Ririro

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Blanca and Rosalinde

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More than four or five hundred years ago, there was once a kind old woman who lived in a friendly village about an hour away from the big city. She was much loved by her neighbors because she was always kind and willing to help the poor.

Her husband was dead, but fortunately she had two exceptionally beautiful daughters. The eldest was called Blanca because of her lily-white color, while the youngest, who had rosy cheeks and rose-red lips, was named Rosalinde. One day, as the old woman, Trude, sat spinning at her door, she saw an old mother hobbling by with her cane. "You must be very tired," Trude said to the old mother. "Come, sit down and rest for a while."

She called her daughters to bring a chair, and Rosalinde immediately went to get one, as she was a friendly and helpful girl. "You might also be hungry and thirsty," Trude said. "Oh yes," said the old mother, "I would like some food and drink."

"I would like to give you the best," Trude replied, "but since I am poor, I can only give you a simple meal." The eldest daughter set the table while the mother took bread, butter, and cheese from the cupboard. The friendly Rosalinde brought a bowl of delicious milk. When the old woman had sat down, the mother said, "Blanca, my dear, would you also get a basket full of plums from the garden?"

But Blanca was not at all pleased and went grumbling and muttering to the garden, saying, "It's outrageous that I have to give some of my precious plums to such an ugly old wanderer!" But she dared not contradict her mother, and when she brought the fruit back, she could hardly hide her regret.

Rosalinde, on the other hand, said, "My little hen has just laid an egg, and if the old mother is hungry, I will get the egg for her." She immediately ran to get it and quickly returned with the egg. But, oh wonder! Just as she was about to lay the egg in front of the old woman, she turned into a wonderfully beautiful lady! She turned to the mother and said, "I have long seen how good and kind you are. I have come to reward your two daughters with justice and fairness."

"The eldest will become a queen, but the youngest will marry a farmer." She touched the cottage with her cane, and it turned into a charming farm.

"This, Rosalinde, is your share. I believe I have given you what each of you desires most," the sorceress said and disappeared. The mother and daughters were naturally very surprised. But once they had recovered from their initial astonishment, they looked at the house from top to bottom and could not get over how neat, clean, and beautiful everything was. The chairs and tables, although made of ordinary wood, were so shiny that they looked like mirrors. The bedding was as white as snow.

After admiring all the splendor and beauty, they went to the garden and the stables. There were the most beautiful cows, the most magnificent horses, and an abundance of all kinds of poultry. Behind the house lay a beautiful vegetable garden and an orchard. Rosalinde and her mother were overjoyed with this rich gift from the sorceress. But Blanca thought nothing of it and only longed to become a queen.

Suddenly the sound of a hunting horn could be heard. Curiosity drove Blanca to the gate, where she saw that the King and his retinue were out hunting. When the King rode by, he was so delighted by Blanca's beauty that he immediately decided to take her as his wife. As soon as he returned to his palace, he had her summoned, and after the necessary preparations, the wedding was celebrated.

Now that Blanca had become Queen, she could hardly sleep for joy. Her thoughts were occupied only with parties, games, dancing, beautiful clothes, and jewelry. She thought that Rosalinde would want to share in her happiness, so she sent a messenger to invite her to the palace. She also promised that she would take care to ensure that her sister would marry the richest and most distinguished lord at court.



Rosalinde was much too wise to choose a turbulent life at court over her own peaceful and contented existence. She declined her sister's invitation and declared that she was very happy and satisfied with her current life.

Blanca considered herself to be the happiest woman in the world for a short time. The court ladies showed her all possible respect. But in their hearts, they were a little jealous to see a simple country girl in such a high position. So they devised all kinds of tricks and schemes to turn the King against his wife.

The young Queen soon realized that things were not going as well between her and her husband as they had in the beginning. Even the servants became negligent and careless and were no longer so obedient to her in everything. Now

the poor Blanca felt really unhappy and wished she could be with her sister. Since becoming Queen, she had not seen her, as she considered a visit to the farm far below her dignity.

The King's lovelessness increased daily, and this saddened Blanca so much that her health suffered. She therefore decided to ask the King for permission to spend some time in the countryside. The King gladly gave his consent; he had long wished to be separated from his wife. Blanca only wanted to visit her sister; she thought of nothing else. So she went on a journey and found liveliness and joy outside the farm door, as a group of peasants were dancing and amusing themselves with all kinds of games.

As soon as Rosalinde heard that her sister was there, she flew outside and embraced and kissed her and led her into the house. The Queen was deeply touched by this gesture of love and burst into tears. In her eyes, Rosalinde was the happiest woman ever. Her husband was kind and careful and did everything to make her life as pleasant as possible. The small farm provided them with everything they needed: grain, milk, butter, cheese, meat, poultry, and wool for making clothes.

Rosalinde was loved by all her neighbors. When the Queen saw her sister so happy, she sighed and said, "Oh, what a bad fate the witch gave me when she made me Queen. True happiness does not lie in external splendor and glory, but in a peaceful and contented life."

She had just uttered these words when the witch appeared again. "I made you Queen," she said, "not to reward you, but to punish you for not giving the old mother a few plums. To be content and happy, you only need the necessities and nothing more."

"Oh," cried Blanca, "I understand now. Can you please put an end to my misery?" - "That wish has already been granted," answered the witch. "You don't have to return to the palace anymore because the King no longer loves you."

And so it was. Blanca now spent many enjoyable and happy days with her sister and never longed to return to the court again.



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