

Chapter VI - Twinkle Meets the Corrugated Giant

"AND now, while we are waiting," continued the fairy turtle, "I want to find a certain flower that has wonderful powers to protect mortals from any injury. Not that I fear I shall be unable to take care of you, but it's just as well to be on the safe side."

"Better," said Twinkle, earnestly. "Where's the flower?"

"We'll hunt for it," replied the turtle.

So holding him in her hand in such a way that he could see all the flowers that grew, the girl began wandering over the mountain side, and everything was so beautiful around her that she would have been quite contented and happy had not the gray castle been before her to remind her constantly that she must face the terrible giant who lived within it.

They found the flower at last--a pretty pink blossom that looked like a double daisy, but must have been something else, because a daisy has no magic power that I ever heard of. And when it was found, the turtle told her to pick the flower and pin it fast to the front of her dress; which she did.

By that time the smoke began to roll out of the giant's chimney in big black clouds; so the fairy turtle said the giant must be getting dinner, and the pot would surely be boiling by the time they got to the castle.

Twinkle couldn't help being a little afraid to approach the giant's stronghold, but she tried to be brave, and so stepped along briskly until she came to the fence of iron spikes.

"You must squeeze through between two of the spikes," said the turtle.

She didn't think it could possibly be done; but to her surprise it was quite easy, and she managed to squeeze through the fence without even tearing her dress. Then she walked up a great driveway, which was lined with white skulls of many sheep which the giant had eaten, to the front door of the castle, which stood ajar.

"Go in," said the turtle; so she boldly entered and passed down a high arched hall toward a room in the rear.

"This is the kitchen," said the turtle, "Enter quickly, go straight to the kettle, and throw me into the boiling water."

Twinkle entered quickly enough, but then she stopped short with a cry of amazement; for there before her stood the ugly giant, blowing the fire with an immense pair of bellows.