

## READING TIME FOR YOUNG FOLKS

### THE MISER'S GOLD

*An Old Legend*

By H. G. K.

THERE was once a greedy old miser who lived alone in a hut in a forest.

All his life this old man had saved all his money. When he had saved enough coppers, he would exchange them for a gold piece. Then he would hide the gold piece away in an iron kettle that he buried in the ground.

One night a robber, who had heard of the greedy old miser and of his many gold pieces, crept into the woods.

When the old man had blown out his candle and gone to sleep, the robber

crept to the hiding place of the iron kettle of gold money. He began to dig in the earth, and soon found the kettle. He pulled it out of the ground and took off the lid. By the bright

moonlight that shone down through the trees, the robber could see the gold pieces shine.

"How rich I shall be!" said the robber.

He put the lid back onto the kettle and started for the edge of the woods. Just as he was almost out of the woods, he thought he heard a twig crack behind him.

"Someone is trying to catch me," he thought, and so he started to run. And at that moment he caught his foot on a big root that stuck up from the ground.

Down went the robber. The kettle flew out of his hand, the lid came off, and the gold pieces were scattered over the ground.

Before he could get up and hunt the gold pieces, it was dawn, and the robber was glad to run away into the town without being caught.

Soon after, a good, beautiful fairy floated by. She saw the gold pieces lying about on the ground, and guessed at once that some one had been trying to rob the greedy old miser who lived in

the hut in the forest.

"This gold must not stay here," the fairy said. "If I leave it the old miser will find it and will hide it away again. I will see if I cannot put it away

where everyone can enjoy it."

So the good fairy bent down, gathered up the gold pieces, and put them back into the iron kettle. Then she left the forest and floated out over the green meadows.

As the fairy floated along she reached into the iron kettle for gold pieces. She tossed them down one by one into the grass of the green meadows.

In each spot where a gold piece fell, there blossomed in a moment a shining

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## MISER'S GOLD

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golden yellow flower. Soon all the meadows in all the land were filled with beautiful golden flowers, the good fairy's golden yellow flowers which everyone could enjoy. And they have bloomed there ever since.

Thus, the good fairy changed the miser's gold into something beautiful which everybody would enjoy.

## QUESTIONS

1. What is a legend? (See the dictionary.)
2. What is a miser? (Again see the dictionary.)
3. How did the miser in this story secure his gold pieces?
4. Where did he hide them?
5. What evil person went to the old miser's hut?
6. What did the robber do?
7. What happened to the kettle of gold?
8. What did the fairy see?
9. What did the fairy decide to do?
10. Tell the rest of the story.
11. What do you think of hoarding money and not using it?
12. Do you know any fairy stories? Could you tell one?

## NIGHT IN A HUT

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were able to kill them.

We were tired and soon we went to sleep, although our beds were not very comfortable. I do not know how long I had been asleep, when I was suddenly awakened by a loud screaming and yelling outside. We got up at once. We could clearly hear the excited voices of men outside. We did not know what had happened. I took a pistol in my hand and my friend took some of the boards down. We could not see anything outside and the noise had stopped. We called twice and one of the natives answered: "*Tui mbaja sana hapa, bwana.*" (I have killed a leopard.)

This killing of a leopard did not interest us very much, we were so accustomed to it at our farm. Therefore we went to bed again and slept until morning.

The natives were talking noisily when we came out of our hut the next morning. There was a corral near the huts where the cattle and the goats were kept at night. The fence of this corral was about nine feet high and was built from branches of red thorn trees. It was effective for keeping the wild animals out.

During the night a leopard had sneaked through the fence to get one of the goats. He had killed two of them and had begun to eat his prey. The cattle in the corral had become excited. This noise had awakened the natives in their huts, and they knew at once that there was a wild beast around. Two of the men had taken their spears and shields and gone outside quietly.

It was dark outside, but these natives are accustomed to seeing in the darkness. The two men quickly found the leopard. The animal then tried to get out of the corral. He leaped at the two men, and they killed him with their long spears.

A medium sized leopard lay before us. The claws of the beast were long and sharp, and looked very strong. I raised his lips and saw his great fangs which were about three inches long.

The leopard still had the spear in his side. Several wounds showed us that both spearmen had fought him. The natives do not like too many holes in the skin of a leopard. They sell the yellow and brown spotted skin, and they will get more money for it when there are not many holes in it. They usually dry the skin in the

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