



Original illustration by Vilhelm Pedersen

The Princess and the Pea

The fairytale *The Princess and the Pea* is the shortest fairytale Hans Christian Andersen ever wrote.

It is also one of his first fairytales and was in the first pamphlet he released in 1835.

In this audiobook, Benjamin Kurzweil reads this 3 minutes ultra short story in English and Danish.

Enjoy!



Recorded in English, *The Princess and the Pea*: [Click here](#)

(Read by Benjamin Kurzweil, London)

(Use WinZip to extract the MP3 file)

(Duration: 3 minutes. File size: 1 MB)

Download *The Princess and the Pea* in PDF format: [Click here](#).

Art is Smart



Hans Christian Andersen

When the Tivoli amusement park opened in 1843, it had Chinese décor several places, which inspired Andersen; especially the Chinese Bazaar.

When visiting the Tivoli Gardens on the 11th of October 1843, Hans Christian Andersen received his initial inspiration to the fairytale *The Nightingale*. Later that evening, Andersen wrote in his diary, "I started on *The Chinese Fairytale*"; a tale he wrote in just two days and then changed the title of the fairytale to *The Nightingale*.

Andersen wrote gems of wisdom. Please join me to hear some of these gems on this audiobook.

The Emperor's New Clothes



Original illustration by Vilhelm Pedersen

In Hans Christian Andersen's own commentary to the 1862 edition of "Fairytales and Stories" Andersen writes, "*The Emperor's New Clothes is of Spanish origin.*" Andersen mentions Prince don Juan Manuel as the author to whom he is indebted for the idea.

Infante don Juan Manuel (1282 – 1349 CE) is famous for his *Libro de Patronio* or *Conde Lucanor* (1328 – 35), a collection of fifty-one cautionary tales, based on Jewish and Arabic literature.

Andersen did not know the Spanish work but had read one of the stories in a German translation entitled '*So ist der Lauf der Welt*'. He took the main plot from this, while at the same time giving it a universality which the Spanish version did not have.

The Emperor's New Clothes was published 7th of April 1837, and translated from the original Danish in an up-to-date English version by Benjamin Kurzweil in 2009. Kurzweil's English translation of *The Emperor's New Clothes* is probably the best English translation in the world of Andersen's most funny and entertaining tale.

Have fun!

Introduction

The original medieval Spanish tale is about a king and three fraudsters that call themselves the best weavers and tailors in the world, and now they want to sew clothes to the King of Castalia, in order to make good money.

The clothes are so subtle and of such a fantastic quality that only the person, who is son of his presumed father, can see it, whereas anyone that says to be his father's son, but is not, will not be able to see the clothes. All the courts men and ministers, who fear for not being their father's son, therefore praise the invisible clothes, but at the end the fraud is revealed.

It is not revealed by a nice little, sharp boy - as described in Andersen's tale - but by a black African, who rubs his eyes and thereafter walks directly to the king's procession. In front of the king - who is sitting on a horse - the black African says boldly, "Your Majesty, I have never had the honour to know my father, and actually I can't be bothered to know who he is. That is why I dare telling you - right up in your face - that you are riding completely naked through the capital city."

Download *The Emperor's New Clothes* in PDF format: [Click here](#).



Original illustration by Vilhelm Pedersen

The Ugly Duckling

Andersen wrote the first word to this fable in August 1842, "*The Cygnet*". It took over a year until "*The Cygnet*" had reached the form Andersen liked; exactly in October 1843 where he wrote, "I finally finished the tale of the young swan," and then he changed the title to "*The Ugly Duckling*".

The fable was published the following month, 11th of November 1843.

© 2008 "*The Ugly Duckling*" image enhancement by Jenna Rutigliano, Graphic Designer.

"But what did he see in the clear water? He saw his own reflection beneath him; he was no longer a clumsy, dark-grey, ugly unattractive bird – he had become a swan!"

Download *The Ugly Duckling* in PDF format: [Click here](#).

To bumble-bee
or to humble-bee?

That is the question,
for you and me.

Shakespeare,
did not appear,
for you to eat,
apple or pear.

Turn the fruit nectar, and all your money,
into wisdom, and beautiful honey.

Better to become humble,
without a mumble,
than to tumble,
like a bumble.

- Pun by Benjamin Kurzweil



The Story of a Mother

The Indian poet Mr Rabindranath Tagore, who won the Nobel Prize in Literature, once said that *The Story of a Mother* was the best known fable in India of all of Andersen's fairytales.

When Andersen received a letter from an organisation in Calcutta, stating the same message as Tagore, Andersen wrote to a member of staff at the Danish royal court, "It is a great pleasure for me to know, that my poetry has taken root in Kalidasa's fatherland, the hometown of the fairytales."

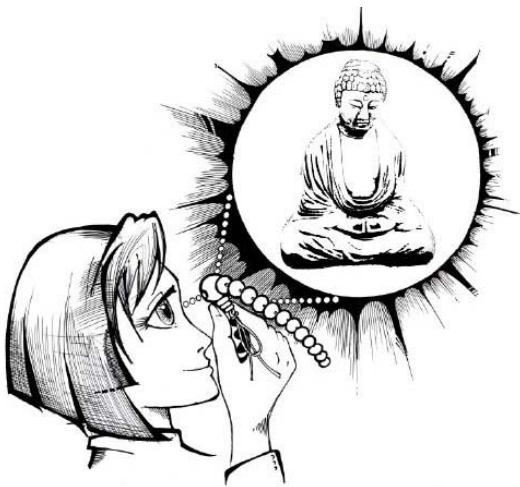
In February 1848 Andersen had an audience with King Oscar I of Sweden where Andersen received the Knighthood of the Northern Star. Andersen was invited to have dinner with the king and queen at the royal palace. After dinner he read them four of his tales – "on hearing *The Story of a Mother* the king and queen wept," Andersen noted in his diary.

"How did you find your way here?" Death asked.

"How could you arrive here before me?"

"I am a mother!" she said.

Hans Christian Andersen said that among all his stories *The Story of a Mother* gave him the greatest joy, since many sorrowful mothers found comfort and strength in *The Story of a Mother*.



The mala illustration says:
*Inside the main bead, you will find a hidden Buddha
only visible when holding the main bead towards the light,
looking through a tiny peep hole.*

A Chinese Light

The symbolism of the mala beads illustration is clear: Only when you are looking towards light, with your inner eye, you will see your inner Buddha.

Beads brings beat and focus to prayer. Can you beat it?

In the fable *A Chinese Light* the Chinese candlelight tries to focus on encouraging the poet on his inner strength and boost his hope. "You don't need a match to light a candle, just say: candle, light yourself!"

When he woke up next morning, the Chinese light was still burning, because it had been made according to a good old Chinese tradition.



Danish sculptor Edward Eriksen created the 1.25-meter-tall statue in 1909 and since then she has been sitting on a rock at Copenhagen harbour.

The Little Mermaid

The Little Mermaid from Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tale is about a young mermaid willing to give up her life in the sea and her identity as a mermaid to gain a human soul and the love of a human prince.

Andersen travelled a lot, but he never visited China. Yet, at the World Expo 2010, Andersen was there in spirit, through the original statue of The Little Mermaid, which was shipped to the Danish pavilion in Shanghai.



Photo: Designer Elyse Allen.

Who is the most valuable?

In some teachings, each finger represents a certain quality. For example, the forefinger symbolises the craving for honour, whereas the little finger has the quality of being diplomatic.

Each quality can be very important and valuable in certain situations, but eventually all the fingers realise that only if they join forces can they accomplish something great; opening up a new opportunity, opening up the door.

As always throughout world history, anything great is accomplished when people stand together hand in hand.

Five fingers discussed which of them was the most valuable.

At the very moment that the hand was about to put its grip on the door handle, the five fingers began to part and argue their worth. "I am the most valuable," said the thumb with its head upright. "Without me, you can't open the door. Just take a look."

When the hands and fingers are working together, life will show the contour lines of a swan (see photo).

Pun is Fun,

but sometimes it leaves things undone.

**Like the accountant who wrote,
on a single note:**

***"Two plus three plus four plus seven,
to add things is to be in Heaven."***

**He wasn't philosophic,
in his topic,**

**but he had great fun,
with his pun.**

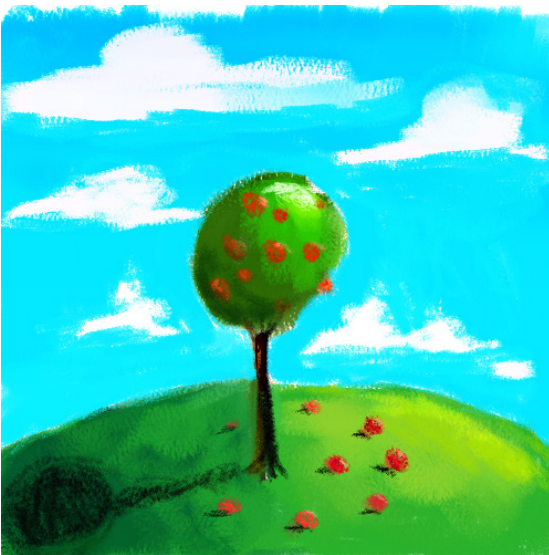
- Pun by Benjamin Kurzweil

The Butterfly



The story “*It’s Quite True!*” is probably one of the fastest-paced and funniest fables Hans Christian Andersen ever wrote. *The Butterfly* also has a fast pace, but the humour might be a little more subtle than in the story *It’s Quite True!*

The Butterfly is a bachelor looking for a flower to live with, but as in the *Princess and the Pea*, he cannot make up his mind. The Butterfly seeks guidance from Margaret daisy. “Sweet Margaret daisy,” he said, “you are the wisest Madame of all the flowers; you can tell fortunes. Tell me whether I will get this one or that one? Tell me who I will get? When I know it, I can fly straight to her and propose.”



The Apple does not fall far...

The worm overheard the apple’s story, which was being told to the children by the elderly. Upon hearing the story, the worm became so excited that it instantly crawled onto the trunk and gnawed this text:

“The apple can fall far from the tree”

Mankind, Kind man

The story "*Mankind, Kind man*" is a short story written by Benjamin Kurzweil – it takes 45 minutes to read.

Download the complete story in PDF format: [Click here](#).



Jaffa Gate - "David's Gate"

Prelude to the historical fiction

Around 2000 years ago lived a person, who could shed light on the DNA of our culture.

Did Jesus learn his teachings from the Jews in Galilee?

Was Jesus influenced by the Jews at that time?

This historical fiction will give you the answer to many of these questions.

The plot is about the Jewish peasant Akiva, who held back his anger to his employer, although he was entitled to be upset after working for three years, still not receiving his wages.



The Muslims call this behaviour the attribute of *al-Haleem*, when you hold back your anger, when you are entitled to be upset.

The Chinese call this *the attuned ear*. Once you have a thorough understanding of the will of Heaven, and a great inner strength of purpose, you will reach the state Confucius described as *having an attuned ear*. You will have attained the greatest possible ability to respect others, you can understand the argument behind the issue, you can listen to all kinds of voices with an open mind, and put yourself in other people's shoes; you understand why they say the way they do.

The Hindus (Bharatiyas) call this *Karma-Yoga*, being above duality and the fruits of your actions. This enables you to listen and understand other people, developing empathy.

The Jews call this *the behaviour of Rabbi Akiva*.

Extract from the short story:

Hurkanos shouted as loud as he could, "Akiva, what is the purpose of mankind?"

And the mountains of Galilee echoed back¹ – Kind man, kind man, kind man.....

¹ **Echoed back.** When the words of an echo are reflected back, it can sometimes seem that the words return in reverse order. This phenomenon can be simulated by simply speaking the word 'mankind' rapidly and repeatedly. After a few times you suddenly realise that it sounds like you are saying 'kind man'. The echo creates a similar audio experience, suggesting that Mother Nature is speaking to you; giving you the answer.



Luck can lie in a Stick

This story is really a story about life and not about luck. Life has its own ways, and we can't catch it and lock it up in a box, feeling more secure. In the beginning of this story, the entrepreneur, the poor merchant, had his focus zoomed in on negativity, but later on, the poor merchant's attitude changes from focusing on other people's bad luck to focusing on being a winner, not looking back. Translated into the language of our day, his motto could be: "Another day, another dollar."

Now he had lots of work to do. He made pears in their thousands; he put wooden pears on all his umbrellas. The man had to work very fast; he

turned and turned as fast as he could. The whole barren pear tree was turned into little pears. It gave him many pounds; it gave him many dollars! "My happiness was laid in the pear tree," said the man. He then bought a big workshop and employed workmen and boys. He was always in a good mood, and often said, "Luck can lie in a stick."

Why Kurzweil Stories?

You might be surprised when I say that there is no unabridged up-to-date Hans Christian Andersen translation on the English market on CD or MP3 digital download.

Most, if not all recorded Hans Christian Andersen translations in English are abridged, and on top of that, they are based on either poor translations or not even translations, but fabricated "translations" pretending they are true translations from the original Danish. 🙄

But at Kurzweil Stories the intention is to give you the authentic H.C. Andersen.

That's what makes Kurzweil Stories so unique.



Enjoy!

*The stories are meant to be heard - not read.
It would be like reading the words of a song,
without listening to them being sung.*

Welcome to KurzweilStories