

This is the story of a girl in the moon who felt sad and lonely and longed for friends. The wind pitied her and brought her to the earth. Here, she became known as the Sampaguita.

THE LITTE WHITE MAIDEN

by
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LISTEN. The Wind is telling a story. Do you see him holding the flowers close to his lips, whispering into their tender ears a tale that was never told? See the flowers laugh and sway with pleasure. Watch the fiery Gumamela fling up her glorious head in glee and settle once more to attention. Look at the Roses — how stately they stand upon their thorny stalks, intently listening to the Wind's sweet tale. Do you notice how the butterflies flutter about in a sort of jealous frenzy while the Wind plays at will among the flowers and lure their sweetness with the silver of his voice? Let's draw near. Perhaps if we are very silent, we shall catch the words that the Wind is saying and enjoy his tale with the flowers of the garden.

Do you hear? The Wind is talking about the Little White Maiden, who dwelt in the moon. She must have been very beautiful, that Little White Maiden, for the Wind is sighing about her with gentle wistfulness. She must have been sweet, that Little White Maiden, for the Wind seems to have captured some of her scent and is wafting it to us. He says that she dwelt alone in the moon, in a crystal palace of glowing mirrors which caught up the radiance of the sun and reflected it to a sleeping world. She wandered all alone in this beautiful palace of loneliness, with

no one to talk to and no one to laugh with. She hummed songs that she heard the Wind sing; she played games with herself, stretching her arms over her head and pretending that the little maidens with the up-flung arms which the mirrors gave back to her were little playmates dancing to the tune of fairy music. How did she know about fairy music? She must have been a fairy once, and the memory of that sweet existence must have lingered with her long after she had been banished to the moon.

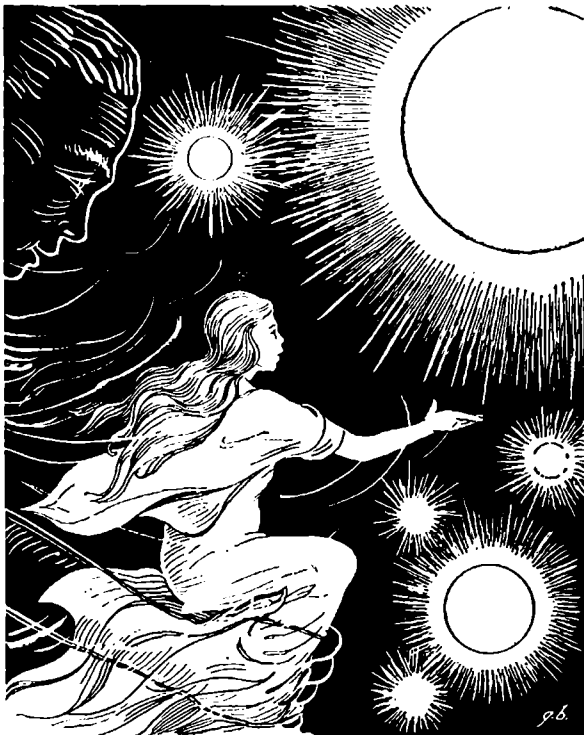
Why was she sent up to the gleaming palace of the moon? Well, let me see. Perhaps she was a little naughty and could not play happily with the other little fairies. Or perhaps she longed for so much light that she could not stand the darkness of the Underworld and thus had flown straight to the moon, the only light she had ever known. But no matter—we must be silent, or the Wind will hear us and discontinue his story.

One night, when the moon was waning, the Little White Maiden felt lonelier than usual. She was sick and tired of the huge palace of mirrors which was so bright and so silent. She wanted to hear laughter—the laughter of good children—the sweetest sound upon the universe. She sat by a little crystal table and thought and thought. The more she thought, the lonelier she felt, and she shed big crystal tears which fell on her knees and rolled down to her feet. As she looked at the little pool of tears which had formed at her feet, she suddenly thought of something that she had seen once in the world of long ago—a silver pool reflecting the brightness of the moon. A great home-



sickness for the earth and all its treasures assailed her. She wanted to go back—to hear the little children playing by the brook, once more hear their strange and lovely voices, and feel the beauty of their laughter. She wanted to go back. She could not stand this terrible loneliness in the glittering palace of the moon.

Resolutely, she stood up and dried her tears. She *will* go back. But how? She looked all about her. Half of the huge palace was in shadow, for the sun was resting on his right side and hid the brightness of his face. She went to a little crystal window and looked out at the world beyond. All about her was darkness, relieved only by the lamps of little stars who played with one another as they kept vigil while the sun slept. The Little White Maiden's heart was nigh to bursting with wistfulness. How she wanted to go out. How she wished she were a star, for then she wouldn't be so lonely. At least the little stars could play. She peeped out some more into the night. As she looked out, the desire to go out among the stars grew stronger within her. What could she do? She would perish of loneliness in the crystal palace of the moon.



The Little White Maiden thought for some more lonely hours. Then she cocked her ears to listen. What sound was that? From the distance came the music of the Wind as he blew among the heavens. The Little White Maiden strained her ears to catch the notes of his whistling. He was coming nearer. She put half of her body out of the little crystal window and waved her hands to attract attention. The Wind saw her tiny white arms frantically beating the silence of the moon palace and hastened to her.

"Please, Brother Wind, take me down!" the Little White Maiden pleaded (so ran the Wind's tale).

And with the words, the brave Little White Maiden flung herself out of the crystal window and sailed down, down, till the wind caught her up in his strong arms.

"Where do you wish to go?" asked the Wind, as he whistled among the walls of the heavens.

"Anywhere, anywhere!" the Little White Maiden replied, "where I can find laughter!"

"Shall we try the stars?"

"Do, do!" the Little White Maiden pleaded.

So they sailed among the stars, coming close to one another and listening with all their ears. There was the sound of faint, indistinguishable music, more like

(Please turn to page 47)

**Answers to the Test on
"OUR MOST FAITHFUL FISH FRIEND"**

- | | |
|-------|-------|
| 1. F | 7. F |
| 2. T | 8. T |
| 3. T | 9. T |
| 4. F | 10. F |
| 5. F | 11. F |
| 6. T | 12. T |
| 13. T | |

THE LITTLE WHITE MAIDEN . . .

(Continued from page 33)

the music of sighs than of laughter.

"Come," said the Little White Maiden to one little star. But the star just winked at her and shook her silver head.

"I have watch to keep," she said at length, "and duty can be more delightful than laughter when one has known it all her life."

All the others whom they approached merely winked and twinkled at them but would not leave their post. So the Little White Maiden, lonely and bewildered, sailed along with the Wind.

"And I told her," (the Wind said,) "about a world beneath the stars. A little world where the colors of the rainbow could be found in the flowers, where sweetness is so free, and laughter so wholesome. I told her of a little garden where children played all day and plucked flowers by a little lake. I told her of the music of their laughter when they were delighted and the wisdom of their words when they were kind. And I told her of the sweetness of their breath when they are asleep and the tinkle of their laughter when they dream of beautiful things. 'Look everywhere you wish,' I said to the Moon Maiden, 'but nowhere can you find sweeter music than the sound of children's laughter when they are happy.'"

The Little White Maiden clapped her hands in glee and asked to be taken down to this little garden. So they sailed down, down, down, till they came to this little garden with the clear bit of lake. She lingered by the beautiful flowers

BOOKS TO READ . . .

(Continued from page 42)

quite funny. Did you ever think that 'foxes' might wear 'sockses'? Many of the poems in the book, **WHEN WE WERE VERY YOUNG** are about the things that little boys and girls love to do and about the things that little girls and boys dream of. All of the poems were written for a real little boy who lives in London, England. His name is Christopher Robin. Some other time I shall tell you a secret about Christopher Robin.

I do wish some of you boys and girls would write to me about the kinds of books you would like to read. Look in the first number of **THE YOUNG CITIZEN** and turn to the page where it tells you just what I would like to know. I am waiting to hear from you.

Lovingly,

MOTHER GOOSE.

while they slept, kissed their delicate petals, caressed their tender stalks, and sank to rest in a little throne of green which lay by the lake. Suddenly, there was the sweet tinkle of a baby's laughter, coming clear and beautiful in the perfumed air. The Little White Maiden clasped her hands in ecstasy, her face beautiful beyond words.

She is there now. Would you like to see her? But you must be good and think only of beautiful things so that the sound of your laughter would be unutterably sweet when she pauses to listen for it. Here, by this tiny pool, look closer, for she is there, the Little White Maiden. Do you see her? Yes, in the daytime she is a little Sam-paguita, sleeping in a bed of sweetness. But in the night, she wakes up from her rest and leaves her fragrant bower. She flits about the cradles within the silent houses, waiting for the thread of melody which tinkles from the land of dreams and trickle out of the sweet, soft lips of slumbering children.

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