HOUSEHOLD STORIES,
FROM
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HERE was once a woman who lived with her daughter in a beautiful cabbage-garden; and there came a rabbit and ate up all the cabbages. At last said the woman to her daughter,

"Go into the garden, and drive out the rabbit."

"Shoo! shoo!" said the maiden; "don't eat up all our cabbages, little rabbit!"

"Come, maiden," said the rabbit, "sit on my tail and go with me to my rabbit-hutch." But the maiden would not.

Another day, back came the rabbit, and ate away at the cabbages, until the woman said to her daughter,

"Go into the garden, and drive away the rabbit."
"Shoo! shoo!" said the maiden; "don't eat up all our cabbages, little rabbit!"

"Come, maiden," said the rabbit, "sit on my tail and go with me to my rabbit-hutch." But the maiden would not.

Again, a third time back came the rabbit, and ate away at the cabbages, until the woman said to her daughter,

"Go into the garden, and drive away the rabbit."

"Shoo! shoo!" said the maiden; "don't eat up all our cabbages, little rabbit!"

"Come, maiden," said the rabbit, "sit on my tail and go with me to my rabbit-hutch."

And then the girl seated herself on the rabbit's tail, and the rabbit took her to his hutch.

"Now," said he, "set to work and cook some bran and cabbage; I am going to bid the wedding guests." And soon they were all collected. Would you like to know who they were? Well, I can only tell you what was told to me; all the hares came, and the crow who was to be the parson to marry them, and the fox for the clerk, and the altar was under the rainbow. But the maiden was sad, because she was so lonely.

"Get up! get up!" said the rabbit, "the wedding folk are all merry."

But the bride wept and said nothing, and the rabbit went away, but very soon came back again.

"Get up! get up!" said he, "the wedding folk are waiting." But the bride said nothing, and the rabbit went away. Then she made a figure of straw, and dressed it in her own clothes, and gave it a red mouth, and set it to watch the kettle of bran, and then she went home to her mother. Back again came the rabbit, saying, "Get up! get up!" and he went up and hit the straw figure on the head, so that it tumbled down.
And the rabbit thought that he had killed his bride, and he went away and was very sad.
Once on a time the cock and the hen went to the nut mountain, and they agreed beforehand that whichever of them should find a nut was to divide it with the other. Now the hen found a great big nut, but said nothing about it, and was going to eat it all alone, but the kernel was such a fat one that she could not swallow it down, and it stuck in her throat, so that she was afraid she should choke.

"Cock!" cried she, "run as fast as you can and fetch me some water, or I shall choke!"

So the cock ran as fast as he could to the brook, and said, "Brook, give me some water, the hen is up yonder choking with a big nut stuck in her throat." But the brook answered, "First run to the bride and ask her for some red silk."

So the cock ran to the bride and said,
"Bride, give me some red silk; the brook wants me to give him some red silk; I want him to give me some water, for the hen lies yonder choking with a big nut stuck in her throat."

But the bride answered,

"First go and fetch me my garland that hangs on a willow." And the cock ran to the willow and pulled the garland from the bough and brought it to the bride, and the bride gave him red silk, and he brought it to the brook, and the brook gave him water. So then the cock brought the water to the hen, but alas, it was too late; the hen had choked in the meanwhile, and lay there dead. And the cock was so grieved that he cried aloud, and all the beasts came and lamented for the hen; and six mice built a little waggon, on which to carry the poor hen to her grave, and when it was ready they harnessed themselves to it, and the cock drove. On the way they met the fox.

"Halloa, cock," cried he, "where are you off to?"

"To bury my hen," answered the cock.

"Can I come too?" said the fox.

"Yes, if you follow behind," said the cock.

So the fox followed behind and he was soon joined by the wolf, the bear, the stag, the lion, and all the beasts in the wood. And the procession went on till they came to a brook.

"How shall we get over?" said the cock. Now in the brook there was a straw, and he said,

"I will lay myself across, so that you may pass over on me." But when the six mice had got upon this bridge, the straw slipped and fell into the water and they all tumbled in and were drowned. So they were as badly off as ever, when a coal came up and said he would lay himself across and they might pass over him; but no sooner had he touched the water than he hissed, went out, and was dead. A stone seeing this was touched
with pity, and, wishing to help the cock, he laid himself across the stream. And the cock drew the waggon with the dead hen in it safely to the other side, and then began to draw the others who followed behind across too, but it was too much for him, the waggon turned over, and all tumbled into the water one on the top of another, and were drowned.

So the cock was left all alone with the dead hen, and he digged a grave and laid her in it, and he raised a mound above her, and sat himself down and lamented so sore that at last he died. And so they were all dead together.
CAT having made acquaintance with a mouse, professed such great love and friendship for her, that the mouse at last agreed that they should live and keep house together.

"We must make provision for the winter," said the cat, "or we shall suffer hunger, and you, little mouse, must not stir out, or you will be caught in a trap."

So they took counsel together and bought a little pot of fat. And then they could not tell where to put it for safety, but after long consideration the cat said there could not be a better place than the church, for nobody would steal there; and they would put it under the altar and not touch it until they were really in want. So this was done, and the little pot placed in safety.

But before long the cat was seized with a great wish to taste it.

"Listen to me, little mouse," said he; "I have been asked by my cousin to stand god-father to a little son she has brought into the world; he is
white with brown spots; and they want to have the christening to-day, so let me go to it, and you stay at home and keep house."

"Oh yes, certainly," answered the mouse, "pray go by all means; and when you are feasting on all the good things, think of me; I should so like a drop of the sweet red wine."

But there was not a word of truth in all this; the cat had no cousin, and had not been asked to stand god-father: he went to the church, straight up to the little pot, and licked the fat off the top; then he took a walk over the roofs of the town, saw his acquaintances, stretched himself in the sun, and licked his whiskers as often as he thought of the little pot of fat; and then when it was evening he went home.

"Here you are at last," said the mouse; "I expect you have had a merry time."

"Oh, pretty well," answered the cat.

"And what name did you give the child?" asked the mouse.

"Top-off," answered the cat, drily.

"Top-off!" cried the mouse, "that is a singular and wonderful name! is it common in your family?"

"What does it matter?" said the cat; "it's not any worse than Crumb-picker, like your god-child."

A little time after this the cat was again seized with a longing.

"Again I must ask you," said he to the mouse, "to do me a favour, and keep house alone for a day. I have been asked a second time to stand god-father; and as the little one has a white ring round its neck, I cannot well refuse."

So the kind little mouse consented, and the cat crept along by the town wall until he reached the church, and going straight to the little pot of fat, devoured half of it.
"Nothing tastes so well as what one keeps to oneself," said he, feeling quite content with his day's work. When he reached home, the mouse asked what name had been given to the child.

"Half-gone," answered the cat.

"Half-gone!" cried the mouse, "I never heard such a name in my life! I'll bet it's not to be found in the calendar."

Soon after that the cat's mouth began to water again for the fat.

"Good things always come in threes," said he to the mouse; "again I have been asked to stand god-father, the little one is quite black with white feet, and not any white hair on its body; such a thing does not happen every day, so you will let me go, won't you?"

"Top-off, Half-gone," murmured the mouse, "they are such curious names, I cannot but wonder at them!"

"That's because you are always sitting at home," said the cat, "in your little grey frock and hairy tail, never seeing the world, and fancying all sorts of things."

So the little mouse cleaned up the house and set it all in order. Meanwhile the greedy cat went and made an end of the little pot of fat.

"Now all is finished one's mind will be easy," said he, and came home in the evening, quite sleek and comfortable. The mouse asked at once what name had been given to the third child.

"It won't please you any better than the others," answered the cat. "It is called All-gone."

"All-gone!" cried the mouse. "What an unheard-of-name! I never met with anything like it! All-gone! whatever can it mean?" And shaking her head, she curled herself round and went to sleep. After that the cat was not again asked to stand god-father.
When the winter had come and there was nothing more to be had out of doors, the mouse began to think of their store.

"Come, cat," said she, "we will fetch our pot of fat, how good it will taste, to be sure!"

"Of course it will," said the cat, "just as good as if you stuck your tongue out of window!"

So they set out, and when they reached the place, they found the pot, but it was standing empty.

"Oh, now I know what it all meant," cried the mouse, "now I see what sort of a partner you have been! Instead of standing god-father you have devoured it all up; first Top-off, then Half-gone, then"——

"Will you hold your tongue!" screamed the cat, "another word, and I devour you too!"

And the poor little mouse, having "All-gone" on her tongue, out it came, and the cat leaped upon her and made an end of her. And that is the way of the world.
HERE was once an old goat who had seven little ones, and was as fond of them as ever mother was of her children. One day she had to go into the wood to fetch food for them, so she called them all round her.

"Dear children," said she, "I am going out into the wood; and while I am gone, be on your guard against the wolf, for if he were once to get inside he would eat you up, skin, bones, and all. The wretch often disguises himself, but he may always be known by his hoarse voice and black paws."

"Dear mother," answered the kids, "you need not be afraid, we will take good care of ourselves." And the mother bleated good-bye, and went on her way with an easy mind.

It was not long before some one came knocking at the house-door, and crying out,
"Open the door, my dear children, your mother is come back, and has brought each of you something."

But the little kids knew it was the wolf by the hoarse voice.

"We will not open the door," cried they; "you are not our mother, she has a delicate and sweet voice, and your voice is hoarse; you must be the wolf."

Then off went the wolf to a shop and bought a big lump of chalk, and ate it up to make his voice soft. And then he came back, knocked at the house-door, and cried,

"Open the door, my dear children, your mother is here, and has brought each of you something."

But the wolf had put up his black paws against the window, and the kids seeing this, cried out,

"We will not open the door; our mother has no black paws like you; you must be the wolf."

The wolf then ran to a baker.

"Baker," said he, "I am hurt in the foot; pray spread some dough over the place."

And when the baker had plastered his feet, he ran to the miller.

"Miller," said he, "strew me some white meal over my paws." But the miller refused, thinking the wolf must be meaning harm to some one.

"If you don't do it," cried the wolf, "I'll eat you up!"

And the miller was afraid and did as he was told. And that just shows what men are.

And now came the rogue the third time to the door and knocked. "Open, children!" cried he. "Your dear mother has come home, and brought you each something from the wood."
"First show us your paws," said the kids, "so that we may know if you are really our mother or not."

And he put up his paws against the window, and when they saw that they were white, all seemed right, and they opened the door; and when he was inside they saw it was the wolf, and they were terrified and tried to hide themselves. One ran under the table, the second got into the bed, the third into the oven, the fourth in the kitchen, the fifth in the cupboard, the sixth under the sink, the seventh in the clock-case. But the wolf found them all, and gave them short shrift; one after the other he swallowed down, all but the youngest, who was hid in the clock-case. And so the wolf, having got what he wanted, strolled forth into the green meadows, and laying himself down under a tree, he fell asleep.

Not long after, the mother goat came back from the wood; and, oh! what a sight met her eyes! the door was standing wide open, table, chairs, and stools, all thrown about, dishes broken, quilt and pillows torn off the bed. She sought her children, they were nowhere to be found. She called to each of them by name, but nobody answered, until she came to the name of the youngest.

"Here I am, mother," a little voice cried, "here, in the clock-case."

And so she helped him out, and heard how the wolf had come, and eaten all the rest. And you may think how she cried for the loss of her dear children. At last in her grief she wandered out of doors, and the youngest kid with her; and when they came into the meadow, there they saw the wolf lying under a tree, and snoring so that the branches shook. The mother goat looked at him carefully on all sides and she noticed how something inside his body was moving and struggling.

"Dear me!" thought she, "can it be that my poor children that he devoured for his evening meal are still alive?" And she sent the little kid back to the house for a pair of shears, and needle, and thread. Then she cut the wolf’s body open, and no sooner had she made one snip than out came the head of one of the kids, and then another snip, and then one
after the other the six little kids all jumped out alive and well, for in his
greediness the rogue had swallowed them down whole. How delightful
this was! so they comforted their dear mother and hopped about like
tailors at a wedding.

"Now fetch some good hard stones," said the mother, "and we will fill
his body with them, as he lies asleep."

And so they fetched some in all haste, and put them inside him, and the
mother sewed him up so quickly again that he was none the wiser.

When the wolf at last awoke, and got up, the stones inside him made
him feel very thirsty, and as he was going to the brook to drink, they
struck and rattled one against another. And so he cried out:

"What is this I feel inside me? Knocking hard against my bones? How
should such a thing betide me! They were kids, and now they're stones."

So he came to the brook, and stooped to drink, but the heavy stones
weighed him down, so he fell over into the water and was drowned. And
when the seven little kids saw it they came up running.

"The wolf is dead, the wolf is dead!" they cried, and taking hands, they
danced with their mother all about the place.