast, there! The Golden Goblin's chimney on the port bow!"

It was unnecessary for Black Patch to raise his telescope. The Enchanted Isle had come into plain view,—the low rim of its old crater, the sandy beach with its semicircle of huge rocks tumbling into the waves at one side, its scattering palms and grassy slopes. The sailors danced about the deck in their glee, but Black Patch presently threw down his telescope in a rage. Dyke Verdomd seized the glass, leveled

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it for a moment at the island, lowered it and announced to the sailors in consternation:

"Bad luck, mates! It must have been an earthquake. The whole rim of the old crater's caved in and stopped up the Golden Goblin's chimney."

Before the sailors could utter the complaints which mutinous sailors always make when anything goes wrong, Black Patch turned to the children and said, in a soft voice and with his cunning smile,

"Little ones, we have treated you well; now you can help us out of our difficulty if you will."

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"Anything possible we will do gladly," replied Jan with caution, for he distrusted the smirking villain.

"It is a very simple thing for you, my lad. You two have the protection of her Majesty the Queen of the Sea. We find ourselves in sudden need of her favor, also. We have heard that she is to give you an audience on the beach of yonder Enchanted Isle to-night, and we ask you to speak well of us and beg her Majesty to grant us the same boon."

"That she can not fail to do," returned Jan, "when she sees it is your ship which carries us safely to her."

Black Patch seemed embarrassed. He scratched his head and finally explained:

"Royal favor is very uncertain, my lad. I have reason to believe that her Majesty has a secret dislike for this ship and all aboard her. We want you to go first and plead our cause for us."

"Go on ahead of the *Flying Dutchman?*" said Jan. "But how?"

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Black Patch jerked his head toward the stern. "There is your ever-faithful raft. The power that causes it to follow will make it lead when you are upon it again."

Gurtruida touched Jan's arm and whispered, "Yes."

"We will do as you ask," said Jan.

Quickly the sailors brought the raft alongside and gently lowered the children upon it. It seemed to rise with pride on the waves to receive them.

"As we are enchanted," said Gurtruida, "we shall need no food nor water."

"That is true," answered Jan; "now I recall that not since we first met Master Spray has either of us thought of food or drink."

"Oh, but our chests!" exclaimed Gurtruida to Black Patch, who was leaning over the rail with a boat-hook in his hand about to shove the raft off. "We must have our best clothes. What will her Majesty think? When the *Wilhelmina* was wrecked we were wearing these

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old-fashioned things just for fun. We have beautiful new clothes in our chests."

"I will take good care of your chests," said Black Patch, who had his own reasons for wishing to retain some hold on the godchildren of the Queen of the Sea. "As for her Majesty, she is a bit old-fashioned herself and will be charmed to receive you as you are." And he gave the raft a push with the boat-hook that sent it bounding merrily over the waves far ahead of the *Flying Dutchman*.

Straight toward the shining beach of the Enchanted Isle flew the raft. The children looked back. The *Flying Dutchman* seemed to be standing still.

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CHAPTER V

DOMESTIC LIFE IN THE NEPTUNE FAMILY

IT was near the hour of midnight on the Enchanted Isle. The yellow sand of the beach glistened in the moonlight. There was just enough breeze from the west to send little wavelets chasing each other up the smooth and shining slope and to make them splash and gurgle gently among the rocks where a mountain gorge entered the sea. Upon these rocks sat twelve of the most beautiful mermaids imaginable. Their shoulders gleamed white between long strands of dark tresses which fell in profusion about them. Their gracefully rounded bodies from arm-pits to hips seemed to be clad in a close-fitting armor of silver

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scales. It may be presumed that they possessed the same fish-like lower extremities common to all properly constructed mermaids, though the green water in which they were immersed to the hips might have caused that to be a matter of doubt to any practical-minded mortal, if there had been any such wandering about the beach—which there was not.

Each of these twelve beautiful mermaids held a small mirror in her left hand and a comb of pearl in her right. They should have been combing their hair, all of them, by very special instruction of her Majesty, the Queen of the Sea, but instead they were swaying their lovely white shoulders in time to a plaintive refrain, whose words ran something like this:

SONG OF THE MOURNFUL MERMAIDS

Oh, dear! oh, dear! oh, dear!
Nothing to do but comb our hair,
Nothing but silver scales to wear,
Nothing but blue above is seen,
Nothing below but deep sea-green—
Oh, dear, oh, dear!

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THE GOLDEN GOBLIN

Why must the ocean be so wet?
Why can't the sun forget to set?
Why can't the moon come up in the west?
Why must the little birds go to rest?
Oh, dear, oh, dear!
What is the use of trying to sing?
What is the matter with everything?
What isn't fast is sure to be loose.
What is the use? What is the use?
Oh, dear, oh, dear!

When they had finished their lugubrious refrain the twelve beautiful mermaids continued to neglect their hair while they kept on sighing, "Oh, dear!" in the most discontented manner possible, until, suddenly, something happened to recall them to a sense of duty. Out just beyond the rock on which sat the loveliest of the beautiful mermaids, old Neptune, with his three-pronged spear in one hand, his long beard festooned with seaweed and his crown very much on one side, bobbed up out of the waves with no ceremony whatever. He seemed in a very bad humor. He shook his trident at the mermaids, upbraiding them in shrill tones:

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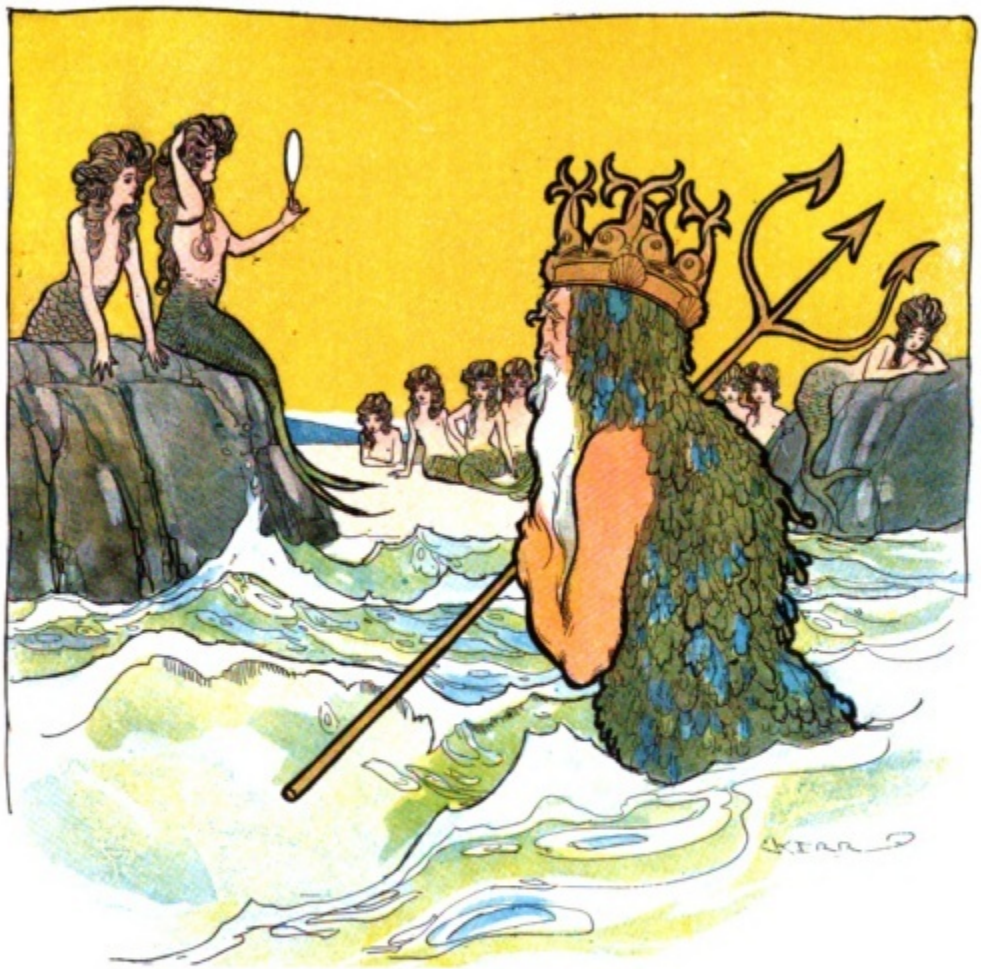

The beautiful mermaids and old Neptune. *Page 52*

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THE GOLDEN GOBLIN

"You needn't think I didn't see you, you idle minxes! What do you mean by sitting there and squawking, instead of combing your hair, by special order of the Queen?"

The mermaids were too frightened to make any reply in words. They lifted their hand-glasses and plunged the pearl combs into their tangled locks. Frantically they tugged away at the neglected snarls, while Neptune, still upbraiding them, waded on to the beach and began plucking the seaweed from his beard. He hopped about fussily, with his crown resting on one ear, and hardly stopped to catch his breath.

"Whatever is the matter with you girls I can't imagine. Am I not an indulgent parent? Haven't you a queen for a mother? Aren't you royal princesses, every one of you?—though you don't deserve to be. Aren't you blessed with the finest, most palatial, happiest and wettest home in all the watery world? What? Why don't you answer respectfully, Ethelinda?"

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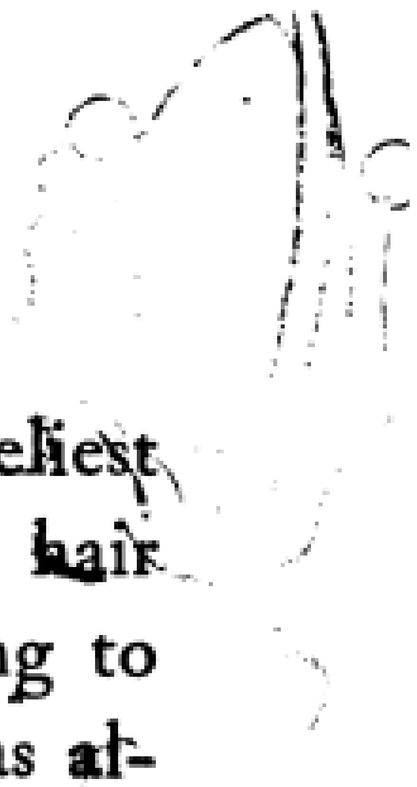

THE GOLDEN GOBLIN

"Yes, your Majesty," murmured the loveliest of the twelve beautiful mermaids, whose hair was the most tangled and who was trying to keep back the tears because the ocean was already salt enough.

"And you, Floralinda? Don't I provide you with everything that is good for a girl—and much more than you deserve?"

"Yes, your Majesty," answered the second loveliest.

"What have you to say, Amberlinda? Do I neglect anything suitable to one of your exalted station—thanks to the Queen and myself?"

"No, your Majesty," admitted the third loveliest of the twelve royal mermaids, between sobs, for the comb was hurting her terribly.

"Coralinda, and the rest of you, do you know of any other father who is more kind, thoughtful and indulgent than I am?"

"No, your Majesty," said the fourth loveliest in the same breath with all the other eight.

At this Neptune was about to look in Ethel-

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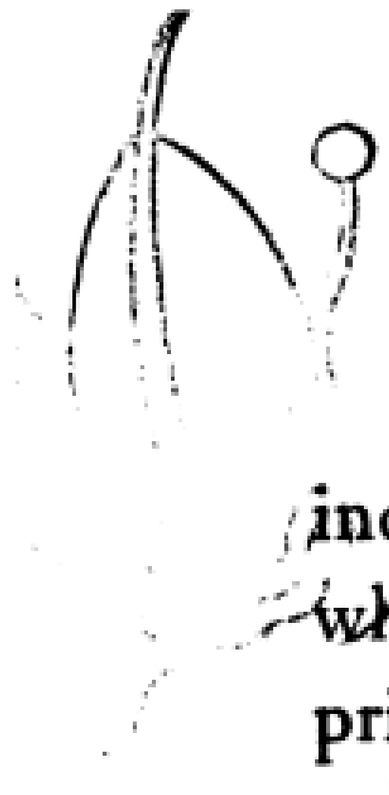

inda's glass to see if his crown was on straight, when he was amazed to hear all of the twelve princesses say with one voice:

"But, your Majesty!"—and then they stopped, frightened at their temerity.

"But? But? *But* to me, after all I've done for you!"—and Neptune danced about on the sand in such impatience that his crown slipped over and rested on the other ear. Suddenly he stood still, looked sternly at Ethelinda and said: "Speak, daughter. It shall not be said that I ever refused to listen to any moderate request made by the royal princesses."

"Your Majesty," said Princess Ethelinda, turning pale in the moonlight, "we are tired of swimming about like fishes. We want to have feet to run about on the sand with, and lovely long clinging gowns instead of scales."

When these words had fallen on his astonished and outraged ears, Neptune stood for a long time opening and closing his mouth and swallowing vainly at something which appeared

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to be several sizes too large for his rather shrunken and skinny throat. At length he dashed his crown down on the sand, jumped on it, and approached his beautiful daughters in the most remarkable tirade of his whole fussy life.

"What! do my ears deceive me? Here am I, weary and worn after a hard day of toil herding the whales and the porpoises—with my most reliable shepherd dogfish down with the mange, too—only to find my pampered and ungrateful daughters unappreciative of the greatest blessing ever vouchsafed to our race—fish-tails to swim with. By the great Sea Serpent, I had never dreamed of such ingratitude! How often have I heard the Queen say, 'Oh, Neppy, if I could only swim with the grace of our daughters!' Think of that! Your own mother knows the disadvantages of feet. She always knows when it is going to rain by the way her corns pain her. Only the other day she stubbed her toe on the Golden Goblin's door-

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step and came home with a terrible stone-bruise. What do *you* know of stone-bruises? How can *you* understand the agony of corns? Comb your hair, you idle, ungrateful minxes, and let me hear no more of this."

Puffing from resentment and lack of breath, Neptune picked up his crown, brushed off the sand, banged it on the back of his head, and stalked moodily up and down the beach. The twelve beautiful mermaid princesses, for the moment quite overcome, went on combing their hair with great energy.

And now, all in a moment, the sea along the beach began to gleam with a soft, opal-tinted radiance. At the spot where these tints were loveliest there presently rose a queenly figure, with a majestic beauty far greater than that of any one of the twelve royal mermaids. A splendid diadem was on her brow and a jeweled wand in her hand. She glided rather than walked to the shore, and stood on the sand, with Neptune, hardly two-thirds her height

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and a sorry figure by comparison, bobbing before her. The mermaids bowed so low that their flowing dark tresses swept the rocks on which they sat. The Queen of the Sea—for it was her Royal Highness—smiled graciously upon the princesses, who were now properly combed, and said to Neptune, her consort:

"Our time is somewhat limited; we shall proceed with the business before us."

She stretched forth the jeweled wand over the ocean to the west. Almost instantly the

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raft bearing Jan and Gurtruida—which had been strangely becalmed and motionless for some hours at the distance of a league from the Enchanted Isle—came into view, bounding swiftly over the waves, straight toward the beach, with Master Spray skipping merrily before it. Presently a wave which seemed to rise higher than the others, as though for that special purpose, cast the children and their raft on the sand, lightly and gently, right at the Queen's feet.

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CHAPTER VI

ON THE ENCHANTED ISLAND

JAN and Gurtruida were huddled in each other's arms with their hands over their eyes. Their hearts throbbed so, they found it impossible to utter the polite speeches they had framed in their minds, with which to address her Majesty, the Queen of the Sea. The Queen smiled and said:

"Why do you cover your eyes, children? I am your friend. Look at me quite fearlessly."

"Oh, your Majesty," faltered Gurtruida, "you are so beautiful and majestic, and the light that shines from you is so bright!"

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Instantly the radiance of the Queen's body diminished to a soft opalescent glow. The children opened their eyes and looked about them in wonder. The Queen stood silent and smiling until they should have become a little accustomed to their unusual surroundings.

"Your Majesty," said Jan, assisting Gurtruida to rise, "if you don't mind we will run about a bit on the sand to restore our courage. It is so long since we have set foot upon land."

"Certainly," said the Queen most affably. "You have the freedom of my isle."

Thereupon the Queen went and sat on one of the rocks near Ethelinda, the loveliest of the twelve beautiful royal mermaids. The rock was shaped like a throne, and the Queen looked very royal as she sat there, with Neptune, looking as dignified as it was possible for him to look, standing a little below her. The twelve beautiful mermaids sighed and seemed more mournful than ever as they watched these mortal children, hand in hand running along

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the beach. Presently they started again their dismal chorus:

"Oh, dear, oh, dear, oh, dear!
Nothing to do but comb our hair,
Nothing but silver scales to wear—"

"For goodness sake, be quiet!" broke in Neptune peevishly. "Do you suppose the Queen—"

"Patience, my daughters," said the Queen, laying her hand on Neptune's shoulder to calm him, "Perhaps I may have a pleasant surprise for you later."

As Jan and Gurtruida skipped happily down to the edge of the waves they saw Master Spray turning cartwheels on the top of a breaker that was just rolling in.

"Oh, Master Spray," cried Gurtruida, holding out her hands toward him, "you have been so kind to us! Do come on the beach and have a romp with us."

"What's that?" inquired Master Spray, bal-

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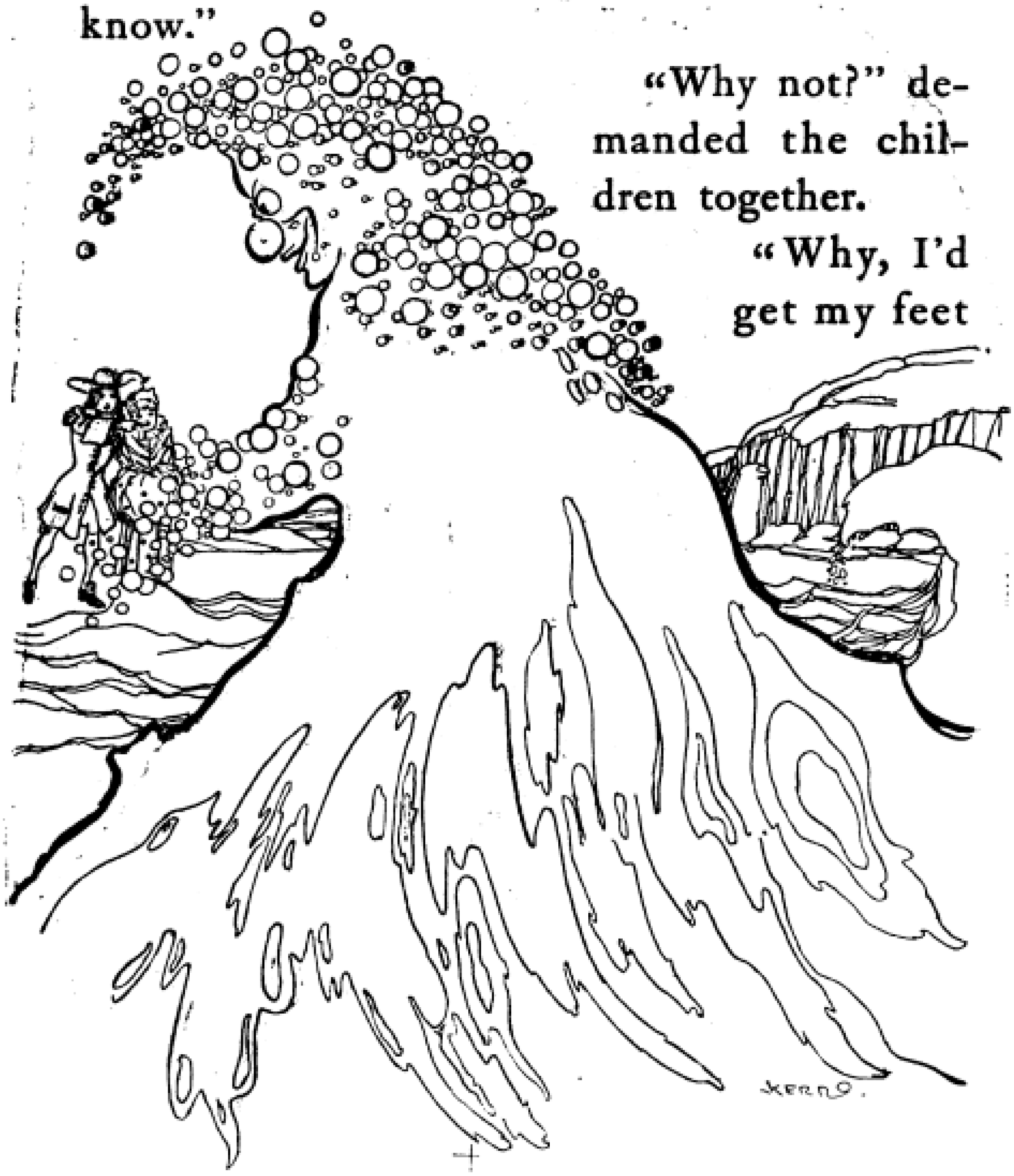
ancing himself on the breaker and looking very much astonished.

"Come and have a romp with us. It's lovely here on the sand."

"Well, burst my bubbles!" exclaimed the odd fellow. "I can't come on the beach, you know."



"Why not?" demanded the children together.

"Why, I'd get my feet

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dry," said Master Spray. "Once I let a breaker carry me up on the sand, and I got my feet dry and had a fearful cold."

As though alarmed at the very idea—which caused the children to laugh merrily—Master Spray skipped hastily out to the third breaker that was just forming and stood there shaking his head till a perfect rainbow of bubbles formed about him.

Now, having got the motion of the sea out of their legs, Jan and Gurtruida approached the Queen hand in hand, Jan bowing low and Gurtruida making a deep curtsey at every other step. The Queen turned to Neptune and said:

"Your Highness, these are the little castaways I told you about yesterday. They are two little mortals whom I have taken under my protection."

"You must understand that you are very fortunate to have her Majesty take an interest in you," said Neptune, looking patronizingly

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at the children and combing his long beard with his fingers.

"Yes, indeed," said Gurtruida, curtseying to Neptune.

"My dears," said the Queen, turning to the twelve beautiful royal mermaids, "these are mortal children whom I have invited to visit us."

Now, for the first time, Jan and Gurtruida observed the lovely forms on the rocks near the Queen.

"Oh, how beautiful you are!" said Gurtruida, stretching out her hands to them.

To the amazement of the children all the

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twelve princesses began to sway their bodies and moan:

"Oh, dear, oh, dear, oh, dear!
Nothing but silver scales to wear—"

"Stop it! Stop it!" screamed Neptune, wagging his head so that his crown barely held on by one ear.

"Silver scales?" repeated Gurtruida inquiringly. "Oh, your Majesty, can these beautiful creatures be mermaids, really and truly?"

"Yes," said the Queen, "they are the mermaid princesses."

"And precious ungrateful they are, too," said Neptune, wagging his crown on straight again.

"Oh, if we only had feet to run about on the sand with!" sighed Ethelinda.

"Oh, please, your Majesty," said Floralinda.

"Please, please," said Coralinda pleadingly.

"Please let us have feet," said Amberlinda. And all the twelve beautiful mermaids held out their lovely white arms to the Queen be-

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seechingly, paying no attention to the threatening gestures and grimaces of Neptune.

"Patience, my daughters, patience," said the Queen. And then she turned to the children.

"You must understand that I know of all that has befallen you, little ones. I have determined to befriend you, and now if you have any special requests to make, speak."

The Queen's glance rested upon Jan, and it was very kindly.

"Your Majesty is very gracious," said Jan, "and there are two favors we ask you to grant. Dear Gurtruida and I wish to be sent safely to our home in Holland, and we wish you to grant an audience to the master of the ship that picked us up."

"What ship is that?" asked the Queen, looking suddenly very stern.

"She is called the *Flying Dutchman*," said Jan.

At these words Neptune became so angry that he fairly frothed at the mouth. He jabbed

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at the air with his three-pronged spear and screamed:

"What right has the *Flying Dutchman* to be sailing eastward on my ocean? She should sail west, west, west!"

The Queen calmed him with a touch, and said:

"I do not approve of mutiny at all, least of all on board a ship; but I will grant your request and see this person." And she pointed her wand at Master Spray, who approached as near the throne as he could without getting his feet dry.

"Master Spray," commanded the Queen, "go forth and bring to me the ship called the *Flying Dutchman*."

Without stopping to perform any of his customary antics, Master Spray spread wide his mantle of foam and went bounding off to sea so rapidly that in a moment he was out of sight. The Queen, whose face was now like marble, and so severe in its majestic beauty

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that neither Jan nor Gurtruida could look upon it without a feeling of awe, kept her wand pointed out to sea, making with it now and then a beckoning motion. No one spoke. Even Neptune now appeared grave and dignified.

It seemed to the children that hardly a minute had elapsed before the *Flying Dutchman* appeared on the horizon. In another minute the sailors were visible on her deck, and in another they could be seen putting great chests into a boat and getting ready to lower it. Black Patch was directing their labors. The wind filled the *Flying Dutchman's* sails and she came so fast that the sailors themselves seemed to fear she would be dashed upon the rocks of the Enchanted Isle.

But presently the Queen lowered her jeweled wand and instantly the ship stopped with all her sails hanging limp. Jan and Gurtruida saw several of the sailors fall on their knees as though overcome by the miracle. But the next moment Black Patch was gesticulating madly

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and they were hastening to lower the boat. Into the boat Black Patch stepped first, and after him Devil Dare, Dunken Hagen, Blut Trinker and Dyke Verdomd. These four, while Black Patch steered, took oars and began to pull for the strip of beach at the foot of the rock-throne on which sat the Queen of the Sea. Watching the boat closely the Queen presently thrust forth the wand. The boat stopped at that instant, nor could all the efforts of the four sailors, tugging at the oars, move it an inch.

At this Black Patch flew into a terrible rage. In his passion he so far forgot himself as to stand on the helmsman's seat and shake his clenched hand at the Queen. Her Royal Highness lifted the jeweled wand quickly, and suddenly the boat with all it contained rose high in the air, surrounded by a rising torrent of foam, while the voices of the unfortunate sailors united in a dreadful shriek. Where the boat had been Jan and Gurtruida saw an enor-

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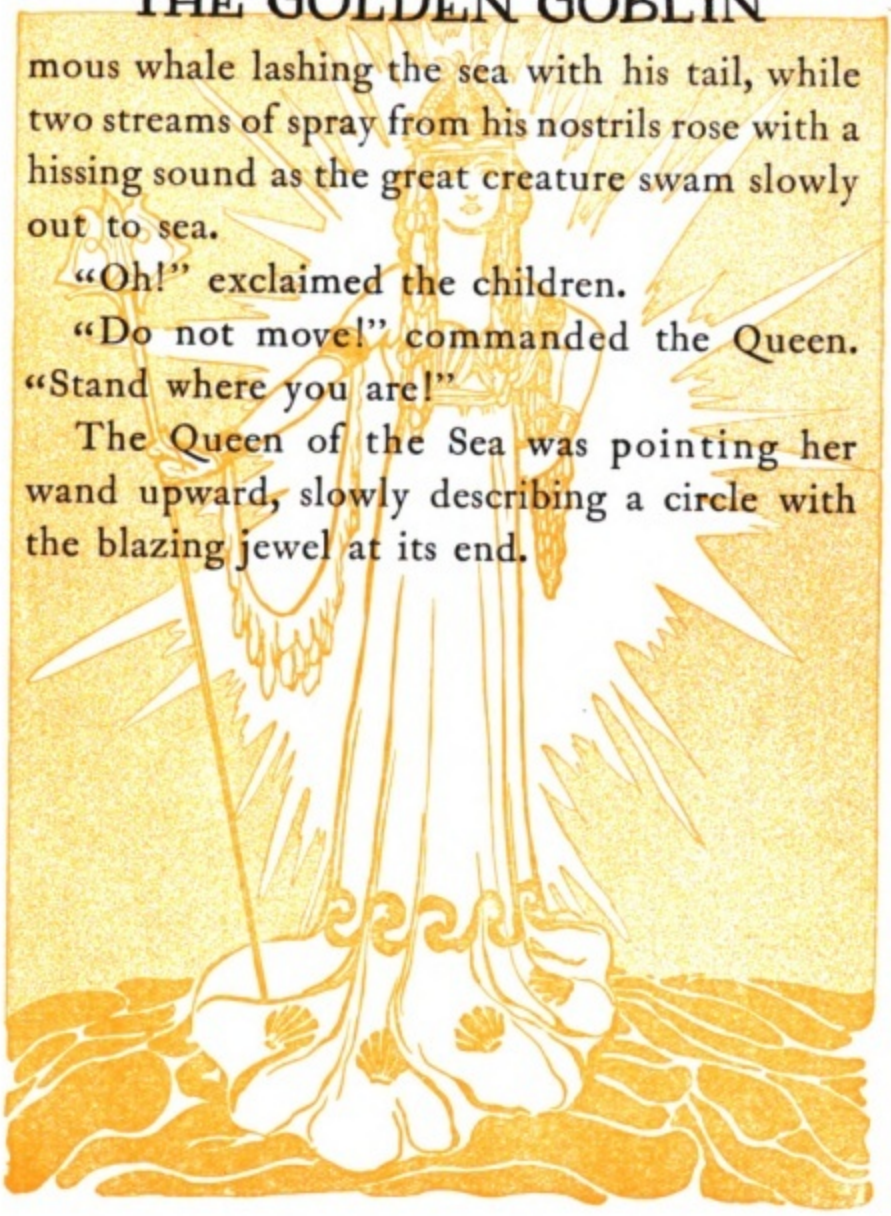
mous whale lashing the sea with his tail, while two streams of spray from his nostrils rose with a hissing sound as the great creature swam slowly out to sea.

"Oh!" exclaimed the children.

"Do not move!" commanded the Queen. "Stand where you are!"

The Queen of the Sea was pointing her wand upward, slowly describing a circle with the blazing jewel at its end.



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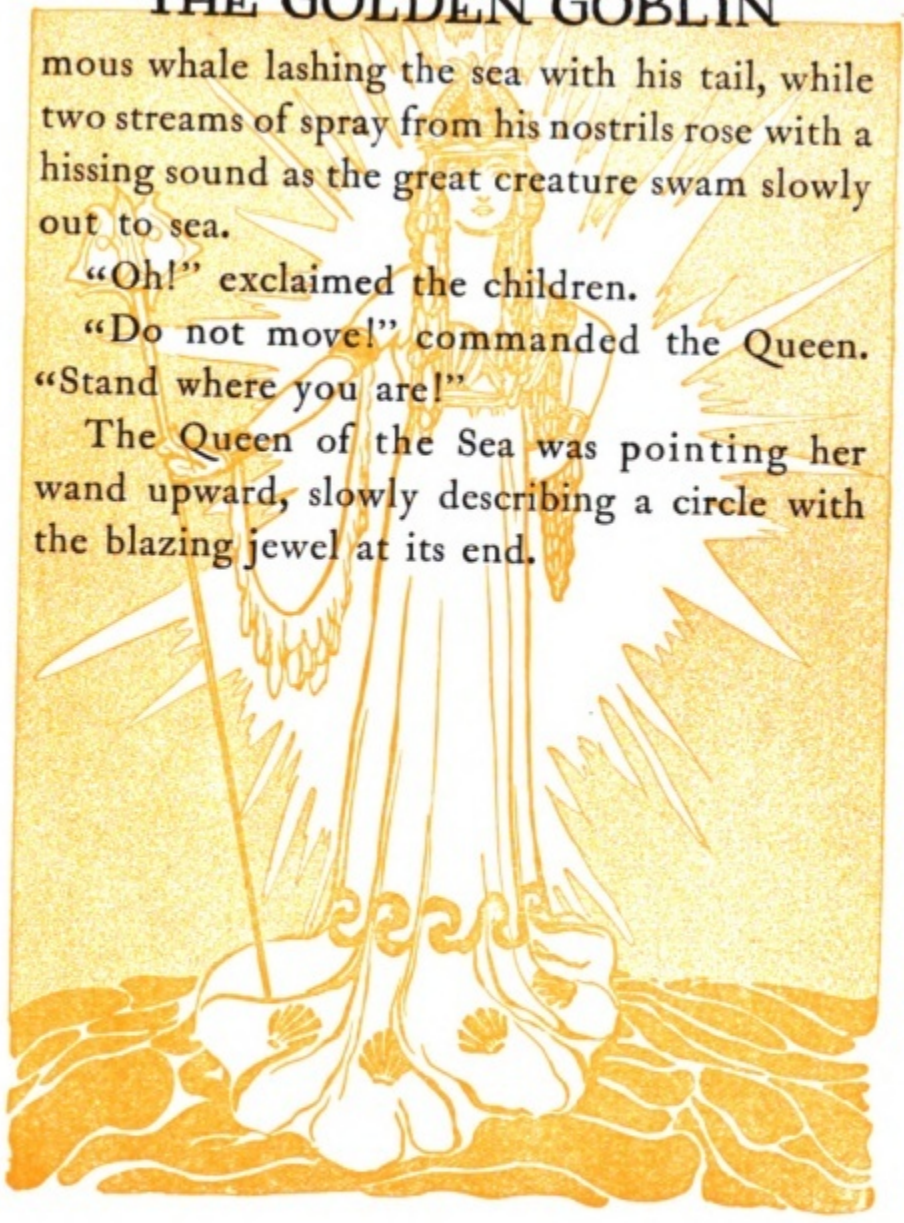

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CHAPTER VII

THE ANIMATED ANCHOR

PRESENTLY, while the Queen continued her motions with the jeweled wand, a boat dropped out of the sky, falling bottom upward on the sand near the water's edge. Next, from the same direction, fell two great chests, which landed right side up in perfect condition near the rocks on which sat the twelve beautiful mermaids. Then down came Black Patch and the four sailors sprawling on the sand in a semicircle directly in front of the throne, with a jar that left them gaping and speechless for several moments. With a stern glance at Black Patch the Queen said:

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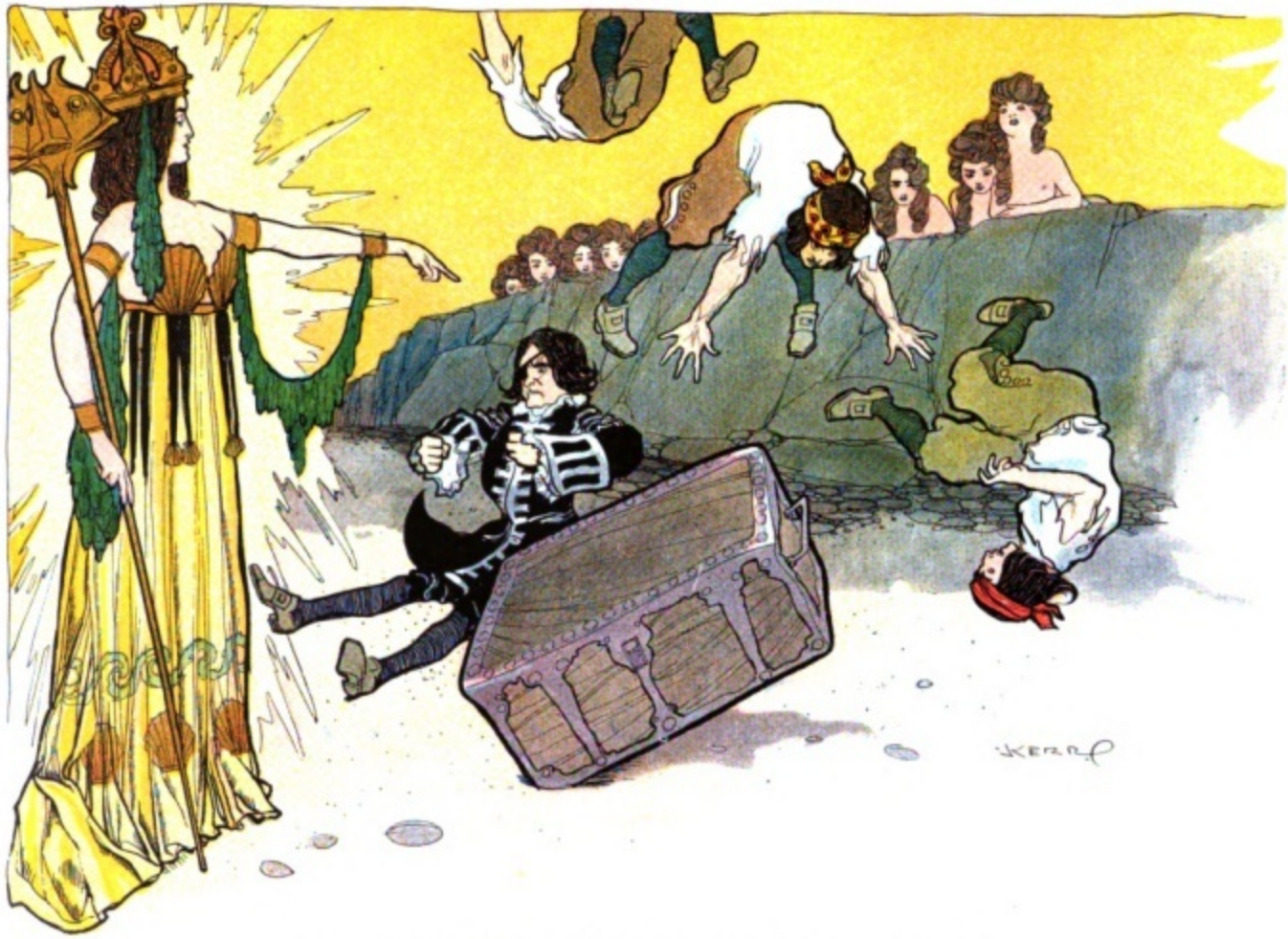

Down came Black Patch and the four sailors. *Page 72*

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"Who are you?" Her tones were severe.

"M-m-m-aster and four of the c-c-crew of the *F-f-flying D-dutchman*," muttered Black Patch through his chattering teeth.

"Ah, you are that despicable crew of mutineers," said the Queen, with a glance so severe that Black Patch and the four sailors writhed in terror. "How dare you approach my throne in this disrespectful and undignified manner?"

"Yes, how dare you?" blustered Neptune.

"It was wholly unintentional, your Majesty, I assure you," said Black Patch, looking about him in a dazed fashion. "I-I think there must have been an explosion."

"You are lucky to have your heads still on your shoulders," said the Queen. "Don't let it occur again."

With much earnestness, while he felt to see if any bones were broken, Black Patch assured the Queen that nothing of the kind should happen again with his consent.

"Enough," commanded the Queen haughtily.

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"I should say it was enough," agreed Neptune fussily. "I never saw such actions. Her Majesty is very much annoyed with you."

"Do not suppose that I am unacquainted with your record," said her Majesty; "yet there are certain details that have escaped me. Do you see that large iron ring in the sand in front of you?"

Black Patch looked where the Queen pointed. He saw the rusty circle of iron and tried to lift it, but could not.

"Dig," commanded the Queen; "all of you."

With their bare hands Black Patch and the four sailors dug the sand away from the ring, which was found to be rusted fast in the end of a huge bar of iron. After more digging they uncovered a rusty round shaft of iron forming a cross with the bar at a little distance from the ring.

"It is a ship's anchor," said Black Patch, brushing the perspiration from his brow.

"Dig!" commanded the Queen shortly.

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THE GOLDEN GOBLIN

Black Patch and the sailors went on digging until the whole of a good-sized ship's anchor lay revealed.

At either end of the cross-piece there was a rusty knob. There were two broad, flat flukes; but these, instead of being attached to the ends of a heavy, curved bar of iron, were like rusty boots on the feet of an iron man—for the bar of which the ring was the upper end had been split to form the two wide-spread ends terminating in the flukes. It was, indeed, a strange sort of anchor. The four sailors

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looked at it with mouths open, and presently Dunken Hagen exclaimed:

"Blast my toplights!"

"What!" shrieked Neptune, prodding the sailor with his trident; "what! profanity before her Majesty?"

"Speak!" commanded the Queen.

"Begging your Majesty's pardon," said Dunken Hagen, who had crawled behind Black Patch to escape Neptune's painful attentions, "this is the port anchor of the *Flying Dutchman* that we lost in a storm in the year 1609."

"That was the year before the Golden Goblin built his chimney," said the Queen, "and this sand was twenty fathoms under the waves."

"Speaking of the Golden Goblin's chimney, your Majesty," began Black Patch, "would you—"

"Silence!" said the Queen. "More about that matter, perhaps, when some points of your record have been cleared up." And the

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Queen made some strange passes with her jeweled wand above the rusty old anchor.

Jan and Gurtruida could hardly believe their eyes. One of the anchor's flukes was moving! It jerked convulsively and a joint like a knee appeared. Then the other fluke became afflicted with the same convulsive movements, resulting also in a knee-like joint. As the Queen went on making passes with her wand the convulsive tremors passed onward to the round cross-piece, in which joints like elbows appeared. The knobs at the ends flattened into something resembling hands. Now, strangest of all, the children and the open-mouthed sailors saw that the ring was not a ring at all, but a large rusty knob of iron which was growing every moment more like a human face. The face was presently writhing in ludicrous grimaces, the mouth opened, and,

"Ker-CHEW!"

The anchor gave such a tremendous sneeze that it sat up on the sand with two more joints

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for hips, while the thick coat of rust all over it fell into the form of draperies very much resembling the time-stained apparel of a most ancient mariner.

"Ker-CHEW!" The anchor sneezed again so forcibly that it bounced up on its flukes and stood facing Black Patch, who seemed half-scared out of his wits. All at once two eyes in the anchor's head opened and were fixed on the face of Black Patch. In an instant the rust on the anchor's head stood up straight like hair and its mouth emitted an ear-splitting shriek. The two arms were brought up over the eyes and the Animated Anchor stood trembling till its knees knocked together. The Queen stretched forth her wand toward the fantastic creature's lips and said:

"Calm yourself; speak."

The Animated Anchor, still shuddering somewhat, waved one arm as though to ward off any possible approach of Black Patch, and said in a hoarse and rusty voice:

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"They are ghosts, all of them. Spooks! I knew them on that ghostly ship. I was afraid, and buried myself in the sand at the bottom of the ocean. Oh, good Queen, bury me once more!"

"I will protect you," said the Queen. "Tell me why you have the greatest fear of the one with the patch over his eye."

"Oh," said the Animated Anchor, "bid him go from my sight. He is not a well-behaved ghost. He is not, and never was a respectable ghost, like his hard-working father and mother and brothers. He is the black sheep of the ghost family."

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"Ah," said the Queen, with evident interest, "that is just what I wished to know about. Be good enough to tell me the story of this wayward son of respectable ghosts."

In obedience to the Queen's command, while Black Patch cowered among his companions, and Jan and Gurtruida and the twelve beautiful mermaids listened eagerly, the Animated Anchor chanted the tale of the black sheep of the ghost family, in a roaring bass voice that was a trifle rusty at the edges, but otherwise quite satisfactory.

SONG OF THE ANIMATED ANCHOR

To a highly respectable ghost family,
With a record as clean as a spook's well can be,
A small ghost was born on a bleak winter's day
Who was destined to change all its pride to dismay.
From the very first hour of this baby-spook's life
Its home was a scene of contention and strife.
Propriety scorning,
It howled all the morning,
To the scandal of all the spook neighbors;
Kept papa-spook walking
To silence its squawking,
Though worn with his ghostly night's labors—
For honest spooks sleep, as you know, through the day,
And at nightfall must haste to their duties away.

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Thus at dusk, when they should have been fresh for their work,
Tired Mr. and Mrs. Spook often would shirk;
Or, sleepily stumbling dejectedly along,
Would waste the best hours and do everything wrong.
Choice victims awaking, instead of in fright
At the sight of such ghosts, would grin with delight—
For a ghost caught a-yawning
Ere daylight is dawning
Is a thing to be viewed with elation;
And a ghost who's detected,
Or even suspected,
Is a ghost who has missed his vocation.
All of which may occur, as you'll readily see,
When a black sheep is born in a ghost family.

Yet as he grew older this spooklet grew worse,
On the family fortunes he worked like a curse.
He hid the blue fire when his father was due
To prove in some graveyard that ghost-tales are true;
Placards irreverent he pinned on his mother,
And brazenly burlesqued the thrills of his brother.
Reproving was thankless,
All spooks being spankless—
Than air you're aware they're still thinner;
In the dark without measure
When locked he took pleasure—
And spooks don't mind missing their dinner.
But just retribution was coming his way,
Most sad is the fate of this black sheep to-day;
As a ghost he's a failure, at work or at play.

The ghostly and spook-like gestures with which the Animated Anchor accompanied this

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thrilling tale with its improving moral, and the meaning with which he pointed a rusty finger of one of his rusty hands at Black Patch upon its conclusion, were most impressive and convincing. Black Patch made no effort to deny its truth.

"Have you nothing to say in your own defense?" her Majesty asked severely.

"Your Royal Highness," whined Black Patch, "we are poor, unfortunate sailors and our case is hopeless without your aid. But we do not come empty-handed. We hope that in those chests yonder you will find some trifling gifts that will incline you to treat us with mercy."

At these words the twelve beautiful, but mournful mermaids brightened visibly.

"Oh, your Majesty," said Ethelinda, "do let us see what is in the chests."

"Yes, do, please do," said all the others in a chorus of appeal.

"There may be feet in them," said Flora-

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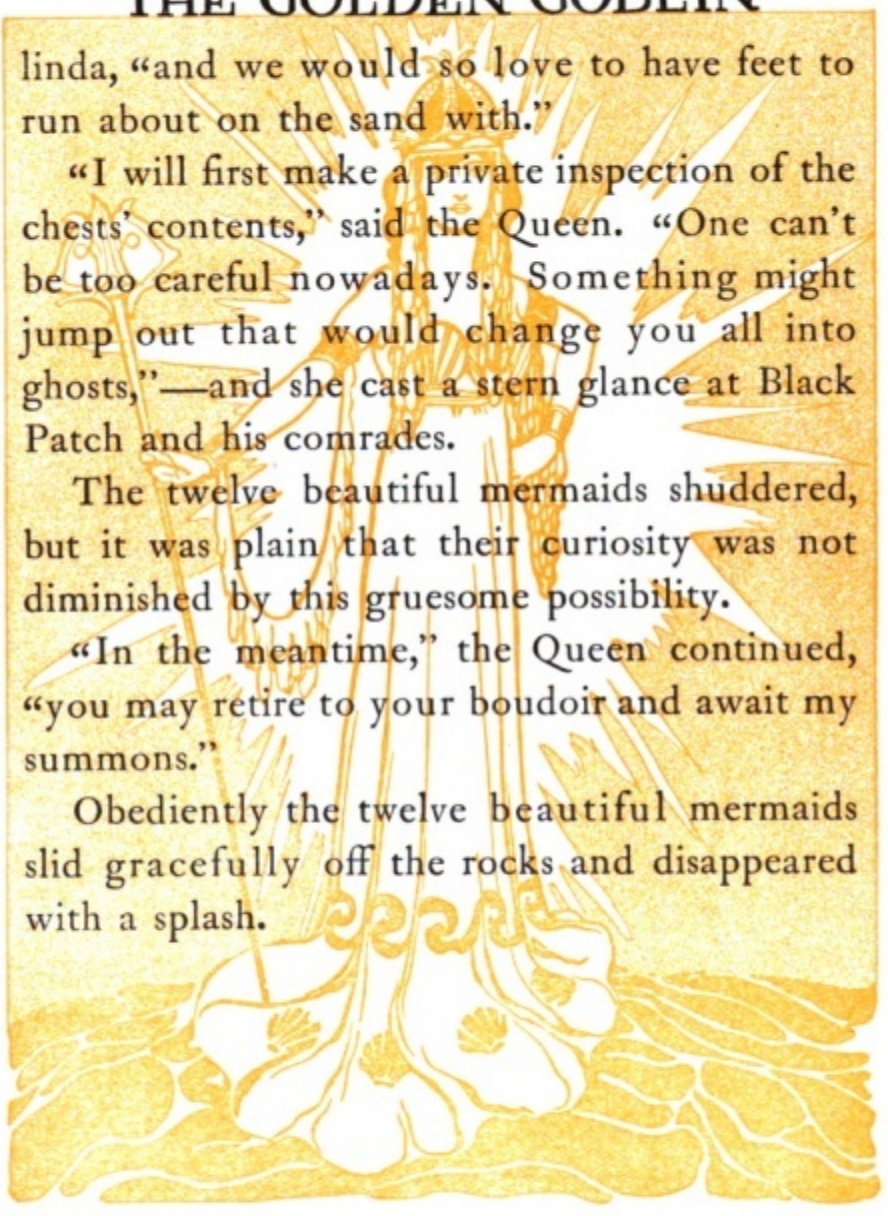

linda, "and we would so love to have feet to run about on the sand with."

"I will first make a private inspection of the chests' contents," said the Queen. "One can't be too careful nowadays. Something might jump out that would change you all into ghosts,"—and she cast a stern glance at Black Patch and his comrades.

The twelve beautiful mermaids shuddered, but it was plain that their curiosity was not diminished by this gruesome possibility.

"In the meantime," the Queen continued, "you may retire to your boudoir and await my summons."

Obediently the twelve beautiful mermaids slid gracefully off the rocks and disappeared with a splash.

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CHAPTER VIII

TRANSFORMATION OF THE MERMAID PRINCESSES

THE Queen left her throne and for several moments stood regarding the two chests meditatively while she waved the jeweled wand slowly above them. Jan and Gurtruida stood near, hand in hand, wondering what marvelous thing would happen next. Neptune combed his long beard with his fingers and kept a watchful eye upon Black Patch and the four sailors, who were divided between interest in the Queen's occupation and annoyance at the hostile manifestations of the Animated Anchor, which kept jumping about them as though preparing for an attack which he could not quite make up his rusty mind to begin. At length Black Patch addressed the Queen.

"If you will permit me, your Majesty, I will bring you the keys."

"Remain where you are," answered the

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Queen very coldly. "I have no need of keys."

With these words she touched with her wand the lid of the larger of the two chests, which immediately flew open. The Queen smiled, transferred the wand to her left hand and with her right reached down into the chest.

"That is the chest filled with the rich garments of long ago," whispered Gurtruida to Jan. "The Queen is pleased."

The children were quite unprepared for the wonderful thing that happened. When the Queen drew forth her hand it was clasped in another as white and slender as her own. Then appeared the head and finally the whole charming figure of Ethelinda, the loveliest of the twelve beautiful mermaids—only she was no longer a mermaid. Her form was draped in a clinging gown of old-gold, and, most wonderful of all, as she stood upon the sand two little feet peeped forth from beneath the gown, clad in shining golden slippers.

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While Ethelinda was staring speechlessly at the feet for which she had longed so ardently, the Queen reached her hand into the chest again and in the same manner there emerged Floralinda, the second loveliest princess, all in pale rose, including slippers for two little feet which plainly filled her with delight, although she did not seem able to utter a word. She stood beside Ethelinda while, in quick succession, the Queen helped from the chest Coralinda, Amberlinda and two other princesses, all in charming clinging gowns of heliotrope, lavender, pale pink and pale green, with slippers to match for the two little feet with which each was miraculously provided.

As the six princesses stood on the sand in a row delightedly looking at their brand-new feet in their pretty slippers, the Queen assisted from the chest, one after the other, the six remaining princesses; but instead of gowns and slippers, these wore the rich costumes of sixteenth century cavaliers—shoes with silver

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She assisted from the chest the cavalier princesses. *Page 86*

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buckles, stockings, knee-breeches, doublets and fine plumed hats, each in colors to match those of their sisters. They, too, stood on the sand staring at their new-found feet in speechless delight.

Now the Queen touched with her jeweled wand the lid of the other chest and brought forth the most exquisite gems, with which she adorned the white throats and hands of the gowned princesses, and beautifully jeweled swords, which she hung at the sides of the others. Having accomplished this marvelous task, the Queen, with a smile upon her lips, stood at a little distance regarding the array of transformed princesses. Neptune was the first to speak. He confronted the princesses and said fussily:

"Well, now that you have feet, I hope you're satisfied."

These words seemed to startle the princesses out of their trance. They uttered a chorus of delighted exclamations and began cautiously

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to try to walk. Those in gowns found it difficult to preserve their balance. Instinctively each reached out for support to one of the cavalier princesses, who, having no skirts, could do a little better. But it was very awkward work for all of them. At length Ethelinda held out her arms imploringly to Gurtruida, saying:

"Please, little mortal, show us how to use our new feet."

The cavalier princesses made the same request of Jan, whose lower limbs in their breeches, stockings and shoes with buckles so much resembled their own. Jan and Gurtruida were indeed glad to oblige such beautiful princesses, and the scene that followed was so pretty and amusing that even fussy old Neptune laughed and applauded by turns.

First the children stepped slowly, hand in hand, a few steps to the right and then to the left, and forward and back, while the princesses in couples repeated these movements as well

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as they could. Each moment they showed improvement. Noting this fact, the Animated Anchor ceased worrying the sailors and set about conscientiously and solemnly copying all the motions of the other pupils in walking, including the mistakes, while his rusty joints creaked ludicrously. The sailors, sitting on the sand, laughed uproariously, seeing that the Queen was unable to repress a smile. At length Gurtruida said:

"Now, if your Royal Highnesses will learn a few dancing steps you will get along quite well. There's nothing like dancing to give one confidence in one's feet."

Thereupon Gurtruida, holding her skirt gracefully at each side, began a pretty little dance. The princesses were charmed. The sailors could not restrain their enthusiasm. Devil Dare, the least ill-favored of them all, took from his pocket an harmonica which he placed to his mouth and blew a lively dance-tune. It sounded strange and old-fashioned

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to Gurtruida, but she kept time to it very well, especially when Jan joined her and they went pirouetting together back and forth in front of the princesses. Soon the princesses began to imitate them, and also the Animated Anchor, after doubtfully shaking his head and making many rusty grimaces.

Devil Dare changed the tune and continued playing as though more than willing to blow all the breath out of his body. Every moment the dance grew more animated, with the princesses and the Animated Anchor each moment surer of their feet, until, with peals of merry laughter, Jan and Gurtruida, with the princesses and the Animated Anchor after them, went racing over the sand, the most charming figures imaginable in the soft moonlight.

Each time the merry party raced past the throne, Ethelinda or one of the other princesses could be heard exclaiming ecstatically:

"Oh, isn't it perfectly lovely to have feet!"

Neptune was combing his beard with his

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fingers again and looking indignant. At length he turned to the Queen and said:

"There, your Majesty, see what you've done! Our hussies of royal princesses have gone daft over the joy of having feet. All your patience and trouble in bringing them up as royal mermaids has gone for nothing. It's a terrible example to set the mermaids of the common people, who copy the princesses in everything. They'll all be wanting feet, and I know too well your obliging nature. Soon there won't be a mermaid in the ocean."

"Don't worry," said the Queen with a smile. "It's only a caprice of the princesses; it won't be long before they're

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begging to have their beautiful silver scales back again."

The Queen resumed her throne, with Neptune beside her, shaking his head doubtfully, and, lifting her jeweled wand, motioned to Black Patch to approach. The villainous-looking fellow came forward, cringing, and dropped on his knees.

"Now," said the Queen—whose manner was slightly softened toward the mutinous master of the *Flying Dutchman*, doubtless on account of the gifts of beautiful garments and gems—"now we shall consider the matter of your request. You may speak fearlessly."

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CHAPTER IX

"GO TO THE GOLDEN GOBLIN"

"YOUR MAJESTY," began Black Patch servilely, in whining tones, "as you are Queen of the Sea, and the most wonderful enchantress in all the world, we beg that you will enchant the winds at the Cape of Storms which, for two hundred and fifty years, have opposed our passage home. Command them to oppose us no longer, so that we may end this weary voyage at last, and—"

"Stop!" commanded the Queen. "Is not your ship called the *Flying Dutchman?*"

"Alas, your Majesty, that is true, but—"

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"—and bears Heaven's own curse because of its master's impiety?"

"Yes, your Majesty, however—"

"—and you placed your captain in chains and led this mutiny, which is an outrage to the ocean and all its orderly and peace-loving inhabitants?"

"Yes, your Majesty," broke in Neptune pettishly, "and by turning the bow of the *Flying Dutchman* eastward, when all the world knows its course is due west for ever and ever, these mutinous scoundrels have scattered my best herds of whales and porpoises to the four winds."

The Queen calmed Neptune with a touch of her hand on his shoulder, and, after meditating briefly, said to Black Patch:

"You must understand that mutiny is detestable to me. I feel that it is my duty to release Captain Vanderdecken and thus enable him to inflict upon you the punishment you so richly deserve."

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Black Patch and the four sailors prostrated themselves before the Queen. They shook in every limb and their faces turned a sickly green hue.

"For two reasons," continued the Queen, "I have decided not to take this course. First, because I well know that sooner or later you will return to your captain on your knees, voluntarily; and, second, because the two little mortals have reported that you have treated them kindly—although I can imagine your sly and deep-laid purpose in acting in a manner so contrary to your evil natures. And now," continued the Queen in her sternest tones, while she rose to her full height at the foot of the throne, "why have you attempted to conceal from me your main purpose in visiting my island?"

The terrified sailors shielded their heads with their arms, as though the flashes from the Queen's eyes were indeed lightning called forth to strike them dead. Lifting her wand the

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Queen of the Sea majestically pronounced these five words:

"Go to the Golden Goblin!"

"Ah, your Majesty permits us?" said Black Patch, much relieved. "But how? As we sailed this way we observed that the Golden Goblin's chimney had fallen, choking with immense rocks the only entrance to his realm from the outer world."

"You may thank her Majesty for that," said Neptune, chuckling so deeply that his crown

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danced all over his head. "The Golden Goblin's chimney has been an awful nuisance to us. It was always smoking. The Queen is very good-natured, but one day the smoke got to be unbearable, and her Majesty, with a wave of her wand, stopped it up with four hundred thousand million tons of granite; he-he-he!" And he chuckled his crown on straight again.

"Naturally the Golden Goblin and I are not on the best of terms at present," admitted the Queen. "As a matter of fact, our relations have never been cordial. The Golden Goblin exercises his powers of enchantment—which are very great—for purposes which I can not approve. Besides, as you doubtless have heard, his four daughters have control of the four winds. They, of course, can not disturb the main body of my ocean, but they are continually ruffling its surface in a most annoying manner."

Jan and Gurtruida had drawn near and were listening with breathless interest.

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"However," her Majesty went on, "since these little mortals desire it I will permit the princesses to escort you to the Golden Goblin's palace by the deep-sea entrance."

"Oh, your Majesty," said Jan, "I'm such a coward! Sha'n't we all be drowned?"

"Not while you are under my protection," answered the Queen with a smile.

"If you please, your Majesty," said Gurtruida earnestly, "dear Jan isn't a coward at all. He's the bravest boy in the whole world."

The Queen smiled upon them both, and continued:

"You will go on board the *Flying Dutchman* with these sailors and the twelve princesses—who know the way perfectly—and the ship will carry you quickly and safely to the bottom of the ocean, to the great coral gate of the Golden Goblin's palace. There you will disembark and the princesses will gain admission for the whole party. You need feel no alarm, for while you are under my protection the

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water, even at the bottom of the ocean, will seem the same as the air to all on the ship. And you will see many strange and beautiful things which as yet no mortal eyes have beheld."

"This Golden Goblin, your Majesty," said Jan doubtfully, "can he be relied upon not to play any of his tricks on Gurtruida?"

"That reminds me," said the Queen, taking a ring from her finger and placing it on one of Jan's. "If either of you little mortals should find yourselves in any danger, all you have to do is to kiss this ring and I shall be with you instantly."

"Thank you, your Majesty," said Jan. "Now I am quite easy in my mind."

The Queen stretched out her wand toward

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the *Flying Dutchman*, which had not moved during all this time, and a beam from the blazing jewel at its end rested on the ship's high poop. Immediately, stern foremost, the ship began to drift toward the rocks, while Black Patch and the four sailors looked on in astonishment. Gently the ship approached till it stopped close to a rock whose flat top was on a level with her upper deck, and so close that a child could have stepped aboard. The Queen turned to Black Patch.

"Back to your ship," she said, "and be sure and remember what you owe to these little mortals."

The sailors made haste to clamber aboard, looking frightened and awe-struck. Jan and Gurtruida followed them, with a final grateful bow and curtsey to the Queen, who gave each an encouraging smile, and then came the twelve beautiful princesses, who were now quite steady on their new feet. The sailors had gone immediately to the lower deck, for they realized

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that the ship was now in command of the twelve princesses, who, with the children, stood on the poop waving their hands at the Queen and fussy old Neptune.

The Queen raised her wand and was just about to start the ship on her submarine voyage when the clank of iron on iron and a rusty voice caused her to pause. It was the Animated Anchor, which had hurried up from the beach and was begging breathlessly:

"Oh, your Majesty, since you have kindly brought me to life I feel it my duty to keep an eye on those ghosts. Let me go back to the old ship. I don't fear the ghosts any more. Your Majesty saw how they fear me, because I know them so well. I may be of some service to the little mortals down below."

The Queen nodded smilingly, and the Animated Anchor clanked up the side of the rock and over the ship's rail. The moment he stepped aboard the great green parrot appeared, hopped to the shoulder of the Ani-

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mated Anchor, rubbed its beak affectionately on the rusty cheek, and croaked:

"How well you're looking! Welcome home, welcome home!"

Thus the strange pair stood on the high deck of the ship's stern, surrounded by Jan and Gurtruida and the twelve beautiful princesses, when the Queen again raised her wand. Slowly the *Flying Dutchman*, with all sails set as usual, drew away from the rock, her bowsprit dipped under the waves, her decks and those on them, and soon the top of the mainmast, too, had disappeared, and the Queen of the Sea and Neptune her consort were left alone on the beach of the Enchanted Isle.

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CHAPTER X

DOWN, DOWN, DOWN!

AS the waters closed over the deck of the *Flying Dutchman* Gurtruida clung, trembling, to Jan's arm. The twelve princesses laughed merrily, and Ethelinda said:

"There is nothing to fear, little mortals. You are now two of us, and air or water, it is all the same."

After a moment the children realized that this was true. If the water touched them they could not feel it, and they breathed as easily as ever. There was only a slight softening of the moon's rays, which enabled them to see plainly all about them forms of ocean life that grew stranger the deeper the ship sank toward the bottom. Some of these floated across the deck, darting this way and that, and casting curious glances at Jan and Gurtruida. They gazed at the parrot with widening eyes, but

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paid no attention to the Animated Anchor nor the twelve beautiful princesses, whose changed aspect they seemed not to notice.

Very soon after the ship sank beneath the waves two familiar creatures of the ocean, swimming lovingly side by side, descended upon the deck near the children and rested against a coil of rope.

"They are jellyfish," said Jan; "but how amiable and loving they look!"

At this the Animated Anchor was convulsed with laughter.

"Ho-ho, ha-ha!" he laughed in his rusty voice. "Of course they're amiable. They're lovers. Many a time when I've gone whizzing down to the bottom at the end of my cable I've seen young jellyfish a-courting. Ho-ho, ha-ha-ha!"—and the Animated Anchor laughed as though this was the best joke in all the world of jokes.

He waved a rusty hand at the queer pair of lovers and said:

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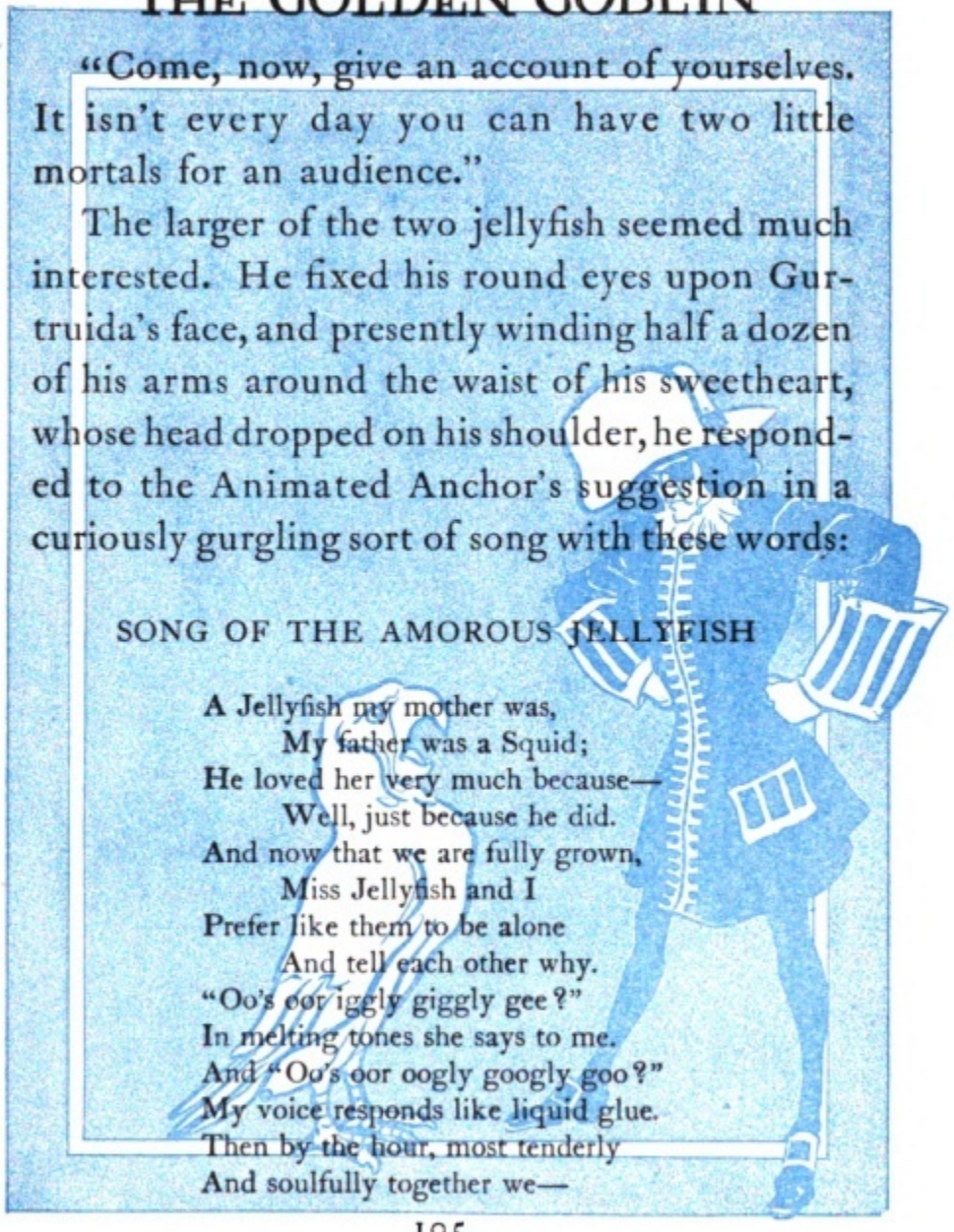
"Come, now, give an account of yourselves. It isn't every day you can have two little mortals for an audience."

The larger of the two jellyfish seemed much interested. He fixed his round eyes upon Gurtruida's face, and presently winding half a dozen of his arms around the waist of his sweetheart, whose head dropped on his shoulder, he responded to the Animated Anchor's suggestion in a curiously gurgling sort of song with these words:



SONG OF THE AMOROUS JELLYFISH

A Jellyfish my mother was,
My father was a Squid;
He loved her very much because—
Well, just because he did.
And now that we are fully grown,
Miss Jellyfish and I
Prefer like them to be alone
And tell each other why.
"Oo's oor iggly giggly gee?"
In melting tones she says to me.
And "Oo's oor oogly googly goo?"
My voice responds like liquid glue.
Then by the hour, most tenderly
And soulfully together we—

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THE GOLDEN GOBLIN

"Iggly giggly gee,
Oogly googly goo,
Iggly giggly, oogly googly goo."

She has the most expansive smile—
It meets beneath her chin;
Her palpitating heart the while
Stirs her remotest fin.
And yet the beauties of her mind,
In every sort of weather,
Eclipse all other charms, I find,
When we converse together.
"Oo's oor iggly giggly gee?"
She giggles gleefully to me.
And "Oo's oor oogly googly goo?"
I gurglingly demand anew.
Such iggly things these words convey
We oogle them the livelong day.
"Iggly giggly gee,
Oogly googly goo,
Iggly giggly, oogly googly goo."

Whene'er we oogle near the shore
We're sure our iggling's right,
For on the beach sometimes a score
Of igglers are in sight.
Queer human igglers on the sand,
With hands in place of fins,
Respond to ooglers close at hand
With curious legs and things.

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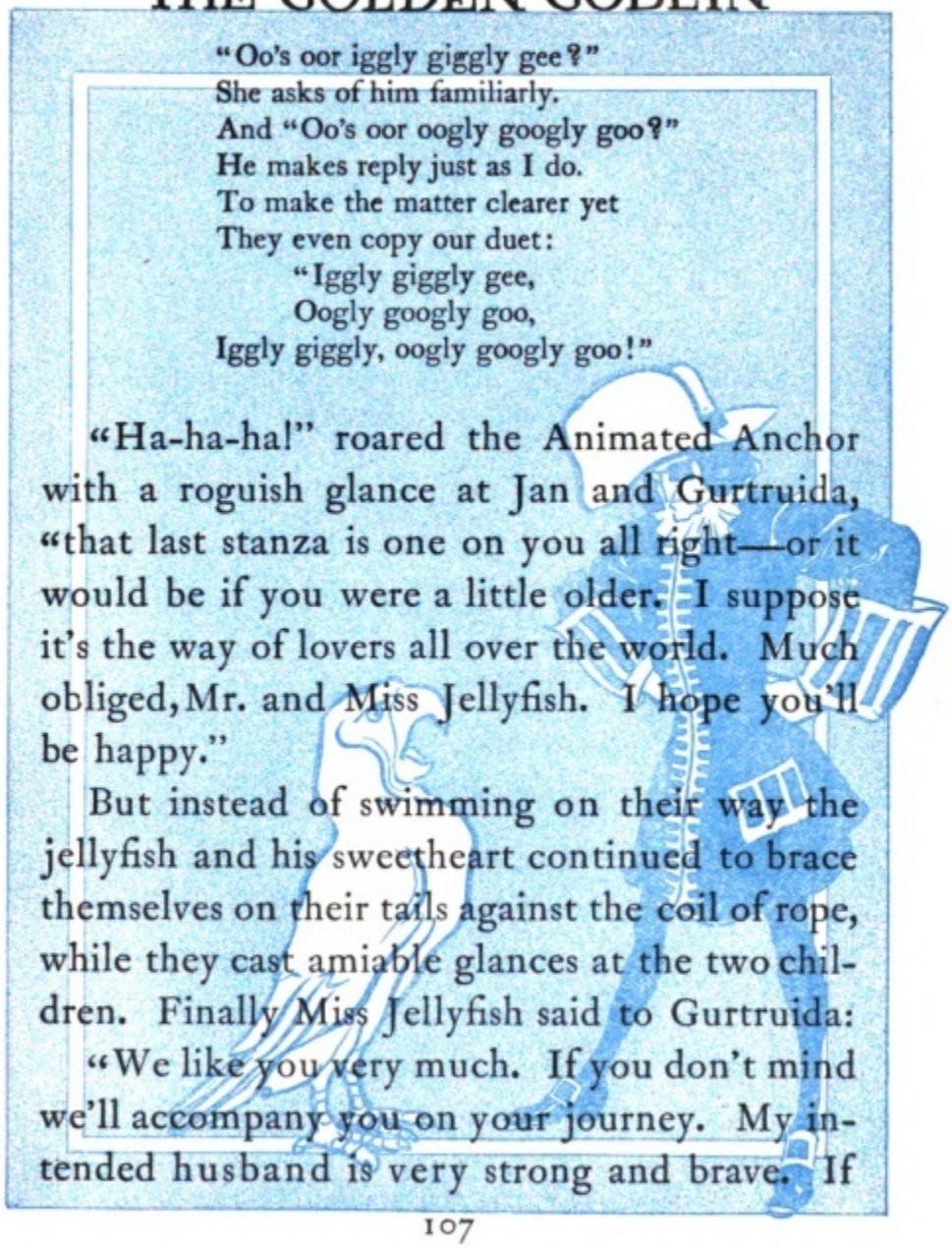
"Oo's oor iggly giggly gee?"
She asks of him familiarly.
And "Oo's oor oogly googly goo?"
He makes reply just as I do.
To make the matter clearer yet
They even copy our duet:
"Iggly giggly gee,
Oogly googly goo,
Iggly giggly, oogly googly goo!"



"Ha-ha-ha!" roared the Animated Anchor with a roguish glance at Jan and Gurtruida, "that last stanza is one on you all right—or it would be if you were a little older. I suppose it's the way of lovers all over the world. Much obliged, Mr. and Miss Jellyfish. I hope you'll be happy."

But instead of swimming on their way the jellyfish and his sweetheart continued to brace themselves on their tails against the coil of rope, while they cast amiable glances at the two children. Finally Miss Jellyfish said to Gurtruida:

"We like you very much. If you don't mind we'll accompany you on your journey. My intended husband is very strong and brave. If

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you should meet an enemy you can depend on his assistance."

"Oh, we shall be very glad," said Gurtruida. She had some other polite phrases in her mind, but the sudden appearance of a fiercely snarling dogfish changed them into a frightened scream.

Just as the dogfish was leaping at Jan's throat the jellyfish dashed at him, wound six or seven of his arms about him and embraced him so savagely that his ribs cracked and he fell lifeless to the deck.

"Oh, thank you, Mr. Jellyfish," said Gurtruida gratefully. "Do remain with us; it will ease our minds so much after this."

Uttering mild but rusty sailor oaths the Animated Anchor kicked the dead dogfish overboard directly into the mouth of a huge shark which had turned on his back, after the manner of sharks, to seize his prey. It was only a small mouthful for so big a shark, and as soon as he had swallowed it he cast a greedy glance at Gurtruida.

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"Quick! Below, get below, if you value your lives!" shouted the Animated Anchor to the children, who seemed paralyzed with horror.

But just as the shark was turning on his back to swallow Gurtruida the jellyfish darted at him and from his open mouth sent a stream of dark-colored fluid right down the shark's throat. It was astonishing then how quickly the great greedy fish changed his mind. He turned pale clear to his tail and swam off out of sight, sputtering and coughing in a way that made the Animated Anchor scream with delight.

Although Gurtruida did not think the jellyfish's method of warfare exactly refined in this instance, she was, of course, very grateful, especially as the twelve princesses did not appear at all shocked. Each of them complimented Mr. Jellyfish highly on his valor, while Miss Jellyfish hovered about him with many caresses in token of her admiration of his conduct.

Suddenly a gigantic shadow was cast upon the deck.

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"The moon must have gone under a cloud," said Jan.

The Animated Anchor was shivering with terror and waving his rusty and clanking arms at something overhead. After a moment Jan and Gurtruida saw an enormous whale plunging down upon the ship. The whale was at least three times as long as the *Flying Dutchman*. As the top of the mainmast tickled his ribs the whale turned a little to one side and his huge bulk was soon level with the ship's rail. The great fish did not seem to be at all fierce. Indeed, his glance was quite amiable as he cast it across the deck and fell to scratching his nose on the break of the poop. The ship swayed under the whale's gentle touch so that the sailors cried out in alarm. The twelve beautiful princesses, who by no means had forgotten their previous existence as royal mermaids, ran to the rail and said "Shoo!" just as Jan had heard Minnetje, the kitchen maid at home, say when the cow rubbed against the rain-barrel.

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"Why, I declare it's old Alexander!" exclaimed Ethelinda.

"Have—have you met him before?" gasped Gurtruida.

"Certainly, my dear. He is the leader of the royal herd, who ran away the other day, and his Royal Highness has been looking for him everywhere. That's why he was so cross when you arrived on the Enchanted Isle."

The whale looked at Ethelinda, and Gurtruida was sure she saw him close one eye roguishly.

"Alexander, go right home this minute!" commanded Ethelinda.

"Naughty Alexander, you'll catch it!" said Floralinda.

"Alexander, you ought to be ashamed of yourself, running off this way!" said Amberlinda.

The only reply the whale made was playfully to bump the ship's side with his immense nose, sending it bobbing about so that Jan and Gurtruida, the Animated Anchor and the twelve

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princesses could hardly keep their feet on the deck, while the sailors fell on their knees and howled dismally. At length Coralinda, the sweetest-voiced of all the princesses, gave the whale's nose a soft pat with her little hand and said pleadingly:

"Please go home, Alexander. They miss you terribly."

At these gentle words the whale gave a mighty flip of his tail—which made the *Flying Dutchman* bounce about like a cork—and sank.

"There!" sighed Ethelinda, "his Royal Highness will be so relieved."

When the ship was steady once more Jan and Gurtruida, looking down beyond her bows, saw a long way off, and far below them, a faint but beautiful pink glow in the water. Presently the glow deepened until it turned the masts and rigging, and every object on the deck and about them in the ocean, the color of coral.

"Oh, beautiful! charming!" exclaimed Gurtruida.

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"Alexander, go right home this minute!" commanded Ethelinda.

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"What can it be?" asked Jan of Ethelinda.

"It is the coral gate of the Golden Goblin's palace," answered the princess. "A few minutes more and we shall be there."

Vaguely at first, and then more plainly, the children could see, where the pink glow was brightest, great columns and capitals and other impressive architectural details, all of the purest and pinkest coral. And in the midst of the great structure were the two halves of a great coral gate, beautifully carved, and much higher than the mainmast of the ship. Swiftly onward and downward sped the *Flying Dutchman*, her bowsprit pointing exactly at the great coral lock which fastened the two halves of the gate in the center.

As Jan and Gurtruida clung to each other, anticipating the crash of the ship's bows against the Golden Goblin's gate, the Princess Ethelinda called out in clear, bell-like tones that seemed to echo through all the ocean's depths:

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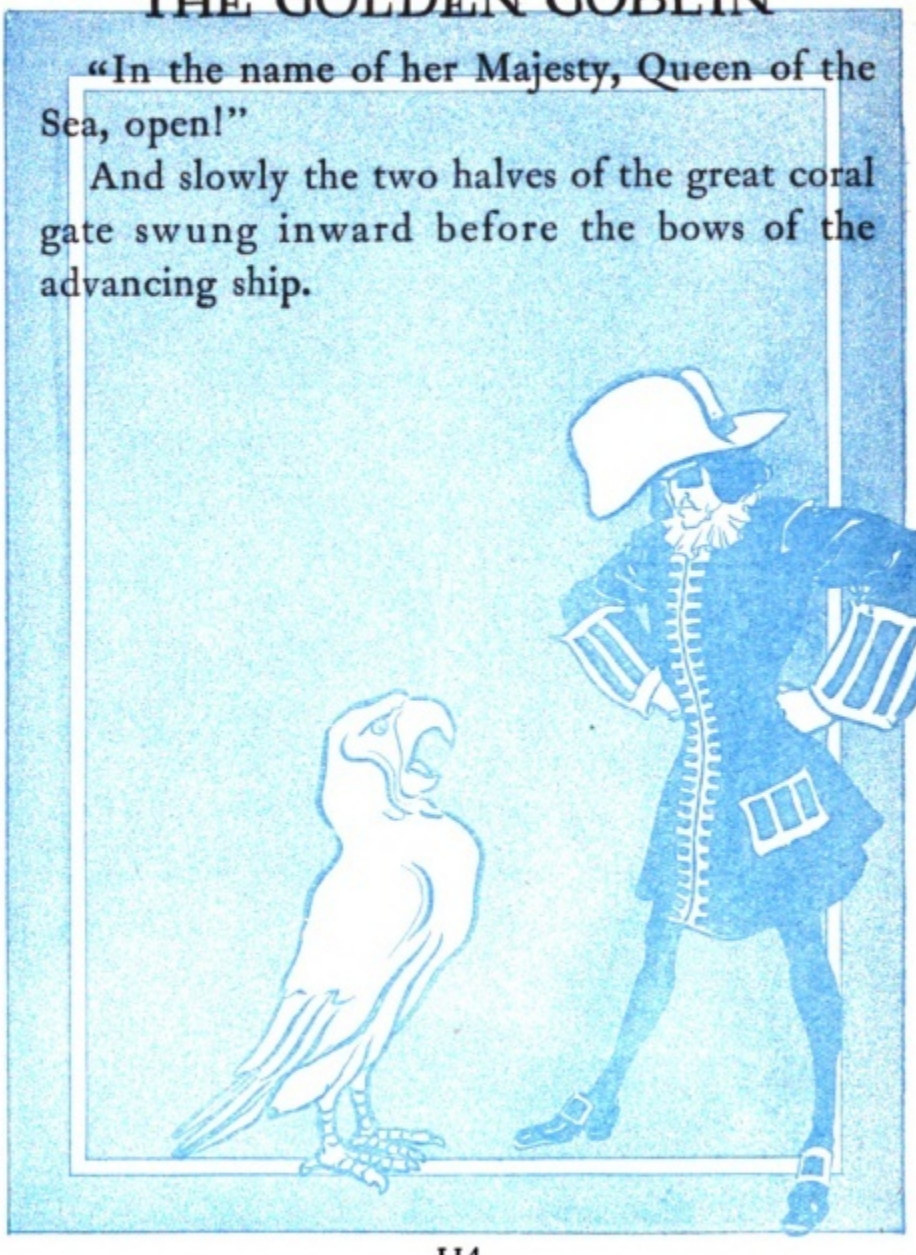
"In the name of her Majesty, Queen of the Sea, open!"

And slowly the two halves of the great coral gate swung inward before the bows of the advancing ship.



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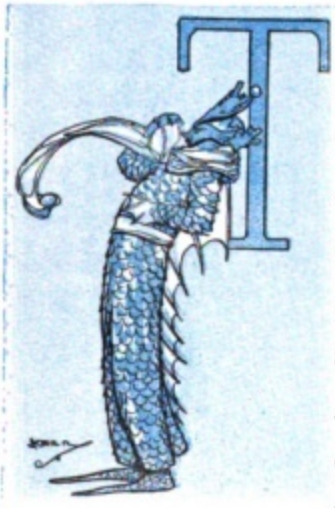
CHAPTER XI

THE GOLDEN GOBLIN HAS A COLD IN HIS HEAD



THE moment the ship had entered the Golden Goblin's palace, and the great gates of coral had closed behind her, even Jan and Gurtruida realized that something more serious than the arrival of the *Flying Dutchman* had lately occurred. The vast chamber, which seemed hewn out of solid coral, even to its high, groined ceiling, was filled with a soft, pink radiance reflected from the walls, after passing through what appeared to be enormous diamonds set in a semicircle above the gates. The chamber—evidently a sort of covered courtyard—was thronged with fantastic figures running hither and thither in the greatest confusion. They

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seemed to be soldiers, for some carried spears and all wore helmets and tunics of some shining yellow metal, like gold. They had the features of human beings rendered grotesque by long green mustaches and great green, bushy eyebrows. But most fantastic of all were their hands and feet. These were enormously broad at the fingers and toes, which appeared to be webbed for the greater part of their length, and were quite bare.

Two of these strange beings, who were nearly twice the height of the others, stood on guard at a door on the further side of the chamber. Each of them held upright a staff twice his own height, having a huge gleaming eye at its upper end. Other great eyes dangled at

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the ends of their tentacles at their sides and backs. Every moment the door opened to permit the exit of a female of this odd-looking race, clad in a short robe of some sea-green material and wearing a quantity of sea-green hair coiled at the back of her neck. Each of these women was burdened with a large basket piled high with something that looked like soiled linen. For every woman who came out another entered. These also carried baskets, but in this instance the contents were stacks of neatly-folded fresh linen, evidently just from the Golden Goblin's laundry.

Always when one of the women came out with her basket she was instantly surrounded by soldiers who seemed to question her with the utmost anxiety, and when she would shake her head dismally the soldiers would run about more distraught than before. Their anxiety was so great that they seemed hardly to notice the entrance of the *Flying Dutchman*.

All these things Jan and Gurtruida noted

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before the ship had come to a standstill in the center of the chamber, and, by the direction of the Princess Ethelinda, had turned about so that her bows pointed at the great gates. As soon as this manœuver had been executed, the Animated Anchor, evincing great excitement, sent his rusty, clanking legs flying forward, where he seized the end of the cable from which he had broken free a century before, and leaped over the port bow. The cable rattled through the hawser-hole, and, looking over the ship's side in astonishment, the children saw the faithful fellow securing an iron-like grip with his rusty arms and legs around one of the carved hinges of the gates. When the Animated Anchor appeared satisfied with his grip he shouted to the children:

"Ha-ha! My flukes have not forgotten their cunning. Go and pay your visit to the Golden Goblin. I'll hold the ship against an army till you return."

At first the great green parrot, who had taken

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a strong fancy to the Animated Anchor, seemed much annoyed, but presently, after some discordant croaking, it rubbed its head on Jan's arm and remarked placidly:

"We're all accursed!"

The poop-deck of the *Flying Dutchman* was now within a few yards of the door where stood the gigantic guards, whose heads were nearly on a level with the rail.

"What, ho, fellow," said the Princess Ethelinda, "inform the Golden Goblin that the twelve Princesses of the Sea are without with two little mortals and demand an audience."

At this the guard twirled his green mustaches and seemed embarrassed. At length he said sullenly:

"His Cantankerous Majesty is not receiving."

"What! To me?" said the Princess Ethelinda sternly, while all the other royal maidens frowned at the presumptuous fellow. "How dare you give such an answer to the Heiress Apparent to the throne of the Sea?"

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"His Cantankerous Majesty is indisposed," muttered the guard.

"Ah, indeed? What appears to be the trouble?"

"All his Cantankerous Majesty's subjects are forbidden to mention it on pain of instant death," answered the guard.

"At least," said the princess, "you can tell me what all these women are carrying in and out in those baskets."

"Ahem!" said the guard cautiously: "well, it is the royal laundry."

"Indeed? The Golden Goblin

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must be entertaining a great number of guests. Since our arrival enough soiled linen has come out and enough fresh linen has gone in to serve for a palace full of women and fops." And Ethelinda cast upon the guard a look so severe that he forgot to open the door for a laundress who had just approached with her basket.

"Wait!" commanded the princess. "Show me what is in the basket."

Muttering, but evidently afraid to disobey, the guard took the basket from the woman and lifted it up to the ship's rail. Ethelinda took one of the neatly-folded squares of linen from the basket and spread it out. It was a handkerchief. The basket was full of handkerchiefs.

"Ah, I see," said the princess, replacing the handkerchief in the basket, which the guard gave back to the woman and hastily opened the door for her, "ah, the Golden Goblin has a cold in his head."

"I haven't mentioned it," said the guard,

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turning pale and casting anxious glances about him to see if he was suspected, "you must not say that I told you."

"I will protect you, fellow; but do not keep us waiting. We shall pay our respects to the four princesses, if they are at home."

"Their Gusty Highnesses are at home;" said the guard, "but they, too, are indisposed. Haven't you noticed that there hasn't been a breath of wind from any direction these three days?"

"Tush, fellow, there's been quite a steady west wind for a week."

"Oh, I forgot," said the guard in confusion, "the Princess Occidenta is not so bad as the others. But Princess Orienta, Princess Arctica, and Princess Antarctica are very ill indeed—in fact, they are confined to their royal couches."

"And his Cantankerous Majesty, is he, too, confined to his bed?"

"Alas! His Cantankerous Majesty will not obey the royal physicians. He sits all day and

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night on his throne beside the great empty fireplace, sneezing his head—"

Here the guard stopped and clapped his hand to his mouth.

"Exactly, sneezing his head off," laughed the princess. "Serves him right for burning soft coal and smoking our eyes out on the Enchanted Isle."

"Alas," sighed the guard, "neither soft coal nor anything else will burn in the royal fireplace any more. The chimney doesn't seem to draw at all."

"I should say it didn't," remarked Princess Ethelinda dryly, while all the other princesses looked at each other significantly and smiled.

Then, summoning Black Patch to her with an imperious motion of her hand, Ethelinda said:

"Wait here, you and your companions. I and my sisters and the little mortals will go to the Golden Goblin and arrange an audience for you."

With these words Ethelinda sprang lightly

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over the rail of the ship and floated gently down to the floor of the courtyard. The other princesses followed her in the same manner.

"Come," said Ethelinda to the children.

"Oh, it is so far to jump," said Gurtruida, drawing back.

"It is nothing in this atmosphere," said Ethelinda.

"I will catch you," said Jan, and he leaped, landing quite lightly beside the princess.

Emboldened by the sight of Jan's upstretched arms, Gurtruida leaped, too, and hardly felt the shock of her fall as Jan's hands caught hers.

"Open!" commanded Princess Ethelinda haughtily.

The guard obeyed, and the children, following the twelve beautiful princesses, found themselves in the coral-walled throne-room of the Golden Goblin's palace. It was a large, many-sided room with a high dome in which were many windows, set like jewels at regular intervals. The light seemed green as it entered

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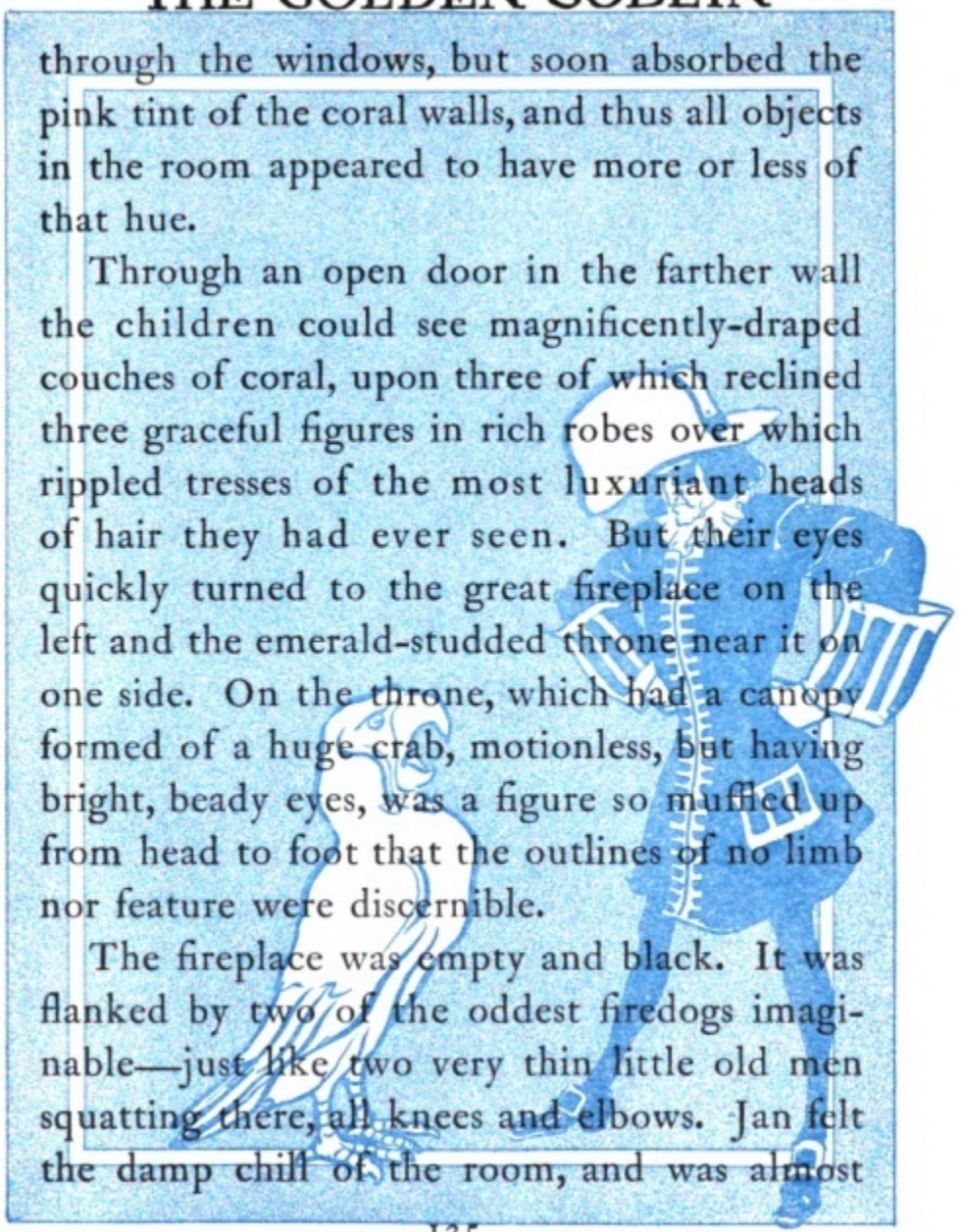
through the windows, but soon absorbed the pink tint of the coral walls, and thus all objects in the room appeared to have more or less of that hue.

Through an open door in the farther wall the children could see magnificently-draped couches of coral, upon three of which reclined three graceful figures in rich robes over which rippled tresses of the most luxuriant heads of hair they had ever seen. But their eyes quickly turned to the great fireplace on the left and the emerald-studded throne near it on one side. On the throne, which had a canopy formed of a huge crab, motionless, but having bright, beady eyes, was a figure so muffled up from head to foot that the outlines of no limb nor feature were discernible.

The fireplace was empty and black. It was flanked by two of the oddest firedogs imaginable—just like two very thin little old men squatting there, all knees and elbows. Jan felt the damp chill of the room, and was almost



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certain one of the human-looking firedogs was shivering.

Suddenly the muffled figure on the throne drew up convulsively and plunged into a perfect paroxysm of sneezing, while two immensely broad hands with fingers webbed to the second joint reached out spasmodically in all directions. A dozen attendants came running from a room back of the throne and thrust handkerchiefs into the groping hands, while the sneezing became every moment more tumultuous, until, with an explosive "Ker-CHEW!" that shook the coral walls of the whole palace, the muffled figure rose, tore off its upper wrappings, revealing a swollen and tear-stained countenance, and thundered:

"Handkerchiefs! Handkerchiefs! What has become of all my handkerchiefs? Ker-CHEW! Let the Grand Chamberlain of the royal laundry be hanged at once—Ker-CHEW!—for treason!"

Whereupon the Golden Goblin resumed his

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sneezing by broadsides and volleys with such increasing fury that Jan and Gurtruida and all the twelve beautiful princesses stood stock-still near the door, hardly daring to draw a full breath.

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CHAPTER XII

THE CORAL FIRE

SO grotesque was the Golden Goblin's appearance that Jan, as his natural fears wore away, was tempted to laugh aloud. The figure of this potentate of the regions under the sea was tall and imposing. It was clad in a close-fitting robe of golden scales, and, but for the contortions caused by the fit of sneezing, would have appeared really majestic. The Golden Goblin's crown, too, was quite a royal and gorgeous affair; but the face under it—what a delight such a face would be for the saucy little street boys at home in Amsterdam!

The Golden Goblin had sea-green mustaches so long that they had to be twisted and turned up over his ears. His sea-green eyebrows, too, were each nearly a foot long, and seemed to have the stiffness of wire, for they were twisted and twirled upward, and the point of each was

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adorned with a little gold ball that tinkled against the sides of the crown every time the Golden Goblin sneezed. Jan thought that if the Golden Goblin's face was not swollen because of his cold, and not twisted out of shape by his efforts to keep from sneezing, and was divested of the absurd eyebrows and mustaches, it would be quite manly, even handsome in a dark and severe way.

Just as Jan's reflections had reached this point the Golden Goblin, who was confronting his unbidden guests in a protesting attitude, managed to get in a few words between sneezes, addressed to the Princess Ethelinda:

"Catch—catch—ker-CHEW! May I ask to what circum—ker-CHEW—stance I am indebted for the—ker-CHEW—honor of your visit—catch—catch—ker-CHEW?"

"May it please your Cantankerous Majesty," began Ethelinda—and then the beautiful princess looked about her in a startled way, and sneezed!

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"Ker-CHEW!" sneezed the great green parrot, who had entered with the others and stood beside Jan.

"Stop! How dare you, in my presence?" thundered the Golden Goblin. And then he was seized with another paroxysm of sneezing.

Ethelinda sneezed again, and then Floralinda sneezed. Then all the other princesses sneezed, and presently Jan and Gurtruida, greatly to their humiliation, were sneezing as though their lives depended on it. The door opened and in came Princess Occidenta, ruler of the West Wind, and ran, sneezing, into the apartment where her three sisters—Orienta of the East Wind, Arctica of the North Wind, and Antarctica of the South Wind—were lying on their couches sneezing in the most heart-breaking fashion.

Hither and thither ran royal attendants distributing handkerchiefs to the royal family and their guests, including the parrot, and while no one could utter a word because of the epidemic

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"Ker-CHEW!" sneezed the great green parrot. *Page 130*

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of sneezing that was upon them all, the door opened again, admitting the Animated Anchor in a state of tremendous excitement. Too excited even to notice that all in the room were too busy with their sneezing to pay him the slightest attention, the Animated Anchor fell on his rusty knees before the Princess Ethelinda and announced:

"There's a conspiracy on the ship to kidnap the Princesses of the Four Winds and hold them for ransom. His Cantankerous Majesty must be warned!"

And then the Animated Anchor fell to sneezing till rust from all his joints rose in a cloud.

Suddenly something happened that shocked the Golden Goblin so that he stopped short right in the middle of one of his most successful sneezes. The queer, human-looking firedogs were shaking as though they were alive and had an attack of ague, and all at once, in unison, they gave vent to a series of sneezes so

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explosive that Jan and Gurtruida thought they must have been repressed for centuries.

"Ha, varlets!" screamed the Golden Goblin, beside himself with rage, "now are you doomed indeed! What good are you as royal spies when your foolish sneezing proclaims that you are not firedogs at all. To-morrow you shall die the death."

But the Princess Ethelinda, commanding herself with a great effort, held up her hand and said:

"May it please your Cantankerous Majesty to rely upon our discretion. No secret of your palace shall be betrayed by any one of us. And if your Majesty has no objection, it is time all this sneezing should stop."

"Stop—ker-CHEW!" sneezed the Golden Goblin. "I should say it was time. That's

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—ker-CHEW!—what I said a week ago after all the palace fires went out because an earthquake choked up the royal chimney."

"If you had not persisted in burning soft coal and smoking our eyes out on the Enchanted Isle," said the princess severely, "her Majesty the Queen of the Sea would not have been compelled to summon that earthquake."

"Well," said the Golden Goblin sullenly, "if you will undertake to cure this awful cold in my head, which will certainly carry me off in another week if it keeps up, we'll let bygones be bygones."

As every one but herself and the Golden Goblin was still sneezing, it was difficult for them to make themselves heard. Putting her lips close to his Cantankerous Majesty's ear the princess shouted:

"In the first place we must have a nice, warm fire in the grate."

"But the chimney won't draw," shouted the Golden Goblin in the princess' ear.

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"That doesn't make any difference, if you go about it right," said the princess.

"A nice warm fire in the grate without any chimney!" exclaimed the Golden Goblin incredulously. "Show me how and I will grant any favor you may ask that is in my power."

"Agreed," said the Princess Ethelinda. "We must have a coral fire."

"A coral fire?" repeated the Golden Goblin, opening his eyes very wide. "Why, I've more coral than I know what to do with. If you're really in earnest you will solve the most important problem that vexes my reign, in these days when even soft coal is becoming so scarce."

Without replying in words, Ethelinda seized a small coral chair standing near the fireplace, dashed it on the floor so that it was shattered into fragments, and piled the fragments neatly in the fireplace, standing between the still-sneezing firedogs.

"Now," she said, "I must have some fresh water."

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"Fresh water?" repeated the Golden Goblin. "Ugh! I can't bear the stuff. I tasted some that came down the chimney once and was ill for a week. I gave a jar full of it to the royal chemist for analysis; maybe he has it yet."

The Golden Goblin despatched an attendant to the royal laboratory for the jar of fresh water. When it came the princess tasted it —while the Golden Goblin shuddered and turned away his head—seemed satisfied, and poured the whole contents of the jar on the bits of coral in the grate.

Instantly the coral glowed a deep red. The most beautiful pink-white flames rose from it without the slightest smoke. The firedogs stopped sneezing and resumed their rigid, iron-like look. The Golden Goblin, feeling the warmth, put out his great hands toward the flames, and roared to the attendants:

"Corall corall Bring corall"

In a few moments the grate was piled high with pieces of broken and discarded palace

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furniture that glowed ruddily, while the beautiful pink-white flames leaped high, and grateful warmth stole all through the room, even into the apartment occupied by the Princesses of the Four Winds. The Golden Goblin—whose sneezes were already growing less frequent—resumed his throne, rubbing his hands.

Gradually all the sneezing ceased, though the Animated Anchor, owing to his being so rusty inside as well as out, was not quite cured until, upon the Golden Goblin's invitation, he approached close to the grate and warmed all his joints thoroughly. Meanwhile he scrutinized the firedogs with a curiosity that was only satisfied when, with the great iron poker, he had given each of them a smart thump on the side of the head and heard the sound of metal on metal.

The silence in the great throne-room became al-

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most oppressive, following such a tornado of sneezing. Jan and Gurtruida waited in some impatience for the Princess Ethelinda to approach the Golden Goblin respecting the object of their visit. Soon they were aware of the cause of her delay. His Cantankerous Majesty was yawning and stretching himself luxuriously. The children glanced into the adjoining room and saw the Princesses of the Four Winds tossing their white arms about while they sighed languorously. Even Ethelinda and her sister princesses seemed less animated than usual, while the great green parrot had perched himself on the back of the throne and closed one eye sleepily.

"Hum, ha!" yawned the Golden Goblin; "it's been more than a week since I've closed an eye. A little good music would certainly start me off on the best sleep of my whole career. I almost regret dismissing the royal orchestra; but the rascals would persist in playing Wagner, confound 'em!"

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At these words Gurtruida advanced timidly to the foot of the throne and said:

"If it would please your Majesty, Jan and I know a lullaby that we can sing for you. It's about a little mite of a girl and her doll, and when you come to the refrain it's very soothing."

"Good!" said the Golden Goblin, yawning again; "fire away with your lullaby—if you're quite sure it isn't Wagner."

The twelve beautiful princesses grouped themselves on either side of the throne, the Animated Anchor stretched out his creaking joints on the hearthstone, and Jan and Gurtruida, standing hand in hand, sang sweetly to the Golden Goblin their lullaby called:

DOLLY'S BEDTIME

All day long, up stairs and down,
Romps Polly with her dolly;
One eye black, the other brown,
Poor dolly owes to Polly.
One sawdust leg completely gone,
The other badly mended;
The left hand off the right hand on—

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For Polly's health is splendid.
But soon the restful shades of night
Change Polly's mood completely;
To dolly, now in spotless white,
She's crooning, oh, so sweetly—
Dolly's bedtime comes again, close those eyes so blue;
Blessed angels hover near, and Polly's heart is true.
Sleep, my dolly, dream once more, darling, do not sigh—
Fold your precious hands and sleep—by-low-by, lullaby.

Filled with hope of future days
For dolly, is Miss Polly.
"You must mend your naughty ways,"
Says Polly to her dolly.
"You must be spanked when you tell fibs,
You're much too fond of quarrels;
And when you soil your little bibs
Tremble for your morals."
But when the soothing shades of night
Lure Polly to her slumbers,
Then sings she to her Heart's Delight
In soft, reposeful numbers—
Dolly's bedtime comes again, close those eyes so blue;
Blessed angels hover near, and Polly's heart is true.
Sleep, my dolly, dream once more, darling, do not sigh—
Fold your precious hands and sleep—by-low-by, lullaby.

Before Jan and Gurtruida were well started on the second stanza the Princesses of the Four Winds were motionless on their couches.

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The end of the first refrain found the Golden Goblin nodding on his throne, with the Animated Anchor snoring rustily on the hearthstone. The twelve princesses joined in the second refrain, but before it was ended they had sunk into cushioned seats which attendants placed for them and were sleeping as soundly as the Golden Goblin himself. As for Jan and Gurtruida, the last note found them seated on the floor at the feet of the Princess Ethelinda, resting their drowsy heads against her knees.

Soon the attendants withdrew and the only sounds to be heard in the Golden Goblin's throne-room were the crackling of the coral flames and the rusty snores of the Animated Anchor.

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CHAPTER XIII

THE VIGIL OF THE FAITHFUL FIREDOGS

THE rusty snoring of the Animated Anchor, stretched on the hearthstone at their feet, may have given the living firedogs the hint that they were no longer observed. At any rate the one on the left presently opened one eye, but closed it again quickly on observing that one eye of the firedog on the right was open and observing him. Evidently the firedog on the right was the bolder of the two, for he cleared his throat with a metallic, "Ahem!" and remarked:

"Oh, pshaw, Knobs, no one's looking."

"Are you quite sure, Longshanks?" said the firedog on the left, in a whisper that sounded like two pieces of stove-pipe being rubbed together.

"Of course. His Majesty and everybody else is sound asleep. Come on; I'm going to stretch my legs."

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With that Longshanks got up quite nimbly and stepped over the sleeping form of the Animated Anchor. Knobs followed his example timidly, and, elbow to elbow, stepping as softly as possible with their iron feet, the royal spies made a circuit of the apartment, looking through various doors to be certain that they were not observed by any of the attendants.

"They're all asleep, too," said Knobs, as they returned to the fireplace and stood regarding Jan and Gurtruida curiously.

"No wonder! Such a week as this has been I hope never to see again."

Longshanks was thoughtful. Presently he shuddered and asked:

"Do you suppose, Knobs, that his Majesty will insist upon our execution?"

"That idea is bothering me some, too, I must confess," said his companion. "It's a pity we can't perform some great service just now —detect a conspiracy of some kind."

"Have you any suspicions of that pair of

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little mortals over there?" asked Longshanks, pointing at the soundly-sleeping children.

"Not the slightest. I've taken a fancy to 'em myself. But I don't know about that queer fellow on the hearth. His snores are too loud, it seems to me, to be quite honest."

With that Longshanks lifted his iron foot and gave the Animated Anchor a smart kick in his ribs. Whereat the rusty fellow rolled over and snored louder and more rustily than before.

"No, he's all right," said Knobs.

But the great green parrot, who had opened one eye and observed the kick with disapproval, croaked hoarsely and said:

"Avast there!"

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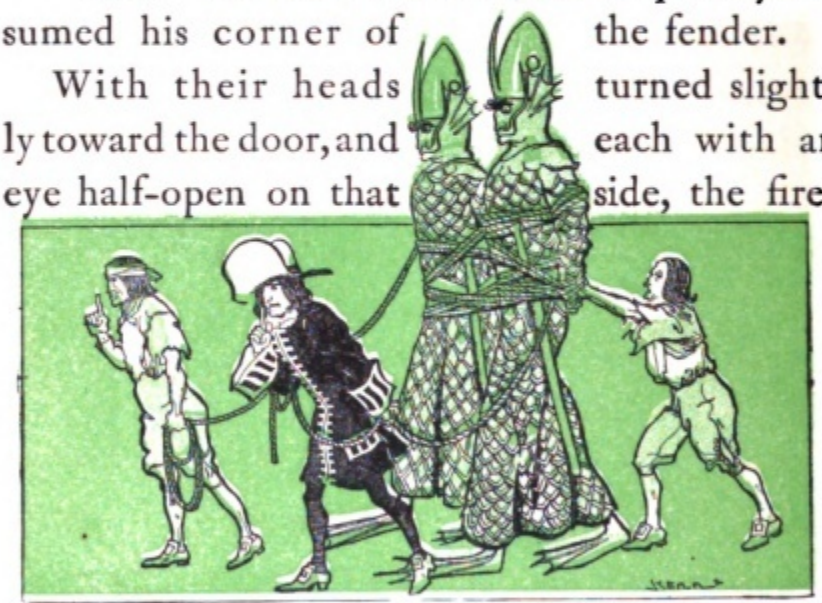
With one frightened leap Longshanks was back on his corner of the fender, trembling with fright. Knobs gazed open-mouthed at the parrot, who closed his eye again after remarking sagely:

"We're all accursed!"

Just then there was a slight noise at the main entrance to the apartment.

"Hist!" exclaimed Knobs, as he quickly resumed his corner of the fender.

With their heads turned slightly toward the door, and each with an eye half-open on that side, the fire-



dogs listened and watched hopefully. Suddenly the door opened and four bearded sailors en-

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tered, dragging with them the two gigantic guards, securely bound and gagged. Placing their helpless victims by the wall and closing the door the four sailors looked cautiously about them.

They were Dunken Hagen, Blut Trinker, Dyke Verdomd and Devil Dare, of the crew of the *Flying Dutchman*. Each with a finger on his lip, and stepping very softly, they advanced toward the sleeping Golden Goblin and his soundly-slumbering guests. The firedogs watched every movement, turning their heads slightly and half opening one eye and then the other. Dunken Hagen was the first to speak, in a harsh whisper through his beard.

"Split my tops'l; we're in luck, mates. They're all asleep and snoring."

"Wait," whispered Blut Trinker, drawing his sheath knife and creeping toward the Animated Anchor. "I've a grudge against that fellow."

But Devil Dare seized the knife as it was descending.

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"Avast, mate! There's no blood to shed there—nothing but rust. Besides, he sleeps sounder than the rest."

Dyke Verdomd was looking with suspicion on the firedogs. He thought he had seen one of them open his left eye. He seized the poker and gave Knobs a sharp rap on the side of his head. The clang of iron on iron satisfied him.

"No more of this nonsense," whispered Dunken Hagen. "A bag of the Golden Goblin's diamonds is what I'm after."

"No, no," said Devil Dare. "'Tis more than diamonds we need. We'll get them, too; but with the Princesses of the Four Winds in our hands we can force the Golden Goblin to hold back the west wind till we've passed the cape and are safely started home. We can't trust all to Black Patch."

With that the four sailors began looking about for signs of the four princesses. Devil Dare was first to catch sight of them as they lay sleeping on their couches in the adjoining

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room. He motioned to his comrades, and without further parley they stole softly in a body to the room of the princesses. All were sleeping so soundly that the sailors had no fear of their awakening.

Each lifted gently a princess from her couch, and seemed not to think it strange that her two arms fell naturally about his neck, so that great beards and flowing tresses mingled. Orienta, Princess of the East Wind, fell to the share of Dyke Verdomd; in the arms of Blut Trinker was Arctica, Princess of the North Wind; Antarctica, Princess of the South Wind, was in the arms of Dunken Hagen, while Devil Dare clasped tightly the beautiful form of Occidenta, Princess of the West Wind.

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The door to the princesses' chamber being wide, the four conspirators, burdened as they were, could retreat side by side. Thus they stole swiftly toward the great entrance, and had reached the center of the throne-room before any suspicion of danger crossed their minds. Then it was that those faithful royal spies, the two firedogs, took the most terrible of all possible advantages of the superstitious sailors from the *Flying Dutchman*.

At exactly the same instant Knobs and Longshanks rose from their places on the fender, and with eyes and mouths wide open, waving their long arms menacingly, leaped with a horrid clanking of iron upon the coral floor right in front of the sailors. The spectacle was so gruesome and so unexpected that their feet seemed glued in their tracks, and they joined in a mighty yell of fright. It was pure fright, so paralyzing that not one of the sailors could move. Their first impulse was to drop their lovely burdens and fly. Their arms

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did, indeed, fall to their sides, and the feet of each princess touched the floor; but at the sound of that hoarse and terrible scream each pair of white arms grasped more tightly the rough, hairy neck about which they were clasped. They seemed like children awakened out of some fearful nightmare and clinging to the nearest object for protection.

Tired as he was, the Golden Goblin's slumbers were not proof against the despairing shriek of Dunken Hagen and his fellows. His Cantankerous Majesty leaped from his throne and strode toward the culprits, while the twelve princesses, Jan and Gurtruida and the Animated Anchor rose to their feet, rubbing their eyes. The parrot flapped his wings and croaked:

"Avast! Avast, there! All hands to the boats!"

The Golden Goblin, seeing the Princesses of the Four Winds in the grasp of four robust and bearded sailors, took in the situation at a glance.

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"Aha, a conspiracy!" he said. "Well done, Knobs. Good, very good, Longshanks. All your indiscretions of the past are fully pardoned. Resume your posts of duty. I shall be pleased presently to command one of the royal housemaids to give both of you an extra fine polish."

The firedogs resumed their places on the fender, and looked so stiff and metallic that it was difficult for Jan and Gurtruida to believe that they had ever left them of their own accord.

The uproar had brought several soldiers running into the throne-room. When they saw what had befallen the Princesses of the Four Winds they fell upon their faces before the Golden Goblin.

"Ha, fellows, so this is how you guard the slumbers of the royal family—when we have not slept for a week!" said his Cantankerous Majesty, spurning one ~~with~~ his foot. "Very well, I shall attend to your cases later. In the meanwhile, see that these barbarians do not escape."

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The Golden Goblin pointed at the four sailors, who appeared to be still holding in their arms the four princesses,—although the reverse was really the case,—and each of them was instantly seized by two of the largest soldiers, while the others went and unbound the two guards lying by the wall.

While Jan and Gurtruida looked on, wondering what awful fate was in store for the sailors, the Golden Goblin stalked back and forth before the trembling culprits, twisting his long mustaches so they would hang more gracefully over his ears, and evidently reflecting deeply. Presently he clapped his great hands and said to an attendant who approached and fell on his knees:

"Bring forth the royal spider!"

At these words the twelve beautiful princesses looked grave, and Jan and Gurtruida saw that even the hardened soldiers of his Cantankerous Majesty turned pale.

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CHAPTER XIV

HOW THE ROYAL SPIDER'S PREY ESCAPED

WHEN the keeper of the royal spider had disappeared through a heavily-barred door beyond the great fireplace, and closed it carefully behind him, the Golden Goblin turned to the doomed sailors and addressed them sternly in these words:

"You have been caught red-handed in next to the gravest crime mentioned in the royal statutes. Modesty forbids me to mention the greatest crime of all,"—and the Golden Goblin gave a graceful twirl to the longest of his mustaches; "I leave that to your imagination. In seizing the persons of my daughters, the Princesses of the Four Winds, you have merited next to the most dreadful punishment invented and patented by the Royal Grand Chamberlain of Capital Penalties."

The Golden Goblin gave a twist to each

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of the little gold balls at the points of his wiry eyebrows, while the knees of the four sailors shook under them, and went on:

"Accordingly, I have sent for the royal spider."

Noticing that the doomed men did not appear to realize the awful significance of this statement, the Golden Goblin continued:

"As the efficacy of capital punishment depends largely upon the terror of anticipation, I have composed something, at the suggestion of the Royal Grand Chamberlain of Capital Penalties, which I think will enable the condemned to appreciate what is in store for them."

Out of politeness to his Cantankerous Majesty the twelve princesses assumed attitudes of attention. Jan and Gurtruida, with some idea of asking mercy for the sailors, had drawn near to them, so that all served as an audience, when the Golden Goblin, suiting voice and action to the words of his terror-inspiring descriptive poem, began his recitation called:

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THE GOLDEN GOBLIN

HOW THE SPIDER LOOKS TO THE FLY

Children, you have met Miss Spider—
And, perhaps, have sat beside her,
Like Miss Muffet
On a tuffet,
Eating curds and whey;
You are very well acquainted
With her reputation tainted
By her eating,
Upon meeting,
Every fly that comes her way.

From her presence you have scurried,
From her hairy horrors hurried,
Though she wouldn't—
For she couldn't—
Eat *you* if she'd try;
Now imagine, if you're able,
You're a fly in some queer fable—
In her larder
Must regard her
From the standpoint of a fly!

In her cruel web you're tangled,
Knowing you will soon be mangled—
Every quiver,
And each shiver
Binds you closer yet;
Thus you now regard Miss Spider,
Certain soon you'll be inside her—
Huge eyes flashing,

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THE GOLDEN GOBLIN

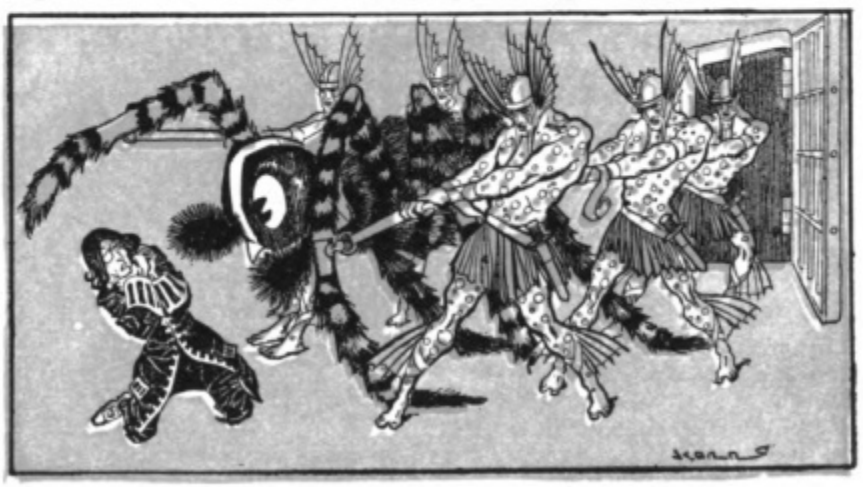
Sharp teeth gnashing,
Comes Miss Spider down her net!

Now you know her as the fly does,
What his eye sees so your eye does—
Mouth a cavern
Like a tavern
Yawning for its guest;
Awful whiskers, like some dragon's,
Four eyes big as wheels of wagons,
Tongues like dippers,
Horrid nippers—
All words fail to tell the rest!

By the time the Golden Goblin had reached the last line of his fearsome word-picture the sailors were howling dismally for mercy.

"Oh, your Majesty," pleaded Gurtruida.

But at that moment the heavily-barred door opened and a great, gray, hairy-legged spider,



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with a body as long as that of a full-grown Newfoundland dog and a head as big as a pumpkin, bounded into the room, dragging after him his keeper by a golden chain fastened to one of his legs. Evidently the spider recognized the four sailors as his prey, for he gnashed his nippers at them horribly. The poor men were transfixed with fear.

Now for the first time the Princesses of the Four Winds appeared to be fully awake. Winding their arms closer yet about the necks of the sailors, they shrieked in unison:

"No, no, no, no!" And Arctica, Princess of the North Wind, added, to the astonishment of Jan and Gurtruida:

"Send back the royal spider; these are good, honest men; we shall marry them."

"Of course," said the Golden Goblin with an indifference which Jan and Gurtruida found most amazing. "The question is, will they marry you?"

"What's that?" asked Devil Dare in great

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excitement. "Do you give your consent to our marriage with these beautiful princesses?"

"Why, certainly," replied his Cantankerous Majesty, with great cordiality.

"And will that save us from the royal spider?" asked Dunken Hagen, over the round shoulder of Antarctica, Princess of the South Wind.

"It will, indeed," said the Golden Goblin.

The sailors were overjoyed. Jan and Gurtruida could not understand why the twelve princesses should regard them with looks of such deep commiseration.

"Take away the royal spider," said his Cantankerous Majesty, who added, upon reflection: "and await my further instructions."

With much difficulty the keeper got the disappointed royal spider back into his den. Thereupon the Golden Goblin said to the Princesses of the Four Winds:

"Go now with your betrothed husbands and consult upon details of the wedding."

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As the four princesses, each leading her sailor lover, went toward four doors at opposite sides of the throne-room, the Golden Goblin called after them, and there ensued a dialogue which puzzled Jan and Gurtruida vastly.

"Princess of the North Wind?"

"Yes, your Majesty?"

"Remember the icicles."

"Yes, your Majesty."

To the Princess of the East Wind the Golden Goblin said:

"Remember the aspen."

And the Princess of the South Wind:

"Remember the flame."

And the Princess of the West Wind:

"Remember the dry bones."

Then the Princesses of the Four Winds disappeared with their betrothed husbands to talk over the wedding.

"May it please your Cantankerous Majesty," said the Princess Ethelinda, now that the Golden Goblin seemed to have leisure for other

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matters, "when I gave you the secret of the coral fire you agreed to grant any favor I might ask."

"I would much rather resume my rudely-interrupted slumbers," said his Majesty, with a yawn; "however, I suppose your time is precious."

"I will take up but little of your Majesty's time," said the princess, and she led Jan and Gurtruida before the throne, which his Majesty had resumed. "These little mortals are under the protection of her Majesty, the Queen of the Sea, and the master of the ship which is to bear them to their distant home is without, awaiting an audience, which both I and these children beg you will grant."

"By all means, let the fellow enter," yawned the Golden Goblin, and gave the necessary order to an attendant.

All the twelve princesses were standing about the throne. Suddenly the Golden Goblin sat up straight, looked at them in astonishment, and then began to laugh.

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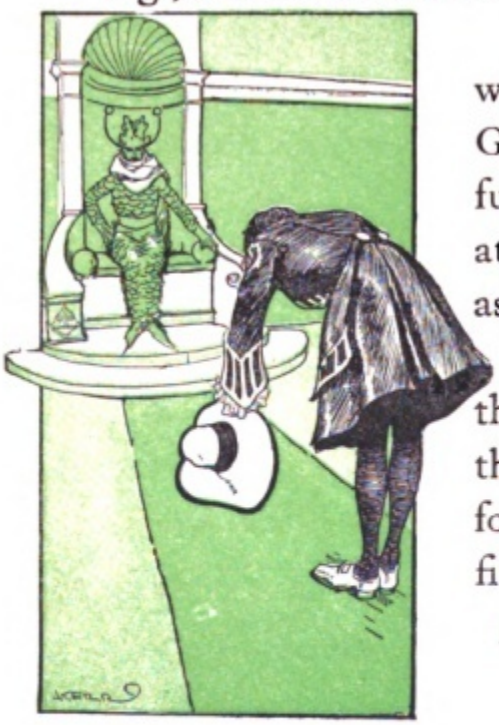
"That's it!" laughed his Cantankerous Majesty; "I'm light-headed on account of that cold and a whole week of sneezing. I could have sworn just now that the whole twelve of you royal mermaids had feet and long gowns like your mother, instead of tails like fishes, and silver scales."

"So we have," said Ethelinda, displaying one pretty foot in its little golden slipper. "Her Majesty, our mother, listened to our pleadings, and so transformed us."



"Well, upon my royal word!"—here the Golden Goblin broke off, cast a furtive look of admiration at the princesses, and then asked abruptly:

"Did you understand that I was to grant more than one favor in return for the secret of the coral fire?"

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"No, your Majesty," answered Ethelinda.

"Then when I receive the master of this ship and treat him well we are quits?"

"Yes, your Majesty."

"Ah!" The Golden Goblin smiled in a way that made Gurtruida shudder, though she could not tell why, and had reached out as though to seize Ethelinda's hand, when the door opened and Black Patch stood, bowing low, a few paces from the foot of the throne.

Then, for the first time, the great crab that formed the canopy above the Golden Goblin's throne seemed indeed alive. Jan saw its beady eyeballs shoot out from their sockets with an angry glare at Black Patch, and the next instant its two great claws shot forth

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and seized the chief mutineer by either arm. Black Patch screamed with terror. But the Golden Goblin said to the faithful creature:

"Peace, Evils!" And Black Patch, being released from the dreadful claws, fell to the floor, half fainting.

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CHAPTER XV

"THE FLYING DUTCHMAN, JUNIOR"

"DEAR Jan, why do you look so grave? Why, Jan, you're—you're not frightened?"

"Gurtruida, dear one, you know my weakness. I am really a coward. Nothing but the thought of you gives me the least bit of courage."

"I know better, Jan. You are the bravest boy in the world. It is only the truly brave who confess their fear; and it is they who have no fear whatever in the moment of real danger. But what alarms you, dear Jan?"

The children had drawn apart from the throne and the group surrounding it, knowing well what the request of Black Patch would

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be, and anticipating no speedy decision from the yawning Golden Goblin.

"Gurtruida," answered Jan, "strange things are brewing. I distrust the Golden Goblin. Why should he appear so willing to give the beautiful Princesses of the Four Winds to those four miserable sailors? And did you notice the look he gave just now to the Princess Ethelinda?"

"I have observed it all, Jan, dear," said Gurtruida soothingly. "But is not the powerful Queen of the Sea our friend? And have you not her ring to kiss and summon her aid when our safety is really threatened?"

"Why, true enough!" said Jan, brightening. "I had forgotten all about the ring,"—and he turned it around on his finger. "Do not leave my side for a moment, Gurtruida. Without your constant presence never in this world shall I be able to do the right thing at the right moment—I am so forgetful, and so easily scared."

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Gurtruida laid her head on his breast and sighed her feeling of perfect contentment and security.

The crisis was nearer than the children realized. They saw the Golden Goblin stretch out his hand toward Black Patch, and heard him say:

"Enough! You should know that there is but one way in which you can lift the curse from your ship and beat homeward against the contrary winds at the Cape of Storms. How often has Vanderdecken tried it and failed?"

Here the Golden Goblin paused and twirled his long green mustaches complacently, and continued:

"But Vanderdecken has always disdained to solicit my aid."

"Then, your Cantankerous Majesty," said Black Patch eagerly, "the plan will succeed if matured under your royal auspices?"

"Can you doubt it?" demanded the Golden Goblin imperiously.

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"No, no," Black Patch hastened to reply with great humility. "Only deign to instruct me in what is necessary."

His Cantankerous Majesty rose to his feet and said in a loud voice:

"The curse will be lifted from the *Flying Dutchman* when her master weds with a mortal maid."

"Ah!" exclaimed Black Patch in a voice of triumph. "And I am the master of the *Flying Dutchman!*"

The Golden Goblin silenced him with a look, and added:

"But this mortal maid must come to him of her own free will."

Black Patch fell on his knees with a groan of despair, whereupon the Golden Goblin spoke harshly:

"Ha! you doubt my power?"

"No, no," said Black Patch, seeing his mistake and rising hopefully to his feet. "If your Cantankerous Majesty will be pleased to—"

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But at that moment a shriek of terror filled the room, and from the door on the north came frantically the figure of a sailor who seemed clothed from head to foot in icicles. Pursued by Arctica, Princess of the North Wind, he approached the throne, and with a great rattling of broken ice on the coral floor, threw himself at the feet of the Golden Goblin, saying:

"Quick, your Cantankerous Majesty, I pray you summon again the royal spider!"

These astonishing words had hardly been uttered when there was another shriek, and from the door on the East came Dyke Verdomd, chattering and shivering as though in the throes of a fatal chill, pursued by Orienta, Princess of the East Wind, and knelt before the Golden Goblin, stuttering:

"P-p-please, your C-c-cantankerous M-m-majesty, I much p-p-prefer the r-royal s-s-spider."

A third shriek drowned the last words.

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From the door on the south, came Dunken Hagen, streaming with perspiration and with hair and beard which appeared to have been singed. Closely pursued by Antarctica, Princess of the South Wind, he fell on his knees beside his comrades and begged:

"Oh, your Cantankerous Majesty, give me to the royal spider!"

Before the Golden Goblin could make any reply there was a fourth shriek, and from the door on the west came headlong Devil Dare, with sunken eyes and shriveled skin, so devoured by fever that Jan and Gurtruida thought they could hear his dry bones rattle. He was followed by Occidenta, Princess of the West Wind. He threw himself on the floor at the feet of the Golden Goblin, saying:

"Bring out the royal spider; I am ready."

The Princesses of the Four Winds stood behind the sailors, holding out their arms appealingly to his Cantankerous Majesty. He regarded them severely and said:

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THE GOLDEN GOBLIN

"Upon my royal word, you girls seem incapable of learning anything by experience. How do you expect ever to secure husbands if you go on this way?

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Princess Arctica, didn't I warn you to remember the icicles?"

"Yes, papa; but you know I have to keep the north wind blowing."

"Princess Orienta, didn't I remind you of the aspen?"

"Yes, papa; but the chill east wind had to be attended to."

"Princess Antarctica, didn't I tell you to be careful about the flame?"

"Yes, papa; but how could I neglect the hot south wind?"

"Princess Occidenta, didn't I warn you to remember the dry bones?"

"Yes, papa; but the dry west wind had died down, and I had to—"

"Silence!" thundered the Golden Goblin. "It seems to me astonishing that you girls never can remember that when you are together your very extreme individual temperatures are neutralized, and that when you are separated you should be on your guard—es-

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pecially during the period of courtship. As I have been a widower so long, and never could understand girls anyway, you probably haven't been properly brought up."

The Golden Goblin paused to cast an admiring glance upon the twelve beautiful Princesses of the Sea, and then continued:

"As you are aware, my daughters, the laws of my realm permit me to marry as many princesses of the blood as I please, up to twelve. Well, I've made up my mind that henceforth you shall not lack motherly care and advice. I am going to go the matrimonial limit, and here, my daughters, stand the twelve princesses whom I shall lead to the altar within the next hour." And the Golden Goblin waved his hand at Ethelinda and her sisters.

Jan and Gurtruida were horrified.

"I think you had better kiss the ring, Jan," said Gurtruida, who was filled with pity.

"Not yet," said Jan, drawing a deep breath. "There's worse yet to come."

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At first the twelve princesses stood as though turned to stone. Suddenly they fell to weeping, while Ethelinda moaned:

"Oh, why were we not satisfied to be

mermaids? Oh, for our silver scales back again!"

While they still wept and wrung their hands,

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Black Patch pointed to Gurtruida and said to the Golden Goblin:

"If it pleases your Cantankerous Majesty to finish my business, there stands the mortal maid I shall marry."

"Take her," said the Golden Goblin shortly; "and leave me to my own pressing affairs."

Black Patch, with a horrid leer lighting his mean face, approached Gurtruida. She put her arms about Jan's neck and seemed about to faint.

"Oh, dear Jan," she said, "I feel so strange. He doesn't look ugly nor mean to me any more. Let me—let me go to him. I—"

But Jan held her fast in his arms. He seemed all in a moment to have become a man. Giving Black Patch a haughty glance, he pressed his lips to the ring given to him by the Queen of the Sea. In an instant the throne-room was flooded with a soft, opal light, and the twelve Princesses of the Sea disappeared as if by magic.

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The Golden Goblin's face turned a dark purple. In a voice choking with fury he thundered:

"Bring forth the royal spider!"

"Avast, there!" screamed the great green parrot, hopping from the high back of the throne to the shoulder of the Animated Anchor. "To the ship! To the ship! All aboard!"

"To the ship!" echoed the Animated Anchor, with a glance at Jan, who confronted Black Patch defiantly, holding Gurtruida tightly clasped in his arms.

Jan did not move. He was awaiting the special sign of the Queen of the Sea. The Animated Anchor, with the parrot on his

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shoulder, ran to the great doors, flung them open and disappeared. Suddenly the four sailors—who had nearly resumed their usual aspect, now that the individual influences of the Princesses of the Four Winds were neutralized by their nearness to each other—jumped up and fled toward the doors, which remained open.

"Bring forth the royal spider!" screamed the Golden Goblin again.

Again the opal light flooded the room, and suddenly the coral fire in the grate flamed up once and went out. All the palace attendants seemed stupefied. No one responded to the Golden Goblin's call for the royal spider.

Leaping from his throne, and followed by the Princesses of the Four Winds, his Cantankerous Majesty ran after the four sailors through the great doors.

Gurtruida, under the Golden Goblin's enchantment, was smiling at Black Patch and holding out her hand to him. As he tried to

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clasp it in his own, Jan, holding Gurtruida in his left arm, drew the sword with which the Queen of the Sea had armed him, as she had the cavalier princesses, and ran it straight through the villain.

Instead of falling, to Jan's surprise Black Patch uttered an unearthly shriek and fled after his companions. A third time the opal light glowed and he heard the voice of the Queen of the Sea. She was not visible, but he heard her say:

"Your manhood is proved, noble youth. Go to the great gates with your precious burden. There my swiftest charger awaits you."

Now Jan knew that he had not trusted in vain the Queen of the Sea. Unnoticed by any he carried Gurtruida out into the covered courtyard, where, for a moment, a strange sight arrested his steps.

Upon the after deck, in an attitude of command, stood the Animated Anchor with the great green parrot on his shoulder. The *Fly-*

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ing Dutchman had started toward the great gates, which were slowly opening outward. The four sailors—Devil Dare, Dunken Hagen, Dyke Verdomd and Blut Trinker—were attempting to board her by the rudder chains, to which they were clinging when the wrathful Golden Goblin, with a gesture, turned them to iron all but their horror-stricken faces.

Seeing the fate of his comrades, Black Patch ran to the bow of the ship, and with a mighty leap caught and clung to her figurehead, which had the shape of an atrociously ugly old woman. Another wave of the Golden Goblin's hand changed Black Patch into wood, all but his head, which, as the ship floated up and out through the gates, could be seen turning away in disgust from that of the figurehead, now alive and grinning at him through its broken and discolored teeth.

Now Jan, looking about him for the queen's swift charger, saw beside the open gates a magnificent flying fish, all bridled and saddled,

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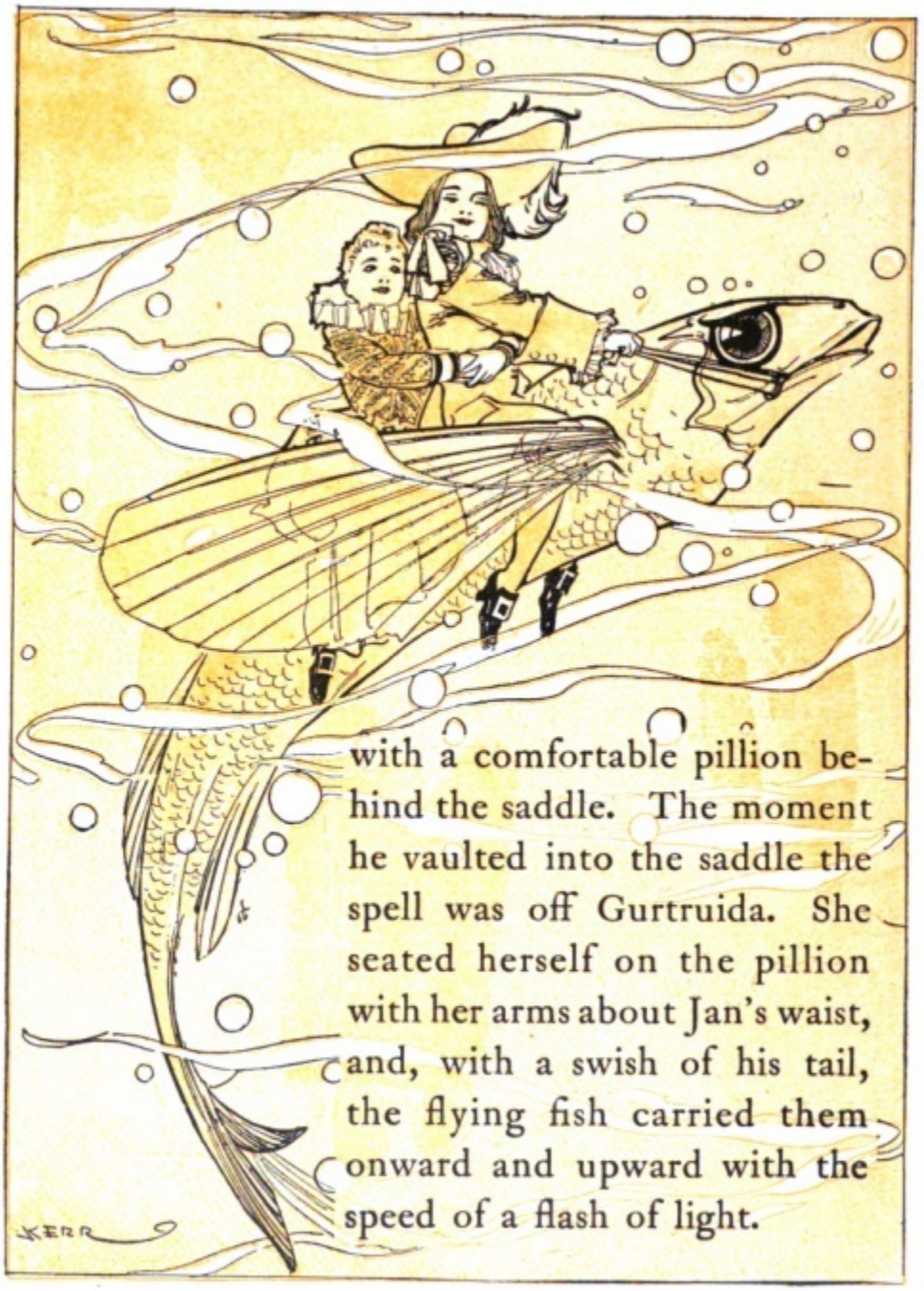

with a comfortable pillion behind the saddle. The moment he vaulted into the saddle the spell was off Gurtruida. She seated herself on the pillion with her arms about Jan's waist, and, with a swish of his tail, the flying fish carried them onward and upward with the speed of a flash of light.

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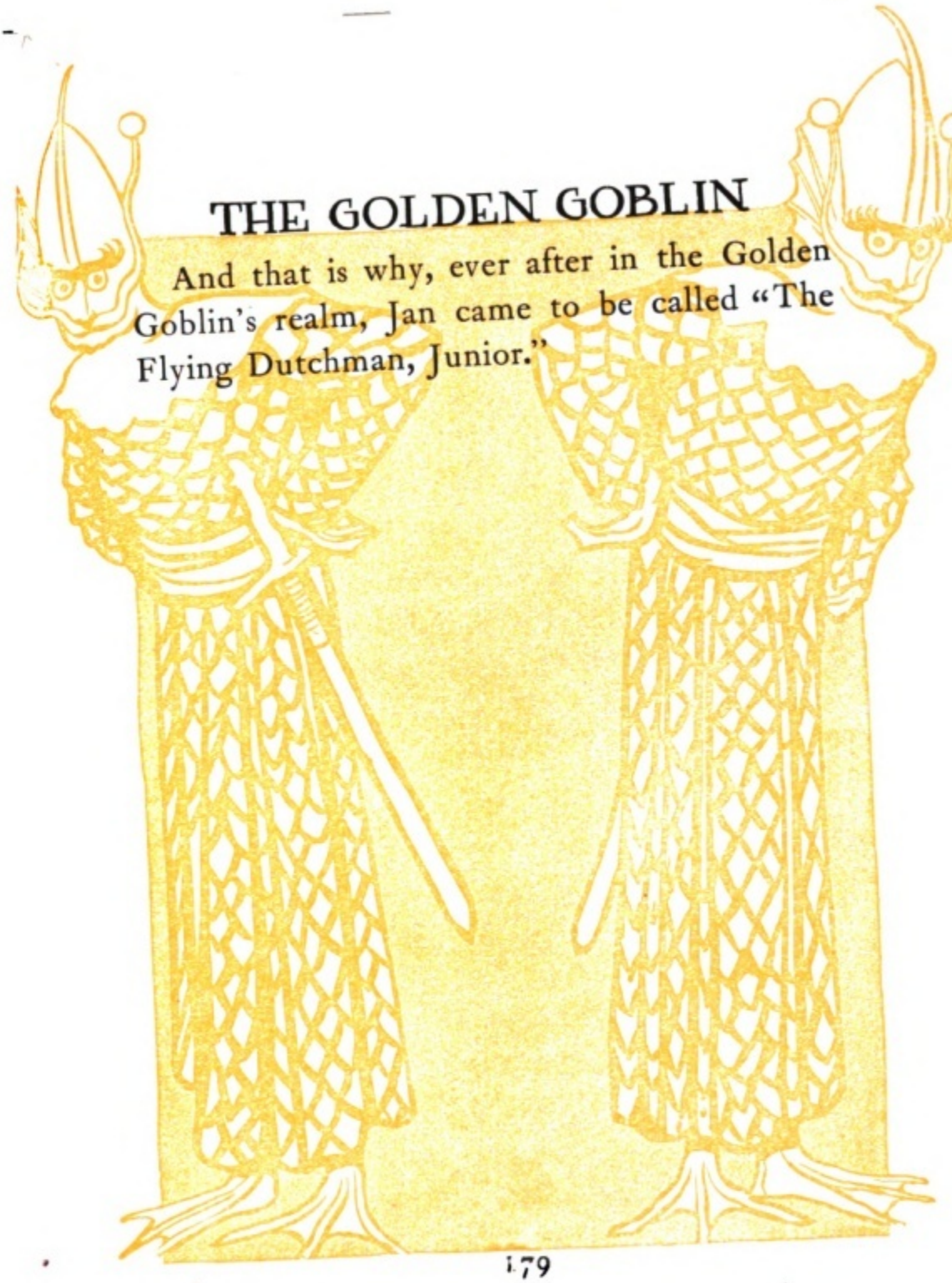
And that is why, ever after in the Golden Goblin's realm, Jan came to be called "The Flying Dutchman, Junior."



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CHAPTER XVI

THE RESCUE

IT seemed to the children that they had hardly drawn a full breath before, with a mighty leap, their strange steed had borne them up to the surface of the ocean and free of the waves into the air. It was night and the heavens were all spangled. The wings of the great fish were wide-spread, bearing him and his delighted riders swiftly and gracefully toward the Enchanted Isle, which, already, Jan and Gurtruida could see lying low on the horizon.

Now and then their steed would float gently down to the surface of the ocean, bury his tail in a wave, and with a quick and powerful splash rise high in the air again.

"It is glorious, dear Jan," said Gurtruida, clinging tightly to his waist. "And it is you, with your faith and your splendid courage, who have saved us both."

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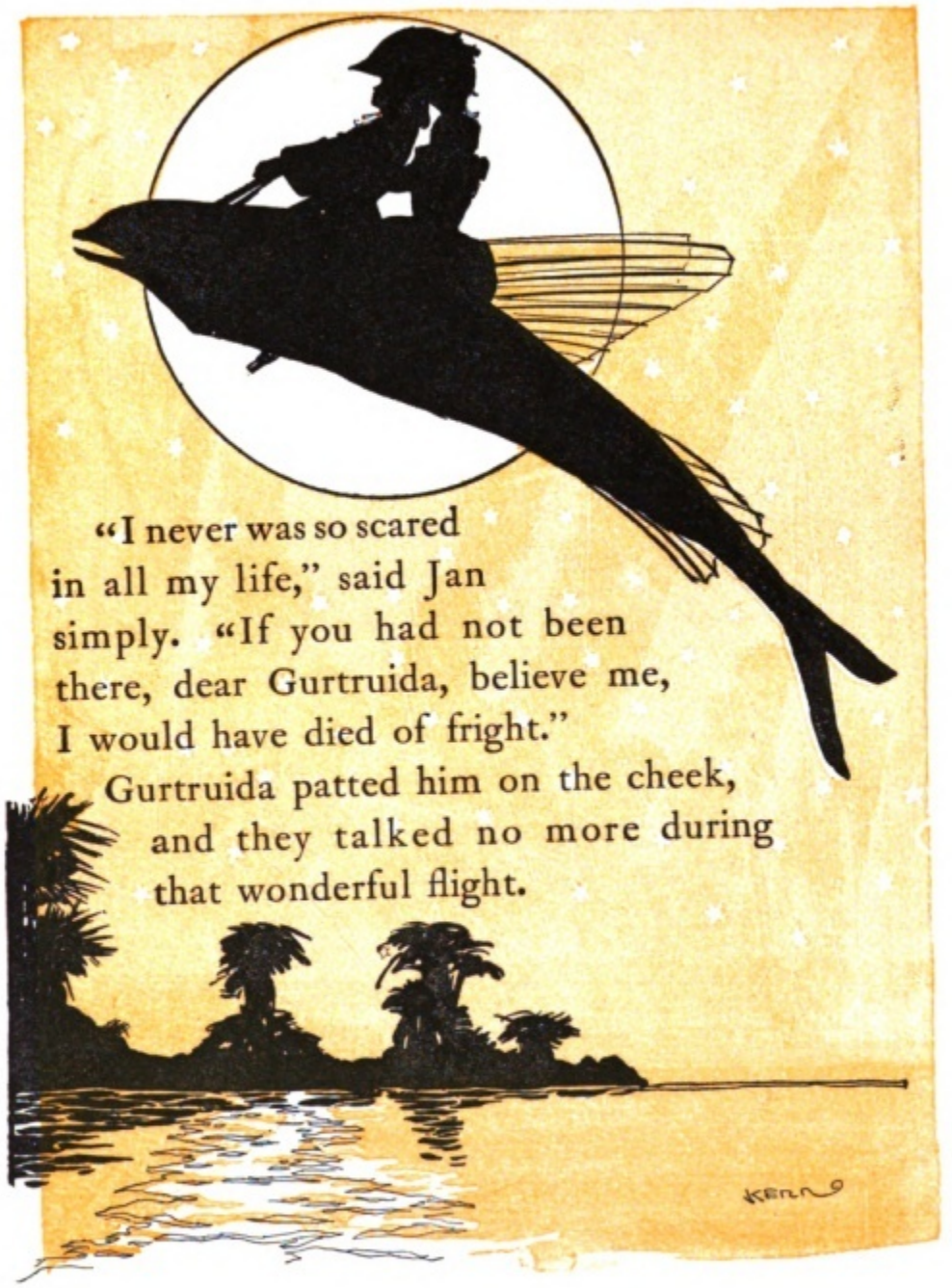

"I never was so scared
in all my life," said Jan
simply. "If you had not been
there, dear Gurtruida, believe me,
I would have died of fright."

Gurtruida patted him on the cheek,
and they talked no more during
that wonderful flight.

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The Enchanted Isle grew more and more distinct. Presently they could see the Queen and Neptune standing on the sandy beach, as though waiting to welcome them. At length the flying fish floated gently down to the water by the rocks, and the children stepped ashore. With a flash of his tail through the green water their faithful steed disappeared.

The Queen and Neptune greeted them most kindly. Neptune seemed in a state of surprising good-humor. When Gurtruida asked anxiously whether the twelve beautiful princesses had arrived safely, he chuckled till his crown seemed to dance a jig on his bald head. At the same time a silvery chorus of laughter rang out from the rocks that were half-buried in the sea.

Looking, startled, in that direction, Jan and Gurtruida saw the twelve beautiful royal mermaids sitting combing their hair just as when they had first made their acquaintance—only they were no longer mournful, but very merry.

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"Why—why," stammered Jan, "where are your lovely gowns—and feet?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Neptune, as he combed his beard with his long, bony fingers, "ha, ha! Their lovely gowns and their feet, and their doublets and hose, and their swords and their jewels are back in those chests, where they came from. It was a good lesson the Golden Goblin gave the minxes, and I hope now we shall have peace in the family."

Now the sound of wailing, as though of souls in despair, was wafted from the ocean on the easterly breeze. As these mournful sounds grew louder the children could see the ghostly white form of the *Flying Dutchman* approaching. After a little they could make out a majestic figure standing on her after-deck. They recalled their talk with the man in chains in the cabin, and Jan exclaimed:

"It is Vanderdecken! The sailors, in despair at the failure of their mutinous enterprise, have released him. He has resumed command of

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the vessel, and the sailors are begging him for mercy."

The sailors could be seen on their knees all about Captain Vanderdecken, who was pointing the ship straight for the deep water off the rocks on the Enchanted Isle.

The Queen of the Sea had seated herself on the hollowed rock which was her throne. She raised her jeweled wand, and the *Flying Dutchman*, floating gently in, stopped with her rail grazing the rocks. At the same instant the rusty and fantastic figure of the Animated Anchor leaped ashore and flung himself upon the sand near the Queen's feet.

"Let me be as I was, O Queen," he implored in agitated and rusty accents. "These ghosts and their ghostly ship have resumed their accursed voyage. Make me again as I was, and, oh, bury me deep from their sight."

With one pitying wave of her wand the Queen left visible above the sand, of what had been the Animated Anchor, only the rusty

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iron ring that had lain there, except during this brief interval, for a hundred years. And then a voice from under the bows of the ship was heard imploring:

"O powerful Queen, save me from this fate, and never again will I or my comrades of the crew rebel against the authority of the rightful master of the *Flying Dutchman*, Captain Vanderdecken."

And from the stern of the ship, where the bodies of the four sailors had been changed by the Golden Goblin into iron, the same as the rudder chains to which they clung, came the same plea and the same promise.

"Ha-ha!" laughed Vanderdecken harshly. "As to these four dupes, your Majesty, if you see fit to break the spell that binds them I offer no objection. But as to the craven wretch who usurped my authority, it pleases me to see him so well mated with the wooden hag under my bows. Ha, ha, ha!"

But Gurtruida, as was her gentle and pity-

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ing nature, begged the captain to forgive and restore them all to their former condition, whereupon Vanderdecken indicated to the Queen his consent that she should undo the whole of the Golden Goblin's spell. The Queen raised her wand and said:

"This I am willing to do for the reason that a Greater Power than any upon the earth or the sea holds in His hand the fate of this ship and her crew. It is ordained that they should go on their way as heretofore."

And without more words the Queen released the four sailors and Black Patch, the arch-mutineer, so that they were able to crawl upon the deck and prostrate themselves before the rightful master, as Vanderdecken had prophesied they would do.

Then the captain ordered Jan and Gurtruida to come aboard, as he would resume his voyage without further delay. But the Queen would not permit this. At her Majesty's orders the brass-bound chests belonging to the children,

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with their water-cask, were brought from the ship and placed upon the little raft, which still rested on the beach at the water's edge. At first the children seemed disturbed, but a protecting smile from the Queen satisfied them that all was going well.

The two chests of garments and jewels were taken aboard the ship, and the boat which the whale's tail had sent skyward with the conspirators in it, was replaced on its davits—and then the sails of the *Flying Dutchman* flapped, the sailors sprang into the rigging, Vanderdecken roared his orders, and while he stood at the helm the ghostly ship fairly bounded away from the rocks, once more upon that hopeless course continued through two and a half centuries, and which is never to end while God wills it so.

Jan and Gurtruida seated themselves on the little raft, which had borne them so gently and safely. They had no fears, for they knew that the Queen of the Sea was still their pro-

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tectress. She was smiling upon them from her throne and pointing her wand out over the sea. Suddenly, as they were waving a pleasant farewell to the twelve beautiful mermaids, a billow came in and swept them gently on the raft far out from shore, while a familiar voice said:

"Swish, swash, burst my bubbles!"

It was Master Spray, but the odd fellow seemed much preoccupied. Muttering incoherently about his bursting bubbles, he led the raft such a merry dance over the waves that soon the Enchanted Isle had disappeared from the children's view entirely. All at once, after casting a startled glance at the eastern horizon, Master Spray danced away toward the west, apparently in great agitation, without a single word of farewell, and was seen no more.

"What strange conduct!" said Jan, standing by the mast and straining his eyes in an effort to see what had frightened away their merry companion; "I can see nothing that is alarming, even to me."

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"Perhaps it means that we are no longer enchanted," said Gurtruida. "Aren't you thirsty, Jan, dear? I am—terribly."

"That's it," said Jan. "I was wondering what was the matter with me. It's thirst. You are right, we are no longer enchanted."

Jan drew cups of water from the cask and they both drank heartily. Then Gurtruida said:

"I'm so sleepy, dear Jan."

"So am I, Gurtruida," and Jan yawned. "There's nothing to be done; we might as well sleep till daylight."

Jan rested his back against the mast and drew Gurtruida's head down on his shoulder.

"Are you afraid, dear Jan?"

"Not a bit—not now, with your head where it is. Are you afraid, Gurtruida?"

"No, Jan, dear. I shall never be afraid—while my head—is where—it—is—now."

The last word was no more than a sigh. The children slept and the stars watched over them.

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"Jan! Jan, dear! Do you hear those men shouting? And those lights, Jan, what are they?"

Jan got up, rubbing his eyes, and looked with Gurtruida at the long, parallel rows of lights, and heard men shouting.

Suddenly the last vestige of slumber was swept from their eyelids. The dawn was just breaking, and against the first faint flush in the east, not a quarter of a mile away, was outlined a great ocean steamship, westward bound, and flying the flag of their own dear Holland.

THE END

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Jan got up and looked with Gurtruida. *Page 190*

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THE GOLDEN GOBLIN

or The Flying Dutchman, Junior

A pleasant fantasy for children based on the most fascinating of all undying legends

TOLD IN PROSE AND VERSE

By

CURTIS DUNHAM

Author of TWO IN A ZOO

AND

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