

**BARON GRAVENSTEIN IN  
FAIRYLAND; OR THE  
WONDERFUL  
ADVENTURES OF A LITTLE BOY  
WHO HAD ALL HE ASKED FOR**

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Baron Gravenstein In Fairyland; Or The Wonderful Adventures Of A Little Boy Who Had All He Asked For by T. H. Chandler

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# BARON GRAVENSTEIN

## IN FAIRYLAND;

OR,

THE WONDERFUL ADVENTURES OF A LITTLE BOY  
WHO HAD ALL HE ASKED FOR.

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"WHO, seeing the way that I am treated, would think that I am the Baron Von Gravenstein. No sooner does the sun show itself over the mountain of a morning, than I have to leave a warm, comfortable bed, to learn a lot of dull, tiresome lessons. Every day, my mother thwarts my wishes in a thousand different ways. I hav'nt a single real pleasure. If I want to have a ride with Carl through the forest, that silly Fritz cries to go with me. If I am reading a book, Bertha tries to pull it out of my hand, to see if there are any pictures in it. I don't think that any other boy was ever half so miserable. When my

father lived, there was plenty of good wine, besides game and venison, at our table ; but, now, we get little else but thin beer, and sauer kraut. They all treat me as a baby. I wish I had a chance of showing them what I can do."

The speaker, the young Baron Gravenstein, as he sat on a decayed tree stump, struck petulantly at the pebbles, which lay thick about his feet, with a stout ashen staff, which he held in in his hand, when he made these dismal reflections.

Overhead the ancient giants of the forest stretched their gnarled and knotted arms, from, which the Autumn winds every now and then, with relentless breath, swept the golden relics of a bye-gone summer. Beyond the forest glades, on a broad expanse of greensward, the Castle Gravenstein reared its massive towers, against a grey and cloud-flecked sky. A few short years had wrought momentous changes within those ancient walls.

Formerly, the castle presented a daily exhibition of feudal state, and chivalrous deeds of arms, as each succeeding baron stoutly maintained what well might be considered a family escutcheon, flagon, sword, and trencher.

If the Lords of Gravenstein led a merry youth, they never experienced a sad old age, and but seldom in middle life recognized the fact, that the

more they fought the poorer they got. The Baron Gravenstein who had last owned the castle was struck down, in the flower of his manhood, by the hand of a French knight, in one of the petty wars, which were then so common, leaving his family, the young Baron, Fritz, and Bertha, in the sole charge of his lady, who combined firmness of character with a matronly and benevolent disposition.

The young Baron was still busily occupied striking pebbles, and considering his many hardships, with a sad and dejected expression of countenance, when a slight crackling noise of twigs breaking behind him caused him to look round. A little old woman, in a dull sombre tint of brown, with a huge coal-scuttle-shaped bonnet upon her head, and with a crooked stick in her hand, stopped a few yards opposite him, as their eyes encountered each other---

"Aha, aha, Baron Gravenstein" cried the little old woman, "you look sad this morning. What ails you? Have you been getting into mischief, eh?"

"I hav'nt been getting into mischief," replied the boy sturdily; "but it is of no use telling you what is the matter with me, you can't help me."

"Don't you be so sure, my little friend," cried the old woman cheerily. "No doctor can affect a cure unless he knows the nature of the complaint. Come now and tell me all about it," and with these words



she came close to the boy. The Baron, in even a more lugubrious tone than before, recounted his many grievances, not omitting a passing allusion to the poverty of his daily fare; on which he laid the greater stress from his not having had anything to eat since the early morn.

"All this can be remedied" said the old woman when he at last finished his recital, provided you faithfully promise to do whatever I tell you. She was going to say something else, but the Baron suddenly interrupted her by crying out "I should think I would to, I promise a thousand times over."

"Well, you will have to come with me then. I am going to the Castle Schaffhausen, and as that is a good step from here, we shall have to push on, if we wish to get to our quarters before sunset."

With this the old lady trudged off so briskly that the Baron had to go at a jog-trot to keep up with her.

Their road lay through the tangled undergrowth of a dense forest, bright with autumn berries, till at length the Baron's eyes were gladdened by a glimpse of the battlemented turrets of Schaffhausen, peering over the intervening trees. As they proceeded they saw in a secluded hollow not far from the castle a mean tumble down hovel. To this uninviting building, this strangely assorted pair directed their steps.

The Castle Schaffhausen belonged of a right to the

Countess Siegfroid, a little girl of some ten summers. Her father and mother being both dead, the care of the castle, and the adjacent domain, had devolved on the late count's brother, Walter Seigfreid, popularly known as Walter the crafty, till the young lady should be of an age to guard her own interests.

Walter Seigfreid, who on account of the position he held at Schaffhausen, assumed the title of count, was a man of heavy unprepossessing appearance, and dull, morose disposition.

He was never known to laugh, except when he alluded to the fighting proclivities of his neighbours the Gravensteins, whom he compared to gamblers, whose reason had forsaken them, since in the endeavour to acquire a little temporary fame, they lost both life and property. While the late Baron Gravenstein was engaged in the war, which at last proved fatal to him, Count Siegfroid was artfully adding a portion of the Gravenstein estate to that of Schaffhausen. The helpless state of the Baroness at her husband's death prevented her obtaining redress from her unscrupulous neighbour; but a bitter and implacable hatred towards the enemy of herself and family firmly took possession of her breast.

The Count's manner to his fair little niece, which was once kind and affectionate, grew gradually colder, and colder, till at length it became a common remark

among the vassals; that the Count was tired of his charge, and was anxious to get the castle into his own hands.

This supposition, as the sequel proved, had more truth in it than such suppositions often have.

One day, Count Seigfreid was seen in the castle-yard, talking long and earnestly with his Falconer, Hubert.

Hubert was evidently being persuaded to undertake something he disliked, but at length his scruples seemed overcome, for the pair separated amicably enough.

A week after this doubtful meeting, the Countess Ida was missing, and though the Count with an appearance of intense sorrow and anxiety at the loss of his niece headed his vassals in a protracted search, yet nowhere could the little girl be heard of. In reality, Hubert had been commissioned to put his little mistress out of the way; but his heart failing him, he took her to his cottage, where his wife by dressing her meanly, and frequent scoldings, hoped in time to rid the little girl's head of high notions, and make her useful in the house.

It was Hubert's house towards which the old woman and Baron Gravenstein directed their steps.

• Through a partly opened door, a little girl with bright blue eyes, and long flaxen hair, which hung in