

The Brothers Grimm

Manyfurs



THINK
DIGITAL ACADEMY



Once Upon a Time

There was once a king who had a wife with golden hair.
She was so beautiful that there was none on earth to
compare with her.



When she fell ill and knew that she must soon die, she called the king to her and said, “If you wish to marry again after my death, promise me that you won’t take anyone who isn’t as beautiful as me and who hasn’t got golden hair like mine.” And after the king had given his word, she closed her eyes and died.



For a long time the king grieved and had no thought of marrying again. But at last his councillors told him, “You must re-marry.” For the king had no son, but only a daughter.



Messengers were sent far and wide looking for a bride who was as beautiful as the late queen and who had such golden hair, but there was no one. So the messengers came home empty-handed.



The only person who was as beautiful as the queen and who had such lovely golden hair was the king's own daughter. And one day the king, who was really half out of his mind with grief and worry said, "I shall marry my daughter."



The councillors told him that he must not. “God forbids it,” they said. “No good would come from such a sin. You will drag the whole kingdom down to hell with you.”

But the king was determined. “She is the only one who looks like my dear wife, so she is the one I should marry,” he said.



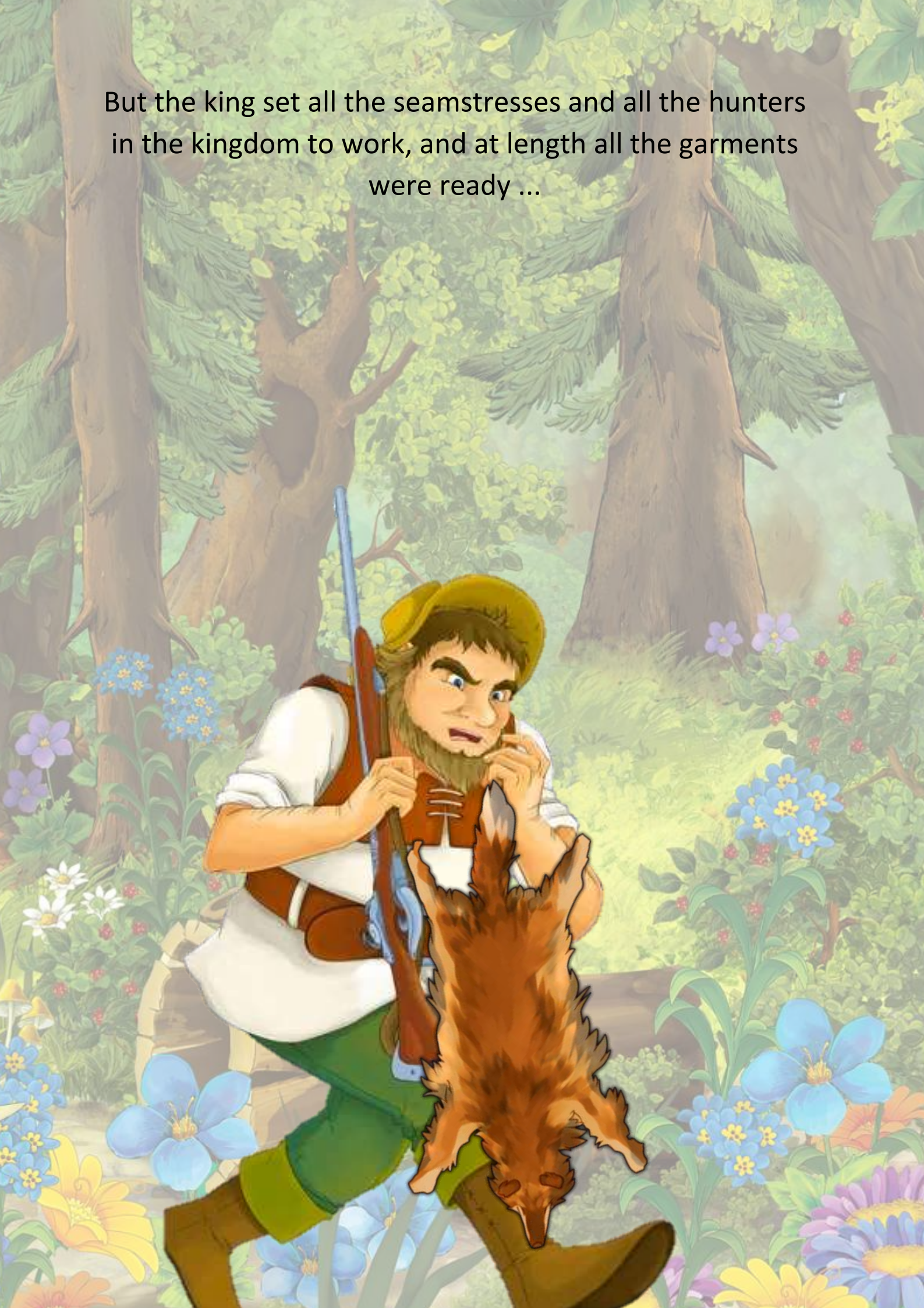
The daughter was even more shocked when she heard of the plan and decided she must hinder it.



So she told him, “Before I consent to marry you, I must have three dresses, one as golden as the sun, one as silver as the moon and one as bright and sparkling as the stars. Also, I must have a cloak made from a thousand different furs and one of every kind of animal in the kingdom must give a piece of its skin for it.” For she thought that the king would never be able to find such garments.



But the king set all the seamstresses and all the hunters
in the kingdom to work, and at length all the garments
were ready ...



... three dresses, as golden as the sun, as silver as the moon
and as bright as the stars, and a cloak made of a thousand
different furs.



As the king spread out the many-furred cloak he said, "At last, tomorrow shall be our wedding day."

When the princess saw that there was no hope of changing the king's mind, she resolved to run away.



That night when everyone was asleep, she got up and took three things from among her treasures – a golden ring, a tiny golden spinning wheel and a tiny golden bobbin.



Then she put her dresses of the sun, moon and stars into a nutshell, put on her cloak of a thousand furs, rubbed dirt into her face and hands ...



... and walked out into the forest, trusting to God to watch over her. She walked until she was exhausted, and then she curled up asleep in a hollow log.



The sun rose, but she went on sleeping. She was still asleep
when the sun was high.



Now it so happened that the king to whom this forest belonged was hunting in it. When his dogs came to the tree, they sniffed, and ran around the tree, barking.

The king ordered his huntsman to see what wild beast was hiding there



. “It’s a strange beast,” the huntsman reported. “I’ve never seen its like. It is lying asleep in a hollow log and its skin is covered with a thousand different furs.”

The king said, “Try and catch it alive. Tie it to the wagon and take it home.”



When the huntsman grabbed hold of the princess, she awoke with a start and cried in terror, "Have pity on me! I'm a poor child, abandoned by my father and mother. Look after me."

He said, "Manyfurs, you can come and work in the kitchen. You can sweep up the ashes." And she was bundled into the wagon and taken back to the palace.



She was given a hidey-hole under the stairs to sleep in, where the sun never shone and told, "This is your place, Manyfurs."



Then she was sent into the kitchen to do the heavy work.
They made her carry wood and water, sweep the hearth,
pluck the chickens, clean the vegetables, rake the ashes –
all the dirty jobs.

Manyfurs lived a wretched life. Alas, fair princess, what's to
become of you?



After a long time, a ball was given in the palace and she asked the chef, “May I go upstairs and watch for a little while? I’ll stay outside the door.”

The chef said, “Yes, but you must be back in half an hour to sweep the hearth.”



Manyfurs took her oil lamp into her hidey-hole, took off her cloak of a thousand furs, washed the grime off her face and hands, and let her beauty shine once more. Then she opened the nutshell and took out her dress as golden as the sun.



As she made her way up to the ballroom, everyone made way for her. No one recognised her. They thought she must be a princess.



The king himself came up to her, took her hand and danced with her. He thought in his heart, This is the most beautiful girl in the world.

When the dance ended, she curtsied.



The king looked away for a moment and when he looked back, she was gone. No one had seen her leave. The king had all the guards questioned, but no one knew where she had come from or where she had gone.



She had run into her hidey-hole, slipped out of her dress, rubbed dirt on her face and hands, put on her cloak of a thousand furs and become Manyfurs again.



She went to the kitchen to sweep the hearth, but the chef said, “Never mind with that now. I want to see the dancing, so you make some soup for the king and mind you don’t drop any hairs in it or you’ll ger no supper.”



The chef went upstairs and Manyfurs made bread soup for the king as best she knew how. Then she fetched her golden ring from her hidey-hole and put it in the bowl.



When the ball was over, the king ate the soup and he liked it very much. When he got to the bowl, he found the golden ring and wondered how it had got there. So he sent for the chef.



The chef was terrified. “You must have let a hair fall into the soup,” he said, “and if you have, you shall be beaten for it.”



When he came before the king, the king asked him
for who made the soup.

“I did,” he replied.

“That it not true,” said the king. “Tonight’s soup was
different. It was much better than usual.”

So the chef had to admit that it was Manyfurs who
made the soup.

“Then send her to me,” said the king.



When Manyfurs came, the king said, “Who are you?”

“I’m a poor girl abandoned by her father and mother,” she replied.

“What’s your position here?”

“I’m here for people to throw boots at.”



The king produced the ring. “Where did this ring come from?”

“What would poor Manyfurs know about a ring like that?” she replied. So the king got nothing out of her and had to send her back to the kitchen.



After a while, the king threw another ball. As before, Manyfurs begged the chef for leave to look on. “Yes,” he answered, “but be sure to be back in half an hour to make the king that bread soup he likes so much.”



She nipped into her hidey-hole, threw off her cloak,
washed and opened the nutshell to take out the dress as
silver as the moon.



She looked as lovely as could be. The king danced with her, but once more she managed to slip away without being noticed.



She turned herself into Manyfurs again and made the king his soup. This time she slipped her tiny golden spinning wheel into the bowl.



Once again, the king summoned the chef and asked who had made the soup and once again he admitted, “Manyfurs.”



But the king could get nothing more out of her this time,
just that her place was to have boots thrown at her and
what would she know of a golden spinning wheel?



The king held a third ball and it was just the same as before. Manyfurs begged to go and watch and the chef let her, saying, “Be sure and come back in time to make the king’s soup. I think you must be a witch, Manyfurs and put a spell on your soup to make the king like it so much better than mine.”



She put on the dress that glittered like the stars and went into the ballroom.



Once more, the king danced with the beautiful girl and thought that she had never looked so radiant. And while they were dancing he managed, without her noticing, to slip the golden ring onto her finger.

Every time the music seemed to be stopping, the king signed to the musicians to keep going.



But at last it came to an end, and though the king tried to hold on to her, the girl tore herself loose and sprang away so quickly that she vanished before his eyes.



She rushed to her hidey-hole. She didn't have time to take off her dress of stars, but just threw her cloak on top of it. And when she rubbed the dirt onto her face and hands, she missed the finger with the ring.



Then she went back to the kitchen as Manyfurs and cooked the king soup. This time, she hid the tiny golden bobbin at the bottom of the bowl.



When the king found the bobbin, he sent for Manyfurs.



Noticing her white finger with the ring on it, he grasped her by the hand and held her fast. When she tried to struggle free, her cloak slipped aside, revealing the dress as bright and sparkling as the stars. The king pulled the many-furred cloak aside, and her lovely hair came tumbling down in a shower of gold. She could conceal herself beneath her many-furred cloak no longer.



She washed the dirt from face and hands and stood there in her glory, more beautiful than anyone who has ever been seen on earth.



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