

590 The Faithless Mother

(previously The Prince and the Arm Bands).

A boy sets out on a journey with his mother. On their way he finds an object (armband, belt, sword, shirt, etc.) which gives him supernatural strength [D840, D1335.5, D1335.4]. In a house of robbers (giants, other supernatural beings) the son defeats all of them (cf. Type 650A) until only one is left with whom his mother (secretly) starts a liaison [S12.1] (she marries him).

In order to get rid of the son (the lover fears the son's strength) the mother feigns sickness and sends her son on a dangerous quest for a remedy [H931, H1211, H1212] (fruit [apple] from the garden of supernatural beings [H1333.3.1, H1333.3.1.1, H1333.3.1.3, D1364. 4.1], water of life, animal's milk [H1361]) for which he must risk his life. The son returns successful and uninjured [F615, F615.2.1], accompanied by wild animals that have become his protectors [B315, B431.2, B520].

In numerous variants the boy rescues a young girl (princess [R111.1.1]) during one of his adventures and sends (brings) her back to her father, and/ or he meets female helpers (old woman, a girl skilled in magic, his bride).

The boy's mother asks him for the secret of his strength and steals it (ties him, gives him a narcotic drink, persuades him to take a bath) [K975, D861]. Then she (and/ or her lover) blinds (murders) the boy. When he is blinded he is found by the princess, who nurses and restores his sight by observing how a blind animal is healed [B512]. When he is murdered he is resuscitated by one of his female helpers (using the remedies he procured).

He recovers the object that holds his strength [D880] and takes revenge on his mother and her lover (kills them). He marries the princess (female helper, daughter of the helper). Cf. Type 315.

Combinations: This type is usually combined with episodes of one or more other types, esp. 300, 315, and also 302, 303, 314, 315A, 318, 400, 531, 551, and 613.

Remarks: Closely related to Type 315; both types are often mixed with each other or they are not clearly differentiated.