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THE HIND IN THE WOOD.

ONCE upon a time there was a King and Queen who were very happy together, but great regret was felt that they had no heir. One day when the Queen was sitting by a fountain, a large crab appeared, and said, "Great Queen, you shall have your wish." The crab then changed into a handsome little old woman, and walked out of the fountain without being wetted. She conducted the Queen through a path in the wood which she had never seen before, although she had been in the wood a thousand times.

The Queen's astonishment was increased by the sight of a palace of diamonds. The gates opened, and six fairies issued forth. They all made a courtesy to the Queen, and each presented her with a flower of precious stones. There was a rose, a tulip, an anemone, a columbine, a carnation, and a pomegranate. "Madam," said they, "we are delighted to announce to you that you will have a beautiful Princess, whom you will call Désirée. Send for us the moment she is born, for we wish to endow her with all good qualities; hold the bouquet, and name each flower, thinking of us, and we shall be instantly in your chamber."

The Queen returned to court, and soon after a Princess was born, whom she named Désirée; she took the bouquet, named the flowers one after another, and all the fairies arrived. They took the little Princess upon their knees and kissed her, one endowing her with virtue, another with wit, a third with beauty, the next with good fortune, the fifth with continual health, and the last with the gift of doing everything well which she undertook.

The Queen thanked them for the favours conferred upon the little Princess, when there entered so large a crab that the door was scarcely wide enough for her to pass through. "Ah! ungrateful Queen," said the crab, "have you so soon forgotten the Fairy of the Fountain, and the service I rendered you by introducing you to my sisters! You have summoned them all, and I alone am neglected!" The Queen asked her pardon; and the fairies, who feared she would endow the child with misery and misfortune, seconded the Queen's endeavours to appease her. "Very well," said she; "I will not do all the mischief to Désirée I had intended. However, I warn you that if she sees the light of day before she is fifteen, it will perhaps cost her her life."

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