

1812

GRIMM' FAIRY TALES

LEAN LISA

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. Lean Lisa (1812) - Lean Lisa vaguely schemes to buy a cow with borrowed money and badgers her husband for wanting to drink the cow's milk. Her fed-up husband presses her head into her pillow.

LEAN LISA

LEAN LISA was of a very different way of thinking from lazy Harry and fat Trina, who never let anything disturb their peace. She scoured everything with ashes, from morning till evening, and burdened her husband, Long Laurence, with so much work that he had heavier weights to carry than an ass with three sacks. It was, however, all to no purpose; they had nothing and came to nothing.

One night as she lay in bed, and could hardly move one limb for weariness, she still did not allow her thoughts to go to sleep. She thrust her elbows into her husband's side, and said, "Listen Lenz, to what I have been thinking: if I were to find one florin and one was given to me, I would borrow another to put to them, and you too should give me another, and then as soon as I had got the four florins together, I would buy a young cow." This pleased the husband right well. "It is true," said he, "that I do not know where I am to get the florin which you want as a gift from me; but, if you can get the money together, and can buy a cow with it, you will do well to carry out your project. I shall be glad," he added, "if the cow has a calf, and then I shall often get a drink of milk to refresh me." "The milk is not for you," said the woman; "we must let the calf suck that it may become big and fat, and we may be able to sell it well." "Certainly," replied the man, "but still we will take a little milk; that will do no harm." "Who has taught you to manage cows?" said the woman; "whether it does harm or not, I will not allow it, and even if you were to stand on your head for it, you should not have a drop of the milk! Do you think, because there is no satisfying you, Long Laurence, that you are to eat up what I

earn with so much difficulty?" "Wife," said the man, "be quiet, or I will give you a blow on your mouth!" "What!" cried she, "you threaten me, you glutton, you rascal, you lazy Harry!" She was just laying hold of his hair, but Long Laurence got up, seized both Lean Lisa's withered arms in one hand, and with the other he pressed down her head into the pillow, let her scold, and held her until she fell asleep for very weariness.

Whether she continued to wrangle when she awoke next morning, or whether she went out to look for the florin which she wanted to find, that I know not.

THE END