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Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm:
Selected Tales. Translated with an
Introduction and Notes by Joyce Crick
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fools,' scolded the cook, 'why didn't you break into the church and bring the crown home with you?' So the old cook herself started out and went after the children with the three farmhands. But the children saw the three farmhands coming from far off, with the cook tottering behind. Then Lenchen said: 'Foundling-Bird, just as you won't leave me, I won't leave you.' And Foundling-Bird replied: 'Not now, not ever.' Said Lenchen: 'Turn into a pond, and I'll turn into the duck upon it.' But the cook arrived, and when she saw the pond leaned over it, intending to drink it dry. But the duck came swimming up fast, seized her by the head with her beak, and pulled her into the water: there the old witch had to drown. Then the children went home together and they were very, very happy. And if they haven't died, they are living still.

39. *Snow-White*

ONCE upon a time in midwinter, when the snowflakes were falling from the sky like down, a queen was sitting and sewing at a window which had a frame of black ebony. And as she sewed at the window and glanced up at the snow, she pricked her finger with her needle and three drops of blood fell onto the snow. And because the red looked so beautiful on the white snow, she thought to herself: 'If only I had a child as white as snow, as red as blood, and as black as the wood in the window-frame.' Not long afterwards she had a little daughter who was as white as snow, as red as blood, and with hair as black as ebony, and because of that she was called Snow-White. And as the child was born, the queen died.

A year later the king took another wife. She was a beautiful woman, but she was proud and arrogant and could not endure it that anyone should surpass her in beauty. She had a marvellous mirror, and when she stood in front of it and gazed at herself, she would say:

'Mirror, mirror on the wall,
Who is the fairest one of all?'

And the mirror would answer:

'Lady, you are the fairest one of all.'

Then she was satisfied, for she knew that the mirror was telling the truth.

But Snow-White was growing up, becoming more and more beautiful, and when she was seven years old she was as fair as the bright day and fairer than the queen herself. One day, when the queen asked her mirror:

'Mirror, mirror on the wall,
Who is the fairest one of all?'

The mirror answered:

'Lady, you are the fairest here,
But Snow-White is a thousand times more fair.'

This horrified the queen, who turned yellow and green with envy. From that hour, whenever she saw Snow-White her heart would turn over in her body, she hated the girl so much. And envy and arrogance grew in her heart like a weed, taller and taller, so that day and night she no longer had any peace. So she called a huntsman to her and told him: 'Take the child out into the forest. I don't want to set eyes on her again. You are to kill her, and bring me her lungs and liver as a token.' The huntsman obeyed and led the child out into the forest. And just as he had drawn his hunting-knife and was about to stab Snow-White in her innocent heart, she began to cry, saying: 'Oh, huntsman dear, spare my life; I'll run away into the wild wood and never come home again.' And because she was so fair, the huntsman took pity on her and said: 'Run away then, you poor child.' 'The wild animals will soon have eaten you up,' he thought, but even so he felt as if a stone had been lifted from his heart because he didn't need to kill her. And as a young boar-piglet came leaping by just at that moment, he stabbed him, took out his lungs and liver, and brought them to the queen as a token. The cook was commanded to stew them in salt, and the wicked woman ate them up, imagining it was Snow-White's lungs and liver she had eaten.

Now the poor child was all alone in the great forest, and she grew so frightened that she gazed at all the leaves on the trees and didn't know what to do to save herself. And so she began to run, and she ran over the sharp stones and through the thorns, and the wild animals leapt past her, but they did her no harm. She ran for as long as her feet could carry her, until it was nearly evening. Then she saw