

**A PICTURE-BOOK
WITHOUT PICTURES**

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A Picture-Book without Pictures by Hans Christian Andersen

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HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN

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HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN.

FROM

THE GERMAN TRANSLATION OF DE LA MOTTE FOUQUÉ

BY

META TAYLOR.

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STRANGE it is, that at those very times when I am conscious of the warmest and best feelings, my hand and tongue seem, as it were, tied, so that I can express nothing, nor give utterance to any of the thoughts that fill my breast. And yet I am a painter: my eye tells me this, and every one has acknowledged it who has seen my sketches and my pictures.

I am a poor fellow, living in one of the narrowest of streets; yet there is no want of light, for

I live high up, and have a view over all the roofs. For some days after I first came to town, the whole scene around appeared to me crowded and yet lonely. In place of the groves and green hills, I saw nothing but dark grey chimneys, as far as my eye could reach. I met with no one whom I knew, no familiar face greeted me.

One evening I was standing, with a heavy heart, at the casement. I opened it and looked out. Imagine my delight, when I beheld the face of an old friend—a round, kind face, looking down on me—my best friend in my little garret. It was the Moon, the dear old Moon, with the same unaltered gleam, just as she appeared when, through the branches of the willows, she used to shine upon me as I sat on the mossy bank beside the river. I kissed my hand to her, and she beamed full into my chamber, and promised

to look in upon me whenever she went out ; and this she has faithfully done. At every visit she tells me of one thing or another that she has seen during the past night, in her silent passage across the sky. "Sketch what I relate to you," said the Moon at her first visit, "and you will have a pretty picture-book." I acted upon the hint : in my own fashion I could give a new "Thousand and one Nights" in pictures ; but this would be too tedious. The sketches I present are not selected, but given as I received them : a painter, poet or musician might make something of them. What I offer are merely slight sketches upon paper, the framework of my thought. The Moon came not every evening—a cloud often intervened.

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