

T H E

Babes in the Wood

Being a true Relation of a Norfolk Gentleman and his Wife, who left two Children to the charge of an Uncle, who dealt most wickedly with them, and how he was punished for it.

To which is added,

The Yorkshire Beauty.



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The Babes in the Wood.

NOW ponder well ye parents dear,
 the words that I shall write,
 A doleful story you shall hear,
 was lately brought to light.
 A gentleman of good report,
 in Norfolk liv'd of late,
 Whose wealth and honour did surmount,
 most men of his estate.
 Sore sick he was and like to die,
 and he no help could have,
 His worthy wife by him lay sick,
 they both possess'd one grave.
 Betwixt them two no love was lost,
 each was to other kind,
 In love they liv'd, in love they died,
 and left two babes behind.
 The one he was a pretty boy,
 not passing three years old,
 The other a girl, younger than he,
 and made in beauty's mould.
 The father left his little son,
 - as it doth well appear,
 When he to perfect age should come,
 three hundred pounds a year,
 And to his little daughter Jean,
 two hundred pounds in gold,

To be told down on marriage day,
 no way to be control'd.
 And if the children chanc'd to die,
 'ere they to age should come,
 The uncle should possess their wealth,
 and so the will did run.
 Now brother, said the dying man,
 look to my children dear,
 Be kind unto my boy and girl,
 no friends I else have here.
 To God and you I recommend,
 my children night and day,
 For little space be sure we have,
 within this world to stay.
 You must be father and mother too,
 and uncle all in one,
 God knows what will become of them,
 when I am dead and gone.
 O then belpake the mother dear,
 my brother kind quoth she,
 You are the man must bring my babes,
 to wealth or misery,
 If you do keep them carefully,
 then God will you reward;
 If otherwise you strive to do,
 God will your deeds regard,
 With lips as cold as any stone,
 she kiss'd these children small.
 God bless you both my children dear,
 and so the tears did fall.

Those speeches that the uncle made,
 to that sick couple there,
 The keeping of your children small,
 dear sister do not fear.
 God never prosper me nor mine,
 nor ought else that I have,
 If I do wrong your children dear,
 when you are laid in grave.
 Their parents being dead and gone,
 the children he did take
 With him into his dwelling house,
 and much of them did make.
 He had not kept these children small,
 a twelvemonth and a day,
 But for their money he devis'd,
 to make them both away.
 He bargain'd with two ruffians,
 who were of furious mood,
 For to take the children small,
 and kill them in a wood.
 He told his wife and children all,
 he would the children send,
 To be brought up in fair London,
 with one that was a friend.

P A R T II.

THESE pretty babes away they went,
 rejoicing at the tide,
 And singing with a merry mood,
 that they were going to ride,

They spake and prattled pleasantly,
as they rode on the way,

To them that should their butchers be
and work their live's decay.

The speech that these sweet babes made,
caus'd their murd'rer hearts relent,

That they had ta'en the deed in hand,
full sore they did repent.

But one of them was hard of heart,
and vow'd to do his charge,

Because the wretch that hir'd them both,
had paid them very large,

So then into the forest thick,
these two men fell at strife,

With one another they did fight,
about the children's life.

And he that was of mildest mood,
did kill the other there,

Within the unfrequented wood,
the babes did quack for fear.

He took the children by the hand,
and led them by the way,

Hold your tongue my children dear,
be sure you do not cry.

Two miles he led them forth till they,
for bread did sore complain.

Stay here, quoth he, I'll bring you bread,
when I come back again.

Then hand in hand these pretty babes,
went wandering up and down,

But they could never see the man,
 approaching from the town.
 Their pretty lips with blackberries,
 were altogether dy'd,
 And when the darksome night came on
 they both sat down and cry'd,
 Thus wandered these pretty babes,
 till death did end their grief
 In one another's arms they dy'd,
 as babes wanting relief.
 No burial these children did
 of any man receive,
 Till robin red-breast carefully
 did cover them o'er with leaves.
 And now the heavy wrath of God,
 upon the uncle fell,
 For fearful fiends did haunt his house,
 his conscience burnt in hell.
 His barns were burnt, his goods consum'd
 his lands were barren made,
 His cattle all died in the field,
 and nothing with him staid;
 And in a voyage to Portugal,
 two of his sons did die.
 Then to conclude, himself was brought
 into much misery.
 He pawn'd and mortgaged his goods,
 ere seven years came about,
 And at the very time, then did
 this cruel act come out.

The fellow that did take in hand,
 the children sweet to kill,
 For robbery was condemn'd to die,
 as was God's blessed will.
 He did confess the very truth,
 the which is here express'd,
 The uncle died, when he for debt,
 in prison long did last.
 All you who be executors,
 and overseers eke,
 Of children that be fatherless,
 and infants mild and meek,
 See that you keep them carefully,
 both by night and day,
 For God that dwells in heaven so high,
 he will your deeds repay.

The Yorkshire Beauty.

WHEN I was a pratty boy,
 Some twunty years ago,
 I was the pride o' mammy's heart,
 She made me quite a shaw,
 Such a beauty's I did grow, did grow,
 Such a beauty's I did grow.
 Straight hair I had and goggle eyes,
 With such a roguish leer,
 A braud face, nose, besides a mouth
 That reach'd fra' ea' side,
 Such a beauty, &c.

One day a-playing with the pigs,
 I chanc'd to brak my nose,
 They slack me in a corn-field
 To fright away the crows.

Such a beauty, &c.

Mymammy prais'd my wond'rous charms
 And when she cid me fill,

For fear a spoon would spoil my mouth,
 She fed me with a quill,

Such a beauty, &c.

Now the plague of being handsome,
 Upon my soul it's true,

I cud wash mysel' as ugly, oy,
 As ony yan o' yau,

Such a beauty, &c.

To *monkeybanks* whun e'er I want,
 I beat 'em all dead hollow;

I wun a flaming gold-lac'd hat,
 By grinning through a callar,

Such a beauty, &c.

Now ladies wha a lover want,
 Pray don't a me despise,

But tak me to your tender arms,
 And sun me wi' your eyes,

Such a beauty I will grow, will grow,
 Such a beauty I will grow.

FINIS.