



**110** Johann Wolfgang von Goethe  
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# A Fairy Tale, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Wearied with the labours of the day, an old Ferryman lay asleep in his hut, on the bank of a wide river, which the late heavy rains had swollen to an unprecedented height. In the middle of the night he was awakened by a loud cry: he listened; it was the call of some travellers who wished to be ferried over.

Upon opening the door, he was surprised to see two Will-o'-the-wisps dancing round his boat, which was still secured to its moorings. Speaking with human voices, they assured him that they were in the greatest possible hurry, and wished to be carried instantly to the other side of the river. Without losing a moment, the old Ferryman pushed off, and rowed across with his usual dexterity. During the passage the strangers whispered together in an unknown language, and several times burst into loud laughter; whilst they amused themselves with dancing upon the sides and seats of the boat, and cutting fantastic capers at the bottom.

"The boat reels," cried the old man; "and, if you continue so restless, it may upset. Sit down, you Will-o'-the-wisps."

They burst into loud laughter at this command, ridiculed the boatman, and became more troublesome than ever. But he bore their annoyance patiently, and they soon reached the opposite bank of the river.

"Here is something for your trouble," said the passengers, shaking themselves, when a number of glittering gold pieces fell into the boat.

"What are you doing?" cried the old man: "some misfortune will happen should a single piece of gold fall into the water. The river, which has a strong antipathy to gold, would become fearfully agitated, and swallow both me and my boat. Who can say even what might happen to yourselves? I pray you take back your gold."

"We can take nothing back which we have once shaken from our persons," answered one of them.

"Then, I shall be compelled," replied the old boatman, as he stooped, and collected the gold in his cap, "to take it to the shore and bury it."

The Will-o'-the-wisps had in the meantime leaped out of the boat, upon which the old man cried, "Pay me my fare."

"The man who refuses gold must work for nothing," answered the Will-o'-the-wisps.

"My payment must consist of fruits of the earth," rejoined the Ferryman.

"Fruits of the earth? We despise them: they are not food for us."

"But you shall not depart," replied the Ferryman, "till you have given me three cauliflowers, three artichokes, and three large onions."

The Will-o'-the-wisps were in the act of running away, with a laugh, when they felt themselves in some inexplicable manner fixed to the earth: they had never experienced so strange a sensation. They then promised to pay the demand without delay, upon which the Ferryman released them, and instantly pushed off with his boat.

He was already far away, when they called after him, "Old man! listen: we have forgotten something important."

But he heard them not, and continued his course. When he had reached a point lower down, on the same side of the river, he came to some rocks which the water was unable to reach, and proceeded to bury the dangerous gold. Observing a deep cleft which opened between two rocks, he threw the gold into it, and returned to his dwelling.

This cleft was inhabited by a beautiful green Dragon, who was awakened from her sleep by the sound of the falling money. At the very first appearance of the glittering pieces, she devoured them greedily, then searched about carefully in hopes of finding such other coins as might have fallen accidentally amongst the briers, or between the fissures of the rocks.

The Dragon immediately felt overpowered with the most delightful sensations, and perceived with joy that she became suddenly shining and transparent. She had been long aware that this change was possible; but, entertaining some doubt whether the brilliance would continue, she felt impelled by curiosity to leave her dwelling, and ascertain, if possible, to whom she was indebted for the beautiful gold. She found no one; but she became lost in admiration of herself, and of the brilliant light which illumined her path through the thick

underwood, and shed its rays over the surrounding green. The leaves of the trees glittered like emeralds, and the flowers shone with glorious hues. In vain did she penetrate the solitary wilderness; but hope dawned when she reached the plains, and observed at a distance a light resembling her own.

"Have I at last discovered my fellow?" she exclaimed, and hastened to the spot.

She found no obstacle from bog or morass; for though the dry meadow and the high rock were her dearest habitations, and though she loved to feed upon the spicy root, and to quench her thirst with the crystal dew, and with fresh water from the spring, yet, for the sake of her beloved gold and of her glorious light, she was willing to encounter every privation.

Wearied and exhausted, she reached at length the confines of a wide morass, where our two Will-o'-the-wisps were amusing themselves in playing fantastic antics. She made toward them, and, saluting them, expressed her delight at being able to claim relationship with such charming personages. The lights played around her, skipped from side to side, and laughed about in their own peculiar fashion.

"Dear aunt!" they exclaimed, "what does it signify, even though you are of horizontal form? We are related at least through brilliancy. But look how well a tall, slender figure becomes us gentry of the vertical shape," and, so saying, both the lights compressed their breadth together, and shot up into a thin and pointed line. "Do not be offended, dear friend," they continued, "but what family can boast of a privilege like ours? Since the first Will-o'-the-wisp was created, none of our race have ever been obliged to sit down or to take repose."

But all this time the feelings of the Dragon in the presence of her relations were anything but pleasant for, exalt her head as high as she would, she was compelled to stoop to earth again when she wished to advance; and, though she was proud of the brilliancy which she shed round her own dark abode, she felt her light gradually diminish in the presence of her relatives, and began to fear that it might finally be extinguished.

In her perplexity she hastily inquired whether the gentlemen could inform her whence the shining gold had come, which had lately fallen into the cleft of the rocks hard by; as in her opinion it was a precious shower from heaven. The Will-o'-the-wisps immediately shook themselves (at the same time laughing loudly), and a deluge of gold pieces at once flowed around. The Dragon devoured them greedily.

"We hope you like them, dear aunt," shouted the shining Will-o'-the-wisps, "we can supply you with any quantity."

They shook themselves with such copious effect, that the Dragon found it difficult to swallow the bright dainties with sufficient speed. Her brilliancy increased as the gold disappeared, till at length she shone with inconceivable radiance; while in the same proportion the Will-o'-the-wisps grew thin and tapering, without, however, losing the smallest iota of their cheerful humour.

"I am under eternal obligations to you," said the Dragon, pausing to breathe from her voracious meal: "ask of me what you please; I will give you anything you demand."

"A bargain!" answered the Will-o'-the-wisps, "tell us, then, where the beautiful Lily dwells. Lead us to her palace and gardens without delay: we die of impatience to cast ourselves at her feet."

"You ask a favour," replied the Dragon, with a deep sigh, "which it is not in my power so quickly to bestow. The beautiful Lily lives, unfortunately, on the opposite bank of the river. We cannot cross over on this stormy night."

"Cruel river, which separates us from the object of our desires! But cannot we call back the old Ferryman?" said they.

"Your wish is vain," answered the Dragon; "for, even were you to meet him on this bank, he would refuse to take you; as, though he can convey passengers to this side of the stream, he can carry no one back."

"Bad news, indeed! But are there no other means of crossing the river?"

"There are, but not at this moment: I myself can take you over at mid-day."

"That is an hour," replied the Will-o'-the-wisps, "when we do not usually travel."

"Then, you had better postpone your intention till evening, when you may cross in the Giant's shadow."

"How is that managed?" they inquired.

"The Giant," replied the Dragon, "who lives hard by, is powerless with his body: his hands are incapable of raising even a straw, his shoulders can bear no burden; but his shadow accomplishes all for him. For this reason he is most powerful at sunrise and at sunset. At the hour of evening the Giant will approach the river softly; and, if you place yourself upon his shadow, it will carry you over. Meet me at mid-day at the corner of the wood, where the trees hang over the river, when I myself will take you across, and introduce you to the beautiful Lily. Should you, however, shrink from the noonday heat, your only alternative is to apply to the Giant, when evening casts its shadows around; and he will no doubt prove obliging."

With a graceful salutation the young gentlemen took their leave; and the Dragon rejoiced at their departure, partly that she might indulge her feelings of pleasure at her own light, and partly that she might satisfy a curiosity by which she had long been tormented.

In the clefts of the rocks where she dwelt, she had lately made a wonderful discovery; for, although she had been obliged to crawl through these chasms in darkness, she had learned to distinguish every object by feeling. The productions of Nature, which she was accustomed everywhere to encounter, were all of an irregular kind. At one time she wound her way amongst the points of enormous crystals, at another she was for a moment impeded by the veins of solid silver, and many were the precious stones which her light discovered to her. But, to her great astonishment, she had encountered in a rock, which was securely closed on all sides' objects which betrayed the plastic hand of man. Smooth walls, which she was unable to ascend; sharp,



regular angles, tapering columns and, what was even more wonderful, human figures, round which she had often entwined herself, and which appeared to her to be formed of brass or of polished marble. She was now anxious to behold all these objects with her eyes, and to confirm, by her own observation, what she had hitherto but suspected. She now thought herself capable of illumining with her own light these wonderful subterranean caverns, and indulged the hope of becoming thoroughly acquainted with these astonishing mysteries. She delayed not, and quickly found the opening through which she was accustomed to penetrate into the sanctuary.

Arrived at the place, she looked round with wonder; and though her brilliancy was unable to light the entire cavern, yet many of the objects were sufficiently distinct. With astonishment and awe, she raised her eyes to an illumined niche, in which stood the statue of a venerable King, of pure gold. In size the statue was colossal, but the figure was rather that of a little than of a great man. His well-turned limbs were covered with a simple robe, and his head was encircled by an oaken garland.

Scarcely had the Dragon beheld this venerable form, when the King found utterance, and said, "How comest thou hither?"

"Through the cleft," answered the Dragon, "in which the gold abides."

"What is nobler than gold?" asked the King.

"Light," replied the Dragon.

"And what is more vivid than light?" continued the Monarch.

"Speech," said the Serpent.

During this conversation the Dragon had looked stealthily around, and observed another noble statue in an adjoining niche. A silver King sat there enthroned, of figure tall and slender: his limbs were enveloped in an embroidered mantle; his crown and sceptre were adorned with precious stones; his countenance wore the serene dignity of pride; and he seemed about to speak, when a dark vein, which ran through the marble of the wall, suddenly became brilliant, and cast a soft light through the whole temple. This light discovered a third King, whose mighty form was cast in brass: he leaned upon a massive club, his head was crowned with laurels; and his proportions resembled a rock rather than a human being.

The Dragon felt a desire to approach a fourth King, who stood before her at a distance; but the wall suddenly opened, the illumined vein hashed like lightning, and became as suddenly extinguished.

A man of middle stature now approached. He was clad in the garb of a peasant: in his hand he bore a lamp, the flame of which it was delightful to behold, and which lightened the entire dwelling, without leaving the trace of a shadow.

"Why dost thou come, since we have already light?" asked the Golden King.

"You know that I can shed no ray on what is dark," replied the old man.

"Will my kingdom end?" inquired the Silver Monarch.

"Late or never," answered the other.

The Brazen King then asked, with voice of thunder, "When shall I arise?"

"Soon," was the reply.

"With whom shall I be united?" continued the former.

"With thine elder brother," answered the latter.

"And what will become of the youngest?"

"He will repose."

"I am not weary," interrupted the fourth King, with a deep but faltering voice.

During this conversation the Dragon had wound her way softly through the temple, surveyed everything which it contained, and approached the niche in which the fourth King stood. He leaned against a pillar, and his handsome countenance bore traces of melancholy. It was difficult to distinguish the metal of which the statue was composed. It resembled a mixture of the three metals of which his

brothers were formed, but it seemed as if the materials had not thoroughly blended; as the veins of gold and silver crossed each other irregularly through the brazen mass, and destroyed the effect of the whole.

The Golden King now asked, "How many secrets dost thou know?"

"Three," was the reply.

"And which is the most important?" inquired the Silver King.

"The revealed," answered the old man.

"Wilt thou explain it to us?" asked the Brazen King.

"When I have learned the fourth," was the response.

"I care not," murmured he of the strange compound.

"I know the fourth," interrupted the Dragon, approaching the old man, and whispering in his ear.

"The time is come," exclaimed the latter, with tremendous voice. The sounds echoed through the temple; the statues rang again: and in the same instant the old man disappeared toward the west, and the Dragon toward the east; and both pierced instantly through the impediments of the rock.

Every passage through which the old man bent his course became immediately filled with gold; for the lamp which he carried possessed the wonderful property of converting stones into gold, wood into silver, and dead animals into jewels. But, in order to produce this effect, it was necessary that no other light should be near. In the presence of another light the lamp merely emitted a soft illumination, which, however, gave joy to every living thing.

The old man returned to his hut on the brow of the hill, and found his wife in the greatest sorrow. She was seated at the fire, her eyes filled with tears; and she refused all consolation.

"What a misfortune," she exclaimed, "that I allowed you to leave home today!"

"What has happened?" answered the old man, very quietly.

"You were scarcely gone," replied she with sobs, "before two rude travellers came to the door: unfortunately I admitted them; as they seemed good, worthy people. They were attired like flames, and might have passed for Will-o'-the-wisps; but they had scarcely entered the house before they commenced their flatteries, and became at length so importunate that I blush to recollect their conduct."

"Well," said the old man, smiling, "the gentlemen were only amusing themselves; and, at your age, you should have considered it as the display of ordinary politeness."

"My age!" rejoined the old woman. "Will you for ever remind me of my age? How old am I, then? And ordinary politeness! But I can tell you something: look round at the walls of our hut: you will now be able to see the old stones, which have been concealed for more than a hundred years. These visitors extracted all the gold more quickly than I can tell you, and they assured me that it was of capital flavour. When they had completely cleared the walls, they grew cheerful; and, in a few minutes, their persons became tall, broad, and shining. They thereupon again commenced their tricks, and repeated their flatteries, calling me a queen. They shook themselves, and immediately a profusion of gold pieces fell on all sides. You may see some of them still glittering on the Door, but a calamity soon occurred. Our dog Mops swallowed some of them; and, see, he lies dead in the chimney corner. Poor animal! His death afflicts me. I did not observe it till they had departed, otherwise I should not have promised to pay the Ferryman the debt they owed him."

"How much do they owe?" inquired the old man.

"Three cauliflowers," answered his wife, "three artichokes, and three onions. I have promised to take them to the river at break of day."

"You had better oblige them," said the old man, "and they may perhaps serve us in time of need."

"I know not if they will keep their word," said she, "but they promised and vowed to serve us."

The fire had, in the meantime, died away; but the old man covered the cinders with ashes, put away the shining gold pieces, and lighted his

lamp afresh. In the glorious illumination the walls became covered with gold, and Mops was transformed into the most beautiful onyx that was ever beheld. The variety of colour which glittered through the costly gem produced a splendid effect.

"Take your basket," said the old man, "and place the onyx in it. Then collect the three cauliflowers, the three artichokes, and the three onions, lay them together, and carry them to the river. The Dragon will bear you across at mid-day: then visit the beautiful Lily; her touch will give life to the onyx, as her touch gives death to every living thing; and it will be to her an affectionate friend. Tell her not to mourn; that her deliverance is nigh; that she must consider a great misfortune as her greatest blessing, for the time is come."

The old woman prepared her basket, and set forth at break of day. The rising sun shone brightly over the river, which gleamed in the far distance. The old woman journeyed slowly on, for the weight of the basket oppressed her; but it did not arise from the onyx. Nothing lifeless proved a burden; for, when the basket contained dead things, it rose aloft, and floated over her head. But a fresh vegetable, or the smallest living creature, induced fatigue. She had toiled along for some distance, when she started, and suddenly stood still; for she had nearly placed her foot upon the shadow of the Giant, which was advancing toward her from the plain. Her eye now perceived his monstrous bulk: he had just bathed in the river, and was coming out of the water. She knew not how to avoid him. He saw her, saluted her jestingly, and thrust the hand of his shadow into her basket. With dexterity he stole a cauliflower, an artichoke, and an onion, and raised them to his mouth. He then proceeded on his course up the stream, and left the woman alone.

She considered whether it would not be better to return, and supply the missing vegetables from her own garden; and, lost in these reflections, she went on her way until she arrived at the bank of the river. She sat down, and awaited for a long time the arrival of the Ferryman. He appeared at length, having in his boat a traveller whose air was mysterious. A handsome youth, of noble aspect, stepped on shore.

"What have you brought with you?" said the old man.

"The vegetables," replied the woman, "which the Will-o'-the-wisps owe you," pointing to the contents of her basket.

But when he found that there were but two of each kind, he became angry, and refused to take them.

The woman implored him to relent, assuring him that she could not then return home; as she had found her burden heavy, and she had still a long way to go. But he was obstinate, maintaining that the decision did not depend upon him.

"I am obliged to collect my gains for nine hours," said he, "and I can keep nothing for myself till I have paid a third part to the river."

At length, after much contention, he told her there was still a remedy.

"If you give security to the river, and acknowledge your debt, I will take the six articles; though such a course is not devoid of danger."



"But, if I keep my word, I incur no risk," she said earnestly.

"Not the least," he replied. "Thrust your hand into the river, and promise that within four and twenty hours you will pay the debt."

The old woman complied, but shuddered as she observed that her hand, on drawing it out of the water had become as black as a coal. She scolded angrily; exclaiming that her hands had always been most beautiful, and that, notwithstanding her hard work, she had ever kept them white and delicate. She gazed at her hand with the greatest alarm, and exclaimed, "This is still worse: it has shrunk, and is already much smaller than the other!"

"It only appears so now," said the Ferryman;" but, if you break your word, it will be so in reality. Your hand will in that case grow smaller, and finally disappear; though you will still preserve the use of it."

"I would rather," she replied, "lose it altogether, and that my misfortune should be concealed. But no matter, I will keep my word, to escape this black disgrace, and avoid so much anxiety."

Whereupon she took her basket, which rose aloft, and floated freely over her head. She hastened after the youth, who was walking thoughtfully along the bank. His noble figure and peculiar attire had made a deep impression upon her mind.

His breast was covered with a shining cuirass, whose transparency permitted the motions of his graceful form to be seen. From his

shoulders hung a purple mantle, and his auburn locks waved in beautiful curls round his uncovered head. His noble countenance and his well-turned feet were exposed to the burning rays of the sun. Thus did he journey patiently over the hot sand, which, "true to one sorrow, he trod without feeling."

The garrulous old woman sought to engage him in conversation; but he heeded her not, or answered briefly, until, notwithstanding his beauty, she became weary, and took leave of him, saying, "You are too slow for me, sir; and I cannot lose my time, as I am anxious to cross the river, with the assistance of the Green Dragon, and to present the beautiful Lily with my husband's handsome present."

So saying, she left him speedily, upon which the youth took heart, and followed her without delay.

"You are going to the beautiful Lily!" he exclaimed, "if so, our way lies together. What present are you taking her?"

"Sir," answered the woman, "it is not fair that you should so earnestly inquire after my secrets, when you paid so little attention to my questions. But, if you will relate your history to me, I will tell you all about my present."

They made the bargain: the woman told her story, including the account of the dog, and allowed him to view the beautiful onyx.

He lifted the beautiful precious stone from the basket, and took Mops, who seemed to slumber softly, in his arms.

"Fortunate animal!" he exclaimed: "you will be touched by her soft hands, and restored to life, in place of fleeing from her contact, like all other living things, to escape an evil doom. But, alas! what words are these? Is it not a sadder and more fearful fate to be annihilated by her presence than to die by her hand? Behold me, thus young, what a melancholy destiny is mine! This armour, which I have borne with glory in the battle-broil; this purple, which I have earned by the wisdom of my government, - have been converted by Fate, the one into an unceasing burden, the other into an empty honour. Crown, sceptre, and sword are worthless. I am now as naked and destitute as every other son of clay. For such is the spell of her beautiful blue eyes, that they waste the vigour of every living creature; and those whom the contact of her hand does not destroy are reduced to the condition of breathing shadows."

Thus he lamented long, but without satisfying the curiosity of the old woman, who sought information respecting both his mental and his bodily sufferings. She learned neither the name of his father nor his kingdom. He stroked the rigid Mops, to whom the beams of the sun and the caresses of the youth had imparted warmth. He inquired earnestly about the man with the lamp, about the effects of the mysterious light, and seemed to expect thence great relief from his deep sorrow.

So discoursing, they observed at a distance the majestic arch of the bridge, which stretched from one bank of the river to the other, and shone splendidly in the beams of the sun. Both were astonished at the sight, as they had never before seen it so resplendent.

"What!" cried the Prince, "was it not sufficiently beautiful before, with its decorations of jasper and opal? Can we now dare to pass over it, constructed as it is of emerald and chrysolite of varied beauty?"

Neither had any idea of the change which the Dragon had undergone; for in truth it was the Dragon, whose custom it was at mid-day to arch her form across the stream, and assume the appearance of a beauteous bridge, which travellers crossed with silent reverence.

Scarcely had they reached the opposite bank, when the bridge began to sway from side to side, and gradually sank to the level of the water; while the Green Dragon assumed her accustomed shape, and followed the travellers to the shore. The latter thanked her for her condescension in allowing them a passage across the stream; observing, at the same time, that there were evidently more persons present than were actually visible. They heard a light whispering, which the Dragon answered with a similar sound. They listened, and heard the following words: "We will first make our observations unperceived in the park of the beautiful Lily, and look for you, when the shadows of evening fall, to introduce us to such perfect beauty. You will find us on the bank of the great lake."

"Agreed," answered the Dragon; and a hissing sound died away in the air.

Our three travellers further consulted with what regard to precedence they should appear before the beautiful Lily; for, let her visitors be never so numerous, they must enter and depart singly if they wished to escape bitter suffering.

The woman, carrying in the basket the transformed dog, came first to the garden, and sought an interview with her benefactress. She was easily found, as she was then singing to the accompaniment of her harp. The sweet tones showed themselves first in the form of circles upon the bosom of the calm lake; and then, like a soft breeze, they imparted motion to the grass and to the tremulous leaves. She was seated in a secluded nook beneath the shade of trees, and at the first glance enchanted the eyes, the ear, and the heart of the old woman, who advanced toward her with rapture, and protested that since their last meeting she had become more beautiful than ever. Even from a distance she saluted the charming maiden in these words:

"What joy to be in your presence! What a heaven surrounds you! What a spell proceeds from your lyre, which, encircled by your soft arms, and influenced by the pressure of your gentle bosom and slender fingers, utters such entrancing melody! Thrice happy the blessed youth who could claim so great a favour!"

So saying, she approached nearer. The beautiful Lily raised her eyes, let her hands drop, and said, "Do not distress me with your untimely praise: it makes me feel even more unhappy. And see! Here is my beautiful canary dead at my feet, which used to accompany my songs so sweetly; he was accustomed to sit upon my harp, and was carefully instructed to avoid my touch. This morning, when, refreshed by sleep, I tuned a pleasant melody, the little warbler sang with increased harmony, when suddenly a hawk soared above us. My little bird sought refuge in my bosom, and at that instant I felt the last gasp of his expiring breath. It is true that the hawk, struck by my instantaneous glance, fell lifeless into the stream; but what avails this penalty to me? my darling is dead, and his grave will but add to the number of the weeping willows in my garden."

"Take courage, beautiful Lily," interrupted the old woman, whilst at the same moment she wiped away a tear which the narration of the sorrowful maiden had brought to her eye, "take courage, and learn from my experience to moderate your grief. Great misfortune is often the harbinger of intense joy. For the time approaches: but in truth," continued she, "'the web of life is of a mingled yarn.' See my hand, how black it has grown; and, in truth, it has become much diminished in size: I must be speedy, before it be reduced to nothing. Why did I promise favours to the Will-o'-the-wisps, or meet the Giant, or dip my hand into the river? Can you oblige me with a cauliflower, an artichoke, or an onion? I shall take them to the river, and then my hand will become so white that it will almost equal the lustre of your own."

"Cauliflowers and onions abound, but artichokes cannot be procured. My garden produces neither flowers nor fruit; but every twig I plant upon the grave of anything I love bursts into leaf at once, and grows a goodly tree. Thus, beneath my eye, alas, have grown these clustering trees and copses. These tall pines, these shadowing cypresses, these mighty oaks, these overhanging beeches, were once small twigs planted by my hand, as sad memorials, in an ungenial soil."

The old woman paid but little attention to this speech, but was employed in watching her hand, which in the presence of the beautiful Lily became every instant of a darker hue, and grew gradually less. She was about to take her basket and depart, when she felt that she had forgotten the most important of her duties. She took the transformed dog in her arms, and laid him upon the grass, not far from the beautiful Lily.

"My husband," she said, "sends you this present. You know that your touch can impart life to this precious stone. The good and faithful

animal will be a joy to you, and the grief his loss causes me will be alleviated by the thought that he is yours."

The beautiful Lily looked at the pretty creature with delight, and rapture beamed from her eyes.

"Many things combine to inspire me with hope; but, alas! is it not a delusion of our nature to expect that joy is near when grief is at the worst?"

Ah I what avail these omens all so fair?  
My sweet bird's death, my friend's hands blackly dyed,  
And Mops transformed into a jewel rare,  
Sent by the Lamp our faltering steps to guide.

Far from mankind and every joy I prize,  
To grief and sorrow I am still allied:  
When from the river will the temple rise?  
When will the bridge span it from side to side?

The old woman waited with impatience for the conclusion of the song, which the beautiful Lily had accompanied with her harp, entrancing the ears of every listener. She was about to say farewell, when the arrival of the Dragon compelled her to remain. She had heard the last words of the song, and on this account spoke words of encouragement to the beautiful Lily.

"The prophecy of the bridge is fulfilled!" she exclaimed, "this good woman will bear witness how splendidly the arch now appears. Formerly of untransparent jasper, which only reflected the light upon the sides, it is now converted into precious jewels of transparent hue. No beryl is so bright, and no emerald so splendid."

"I congratulate you thereupon," said the Lily, "but pardon me if I doubt whether the prediction is fulfilled. Only foot-passengers can as yet cross the arch of your bridge; and it has been foretold that horses and carriages, travellers of all descriptions, shall pass and repass in mingled multitudes. Is prediction silent with respect to the mighty pillars which are to ascend from the river?"

The old woman, whose eyes were fixed immovably upon her hand, interrupted this speech, and bade farewell.

"Wait for one moment," said the beautiful Lily, "and take my poor canary-bird with you. Implore the Lamp to convert him into a topaz; and I will then reanimate him with my touch, and he and your good Mops will then be my greatest consolation. But make what speed you can; for with sunset decay will have commenced its withering influence, marring the beauty of its delicate form."

The old woman enveloped the little corpse in some soft young leaves, placed it in the basket, and hastened from the spot.

"Notwithstanding what you say," continued the Dragon, resuming the interrupted conversation, "the temple is built."

"But it does not yet stand upon the river," replied the beautiful Lily.



"It rests still in the bowels of the earth," continued the Dragon. " I have seen the Kings, and spoken to them."

"And when will they awake?" inquired the Lily.

The Dragon answered, "I heard the mighty voice resound through the temple, announcing that the hour was come."

A ray of joy beamed from the countenance of the beautiful Lily as she exclaimed, "Do I hear those words for the second time to-day? When will the hour arrive in which I shall hear them for the third time?"

She rose, and immediately a beautiful maiden came from the wood, and relieved her of her harp. She was followed by another, who took the ivory chair upon which the beautiful Lily had been seated, folded it together, and carried it away, together with the silver-tissued cushion. The third maiden, who bore in her hand a fan inlaid with pearls, approached to tender her services if they should be needed. These three maidens were lovely beyond description, though they were compelled to acknowledge that their charms fell far short of those of their beautiful mistress.

The beautiful Lily had, in the meantime, surveyed the marvellous Mops with a look of pleasure. She leaned over him, and touched him. He instantly leaped up, looked round joyously, bounded with delight, hastened to his benefactress, and caressed her tenderly. She took him in her arms, and pressed him to her bosom.

"Cold though thou art," she said, "and endued with only half a life, yet art thou welcome to me. I will love thee fondly, play with thee sportively, kiss thee softly, and press thee to my heart."

She let him go a little from her, called him back, chased him away again, and played with him so joyously and innocently, that no one could help sympathising in her delight and taking part in her pleasure, as they had before shared her sorrow and her woe.

But this happiness and this pleasant pastime were interrupted by the arrival of the melancholy youth. His walk and appearance were as we have before described; but he seemed overcome by the heat of the day, and the presence of his beloved had rendered him perceptibly paler. He bore the hawk upon his wrist, where it sat with drooping wing as tranquil as a dove.

"It is not well," exclaimed the Lily, "that you should vex my eyes with that odious bird, which has only this day murdered my little favourite."

"Blame not the luckless bird," exclaimed the youth, "rather condemn yourself and fate, and let me find an associate in this companion of my grief."

Mops, in the meantime, was incessant in his caresses; and the Lily responded to his affection with the most gentle tokens of love. She clapped her hands to drive him away, and then sportively pursued to win him back. She caught him in her arms as he tried to escape, and chased him from her when he sought to nestle in her lap. The youth looked on in silence and in sorrow; but when at length she took him in her arms, and pressed him to her snowy breast, and kissed him with

her heavenly lips, he lost all patience, and exclaimed in the depth of his despair, "And must I, whom a sad destiny compels to live in your presence) and yet to be separated from you, perhaps for ever, - must I, who for you have forfeited everything, even my own being, - must I look on and behold this 'defect of nature' gain your notice, win your love, and enjoy the paradise of your embrace? Must I continue to wander and measure my solitary way along the banks of this stream? No! A spark of my former spirit still burns within my bosom. Oh that it would for the last time mount into a flame! If stones may repose within your bosom, then let me be converted to a stone; and, if your touch can kill, I am content to receive my death at your hands."

He became violently excited; the hawk flew from his wrist; he rushed toward the beautiful Lily; she extended her arms to forbid his approach, and touched him undesignedly. His consciousness immediately forsook him, and with dismay she felt the beautiful burden lean for support upon her breast. She started back with a scream, and the fair youth sank lifeless from her arms to the earth.

The deed was done. The sweet Lily stood motionless, and gazed intently on the breathless corpse. Her heart ceased to beat, and her eyes were bedewed with tears. In vain did Mops seek to win her attention: the whole world had died out with her lost friend. Her dumb despair sought no help, for help was now in vain.

But the Dragon became immediately more active. Her mind seemed occupied with thoughts of rescue; and, in truth, her mysterious movements prevented the immediate consequence of this dire misfortune. She wound her serpentine form in a wide circle round the spot where the body lay, seized the end of her tail between her teeth, and remained motionless.

In a few moments one of the servants of the beautiful Lily approached, carrying the ivory chair, and with friendly entreaties compelled her mistress to be seated. Then came a second, bearing a flame-coloured veil, with which she rather adorned than covered the head of the Lily. A third maiden offered her the harp; and scarcely had she struck the chords, and awakened their delicious tones, when the first maiden returned, having in her hands a circular mirror of lustrous brightness placed herself opposite the Lily, intercepted her looks, and reflected the most enchanting countenance which nature could fashion. Her sorrow added lustre to her beauty, the veil heightened her charms, the harp lent her a new grace; and, though it was impossible not to hope that her sad fate might soon undergo a change, one could almost wish that that lovely and enchanting vision might last for ever.

Silently gazing upon the mirror, she drew melting tones of music from her harp; but her sorrow appeared to increase, and the chords responded to her melancholy mood. Once or twice she opened her lips to sing, but her voice refused utterance; whereupon her grief found refuge in tears. Her two attendants supported her in their arms, and the harp fell from her hands; but the watchful attention of her handmaid caught it, and laid it aside.

"Who will fetch the man with the lamp?" whispered the Dragon in low but audible voice. The maidens looked at each other, and the Lily's tears fell faster.

At this instant the old woman with the basket returned breathless with agitation.

"I am lost and crippled for life!" she exclaimed. "Look! My hand is nearly withered. Neither the Ferryman nor the Giant would set me across the river, because I am indebted to the stream. In vain did I tempt them with a hundred cauliflowers and a hundred onions: they insist upon the stipulated three, and not an artichoke can be found in this neighbourhood."

"Forget your distress," said the Dragon, "and give your assistance here; perhaps you will be relieved at the same time. Hasten, and find out the Will-o'-the-wisps; for, though you cannot see them by daylight, you may, perhaps, hear their laughter and their motions. If you make good speed, the Giant may yet transport you across the river, and you may find the man with the lamp and send him hither."

The old woman made as much haste as possible, and the Dragon showed as much impatience for her return as the Lily. But, sad to say, the golden rays of the setting sun were shedding their last beams upon the highest tops of the trees, and lengthening the mountain shadows over lake and meadow. The motions of the Dragon showed increased impatience, and the Lily was dissolved in tears.

In this moment of distress the Dragon looked anxiously round: she feared every instant that the sun would set, and that decay would penetrate within the magic circle, and exert its fell influence upon the corpse of the beautiful youth. She looked into the heavens, and caught sight of the purple wings and breast of the hawk, which were illumined by the last rays of the sun. Her restlessness betrayed her joy at the good omen; and she was not deceived, for instantly afterward she saw the man with the lamp sliding across the lake as if he had skates on his feet.

The Dragon did not alter her position; but the Lily, rising from her seat, exclaimed, "What good spirit has sent you thus opportunely when you are so much longed for and required?"

"The Spirit of my Lamp impels me," replied the old man, "and the hawk conducts me hither. The lamp flickers when I am needed; and I immediately look to the heavens for a sign, when some bird or meteor points the way I should go. Be tranquil, beautiful maiden: I know not if I can help you; one alone can do but little, but he can avail who in the proper hour unites his strength with others. We must wait and hope."

Then turning to the Dragon, he said, "Keep your circle closed ;" and, seating himself upon a hillock at his side, he shed a light upon the corpse of the youth. "Now bring the little canary-bird," he continued, "and lay it also within the circle."

The maiden took the little creature from the basket, and followed the directions of the old man.

The sun had set in the meantime; and, as the shades of evening closed around, not only the Dragon and the Lamp cast their customary light, but the veil of the Lily was illumined with a soft brilliancy, and caused her pale cheeks and her white robe to beam like the dawn of morning, and clothed her with inexpressible grace. They gazed at each other with silent emotions: anxiety and sorrow were softened by hope of approaching happiness.

To the delight of all, the old woman appeared with the lively Will-o'-the-wisps, who must have led a prodigal life of late, for they looked wonderfully thin, but behaved all the more politely to the princess and

the other young ladies. With an air of confidence, and much force of expression, they discoursed upon ordinary topics, and were much struck by the charm which the shining veil shed over the beautiful Lily and her companions. The young ladies cast down their eyes with modest looks, and their beauty was heightened by the praise it called forth. Every one was happy and contented, not excepting even the old woman. Notwithstanding the assurance of her husband that her hand would not continue to wither whilst the Lamp shone upon it, she continued to assert, that, if things went on thus, it would disappear entirely before midnight.

The old man with the lamp had listened attentively to the speech of the Will-o'-the-wisps, and was charmed to observe that the beautiful Lily was pleased and flattered with their compliments. Midnight had actually come before they were aware. The old man looked up to the stars, and spoke thus: "We are met at a fortunate hour; let each fulfil his office, let each discharge his duty; and a general happiness will alleviate one individual trouble, as a universal sorrow destroys particular joys."

After these observations a mysterious murmur arose; for every one present spoke for himself, and mentioned what he had to do: the three maidens alone were silent. One had fallen asleep near the harp, the other beside the fan, and the third leaning against the ivory chair: and no one could blame them; for, in truth, it was late. The Will-o'-the-wisps, after paying some trivial compliments to the other ladies, including even the attendants, attached themselves finally to the Lily, by whose beauty they were attracted.

"Take the mirror," said the old man to the hawk, "and illumine the fair sleepers with the first beams of the sun, and rouse them from their slumbers by the light reflected from heaven."

The Dragon now began to move: she broke up the circle, and in long windings moved slowly to the river. The Will-o'-the-wisps followed her in solemn procession, and they might have been mistaken for the most serious personages. The old woman and her husband took up the basket, the soft light of which had hitherto been scarcely observed; but it now became clearer and more brilliant. They laid the body of the youth within it, with the canary-bird reposing upon his breast, upon which the basket raised itself into the air, and floated over the head of the old woman; and she followed the steps of the Will-o'-the-wisps. The beautiful Lily, taking Mops in her arms, walked after the old woman; and the man with the lamp closed the procession.

The whole neighbourhood was brilliantly illuminated with all these various lights. They all observed with astonishment, on approaching the river, that it was spanned by a majestic arch, whereby the benevolent Dragon had prepared them a lustrous passage across. The transparent jewels of which the bridge was composed were objects of no less astonishment by day than was their wondrous brilliancy by night. The clear arch above cut sharply against the dark sky; whilst vivid rays of light beneath shone against the key-stone, revealing the firm pliability of the structure. The procession moved slowly over; and the Ferryman, who witnessed the proceeding from his hut, surveyed the brilliant arch with awe, no less than the wondrous lights as they journeyed across it.

As soon as they had reached the opposite bank, the bridge began to contract as usual, and sink to the surface of the water. The Dragon made her way to the shore, and the basket descended to the ground. The Dragon now once more assumed a circular shape; and the old man, bowing before her, asked what she had determined to do.



"To sacrifice myself before I am made a sacrifice; only promise me that you will leave no stone on the land."

The old man promised, and then addressed the beautiful Lily thus: "Touch the Dragon with your left hand, and your lover with your right."

The beautiful Lily knelt down, and laid her hands upon the Dragon and the corpse. In an instant the latter became endued with life: he moved, and then sat upright. The Lily wished to embrace him; but the old man held her back, and assisted the youth whilst he led him beyond the limits of the circle.

The youth stood erect, the little canary fluttered upon his shoulder, but his mind was not yet restored. His eyes were open; but he saw, at least he appeared to look on, everything with indifference. Scarcely was the wonder at this circumstance appeased, when the change which the Dragon had undergone excited attention. Her beautiful and slender form was converted into thousands and thousands of precious stones. The old woman, in the effort to seize her basket, had struck unintentionally against her, after which nothing more was seen of the figure of the Dragon. Only a heap of brilliant jewels lay in the grass.

The old man immediately set to work to collect them into his basket, a task in which he was assisted by his wife. They both then carried the basket to an elevated spot on the bank, when he cast the entire contents into the stream, not, however, without the opposition of his wife and of the beautiful Lily, who would willingly have appropriated a portion of the treasure to themselves. The jewels gleamed in the rippling waters like brilliant stars, and were carried away by the stream; and none can say whether they disappeared in the distance or sank to the bottom.

"Young gentlemen," then said the old man respectfully to the Will-o'-the-wisps, "I will now point out your path, and lead the way; and you will render us the greatest service by opening the doors of the temple through which we must enter, and which you alone can unlock."

The Will-o'-the-wisps bowed politely, and took their post in the rear. The man with the lamp advanced first into the rocks, which opened of their own accord; the youth followed with apparent indifference; with silent uncertainty the beautiful Lily lingered slowly behind; the old woman, unwilling to be left alone, followed after, stretching out her hand that it might receive the rays of her husband's lamp; the procession was closed by the Will-o'-the-wisps, and their bright flames nodded and blended with each other as if they were engaged in active conversation.

They had not gone far before they came to a large brazen gate which was fastened by a golden lock. The old man thereupon sought the assistance of the Will-o'-the-wisps, who did not want to be entreated, but at once introduced their pointed flames into the lock, when the wards yielded to their influence.

The brass resounded as the doors flew wide asunder, and displayed the venerable statues of the kings illuminated by the advancing lights. Each individual in turn bowed to the reverend potentates with respect, and the Will-o-the-wisps were prodigal of their lambent salutations.

After a short pause the Golden King asked, "whence do you come?"

"From the world," answered the old man.

"And whither are you going?" inquired the Silver King.

"Back to the world," was the answer.

"And what do you wish with us?" asked the Brazen King.

"To accompany you," responded the old man.

The fourth king was about to speak, when the golden statue thus addressed the Will-o'-the-wisps, who had advanced toward him:

"Depart from me. My gold is not for you."

They then turned toward the Silver King, and his apparel assumed the golden hue of their yellow flames. "You are welcome," he said, "but I cannot feed you. Satisfy yourselves elsewhere, and then bring me your light."

They departed; and, stealing unobserved past the Brazen King, they attached themselves to the King composed of various metals.

"Who will rule the world?" inquired the latter in inarticulate tones.

"He who stands erect," answered the old man.

"That is I," replied the King.

"Then it will be revealed," said the old man, "for the time is come."

The beautiful Lily fell upon his neck, and kissed him tenderly.

"Kind father," she said, "a thousand thanks for allowing me to hear this comforting word for the third time."

So saying, she felt compelled to grasp the old man's arm; for the earth began to tremble beneath them: the old woman and the youth clung to each other, whilst the pliant Will-o'-the-wisps felt not the slightest inconvenience.

It was evident that the whole temple was in motion; and, like a ship which pursues its quiet way from the harbour when the anchor is raised, the depths of the earth seemed to open before it, whilst it clove its way through. It encountered no obstacle, no rock opposed its progress.

Presently a very fine rain penetrated through the cupola. The old man continued to support the beautiful Lily, and whispered, "We are now under the river, and shall soon attain the goal."

Presently they thought the motion ceased; but they were deceived, the temple still moved onwards.

A strange sound was now heard above them: beams and broken rafters burst in disjointed fragments through the opening of the cupola. The Lily and the old woman retreated in alarm; the man with the lamp stood by the youth, and encouraged him to remain. The Ferryman's

little hut had been ploughed from the ground by the advance of the temple, and, in its gradual fall, buried the youth and the old man.

The women screamed in alarm, and the temple shook like a vessel which strikes upon a hidden rock. Anxiously the women wandered round the hut in darkness; the doors were shut, and no one answered their knocking. They continued to knock more loudly, when at last the wood began to ring with sounds: the magic power of the lamp, which was enclosed within the hut, changed it into silver, and presently its very form was altered; for the noble metal, refusing to assume the form of planks, posts, and rafters, was converted into a glorious building of artistic workmanship: it seemed as if a smaller temple had grown up within the large one or at least an altar worthy of its beauty.

The noble youth ascended a staircase in the interior, whilst the man with the lamp shed light upon his way; and another figure lent him support, clad in a short white garment, and holding in his hand a silver rudder: it was easy to recognise the Ferryman, the former inhabitant of the transformed hut.

The beautiful Lily ascended the outward steps which led from the temple to the altar, but was compelled to remain separated from her lover. The old woman, whose hand continued to grow smaller whilst the light of the lamp was obscured, exclaimed, "Am I still doomed to be unhappy amid so many miracles? will no miracle restore my hand?"

Her husband pointed to the open door, exclaiming, " See, the day dawns! Hasten, and bathe in the river!"

"What advice!" she answered: "shall I not become wholly black, and dissolve into nothing for I have not yet discharged my debt."

"Be silent," said the old man, "and follow me: all debts are wiped away."

The old woman obeyed, and in the same instant the light of the rising sun shone upon the circle of the cupola. Then the old man, advancing between the youth and the maiden, exclaimed with a loud voice, "Three things have sway upon the earth, - Wisdom, Appearance, and Power."

At the sound of the first word the Golden King arose; at the sound of the second, the Silver King; and the Brazen King had risen at the sound of the third, when the fourth suddenly sunk awkwardly to the earth.

The Will-o'-the-wisps, who had been busily employed upon him till this moment, now retreated: though paled by the light of the morning, they seemed in good condition, and sufficiently brilliant; for they had with much dexterity extracted the gold from the veins of the colossal statue with their sharp-pointed tongues. The irregular spaces which were thus displayed remained for some time exposed and the figure preserved its previous form; but when at length the most secret veins of gold had been extracted, the statue suddenly fell with a crash, and formed a mass of shapeless ruins.

The man with the lamp conducted the youth, whose eye was still fixed upon vacancy, from the altar toward the Brazen King. At the foot of the mighty monarch lay a sword in a brazen sheath. The youth bound it to his side.

"Take the weapon in your left hand, and keep the right hand free," exclaimed the King.

They then advanced to the Silver Monarch, who bent his sceptre toward the youth; the latter seized it with his left hand: and the King addressed him in soft accents, "Feed my sheep."

When they reached the statue of the Golden King with paternal benediction the latter pressed the oaken garland on the head of the youth, and said, "Acknowledge the highest."

The old man had, during this proceeding, watched the youth attentively. After he had girded on the sword, his breast heaved, his arm was firmer, and his step more erect; and, after he had touched the sceptre his sense of power appeared to soften, and at the same time, by an inexpressible charm, to become more mighty; but, when his waving locks were adorned with the oaken garland, his countenance became animated, his soul beamed from his eye; and the first word he uttered was "Lily!"

"Dear Lily!" he exclaimed, as he hastened to ascend the silver stairs, for she had observed his progress from the altar where she stood, "dear Lily, what can man desire more blessed than the innocence and the sweet affection which your love brings me? O my friend!" he continued, turning to the old man, and pointing to the three sacred statues, "secure and glorious is the kingdom of our fathers; but you have forgotten to enumerate that fourth power, which exercises an earlier, more universal, and certain rule over the world, - the power of love."

With these words he flung his arms round the neck of the beautiful maiden: she had cast aside her veil, and her cheeks were tinged with a blush of the sweetest and most inexpressible beauty.

The old man now observed, with a smile, "Love does not rule, but controls; and that is better."

During all this delight and enchantment no one had observed that the sun was now high in heaven; and through the open gates of the temple most unexpected objects were perceived. An empty space, of large dimensions, was surrounded by pillars, and terminated by a long and splendid bridge, whose many arches stretched across the river. On each side was a footpath, wide and convenient for passengers, of whom many thousands were busily employed in crossing over: the wide road in the centre was crowded with flocks and herds, and horsemen and carriages; and all streamed over without impeding each other's progress. All were in raptures at the union of convenience and beauty; and the new king and his spouse were as much charmed with the animation and activity of this great concourse as they were with their own reciprocal love.

"Honour the Dragon," said the man with the lamp:" to her you are indebted for life, and your people for the bridge whereby these neighbouring shores are animated and connected. Those shining precious stones which still float by are the remains of her self-sacrifice, and form the foundation-stones of this glorious bridge, upon which she has erected herself to subsist, for ever."

The approach of four beautiful maidens, who advanced to the door of the temple, prevented any inquiry into this wonderful mystery.



Three of them were recognised as the attendants of the beautiful Lily, by the harp, the fan, and the ivory chair; but the fourth, though more beautiful than the other three was a stranger. She, however, played with the others with sisterly sportiveness, ran with them through the temple, and ascended the silver stairs.

"Thou dearest of creatures," said the man with the lamp, addressing the beautiful Lily, "you will surely believe me for the future. Happy for thee, and every other creature, who shall bathe this morning in the waters of the river!"

The old woman, who had been transformed into a beautiful young girl, and of whose former appearance no trace remained, embraced the man with the lamp with tender caresses, which he returned with affection.

"If I am too old for you," he said with a smile, "you may select another bridegroom; for no tie can henceforth be considered binding which is not this day renewed."

"But are you not aware that you also have become young?" she inquired.

"I am delighted to hear it," he replied. "If I appear to you to be a gallant youth, I take your hand anew, and hope for a thousand years of happiness."

The Queen welcomed her new friend, and advanced with her and the rest of her companions to the altar whilst the King, supported by the

two men, pointed to the bridge, and surveyed with wonder the crowd of passengers.

But his joy was soon overshadowed by observing an object which gave him pain. The Giant, who had just awakened from his morning sleep, stumbled over the bridge, and gave rise to the greatest confusion. He was, as usual, but half awake, and had risen with the intention of bathing in the neighbouring cove; but he stumbled instead upon firm land, and found himself feeling his way upon the broad highway of the bridge. And, whilst he went clumsily along in the midst of men and animals, his presence, though a matter of astonishment to all, was felt by none; but when the sun shone in his eyes, and he raised his hand to shade them, the shadow of his enormous fist fell amongst the crowd with such careless violence, that both men and animals huddled together in promiscuous confusion, and either sustained personal injury, or ran the risk of being driven into the water.

The King, observing this calamity, with an involuntary movement placed his hand upon his sword, but, upon reflection, turned his eyes on his sceptre, and then on the lamp and the rudder of his companions.

"I guess your thought," said the man with the lamp, "but we are powerless against this monster: be tranquil; he injures for the last time, and happily his shadow is turned from us."

In the meantime the Giant had approached, and, overpowered with astonishment at what he saw, let his hands sink down: he became powerless for injury, and, gazing with surprise, entered the courtyard.

He was moving straight toward the door of the temple, when he felt himself suddenly held fast to the earth. He stood like a colossal pillar constructed of red, shining stones; and his shadow indicated the hours, which were marked in a circle on the ground, not, however, in figures, but in noble and significant effigies.

The King was not a little delighted to see the shadow of the monster rendered harmless; and the Queen was not less astonished, as she advanced from the altar with her maidens, all adorned with the greatest magnificence, to observe the strange wonder which almost covered the whole prospect from the temple to the bridge.

In the meantime the people had crowded after the Giant, and, surrounding him as he stood still, had observed his transformation with the utmost awe. They thence bent their steps toward the temple, of the existence of which they now seemed to be for the first time aware, and thronged the doorways.

The hawk was now observed aloft, towering over the building, and carrying the mirror, with which he caught the light of the sun, and turned the rays upon the multifarious group which stood around the altar. The King, the Queen and their attendants, illumined by heavenly light, appeared beneath the dim arches of the temple: their subjects fell prostrate before them. When they had recovered, and risen again, the King and his attendants had descended to the altar, in order to reach his palace by a less obstructed path; and the people dispersed through the temple to satisfy their curiosity. They beheld with astonishment the three kings, who stood erect, and were all the more anxious to know what could be concealed behind the curtain in the fourth niche; since, whatever kindness might have prompted the deed, a thoughtful discretion had extended a costly covering over the ruins of the fallen

king, which no eye cared to penetrate, and no profane hand dared to uplift.

There was no end to the astonishment and wonder of the people, and the dense throng would have been crushed in the temple if their attention had not been attracted once more to the court without.

To their great surprise, a shower of gold pieces fell as if from the air, resounding upon the marble pavement, and caused a contest and commotion amongst the passers-by. Several times this wonder was repeated in different places, at some distance from each other. It is not difficult to infer that this feat was the work of the retreating Will-o'-the-wisps, who having extracted the gold from the limbs of the mutilated king, dispersed it abroad in this joyous manner. The covetous crowd continued their contentions for some time longer, pressing hither and thither, and inflicting wounds upon each other, till the shower of gold pieces ceased to fall. The multitude at length dispersed gradually, each one pursuing his own course; and the bridge, to this day, continues to swarm with travellers; and the temple is the most frequented in the world.

The End