

1812

**GRIMM'S FAIRY TALES
PRUDENT HANS**

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. Prudent Hans (1812) - A humorous dialogue in which Hans goes to see Gretel, carries something home improperly, and then applies his mother's advice on how to carry each item to the next, entirely different, item he picks up.

PRUDENT HANS

ONE DAY, Hans's mother said, "Where are you going, Hans?" Hans answered, "To Gretel's, mother." "Manage well, Hans." "All right! Good-bye, mother." "Good-bye, Hans." Then Hans came to Gretel's.

"Good morning, Gretel." "Good morning, Hans. What have you brought me today?" "I have brought nothing, but I want something." So Gretel gave Hans a needle; and then he said, "Good-bye, Gretel," and she said, "Good-bye, Hans." Hans carried the needle away with him, and stuck it in a hay-cart that was going along, and he followed it home.

"Good evening, mother." "Good evening, Hans. Where have you been?" "To Gretel's, mother." "What did you take her?"

"I took nothing, but I brought away something." "What did Gretel give you?" "A needle, mother." "What did you do with it, Hans?" "Stuck it in the hay-cart." "That was very stupid of you, Hans. You should have stuck it in your sleeve." "All right, mother! I'll do better next time." When next time came, Hans's mother said, "Where are you going, Hans?" "To Gretel's, mother." "Manage well, Hans." "All right. Good-bye, mother." "Good-bye, Hans." Then Hans came to Gretel.

"Good morning, Gretel." "Good morning, Hans. What have you brought me today?" "I've brought nothing, but I want something."

So Gretel gave Hans a knife, and then he said, "Good-bye, Gretel," and she said, "Good-bye, Hans."

Hans took the knife away with him, and stuck it in his sleeve, and went home.

"Good evening, mother." "Good evening, Hans. Where have you been?" "To Gretel's." "What did you take her?" "I took nothing, but I brought away something." "What did Gretel give you, Hans?" "A knife, mother." "What did you do with it, Hans?" "Stuck it in my sleeve, mother." "That was very stupid of you, Hans. You should have put it in your pocket." "All right, mother! I'll do better next time." When next time came, Hans's mother said, "Where to, Hans?" "To Gretel's, mother." "Manage well, Hans." "All right! Good-bye, mother." "Good-bye, Hans." So Hans came to Gretel's.

"Good morning, Gretel." "Good morning, Hans. What have you brought me today?" "I've brought nothing, but I want to take away something." So Gretel gave Hans a young goat; then he said, "Good-bye, Gretel," and she said, "Good-bye, Hans." So Hans carried off the goat, and tied its legs together, and put it in his pocket, and by the time he got home it was suffocated.

"Good evening, mother." "Good evening, Hans. Where have you been?" "To Gretel's, mother." "What did you take her, Hans?" "I took nothing, but I brought away something." "What did Gretel give you, Hans?" "A goat, mother." "What did you do with it, Hans?" "Put it in my pocket, mother." "That was very stupid of you, Hans. You should have tied a cord round its neck, and led it home." "All right, mother! I'll do better next time."

Then when next time came, "Where to, Hans?" "To Gretel's, mother." "Manage well, Hans." "All right! Good-bye, mother." "Good-bye, Hans." Then Hans came to Gretel's.

"Good morning, Gretel." "Good morning, Hans. What have you brought me today?" "I've brought nothing, but I want to take away something." So Gretel gave Hans a piece of bacon; then he said, "Good-bye, Gretel." She said, "Good-bye, Hans." Hans took the bacon, and tied a string round it, and dragged it after him on his way home, and the dogs came and ate it up, so that when he got home he had the string in his hand, and nothing at the other end of it.

"Good evening, mother." "Good evening, Hans. Where have you been?" "To Gretel's, mother." "What did you take her, Hans?" "I took her nothing, but I brought away something."

“What did Gretel give you, Hans?” “A piece of bacon, mother.” “What did you do with it, Hans?” “I tied a piece of string to it, and led it home, but the dogs ate it, mother.” “That was very stupid of you, Hans. You ought to have carried it on your head.” “All right! I’ll do better next time, mother.” When next time came, “Where to, Hans?” “To Gretel’s, mother.” “Manage well, Hans.” “All right! Good-bye, mother.” “Good-bye, Hans.” Then Hans came to Gretel’s.

“Good morning, Gretel.” “Good morning, Hans. What have you brought me?” “I have brought nothing, but I want to take away something.” So Gretel gave Hans a calf.

“Good-bye, Gretel.”

“Good-bye, Hans.” Hans took the calf, and set it on his head, and carried it home, and the calf scratched his face.

“Good evening, mother.” “Good evening, Hans. Where have you been?” “To Gretel’s, mother.” “What did you take her?” “I took nothing, but I brought away something.” “What did Gretel give you, Hans?” “A calf, mother.” “What did you do with the calf, Hans?” “I carried it home on my head, but it scratched my face.” “That was very stupid of you, Hans. You ought to have led home the calf, and tied it to the manger.” “All right! I’ll do better next time, mother.” When next time came, “Where to, Hans?” “To Gretel’s, mother.” “Manage well, Hans.” “All right, mother! Good-bye.”

“Good-bye, Hans.” Then Hans came to Gretel’s.

“Good morning, Gretel.” “Good morning, Hans. What have you brought me today?” “I have brought nothing, but I want to take away something.” Then Gretel said to Hans, “You shall take away me.” Then Hans took Gretel, and tied a rope round her neck, and led her home, and fastened her up to the manger, and went to his mother.

“Good evening, mother.” “Good evening, Hans. Where have you been?” “To Gretel’s, mother.” “What did you take her, Hans?” “Nothing, mother.” “What did Gretel give you, Hans?” “Nothing but herself, mother.” “Where have you left Gretel, Hans?” “I led her home with a rope, and tied her up to the manger to eat hay, mother.” “That was very stupid of you, Hans. You should have cast sheep’s eyes at her.”

“All right, mother! I’ll do better next time.” Then Hans went into the stable, and taking the eyes out of the sheep, he threw them in

Gretel's face. Then Gretel was angry, and getting loose, she ran away and became the bride of another.

THE END