

# **HAN'S ANDERSEN'S STORIES**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649146482

Han's Andersen's Stories by H. C. Andersen

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

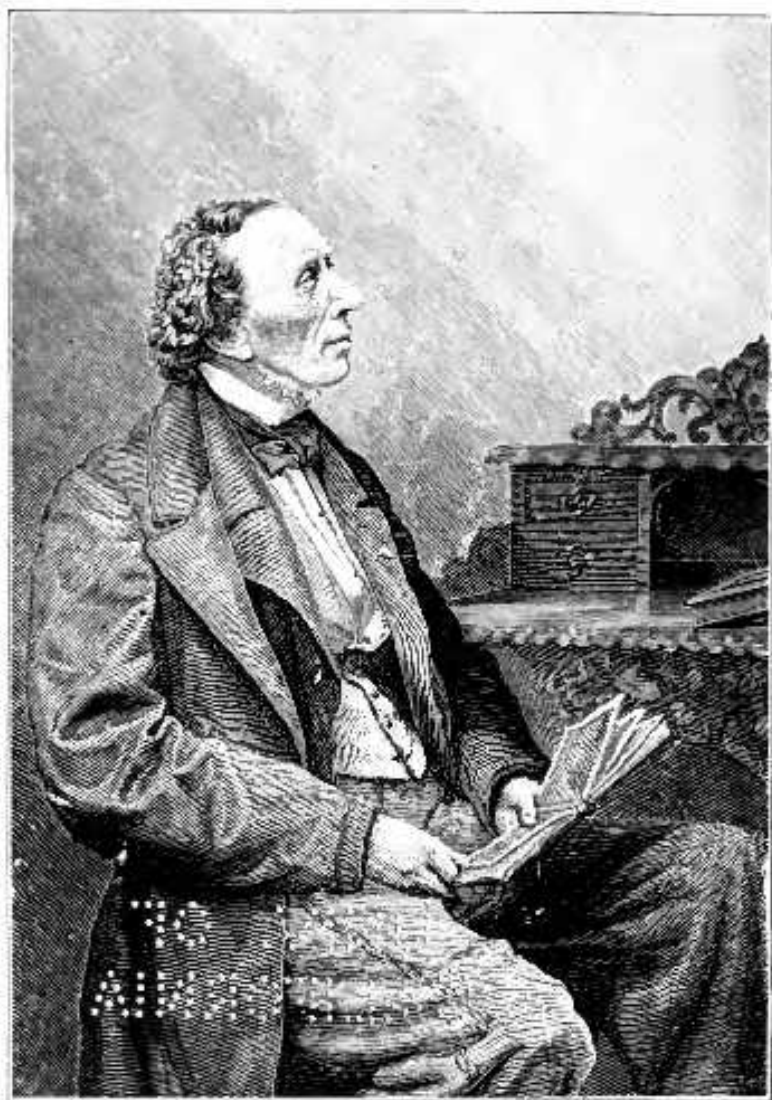
This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

[www.triestepublishing.com](http://www.triestepublishing.com)

**H. C. ANDERSEN**

**HAN'S ANDERSEN'S  
STORIES**





*J. P. Andersen.*

The Riverside Literature Series

HANS ANDERSEN'S STORIES

NEWLY TRANSLATED



UNIVERSITY OF  
CALIFORNIA

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY  
Boston: 4 Park Street; New York: 25 Fifth Avenue  
Chicago: 372-388 Wabash Avenue  
The Riverside Press Cambridge

PT 8116  
EG 53  
Edwin  
118

## PREFACE.



THE bits of genuine literature which a child first comes to know, when he reads for himself, are fables and folk stories, the production of the world in its own period of childhood. He finds no author's name attached to these save the almost impersonal one of Æsop, and he never thinks of authorship in connection with this literature. If he asks the origin of what he reads, he is told that the stories were told once upon a time, dim ages ago.

By and by he begins to hear names of authors, and to associate this or that story, or poem, with some particular personality, and his interest is quickened it may be by learning that the author is still living, perhaps he is in his own neighborhood; and finally, in his school exercises, his attention is drawn almost away from literature to the creators of literature, and he joins with his companions in celebrating the praises of some author upon his birthday.

Now there is a writer of our own time whose work furnishes a connecting link between the

literature which is nameless and that which is identified with personality. Hans Christian Andersen, the Dane, who was born April 2, 1805, and died August 4, 1875, has created forms of literature consciously which are very closely allied to the stories which have been rolled over and over in the minds of people until, acquiring a certain consistency and soundness, they have lost all individuality of authorship. It is but a step from fables and folk stories to Hans Andersen's stories, and but another step from Hans Andersen's stories to the abundant literature which is simple in spirit and closely associated with the names of its authors.

It is worth while to note briefly the difference between Andersen's little stories and the fables with which they have something in common. The end of every fable is "Moral;" it was for this end that the fable was created. The lion, the fox, the mouse, the dog, are in a very limited way true to the accepted nature of the animals which they represent, and their intercourse with each other is governed by the ordinary rules of animal life, but the actions and words are distinctly illustrative of some morality. The fable is an animated proverb. The lesson is first; the characters, created afterward, are, for purposes of the teacher, disguised as animals; very little of the animal appears, but very much of the les-



son. The child's mind, however much he may be entertained by the action of the little story, is pretty sure to apply the moral of it, and to say "sour grapes," for example, with considerable emphasis very soon after reading *The Fox and the Bunch of Grapes*.

In Andersen's stories the spring is not in the didactic, but in the imaginative. He sees the beetle in the imperial stable stretching out his thin legs to be shod with golden shoes like the emperor's favorite horse, and the personality of the beetle determines the movement of the story throughout; egotism, pride at being proud, jealousy, and boundless self-conceit are the furniture of this beetle's soul, and his adventures one by one disclose his character. Is there a lesson in all this? Precisely as there is a lesson in any picture of human life where the same traits are sketched. The beetle, after all his adventures, some of them ignominious, but none expelling his self-conceit, finds himself again in the emperor's stable, having solved the problem why the emperor's horse had golden shoes. "The horse got them for my sake," he says, and adds, "The world is not so bad upon the whole; but one must know how to take it."

One test of the lasting value of Andersen's stories is to be found in the charm and the new meaning which await the mature reader who has

already in earlier years made their acquaintance. The story of *The Ugly Duckling*, for example, is an inimitable presentation of Andersen's own tearful and finally triumphant life ; yet no child who reads this story has his sympathy for a moment withdrawn from the duckling and transferred to a human being. It is only when, later in life, he reads the story with a knowledge not of Andersen's history alone, but of much human experience, that he discovers what an apologue is in the little narrative.

A prime advantage in an early acquaintance with Andersen springs from the stimulus which his quaint fancy gives to the budding imagination of childhood. It may be said without exaggeration that Andersen truly represents creative childhood in literature. The power of animating dumb and inanimate objects is a common property of childhood, which not only invests the simulacra of life with life, making dolls real people, but turns the most unlikely objects into the puppets of imagination ; a stick becomes a horse if one only ride it, and spools are made lively *dramatis personæ*. What every child is likely to do in this way, Andersen does with delightful art, and a darning-needle, a top, a ball, the flower of the field, all have an active and a consistent life that springs from a thoroughly artistic sense in the mind of their creator. It is

this nice sympathy held by Andersen with the peculiar phase of childhood which makes his writings so eminently fit for the reading of children ; in entering his world they do not pass out of their own but enlarge it, for by the means of his art they are introduced to the larger art of imaginative literature.

It is interesting to observe that Andersen began the compositions which have won him his special fame by writing out the folk stories which he had heard as a child. Then he made one or two inventions in the same order, and then through the native bent of his own childish nature fell to endowing ordinary and inanimate objects with imagined vitality, giving one the impression that he is looking at life through the reverse end of an opera glass. At first the critics were puzzled by this new form of literature and advised him to waste no more time over such work. He was half ashamed himself, but said : "I would willingly have discontinued writing them, but they forced themselves from me," and it was not long before old and young received them with avidity. No Christmas tree was grown unless some of this fruit hung from it ; every Christmas for years there came out in Copenhagen one of the little volumes of these stories. They became the fashion, and actors declaimed the stories from the stage as interludes between the larger pieces.