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## Diamonds and Toads

Once upon a time there was a woman who had two daughters. The elder daughter was very much like her mother in face and manner. They were both so disagreeable and so proud that there was no living with them.

The younger daughter was like her father, for she was good and sweet-tempered, and very beautiful. As people naturally love their own likeness, the mother was very fond of her elder daughter, and at the same time had a great dislike for the younger. She made her eat in the kitchen, and work all the time.

Among other things, this poor child was obliged to go twice a day to draw a pitcherful of water from the spring in the woods, two miles from the house.

One day, when she reached the spring, a poor woman came to her and begged for a drink.

"Oh yes! With all my heart, ma'am," said this pretty little girl, and she took some clear, cool water from the spring, and held up the pitcher so that the woman might drink easily.

When she had finished, the woman said, "You are so very pretty, my dear, so good and so kind, that I cannot help giving you a gift."

Now this was a fairy, who had taken the form of a poor country woman to see how this pretty girl would treat her. "I will give you for a gift," continued the fairy, "that at every word you speak, either a flower or a jewel shall come out of your mouth."

When the girl reached home, her mother scolded her for staying so long at the spring. "I beg your pardon, Mamma," said the poor girl, "for not making more haste." And as she spoke, there came out of her mouth two roses, two pearls, and two large diamonds.

"What is it I see there?" said her mother, very much surprised. "I think I see pearls and diamonds come out of the girl's mouth! How does this happen, my child?" This was the first time she had ever called her "my child," or spoken kindly to her.

The poor child told her mother all that had happened at the spring, and of the old woman's promise. All the time jewels and flowers fell from her lips.

"This is delightful," cried the mother. "I must send my dearest child to the spring. Come, Fanny, see what comes out of your sister's mouth when she speaks! Would you not be glad, my dear, to have the same gift given to you? All you will have to do is to take the pitcher to the spring in the wood. When a poor woman asks you for a drink, give it to her."

"It would be a fine thing for me to do," said the selfish girl. "I will not go to draw water! The child can give me her jewels. She does not need them."

"Yes, you shall," said the mother, "and you shall go this minute."

At last the elder daughter went, grumbling and scolding all the way, and taking with her the best silver pitcher in the house.

She had no sooner reached the spring than she saw a beautiful lady coming out of the wood, who came up to her and asked her for a drink. This was, you must know, the same fairy who had met her sister, but who had now taken the form of a princess.

"I did not come out here to serve you with water," said the proud, selfish maid. "Do you think I brought this silver pitcher so far just to give you a drink? You can draw water from the spring as well as I."

"You are not very polite," said the fairy. "Since you are so rude and so unkind, I give you for a gift that at every word you speak, toads and serpents shall come out of your mouth."

As soon as the mother saw her daughter coming, she cried out, "Well, my dear child, did you see the good fairy?"

"Yes, Mother," answered the proud girl, and as she spoke, two serpents and two toads fell from her mouth.

"What is this that I see?" cried the mother. "What have you done?"

The girl tried to answer, but at every word toads and serpents came from her lips.

And so it was forever after. Jewels and flowers fell from the lips of the younger daughter, who was so good and kind, but the elder daughter could not speak without a shower of serpents and toads.

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