

## **AI-Generated Graded Readers**

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### **About This Edition**

This book is a simplified English adaptation created for extensive reading practice.

The text was generated using ChatGPT and prepared for intermediate English learners as part of an educational project.

Target reading level: CEFR A2-B1

This edition aims to support fluency development through accessible vocabulary, expanded narration, and improved readability while preserving the original story structure.

### **Content Note**

This adaptation is based on a historical literary work. It may contain expressions, attitudes, or depictions that some readers may consider inappropriate or offensive by today's standards. Such elements have been retained or reflected where necessary in order to preserve the historical and literary character of the original work.

### **Source Text**

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Hans Christian Andersen, *What the Moon Saw* (Simplified Edition, Adapted and Simplified by ChatGPT)

## Part 1 — The Moon Becomes a Friend

When I feel something very strongly, I often cannot speak well. My hands feel slow, and my tongue feels weak. The thoughts are inside me, but I cannot always put them into good words or clear pictures. This is strange, because I am a painter. My eyes see many things, and my friends say that my drawings show life and feeling.

I was a poor young man, and I lived in a very narrow street. My room was high in the house, so light could still come in. From my window I could see many roofs and many chimneys. But when I first came to the town, I felt sad and alone. I had left the green hills and the trees of my old home, and now I had only smoke, roofs, and strange faces around me.

One evening I sat by the window with a heavy heart. Then I opened the window and looked out. Suddenly I saw a face I knew very well. It was round and bright and kind. It was the Moon. He looked just as he had looked at home, when he shone through the willow trees near the wet fields.

I was so happy that I kissed my hand to him again and again. His light came into my poor little room, and the room no longer felt so lonely. The Moon seemed to promise that he would visit me whenever he could. He would look in for a short time and tell me what he had seen. “Paint the pictures I give you,” he said. “Then you will have a beautiful picture book.”

I listened to him for many evenings. He did not come every night, because clouds sometimes hid his face. But when he came, he told me about far countries, poor rooms, bright halls, children, old people, love, fear, and death. I wrote down his pictures as well as I could. They are only quick sketches, but they came to me in the order in which the Moon told them.

On the first evening, the Moon said, “Last night I moved across the clear sky of India. My face shone in the water of the Ganges. My light tried to pass through

the thick leaves of banana trees, which bent over the river. From the dark trees came a young Indian girl. She moved quickly, and her face was beautiful in the soft light.

“The sharp plants cut her feet, but she did not stop. She carried a small lamp in her hand. A deer near the water saw the flame and jumped away in fear. The girl came down to the river and held her hand before the little fire, so the wind would not put it out. Then she placed the lamp on the water and let it float away.

“The flame moved from side to side. Sometimes it looked weak, and sometimes it looked bright again. The girl watched it with all her heart. She believed that if the lamp burned while she could still see it, the man she loved was alive. If the lamp went out, he was dead. The lamp still burned, and the girl fell on her knees and prayed.

“A spotted snake lay in the grass near her, but she did not see it. She thought only of her god and of the man she loved. The lamp floated farther and farther away, but its small fire still lived. Then joy filled her face. ‘He lives!’ she cried. ‘He lives!’ The hills gave back her words, and the echo answered, ‘He lives!’”

On the second evening, the Moon said, “Yesterday I looked down into a small yard. Houses stood all around it, and the yard was shut in on every side. A hen sat there with eleven little chickens. A pretty little girl ran and jumped around them. The hen was afraid and spread her wings over her chicks.

“Then the girl’s father came out and scolded her. I went on my way and thought no more about it. But this evening I looked into the same yard again. Everything was quiet at first. Then the little girl came out softly and went to the hen-house.

“She opened the door and slipped inside. The hen and the chickens cried out and flew down in fear. The little girl ran after them, and they ran everywhere. I could see it clearly through a small hole in the wall. I was angry with the child, because I thought she was being cruel.

“Then her father came out again. This time he scolded her more strongly and held her arm. She hung her head, and her blue eyes filled with big tears. ‘What are you doing here?’ he asked. She cried and said, ‘I wanted to kiss the hen and say sorry for frightening her yesterday. But I was afraid to tell you.’

“Then the father understood. He kissed the child’s forehead, because she had not come to hurt the hen. She had come to make peace with it. I also kissed her with my light, on her mouth and on her eyes. Her tears shone like little stars.”

On the third evening, the Moon said, “There is a narrow street near your room. It is so narrow that my light can touch the walls only for a moment. But even in one moment I can see much. Tonight I saw a woman there. Many years ago, when she was a child, I saw her in a country garden.

“That garden belonged to a pastor’s house. Old rose bushes grew over the paths, and some branches reached into the apple trees. Many flowers were faded, but a few roses still had colour and smell. The pastor’s little daughter sat under the roses with her doll. To me, she was prettier than any flower in the garden.

“Ten years later I saw her again. She was in a bright ballroom, dressed as the beautiful bride of a rich merchant. I was glad for her happiness. But after that, her life went wrong, like wild rose branches growing in the wrong way. People do not always see the sad stories of daily life. Tonight I saw the last scene of hers.

“She lay sick in a bed in a poor house on that narrow street. The landlord came in and pulled away her thin cover. It was the only thing that kept her warm. ‘Get up,’ he said. ‘Your face will frighten people. Dress yourself and give me money, or I will put you out in the street.’ She said, ‘Death is already in my heart. Let me rest.’

“But he forced her to rise. He made her wash her face and put roses in her hair. Then he placed her in a chair by the window, with a candle beside her. After that, he went away. I looked at her. Her hands lay still in her lap, and she did not move.

“The wind shut the open window with a crash, and a piece of glass fell down. Still she did not move. The curtain caught fire, and the flames came near her face. Then I saw the truth. She was dead. The poor rose from the pastor’s garden sat dead at the window, and her end showed a dark lesson about a lost life.”

On the fourth evening, the Moon said, “Tonight I saw a play in a small German town. The theatre was not a real theatre. It had once been a stable. The walls were covered with coloured paper, and the wooden parts were made to look fine. A small iron light hung from the ceiling.

“Above the light, someone had placed a large upside-down tub. When the bell rang, the light was pulled up into the tub, as if it had disappeared into the ceiling. That was the sign that the play was going to begin. The people liked this very much, because it made the little theatre seem grand. The place was full, for a young lord and his lady had come to watch the play.

“But there was one empty place under the hanging light. No one wanted to sit there, because hot fat kept falling from the candles. It fell drop by drop. The room was warm, so every small opening was left open. Servants stood outside and looked in through the cracks, while a policeman inside tried to drive them away with his stick.

“Near the music sat the young lord and his lady in two old armchairs. Usually the mayor and his wife sat in those chairs. Tonight they had to sit on plain wooden seats, like common people. The mayor’s wife looked at this and quietly thought, ‘There is always someone higher than you.’ That small change made the evening feel even more important.

“The little light jumped up and down. The crowd pushed together and got their hands knocked. People laughed, stared, whispered, and waited for the actors. Everything was small and poor, but everyone treated it as a great event. I, the Moon, looked in from outside and watched the whole play from beginning to end.”

## Part 2 — History, Poetry, and the Human Eye

On the fifth evening, the Moon said, “Yesterday I looked down on Paris. There was noise and movement in the great city, but my light passed into one quiet room in the Louvre. It was a large throne room, and it was almost empty. An old grandmother came in with a servant. She was poor and simply dressed, but she had worked hard and asked many people before she was allowed to enter that room.

“She folded her thin hands and looked around her with deep feeling. To her, the room was almost like a church. Then she went near the throne, where rich red cloth and gold hung down. ‘Here it was,’ she said softly. ‘Here.’ She knelt down

and kissed the carpet near the throne.

“The servant looked at her and smiled a little. ‘But it was not this same cloth,’ he said. The old woman answered, ‘No, but it was this same place. It must have looked almost like this.’ The servant said, ‘It looked like this, but also not like this. The windows were broken, the doors were torn away, and there was blood on the floor.’ Then the old woman said, ‘Still, my grandson died on the throne of France. He died here.’

“After that, they said almost nothing. Soon they left the great room, and evening came down over Paris. My light shone on the rich cloth of the throne. But I was thinking of the old woman and of the picture she carried in her heart. So I will tell you the story behind her tears.

“It happened during the July Revolution. On that bright and terrible day, people fought in the streets. Houses became like small forts, and every window became a place of danger. Men, women, and even children joined the fighting. They rushed into the royal palace and passed through its rooms and halls.

“Among them was a poor boy, not yet a man. His clothes were torn, but he fought with the older people. Then soldiers’ weapons struck him, and he fell in the throne room. The people lifted him and placed him on the throne of France. They wrapped the rich cloth around his wounds, but his blood still came through.

“There he lay, a poor child on a royal throne. Around him were broken things, fighting people, and a flag on the floor. Above him the new colours of France moved over the soldiers’ weapons. His face was pale, and his eyes looked upward. Long ago someone had said, ‘He will die on the throne of France,’ and his mother had dreamed of great glory for him.

“Now his glory was only this sad end. I have shone on the flowers at his grave. Tonight I also shone on the forehead of the old grandmother, while she remembered him. In her dream she still saw the picture. It was the poor boy lying on the throne of France.”

On the sixth evening, the Moon said, “I have been in Upsala. I looked down on wide fields, rough grass, and a river. My face lay in the water, and the waves made long dark lines near the old hills. People call those hills the graves of Odin,

Thor, and Friga. The names of old gods live there, but the grass also carries the names of passing travellers.

“There was no stone wall where visitors could write their names. There was no great monument where they could leave a mark. So people cut their names into the thin grass. The dark earth showed through in large letters. It was a strange kind of fame, for it would last only until fresh grass grew again.

“On one hill stood a poet. He held a drinking horn with a silver edge, and he spoke a name in a low voice. He asked the wind not to carry the name away. But I heard it. I knew why he did not say it loudly, for it belonged to someone of high birth.

“I smiled when I heard him. A family crown may shine over one person’s name, but the poet also has his own crown. It is the crown of song and art. The name of a great woman can become bright through the name of a great poet. I also knew where the rose of beauty was growing.

“Then a cloud came between us. The Moon’s voice stopped, and I saw no more of that scene. But I thought about the poet and the name he had spoken. Love may be quiet, but it can still fill the whole sky for one heart. May no dark cloud stand for long between the poet and the rose he loves.”

On the seventh evening, the Moon said, “Beside the sea there is a forest of fir trees and beech trees. The air is fresh there, and in spring many nightingales sing among the branches. Close beside the forest lies the sea, always moving and changing. Between the sea and the trees runs a broad road. Many carriages pass there, but I did not follow them all.

“My eye rested on one place. There was an old grave mound among stones, with wild bushes growing around it. The place was quiet and beautiful. It held true poetry, not written in a book, but living in earth, trees, night air, and sea. Yet people did not all see that beauty in the same way.

“First, two rich landowners drove past. One said, ‘Those trees are fine.’ The other answered, ‘Yes, each one would give much firewood. It will be a hard winter, and wood will sell well.’ Then they were gone. Another man complained that the road was bad. His friend said the trees were the problem, because they stopped

the wind from passing freely.

“A coach passed next. All the passengers were asleep, though the place was lovely. The driver blew his horn and thought only that he played well. Two young men rode by on horses. They smiled at the green hill and the dark forest, but one only said he would like to walk there with a certain girl. Then they too were gone.

“The flowers gave a soft smell, and the air was still. The sea seemed almost like part of the sky. Then another carriage came with six people in it. Four were asleep. One thought about his new summer coat. The last one asked the driver if anything important had happened near the heap of stones.

“The driver answered, ‘No, it is only a heap of stones. But the trees are important.’ The passenger asked why. The driver said, ‘In winter the snow covers the road. Then I use those trees to find my way, so I do not drive into the sea.’ For him, the trees were not beautiful or holy. They were useful, and that was enough.

“Then a painter came. His eyes shone, but he did not speak at first. He began to make notes about the colours: blue, purple, dark brown, and all the changes between them. The nightingales sang louder, but he told them to be quiet. He wanted the view as a picture, and while he worked, he whistled a tune. He saw much, but perhaps he still missed something.

“Last of all, a poor girl came along the road. She put down the heavy thing she was carrying and sat on the old grave mound. Her pale face turned toward the forest, and she listened. Then she looked at the sea and the sky, and her eyes became bright. She folded her hands, and I think she prayed, ‘Our Father.’ She did not understand all that she felt, but that moment would stay in her memory for many years. My light followed her until morning touched her face.”

On the eighth evening, heavy clouds covered the sky. The Moon did not come. I stood alone in my little room and looked up where he should have been. I felt more lonely than before, because I had grown used to his visits. My thoughts went up through the clouds to my great friend.

I thought of all he had seen. He had shone over the great flood and looked at Noah’s ark. He had looked down when the people of Israel sat crying beside the waters of Babylon. He had seen lovers, kings, prisoners, soldiers, and travellers.

He had watched both hope and sorrow in every age.

I thought of Romeo climbing to Juliet's balcony in the night. I thought of the lonely prisoner on the island of St. Helena, looking across the sea with great thoughts in his heart. The Moon had seen all these things. Human life must be like one long story to him. Every night he turned another page.

But that night I could not draw a new picture. I could only look at the clouds and miss him. Then, for one moment, the sky grew lighter. A single beam of moonlight fell into my room. It was gone almost at once, and the dark clouds passed over again. Still, I understood it as a greeting. It was the Moon's quiet good-night to me.

### Part 3 — Death, Ruins, and Judgment

After several evenings, the sky became clear again. The Moon was still young, and only part of his round face was bright. He came back to my window and gave me another picture to draw. "I have followed the sea bird and the whale," he said, "to the cold east coast of Greenland. There I saw dark rocks, ice, low green bushes, and flowers that gave a soft smell in the short summer night."

"My light was pale there, but the sky was full of fire. The northern lights burned above the land like a great crown. Long rays moved across the sky, changing from green to red. The people of that cold country had seen this many times, so they did not look at it for long. They were gathering for dancing and songs.

"In the middle of the circle stood a man without his heavy fur coat. He held a small pipe and sang about hunting seals. The people around him answered the song and moved in a ring. In their white fur clothes, they looked almost like white bears dancing in the night. The ice rocks shone, the air was cold, and the song sounded strange and strong.

"Then they held a kind of judgment. People who had quarrelled came forward. One person sang about the other person's faults and made them sound funny. Then the other person answered in the same way, with sharp words and song. The

people laughed and gave their judgment by their laughter.

“Not far away, in a tent made of skins, a sick man lay near death. He still breathed, but he knew that he would soon die, and everyone around him knew it too. His wife was sewing his fur shroud around him, because after death she did not want to touch the body. She asked him, ‘Do you want to be buried on the rock, in the hard snow? Or do you want to be buried in the sea?’

“‘In the sea,’ he whispered, and he smiled sadly. His wife said, ‘Yes, the sea is a good summer tent. There are many seals there, and the walrus will lie near your feet. The hunt will be happy there.’ Then the children pulled away the skin from the opening of the tent. The dead man would be carried to the sea, which had fed him in life and would hold him in death. His grave marker would be the moving icebergs, where seals sleep and birds fly over the shining tops.”

On the tenth evening, the Moon said, “I knew an old unmarried woman. Every winter she wore a yellow satin house coat. It always looked new, though it was the only fine thing she wore. In summer she had the same straw hat and, I think, the same grey-blue dress. Her life was very quiet and changed almost not at all.

“For many years she went out only to visit an old woman across the street. Later she stopped even that small walk, because her friend had died. She spent her days near her window. In summer she had flowers there, and in winter she grew little green plants on wet cloth. But during the last months I did not see her at the window.

“I knew she was still alive, because I had not yet seen her begin the long journey she often spoke about. She used to say, ‘When I die, I shall travel farther than I have ever travelled in life. Our family grave is six miles away. They will carry me there, and I shall sleep with my family.’ Last night a wagon stopped at her house, and a coffin was carried out.

“They put straw around the coffin, and the wagon drove away. The quiet old woman, who had stayed in her house for a whole year, now went out through the town gate. The driver became nervous on the road. Perhaps he half imagined she might sit up on the coffin in her yellow satin coat. He pulled the reins hard and struck the young horses.

“Then a hare jumped across the road, and the horses ran away. The wagon rushed over stones and rough ground. The coffin slipped out and fell onto the road, still wrapped in straw. Horses, driver, and wagon raced away without it. So the woman who had moved so slowly in life was suddenly left alone on the open road after death.

“Morning came. A lark rose from a field and sang above the coffin. Then it came down and sat on the straw. It pecked at the covering, as if it wanted to pull it apart. The bird rose again, still singing in the morning air. Then I moved away behind the red clouds of dawn.”

On the eleventh evening, the Moon said, “I will show you Pompeii. I was in the Street of Tombs, where fine grave stones stand outside the old city. Long ago, young people danced there with flowers around their heads. Now everything was silent. Soldiers kept watch, played cards, and threw dice. Then some travellers came to see the dead city by moonlight.

“I showed them the deep marks of wheels in the stone streets. I showed them names on old doors and signs that still hung near houses. They saw small yards with fountain basins, but no water rose from them. They saw rooms painted with bright colours, but no songs came from them. It was a city brought back from the grave, but still full of death.

“Only Vesuvius seemed alive. The dark mountain stood behind the city, and fire came from it into the night. A red cloud of smoke hung above it, like the top of a great tree. The travellers went to the temple of Venus, where white stone steps and pillars still stood. Green willow branches grew among the old stones.

“Among the travellers was a famous woman singer. I had seen people honour her in many great cities. When they reached the old theatre, they sat on the stone seats like people in ancient times. The stage was still there, and through the openings behind it one could see the mountains beyond. Nature itself made the background.

“The singer stepped onto the old stage and began to sing. The place gave strength to her voice. At one moment her song was light and free, like a strong horse running. At another moment it was deep with pain, like a mother standing

beside a cross. The listeners were moved, and their praise filled the old theatre.

“A few minutes later, the stage was empty. The travellers had gone, the singer had gone, and the sound had died away. But the ruins stood unchanged. They had stood there for many years, and they would stand when this singer and her praise were forgotten. Even for me, said the Moon, that hour would one day be only a dream of the past.”

On the twelfth evening, the Moon said, “I looked through the windows of an editor’s house somewhere in Germany. The room had fine furniture, many books, and newspapers everywhere. Several young men were there with the editor. On his desk lay two small books, both written by young authors. The editor had not yet read one of them, so he asked the others what they thought.

“One young man, who was also a poet, said, ‘It is good enough. The writer is still young. The poems could be better, and many thoughts are common, but we cannot always expect something new. I do not think he will become great, but you can praise him safely. He has read much, and he once wrote a kind review of my book.’ Another man said, ‘But he is only a common writer. In poetry, nothing is worse than being just ordinary.’

“A third man spoke more softly. ‘Poor young man,’ he said. ‘His aunt is so proud of him. She also helped get many people to buy your last book.’ The editor understood. He wrote a short kind notice. He called the book a welcome gift and a flower in the garden of poetry. The safe young poet would be praised, not because his work was great, but because praise was useful and easy.

“Then they spoke of the second book. This writer was stronger and more original. Some people said he had real genius. But the poet in the room said, ‘Yes, people say that, but his book is wild. Even his punctuation is strange.’ The editor decided that it would be good to cut him down a little. Too much praise, he said, might make the young man think too well of himself.

“One person tried to be fair. He said, ‘Let us not pick at small faults. Let us be glad about the real good in the book.’ But the others did not listen. They said that if the writer truly had genius, he could bear hard words. So the editor wrote that the book showed talent, but also careless work. He even pointed to small errors

and advised the writer to study old authors.

“Then I went away,” said the Moon. “I looked into another house, where the praised and safe poet sat happily among guests. Everyone honoured him, and he enjoyed their kind words. Then I found the stronger poet in another room, where a rich supporter spoke to him. ‘I shall read your book too,’ the man said, ‘but I do not expect much. You are too wild. Still, as a man, you are very respectable.’”

“In a corner sat a young girl with a book. She read words that told a hard truth. Genius and glory may lie in the dust, while ordinary talent often earns money and praise. It is an old story, but it happens again and again. The Moon had seen it before, and now he saw it once more.”

#### Part 4 — Children, Exiles, Love, and Joy

On the thirteenth evening, the Moon said, “Beside a path through the wood, there are two small farmhouses. Their doors are low, and their windows are not all in the same place. Some windows are high, and some are close to the ground. Bushes grow around the houses, and moss and yellow flowers grow on the roofs. In the small gardens there are only cabbages and potatoes.

“Near the hedge stands a willow tree. Under that tree sat a little girl. She looked at an old oak tree between the two houses. The top of the oak had been cut off, and a stork had built its nest there. The stork stood in the nest and made a clapping sound with its beak.

“A little boy came and stood beside the girl. He was her brother. ‘What are you looking at?’ he asked. The girl answered, ‘I am watching the stork. Our neighbour told me that it would bring us a little brother or sister today. Let us watch and see it come.’”

“The boy did not believe this. ‘The stork does not bring babies,’ he said. ‘I know that. Our neighbour told me the same thing, but she laughed when she said it. I asked her to say it was true on her honour, and she would not. So I know adults say this only to make children wonder.’”

““Then where do babies come from?” the little girl asked. The boy had an

answer ready. 'An angel from heaven brings them under his coat,' he said. 'But no one can see the angel. That is why we never know when he comes.' The little girl listened carefully, and both children became quiet.

"At that moment something moved in the branches of the willow tree. The children folded their hands and looked at each other. Surely this must be the angel coming with the baby. They took each other's hands. Then the door of one house opened, and the neighbour came out.

"'Come in, you two,' she said. 'See what the stork has brought. It is a little brother.' The children looked at each other and nodded in a very serious way. They were not surprised. In their own hearts, they had already felt that the baby had come."

On the fourteenth evening, the Moon said, "I was moving over the Lueneburg Heath. It was a wide and lonely place. A small poor hut stood by the road, and a few low bushes grew near it. A nightingale had lost its way and sang there in the cold night. Its song was sweet, but it was also its last song, for the bird died before morning.

"When morning began to shine red in the sky, I saw a group of poor country families. They were leaving their homes and going toward Hamburg. From there they hoped to cross the sea to America. They thought a better life waited for them there. The mothers carried little children on their backs, and older children walked weakly beside them.

"A thin hungry horse pulled a cart with their few things. The cold wind blew across the heath, so a little girl pressed herself closer to her mother. The mother looked up at my fading face and thought of the hard life they had left behind. They had been poor, and they had not been able to pay what was asked of them. All the people in the group were thinking the same sad thoughts.

"To them, the red morning seemed like a promise. They believed the sun was bringing good luck. They heard the dying nightingale, and its song seemed to tell them that happiness was ahead. But they did not understand the song. The wind blew, and hope made their ears hear only what they wanted to hear.

"The bird's song was really a warning. It seemed to say, 'Go far away over the

sea. You have paid for the long journey with everything you had. You will arrive poor and weak. You may have to sell your own labour, and your wife and children may suffer too. Your sorrow will not last forever, but death may wait for you in that new land.’

“The families did not hear this meaning. They listened happily and walked on. The day grew brighter, and country people crossed the heath on their way to church. The women wore dark clothes and white head coverings, and from far away they looked like figures from old church pictures. The open land lay brown, pale, and quiet around them. Pray for those poor travellers, said the Moon, for they are going far away to find graves beyond the sea.”

On the fifteenth evening, the Moon said, “I know a Pulcinella, a comic actor. As soon as the public sees him, people laugh and clap. Every movement he makes seems funny. He does not need to pretend very much, because his body itself makes people laugh. He has a hump on his back and another on his chest, and nature seems to have made him for comedy.

“But inside him there is a very different person. His mind is rich, quick, and full of deep feeling. The theatre is his whole world. If his body had been straight and fine, he might have played great tragic heroes. His soul loves noble things, but the public wants only his funny face and strange body. Even his sadness makes him look funnier to them.

“There was a lovely Columbine in the theatre. She was kind to him, and when he felt very sad, she could make him smile. First she would be serious with him, then gentle, and then cheerful. Once she said, ‘I know what is wrong with you. You are in love.’ He laughed and said, ‘I, in love? How funny that would look! The public would shout with laughter.’

“Then she said, in a playful way, ‘Yes, you are in love, and I am the person you love.’ She could say this because it seemed impossible. Pulcinella laughed and jumped into the air, and for a moment his sadness went away. But her words were true. He did love her. He loved her deeply, as he loved all that was beautiful and great in art.

“Columbine married Harlequin. Pulcinella was the happiest guest at the

wedding, or at least he seemed to be. He laughed, moved, and made everyone merry. But later, in the quiet night, he cried alone. If the public had seen his face then, they might still have clapped, because even his pain would have looked strange and comic to them.

“A few days ago, Columbine died. On the day of her funeral, Harlequin did not have to act, because he was a grieving husband. The theatre director chose a very funny play, so the public would not miss Columbine and Harlequin too much. Pulcinella had to be wilder and funnier than ever. He danced and jumped with despair in his heart, and the people shouted, ‘Bravo!’ They called him back before the curtain and said he was wonderful.

“But last night the poor little man went out of the town alone. He went to the quiet churchyard, where Columbine’s flowers were already fading on her grave. He sat down there with his chin in his hands and looked up at me. He looked like a strange little statue on a grave. If the people had seen him, they might have cried again, ‘Bravo, Pulcinella!’ They would still have seen only the comic mask, not the broken heart.”

On the sixteenth evening, the Moon said, “I have seen many happy people. I have seen a young soldier put on his new officer’s uniform for the first time. I have seen a bride in her wedding dress. I have seen a young princess shine in beautiful clothes. But this evening I saw a happiness greater than all of these.

“It belonged to a little girl of four. She had received a new blue dress and a new pink hat. The clothes had just been put on her, and everyone called for a candle, because my moonlight was not bright enough for such an important moment. She stood as still as a doll. Her arms were held out straight, because she did not want to touch or spoil the dress.

“Her fingers were spread apart, and her whole face was full of joy. She looked down at the dress and then up at the hat. Her mother said, ‘Tomorrow you may go out in your new clothes.’ The little girl smiled more brightly than before. The world had become new to her because she had a blue dress and a pink hat.

“Then she looked at her mother and cried, ‘Mother, what will the little dogs think when they see me in these wonderful new things?’ That was her great

thought. She was not thinking of kings, soldiers, brides, or princesses. She was thinking of the small dogs in the street. To her, their wonder would make the next day perfect.”

## Part 5 — Dead Cities and Broken Lives

On the seventeenth evening, the Moon said, “I have already told you about Pompeii, a dead city brought back into the sight of living people. But I know another city that is even stranger. It is not like a dead body. It is more like a ghost. When water rises and falls in the stone basins, it seems to tell the story of that floating city.”

“The sea itself seems to sing of her old greatness. Often a mist lies on the water, like a veil over a widow’s face. The city was once the bride of the sea, but now her great days are gone. Her palaces and streets are like a grave for her past life. No wheels sound there, and no horses strike the stones with their feet.

“Fish swim through the water streets, and black boats move silently over the green water. I will show you the largest square. Grass grows between the broad stones. In the early morning, many tame pigeons fly around the high tower. On three sides there are long covered walks, where silent men sit or lean against the pillars.

“There a Turk sits and smokes his long pipe. Near him, a handsome Greek looks at the tall masts and old signs of power. A girl rests there too. She has put down her heavy water pails, and the wooden bar for carrying them lies across one shoulder. She leans against a sign of victory, but the old victory belongs to the past.

“The building before you may look like a palace from a wonder tale, but it is a church. Its gold domes shine back my light. High above, bronze horses stand, and they too have made long journeys, like horses in a tale. They have been taken away and brought back again. Their still bodies remember more history than many living people know.

“Look at the bright walls and windows. They seem as if a child’s dream and a

great artist's mind had worked together. On a pillar stands a winged lion. Gold still shines on him, but his wings seem tied. The lion is dead, because the old king of the sea is dead. Great halls stand empty, and where fine pictures once hung, bare walls now show through.

“Poor people sleep where only noble feet once walked. From deep places, and perhaps from old prisons, sorrow seems to rise like a voice. Long ago, music sounded in the black boats, and the city was full of pride and joy. Now mist should cover her, as mourning clothes cover a widow. This is Venice, beautiful, cold, and ghost-like above the water.”

On the eighteenth evening, the Moon said, “I looked down on a great theatre. It was full of people, because a new actor was appearing for the first time. My light passed over a small window in the wall, and I saw a painted face pressed against the glass. It was the face of the man everyone had come to see. His stage beard curled around his chin, but tears stood in his eyes.

“He had been hissed off the stage, and the audience had not been wrong. He loved acting deeply, but acting did not love him back. He had feeling, and he wanted to serve art. But strong feeling alone is not enough. The world of art cannot give a place to everyone who loves it.

“The bell had sounded, and his part had ordered him to enter bravely. So he had walked out before the crowd with a strong look. But the people laughed at him and made cruel sounds. When the play ended, he left the theatre wrapped in a cloak. He went down the steps like a defeated knight. The workers of the theatre whispered about him as he passed.

“I followed him home to his room. He thought about death. He thought of hanging himself, and he thought of poison, though poison was not there. Then he looked at his pale face in the mirror. He half closed his eyes to see how he might look when dead.

“A person can be very unhappy and still think about how he looks. He pitied himself, and then he cried hard. That saved him for that night. When a man has cried enough, he often does not kill himself at once. His tears carried him past that dark hour.

“A year passed. Again I saw the same face, with painted cheeks and the curled beard. This time he was in a small poor theatre with a travelling company. He looked up at me and smiled, though only a minute before he had again been hissed off the stage. The place was poor, and the audience was poor, but the shame still hurt.

“That night a dirty hearse went out through the town gate. The painted, despised actor lay inside. He had killed himself at last. No one followed him except the driver and my light. They put him in a corner of the churchyard, where weeds would soon grow over him. The world had laughed at him, and then it forgot him.”

On the nineteenth evening, the Moon said, “I come from Rome. In the middle of that city, on one of its seven hills, stand the ruins of an old imperial palace. Wild fig trees grow in cracks in the walls. Donkeys walk over broken stones and eat rough plants. From a place where Roman power once flew across the world, a door now leads into a poor little house.

“The house is built between old pillars. A wild vine hangs over its crooked window like a dark green wreath. An old woman and her little granddaughter live there. In a strange way, they are now the rulers of the old palace. They show strangers the remains of its former greatness.

“Only one bare wall is left from the great throne room. A black cypress tree throws its shadow where the throne once stood. Dust lies deep over the broken floor. The little girl often sits there on her stool when the evening bells ring. She calls the keyhole in a nearby door her tower window, because through it she can see across Rome to the great dome of Saint Peter’s.

“This evening all was quiet. In my full light, the little granddaughter came up the steps. She carried an old-shaped clay pitcher full of water on her head. Her feet were bare, and her short dress and white sleeves were torn. I touched her shoulders, her dark eyes, and her shining black hair with my light.

“The stairs were steep and rough. They were made from broken marble and pieces of fallen pillars. Bright little lizards ran away from her feet, but she was not afraid. She reached up to pull the bell string. It was only a hare’s foot tied to

a string, but it was the bell of the imperial palace now.

“Then she stopped for a moment. What was she thinking about? Perhaps she was thinking of the beautiful child Jesus in the chapel below, dressed in gold and silver. Perhaps she was thinking of the songs her little friends sang there. I do not know. Then she moved again, and her foot slipped.

“The clay pitcher fell from her head and broke on the marble steps. Water ran over the old stone. The girl began to cry. The little daughter of the imperial palace stood there barefoot and wept over a cheap broken pitcher. She did not dare to pull the bell string and go inside.”

On the twentieth evening, the Moon did not begin at once, for more than two weeks had passed since he had shone. Then he came again, round and bright above the clouds. “From a town in Fezzan,” he said, “I followed a caravan. At the edge of the sandy desert, the travellers stopped on a salt plain. It shone like a frozen lake, with a little loose sand moving over it.”

“The oldest man in the group carried water at his belt and a small bag of dry bread on his head. With his stick he drew a square in the sand and wrote sacred words inside it. Then the whole caravan passed over that marked place. A young merchant rode forward on a white horse. He was quiet and thoughtful, and I knew he came from the East by his eyes and his bearing.

“Perhaps he was thinking of his young wife. Only two days before, a camel covered with rich cloth had carried her around the city walls as a bride. Drums had sounded, women had sung, and shots had been fired in joy. The bridegroom himself had fired the most shots. Now he was already far from her, crossing the desert with the caravan.

“For many nights I followed the travellers. I saw them rest near wells among low palm trees. I saw them kill a fallen camel and cook its flesh over the fire. My light cooled the hot sand and showed black rocks rising from it like dead islands in a sea of sand. No enemy met them, and no great storm of sand came against them.

“At home, the beautiful wife prayed for her husband and her father. When I was a thin golden shape, she asked me, ‘Are they dead?’ When I was full and

round, she asked again, ‘Are they dead?’ But the desert was now behind them. This evening they sat under tall palm trees, where birds moved in the branches and the grass was crushed by the feet of great animals.

“A group of Black traders came back from a market farther inland. The women wore blue-dyed clothes and copper buttons in their dark hair. They drove heavy oxen, and small sleeping children lay on the animals’ backs. One man led a young lion by a string. They came near the caravan.

“The young merchant sat still and silent. He was in the land beyond the desert, but his thoughts were far away with his white flower at home. Then he raised his head, and—” At that moment a cloud passed before the Moon, and then another cloud came after it. I heard no more from him that evening.

## Part 6 — Small Sorrows and Great Fame

On the twenty-first evening, the Moon said, “I saw a little girl crying. She was crying because the world seemed very bad to her. She had received a beautiful doll as a present. The doll was so pretty and soft-looking that it did not seem made for pain or trouble. But the girl’s brothers, those wild boys, had put the doll high up in a tree and then had run away.

“The little girl could not reach the doll. She stood under the tree and looked up through the leaves. The doll stretched out her arms from the branch and looked very sad. The girl was sure the doll was suffering too. It was already growing dark, and the thought of night made everything worse.

“‘Must you stay there alone all night?’ the girl thought. She could not allow that. ‘I will stay with you,’ she said to the doll, though she was very afraid. The bushes began to look strange in the fading light. She almost thought she saw small dark people with tall hats hiding among them.

“Farther down the path, tall shadowy figures seemed to move and dance. They came nearer in her fear. They pointed toward the tree and laughed at the doll. The little girl trembled, but then she tried to comfort herself. ‘If a person has done nothing wrong, nothing bad can hurt her,’ she thought.

“Then she began to ask herself whether she had done anything wrong. At last she remembered one thing. ‘Yes,’ she thought, ‘I laughed at the poor duck with the red cloth on her leg. She walked in such a funny way that I laughed, but it is wrong to laugh at animals.’ Then she looked up at the doll and asked, ‘Did you laugh at the duck too?’ The doll seemed to shake her head, as if she had done no wrong.”

On the twenty-second evening, the Moon said, “I looked down on Tyrol. My light made the dark pine trees throw long shadows over the rocks. On the walls of the houses I saw large holy pictures. One showed Saint Christopher carrying the child Jesus. Another showed Saint Florian pouring water on a burning house. Beside the road, Christ hung on a great cross.

“To the people now, these pictures are old. But I remember when they were new. I saw them painted, one after another. High on the mountain stood a lonely convent. It sat there like a small bird’s nest against the rock.

“Two young nuns were in the tower, ringing the bell. They were both young, so their eyes did not stay only inside the convent walls. Their looks went out over the mountains and down toward the road. A travelling coach passed below them. The driver blew his horn, and the sound rose through the air.

“For a moment, the two nuns looked after the coach. Their eyes were sad. In the younger one’s eyes there was a tear. The horn sounded more and more faintly as the coach went away. Then the convent bell covered the last sound of it, and the mountain was quiet again.”

On the twenty-third evening, the Moon said, “Some years ago, here in Copenhagen, I looked into a poor little room. The father and mother were asleep, but their small son was awake. The flowered curtain of the bed moved, and the child peeped out. At first I thought he was looking at the large clock, which was painted in bright red and green. A cuckoo sat at the top, and the heavy weights hung below.

“But the boy was not looking at the clock. He was looking at his mother’s spinning wheel, which stood under it. That wheel was his favourite thing in the room. He loved to watch it turn when his mother worked. But he was not allowed

to touch it, because if he did, he would be punished.

“For many hours he had sat beside his mother and watched the wheel. The round wheel turned, the small parts moved, and the thread ran through it. Many thoughts came to him while he watched. How wonderful it would be if he could turn it himself, just once. Now his father and mother were asleep, and the wheel stood there waiting.

“First one little bare foot came out of the bed. Then the second foot appeared, and then two small white legs. The boy stood up in his short night shirt. He looked at his parents again to make sure they were still asleep. Then he crept very softly across the room to the spinning wheel.

“He touched it and began to spin. The thread moved, and the wheel turned faster and faster. His face was full of care and joy. I kissed his fair hair and his blue eyes with my light. It was a dear little picture, quiet and bright in the poor room.

“Then his mother woke. The curtain moved, and she looked out. In the dim room she thought she saw a little spirit or strange child from a tale. ‘Heaven help us!’ she cried, and woke her husband. He opened his eyes, rubbed them, and looked at the busy little boy. ‘Why, that is Bertel,’ he said.

“My eye left the poor room then, because I had many things to see. At that same moment I looked into the great halls of the Vatican. There stood the marble gods. I shone on the Laocoon group, and the stone seemed almost to breathe with pain. I touched the lips of the Muses, and they seemed almost to move.

“But my light stayed longest on the great Nile group. The mighty river god lay there, thoughtful and still, beside the Sphinx. Around him little child figures played with him and with the crocodiles. One small child sat with folded arms and looked at the great god. His face was just like the face of the boy at the spinning wheel.

“That little marble child had been made more than a thousand years before. The wheel of time had turned again and again since then. Yet the same life could appear once more in a poor room. The boy who turned the spinning wheel would one day call new life out of stone. The Moon knew this before the world knew it.

“Years passed. Yesterday I looked over a bay on the east coast of Denmark. There were fine woods, tall trees, an old red castle, ponds with swans, and a little town with a church. Many boats moved over the quiet water, and each boat carried lights. The lights were not for fishing. Everything showed that people were celebrating.

“Music sounded, and people sang. In one boat stood the man whom all the others honoured. He was tall and strong, wrapped in a cloak, with blue eyes and long white hair. I knew him. I thought of the Vatican, the Nile group, and the old marble gods. I also thought of the little room where Bertel had stood in his night shirt at the spinning wheel.

“The wheel of time had turned. New great figures had come from stone. The poor little boy had become a famous artist. From the boats came a loud shout: ‘Hurrah for Bertel Thorwaldsen!’ The Moon had seen the child in the room and the great man on the water, and both pictures belonged together.”

On the twenty-fourth evening, the Moon said, “Now I will give you a picture from Frankfort. I noticed one house there more than the others. It was not the house where Goethe was born. It was not the old council house, where people once celebrated emperors. It was a plain private house, painted green, near the old Jewish street. It was the house of Rothschild.

“I looked through the open door. The stairs were full of light. Servants stood there with wax candles in large silver holders. They bowed deeply before an old woman who was being carried downstairs in a chair. The owner of the house stood with his head uncovered and kissed the old woman’s hand with great respect.

“She was his mother. She nodded kindly to him and to the servants. Then they carried her out of the bright house and into the dark narrow street. They took her to a little house, for that was where she lived. In that small house her children had been born, and from there the family’s fortune had first begun.

“She believed that if she left the poor street and the little house, good fortune would leave her children. That was her strong belief. The Moon told me no more, because his visit was short that evening. But I kept thinking about the old woman in the narrow street. With one word, she could have had a grand house by the

Thames or a beautiful villa by the Bay of Naples.

“But she stayed where her sons’ good fortune had first grown. Perhaps her belief was only a superstition. Still, it was a superstition full of love. Anyone who saw that picture would need only two words under it to understand. Those two words would be: ‘A mother.’”

## Part 7 — Work, Longing, and Memory

On the twenty-fifth evening, the Moon said, “Yesterday, in the early morning, I looked at a great city. No smoke was yet rising from the chimneys. The houses were still quiet, and the day had only just begun. Then suddenly a small head came up out of one chimney. A moment later, half of a small body appeared too, with two arms resting on the edge of the chimney pot.

“‘Ya-hip! Ya-hip!’ cried a happy voice. It was a little chimney-sweeper. For the first time in his life, he had climbed all the way through a chimney and reached the top. This was very different from crawling in the dark, narrow place below. Up there the air was fresh, the sky was open, and the whole city lay under him.

“The sun was rising. It came up round and large, and its light shone straight on the boy’s face. His face was black with soot, but it also shone with joy. He looked toward the green woods beyond the city. For one bright moment, he seemed to own the roofs, the sky, and the morning.

“‘The whole town can see me now,’ he cried. ‘The Moon can see me, and the Sun can see me too. Ya-hip! Ya-hip!’ Then he lifted his brush and waved it proudly. He was only a little working boy, black from the chimney. But on that morning, high above the city, he felt like a king.”

On the twenty-sixth evening, the Moon said, “Last night I looked down on a town in China. My light shone on bare walls along the streets. Sometimes I saw a door, but it was closed. The houses looked shut away from the outside world. Wooden shutters covered the windows, but a soft light came from the windows of a temple.

“I looked inside. The temple was full of bright colours and gold. Pictures

covered the walls from the floor to the ceiling. They showed stories of the gods on earth. Statues stood in small spaces in the walls, but cloth and long banners almost hid them. Before each statue there was a small altar with water, flowers, and burning lights.

“Above all the others stood Fo, the great god of the temple, dressed in yellow silk. At the foot of the altar sat a young priest. His name was Soui-hong. He seemed to be praying, but his thoughts had gone away from his prayer. His face became warm and red, and he lowered his head as if he knew his thoughts were wrong.

“What was he thinking about? Was he thinking of the little flower garden behind a high wall? Did work there seem sweeter than watching the temple lights? Was he thinking of a rich feast, with fine dishes and silver paper to wipe the mouth? Or had his thoughts gone even farther, to foreign ships and foreign lands? No, they had not gone so far. But they were still dangerous thoughts, because they came from a young heart in a place where such thoughts were not allowed.

“I knew where his thoughts had gone. At the far end of the city, on a flat roof paved with fine tiles, sat beautiful Pu. Painted flower pots stood near her. She had bright eyes, full lips, and tiny feet. Her tight shoes hurt her, but her heart hurt more. She lifted her round arm, and her silk dress made a soft sound.

“Before her stood a glass bowl with four goldfish. She moved the water very slowly with a thin painted stick. She too was lost in thought. Perhaps she thought about the fish. They wore gold, lived safely in their clear bowl, and were fed every day. Yet perhaps they would be happier if they were free.

“Pu understood that feeling very well. Her thoughts left her house and went toward the temple. But they did not go there for holy reasons. They went to Soui-hong. Poor Pu, poor Soui-hong. Their human thoughts met in the night, but my cold light lay between them like a bright sword.”

On the twenty-seventh evening, the Moon said, “The air was calm. The water was so clear that it seemed almost like the sky through which I was moving. Deep under the surface, I could see strange water plants. Their long arms reached upward, like great trees in a forest. Fish swam over their tops, moving quietly in

the shining water.

“High above the water, a group of wild swans flew through the air. One of them began to sink lower and lower. His wings were tired, but his eyes still followed the others. They flew farther and farther away, and at last they seemed to melt into the distance. The lonely swan opened his wings wide and fell slowly toward the water.

“He touched the surface as gently as a light bubble falling through still air. Then his head rested back between his wings. He lay there in silence, white and calm on the quiet lake. He looked like a white flower lying on the water. Around him everything was still.

“Then a soft wind came. Small lines moved over the water, and the shining surface changed. The swan lifted his head. Bright water splashed over his breast and back, blue and shining in my light. The morning began to colour the clouds red.

“The swan had rested, and now strength returned to him. He rose from the water and flew toward the rising sun. Far away was the blue coast where the other swans had gone. He followed them, but he followed alone. A longing filled his breast as he flew over the wide blue waves.”

On the twenty-eighth evening, the Moon said, “I will give you another picture of Sweden. Among dark pine woods, near the sad banks of the Stoxen, stands the old convent church of Wreta. My light passed through the iron bars and entered the wide burial rooms below. There kings sleep quietly in great stone coffins.

“On the wall above each grave hangs a sign of earthly greatness: a royal crown. But each crown is only made of wood. It is painted and covered with gold colour, then hung on a wooden peg in the wall. Worms have eaten the bright wood, and spiders have made webs from the crowns down to the sand. The webs hang there like thin mourning cloth.

“How quietly the dead kings sleep. I remember them clearly. I still see the bold smiles that once showed joy or sorrow on their faces. But now strangers come by steamboat over the lakes and ask the names of the kings. The names sound dead and forgotten. Often the stranger smiles at the old wooden crowns.

“If the stranger is a thoughtful person, sadness comes into that smile. Human power becomes small in such a place. Crowns break, names fade, and stone rooms become silent. But I still think of those who sleep there. At night I send my light into their quiet kingdom, where the crown above them is only painted wood.”

## Part 8 — Fear, Music, and a Child’s Prayer

On the twenty-ninth evening, the Moon said, “Close beside the high road there is an inn. Across from it stands a large wagon shed. Its straw roof was being repaired, so I could look down between the open beams and into the cold space below. The place was poor and empty-looking. A turkey slept on a beam, and a saddle lay in an empty feeding box.

“In the middle of the shed stood a travelling carriage. Its owner slept inside it, while the horses were being given water outside. The driver stretched his arms and legs, though I was quite sure he had slept well for half of the last part of the road. The door to the servants’ room stood open. The bed inside looked as if someone had turned in it again and again, and a candle on the floor had burned almost to the end.

“A cold wind moved through the shed. It was nearer to morning than to midnight. On a wooden frame on the ground slept a wandering family of musicians. The father and mother seemed to be dreaming of the strong drink that was still left in their bottle. Their little pale daughter was dreaming too, but tears were wet on her face. The harp stood near their heads, and their dog lay stretched out at their feet.”

On the thirtieth evening, the Moon said, “This happened in a small country town. It was last year, but that does not matter. I saw it clearly, and today I read about it in the newspaper. But the newspaper did not tell it half as well as I saw it. In the drinking room of a little inn sat a bear leader, eating his supper.

“Outside, behind the wood pile, his bear was tied. Poor Bruin looked rough and frightening, but he did not mean to hurt anyone. Up in the attic, three little children were playing in my light. The oldest was perhaps six years old, and the

youngest was not more than two. They were alone and happy in the little room.

“Then came a heavy sound on the stairs: tramp, tramp. Who could it be? The door was pushed open, and there stood Bruin, the great shaggy bear. He had become tired of waiting in the yard and had found his way upstairs. The children were very frightened at first. Each child ran into a corner, but the bear found them all.

“He only smelled them and did not hurt them. Then the children began to feel brave. ‘This must be a big dog,’ they said. They came nearer and began to stroke his thick fur. Bruin lay down on the floor, and the youngest boy climbed onto his back. The little boy bent his golden head down and hid it in the bear’s long hair.

“Then the oldest boy took his drum and beat it loudly. The bear rose on his back legs and began to dance. It was a wonderful sight. Each boy took his toy gun, and the bear had to hold one too. He held it quite well. The children had found a fine playmate, and they began to march around the room: one, two; one, two.

“Suddenly the door opened again, and the children’s mother appeared. Her face went white, and her mouth stayed half open. She could not speak, because fear had taken all her words away. Her eyes fixed on the great bear and the children beside him. But the youngest boy nodded happily and cried, ‘We are playing soldiers!’ Then the bear leader ran up the stairs and came into the room.”

On the thirty-first evening, the wind was cold and strong. Clouds hurried across the sky, and the Moon showed himself only for a moment now and then. He said, “I looked down from the silent sky and saw great shadows racing over the earth. Then I looked at a prison. A closed carriage stood in front of it, because a prisoner was to be taken away.

“My light passed through the bars of the prison window and touched the wall. The prisoner was scratching a few lines there before he left. But he was not writing words. He was writing a melody. It was the last message of his heart.

“The door opened, and the prisoner was led out. He lifted his eyes to my round face. Then clouds passed between us, as if he must not see me and I must not see him. He stepped into the carriage, the door was shut, the whip cracked, and the horses ran away toward the dark forest. My light could not follow him there.

“I looked again through the prison bars. My rays touched the music notes on the wall, his last farewell. Where words cannot speak, music can sometimes speak. But my light could reach only some of the notes, and much of the melody stayed dark. Was it a death song? Was it a song of joy? Was he going to die, or was he going to meet someone he loved? The Moon cannot read everything that human beings write.”

On the thirty-second evening, the Moon said, “I love children, especially very little children. They are so funny and dear. Sometimes I look into a room between the curtain and the window frame, when they are not thinking of me. I like to see them getting dressed and undressed. First a small round shoulder comes out of a dress, then an arm, or a stocking is pulled off and a little white foot appears. I kiss that foot with my light.

“But now I will tell you what I saw this evening. I looked through a window where no curtain was drawn, because no one lived opposite. Inside was a whole group of little children from one family. Among them was a little sister. She was only four years old, but she could say her prayers as well as the older children.

“Every evening her mother sat beside her bed and listened to her prayer. Then the little girl received a kiss. After that, the mother stayed beside the bed until the child fell asleep. Usually this happened very quickly, almost as soon as she closed her eyes. The room was warm and full of the small noises of family life.

“This evening the two older children were rather noisy. One jumped about on one leg in a long white nightgown. Another stood on a chair with all the children’s clothes around him and said he was acting like Greek statues. The third and fourth children carefully put clean clothes into a box, because that work had to be done. The mother sat by the youngest child’s bed and told the others to be quiet, because little sister was going to pray.

“I looked in over the lamp and down into the little girl’s bed. She lay under a clean white cover. Her hands were folded, and her little face was very serious. She began to say the Lord’s Prayer aloud. But in the middle of the prayer, her mother stopped her.

“‘Why is it,’ the mother asked, ‘that when you pray for daily bread, you always

add something that I cannot understand? You must tell me what it is.' The little girl lay still and looked shyly at her mother. 'What do you say after "our daily bread"?' asked the mother. The child answered, 'Dear mother, do not be angry. I only say, "and plenty of butter on it."'"