

THE HAUGHTY PRINCESS

THERE was once a very worthy King, whose daughter was the greatest beauty that could be seen far or near, but she was as proud as Lucifer, and no king or prince would she agree to marry. Her father was tired out at last, and invited every king, and prince, and duke, and earl that he knew or didn't know to come to his court to give her one trial more. They all came, and next day after breakfast they stood in a row in the lawn, and the Princess walked along in the front of them to make her choice. One was fat, and says she: "I won't have you, Beer-barrel!" One was tall and thin, and to him she said: "I won't have you, Ram-rod" To a white-faced man she said, "I won't have you, Pale Death;" and to a red-cheeked man she said, "I won't have you, Cockscorn!" She stopped a little before the last of all, for he was a fine man in face and form. She wanted to find some defect in him, but he had nothing remarkable but a ring of brown curling hair under his chin. She admired him a little, and then carried it off with, "I won't have you, Whiskers!"

So all went away, and the King was so vexed, he said to her, "Now to punish your impudence, I'll give you to the first beggarman or singing sthronehuch that calls;" and, as sure as

his shoulders, and as sure the hearth-money, a fellow all over rags, with hair that came to his shoulders, and a busy red beard all over his face, came next morning, and began to sing before the parlor window.

When the song was over, the hall-door was opened, the singer asked in, the priest brought, and the Princess married to Beardy. She roared and she bawled, but her father didn't mind her. There," says he to the bridegroom, "is five guineas for you. Take your wife out of my sight, and never let me lay eyes on you or her again.

Off he led her, and dismal enough she was. The only thing that gave her relief was the tones of her husband's voice and his genteel manners. "Whose wood is this?" said she, as they were going through one. "It belongs to the King you called Whiskers yesterday." He gave her the same answer about meadows and cornfields, and at last a fine city. "Ah, what a fool I was!" said she to herself. "He was a fine man, and I might have him for a husband." At last they were coming up to a poor cabin. "Why are you bringing me here?" says the poor lady. "This is my house," said he, "and now yours." She began to cry, but she was tired and hungry, and she went in with him.

Ovoch! there was neither a table laid out, nor a fire burning, and she was obliged to help her husband to light it, and boil their dinner, and clean up the place after: and next day he made her put on a stuff gown and a cotton handkerchief. When she had her house readied up, and no business to keep her employed, he brought home sallies (willows), peeled them, and showed her how to make baskets. But the hard

twigs bruised her delicate fingers, and she began to cry. Well, then he asked her to mend their clothes, but the needle drew blood from her fingers, and she cried again. He couldn't bear to see her tears, so he bought a creel of earthenware, and sent her to the market to sell them. This was the hardest trial of all, but she looked so handsome and sorrowful, and had such a nice air about her, that all her pans, and jugs, and plates, and dishes were gone before noon, and the only mark of her old pride was showed was a slap she gave a buckeen across the face when he axed her an impudent question.

Well, her husband was so glad, he sent her with another creel the next day; but, faith! her luck was after deserting her. A drunken huntsman came riding up, and his beast got in among her wear, and brishe of every mother's son of 'em. She went home cryin', and her husband wasn't at all pleased. "I see," said he, "you're not fit for business. Come along, I'll get you a kitchen-maid's place in the palace. I know the cook."

So the poor thing was obliged to stifle her pride once more. She was kept very busy, and the footman and the butler would be very impudent about looking for a kiss, but she let a screech out of her the first attempt was made, and the cook gave the fellow such a lambasting with the besom (broom) that he made no second offer. She went home to her husband every night, and she carried broken victuals wrapped in papers in her side pockets.

A week after she got service there was great bustle in the kitchen. The King was going to be married, but no one knew

who the bride was to be. Well, in the evening the cook filled the Princess's pockets with cold meat and puddens, and, says she, "Before you go, let us have a look at the great doings in the big parlor." So they came near the door to get a peep, and who should come out but the King himself, as handsome as you please, and no other but King Whiskers himself. "Your handsome helper must pay for her peeping," said he to the cook, "and dance a jig with me." Whether she would or no, he held her hand and brought her into the parlor. The fiddlers struck up, and away went him and her. But they hadn't danced two steps when the meat and the puddens flew out of her pockets. Every one roared out, and she flew to the door, crying piteously. But she was soon caught by the King, and taken into the back parlor. "Don't you know me, my darling?" said he. "I am both King Whiskers, your husband the ballad-singer, and the drunken huntsman. Your father knew me well enough when he gave you to me, and all was to drive your pride out of you." Well, she didn't know how she was, with fright, and shame, and joy. Love was uppermost, anyhow, for she laid her head on her husband's breast and cried like a child. The maids-of-honor soon had her away and dressed her as fine as hands and pins could do it; and there was her mother and father, too. While the company were wondering what would be the end of the handsome girl and the King, he and his Queen, who they didn't know in her fine clothes, came in, and such rejoicings and fine doings as there was, none of us will ever see, anyway.

