



# ENGLISH FAIRY TALES

by Joseph Jacobs

## I. Fairy Ointment<sup>1</sup>

Dame Goody was a nurse that looked after<sup>2</sup> sick people, and minded babies. One night she woke up at midnight, and when she went downstairs, she saw a strange squinny-eyed<sup>3</sup>, little ugly old fellow, who asked her to come to his wife who was too ill to mind her baby. Dame Goody didn't like the look of the old fellow, but business is business; so she popped on<sup>4</sup> her things, and went down to him. And when she got down to him, he whisked her up on to a large coal-black<sup>5</sup> horse with fiery eyes, that stood at the door; and soon they were going at a rare pace, Dame Goody holding on to the old fellow like grim death<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> **ointment** — мазь

<sup>2</sup> **look after smb.** — присматривать за кем-либо

<sup>3</sup> **squinny-eyed** — косоглазый

<sup>4</sup> **pop smth. on** — надеть что-либо

<sup>5</sup> **coal-black** — угольно-чёрный

<sup>6</sup> **hold on like grim death** — держаться изо всех сил

They rode, and they rode, till at last<sup>1</sup> they stopped before a cottage door. So they got down and went in and found the good woman abed with the children playing about; and the babe, a fine bouncing boy, beside her.

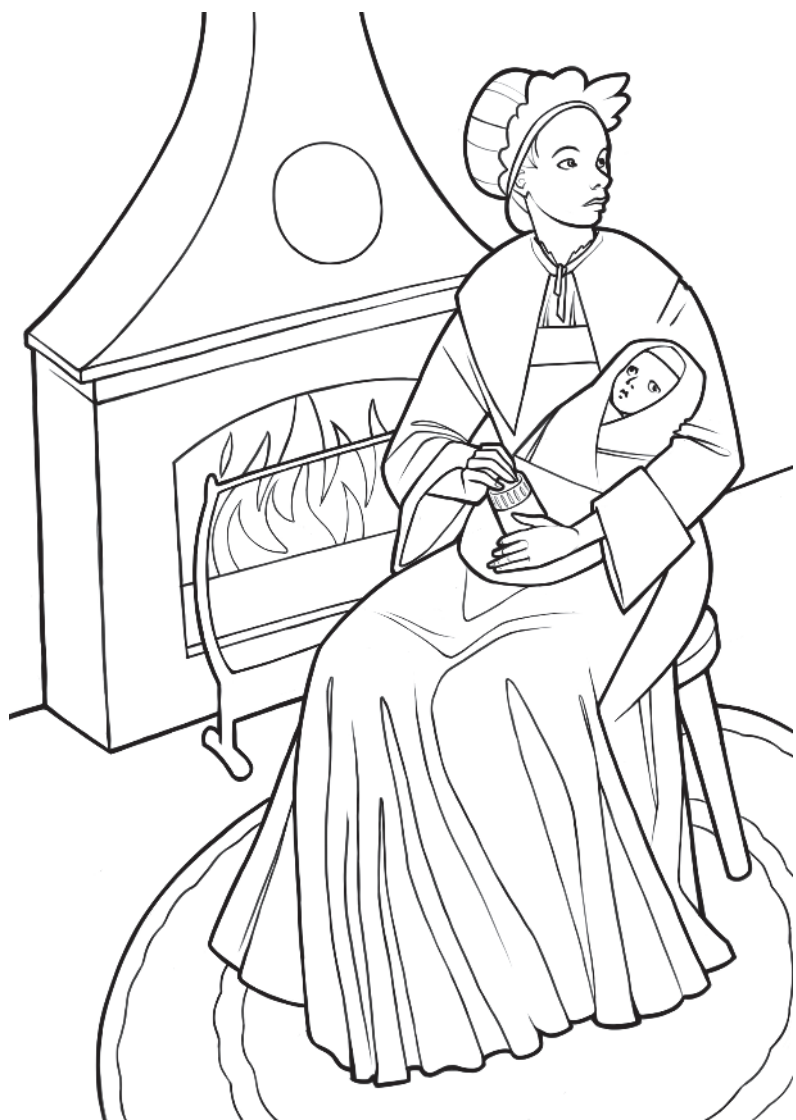
Dame Goody took the babe, which was a fine baby boy. The mother, when she handed the baby to Dame Goody to mind, gave her a box of ointment, and told her to stroke the baby's eyes with it as soon as it opened them. After a while it began to open its eyes. Dame Goody saw that it had squinny eyes just like its father. So she took the box of ointment and stroked its two eyelids with it. But she wondered what it was for, as she had never seen such a thing before. So she looked to see if the others were looking, and, when they were not noticing, she stroked her own right eyelid with the ointment.

No sooner had she done so, than<sup>2</sup> everything seemed changed about her. The cottage became elegantly furnished. The mother in the bed was a beautiful lady, dressed up in white silk. The little baby was still more beautiful than before, and its clothes were made of a sort of silvery cloth. It's

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<sup>1</sup> **at last** — наконец

<sup>2</sup> **no sooner... than** — как только... сразу



little brothers and sisters around the bed were flat-nosed imps with pointed ears, who made faces at<sup>1</sup> one another, and scratched their heads. Sometimes they pulled the sick lady's ears with their long and hairy paws. In fact, they were up to all kinds of mischief; and Dame Goody knew that she was in a house of pixies. But she said nothing to nobody, and as soon as the lady was well enough to mind the baby, she asked the old fellow to take her back home. So he came round to the door with the coal-black horse with eyes of fire, and off they went as fast as before, or perhaps a little faster, till they came to Dame Goody's cottage, where the squinny-eyed old fellow lifted her down and left her, thanking her civilly, and paying her more than she had ever been paid before for such service.

Next day happened to be market-day, and as Dame Goody had been away from home, she wanted many things in the house, and trudged<sup>2</sup> off to get them at the market. As she was buying the things she wanted, who should she see but the squinny-eyed old fellow who had taken her on the coal-black horse. And what do you think

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<sup>1</sup> **make faces at smb.** — корчить кому-либо рожи

<sup>2</sup> **trudge** — устало тащиться, плестись