

1812

GRIMM'S FAIRY TALES

THE DITMARSCH TALE OF WONDERS

Jacob Ludwig Grimm and Wilhelm Carl Grimm

Grimm, Jacob (1785-1863) and Wilhelm (1786-1859) - German philologists whose collection "Kinder- und Hausmarchen," known in English as "Grimm's Fairy Tales," is a timeless literary masterpiece. The brothers transcribed these tales directly from folk and fairy stories told to them by common villagers. The Ditmarsch Tale of Wonders (1812) - A short nonsensical tale which concludes with the advice: "Open the windows that the lies may fly out."

DITMARSCH TALE OF WONDERS

I WILL TELL you something. I saw two roasted fowls flying; they flew quickly and had their breasts turned to Heaven and their backs to Hell; and an anvil and a mill-stone swam across the Rhine prettily, slowly, and gently; and a frog sat on the ice at Whitsuntide and ate a ploughshare.

Four fellows who wanted to catch a hare, went on crutches and stilts; one of them was deaf, the second blind, the third dumb, and the fourth could not stir a step. Do you want to know how it was done? First, the blind man saw the hare running across the field, the dumb one called to the deaf one, and the lame one seized it by the neck.

There were certain men who wished to sail on dry land, and they set their sails in the wind, and sailed away over great fields. Then they sailed over a high mountain, and there they were miserably drowned.

A crab was chasing a hare which was running away at full speed; and high up on the roof lay a cow which had climbed up there. In that country the flies are as big as the goats are here.

Open the window that the lies may fly out.

THE END