

{AT653} The Four Skillful Brothers.

The father has them trained. Display of their accomplishments. The bird's nest on the tree. The stolen princess recovered. Cf. Type 513, 514.

I. The Four Brothers Tested.

- (a) Four brothers sent to learn trades return home and are tested,
- (b) The star-gazer sees how many eggs are in a bird's nest on a tree; the thief steals the eggs; the huntsman shoots them although they are scattered about on a table; the tailor sews them up so that they can be returned. Only a red line is around the neck of the birds when hatched.

II. Rescue of Princess.

- (a) A stolen princess is offered in marriage to her rescuer,
- (b) The astronomer finds her on a rock in a distant sea; the thief steals her; the huntsman shoots the dragon guardian; the tailor sews together the shattered planks on the boat on which they are returning.

III. The Reward.

- (a) Each claims to be rescuer of the princess and they dispute as to who shall have her.
- (b) The dispute is still unsettled; or
- (c) it is proposed that she be divided and thus the true lover is discovered; or
- (d) they are given half the kingdom instead.

Motifs:

I.

[P251.6.2] Four brothers.

[F660.1] Brothers acquire extraordinary skill. Return home and are tested.

[H504] Test of skill in handiwork.

[F642] Person of remarkable sight.

[F642.1] Remarkable star-gazer. Sees birds in nest in distant tree.

[H1151.12] Task: stealing eggs from under bird.

[K305.1] Thieving contest: first steals eggs from under bird, etc.

[F661.4] Skillful marksman shoots eggs scattered over table.

[F662.1] Skillful tailor sews up broken eggs.

[F662.1.1] Birds hatched from broken eggs repaired by skillful tailor have red line around neck.

II.

[R10.1] Princess abducted.

[T68.1] Princess offered as prize to rescuer.

[R166] Brothers having extraordinary skill rescue princess.

[R111.1.3] Rescue of princess from dragon.

[F662.2] Skillful tailor sews together scattered planks in capsizing boat.

III.

[H621.2] Girl rescued by skillful companions: to whom does she belong?

[R111.7] Joint rescuers quarrel over rescued princess.

[Z16] Tales ending with a question.

[J1171.2] Solomon's judgment: the divided bride.

[QJ 12] Half of kingdom as reward.

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West Indies (Negro) 11;

African 6.

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{AT653A} The Rarest Thing in the World.

A princess is offered to the one bringing the rarest thing in the world [T68.1] .

Three brothers set out and acquire magic objects: a telescope which shows all that is happening in the world [D1323.15] , a carpet (or the like) which transports one at will [D1520.18] , and an apple (or other object) which heals or resuscitates [D1500.1.5.1], [E106] . With the telescope it is learned that the princess is dying or dead. With the carpet they go to her immediately and with the apple they cure or restore her to life. Dispute as to who is to marry her [H621.2], [Z16] .

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{AT653B} The Suitors Restore the Maiden to Life

[T92.0.1], [T92.14] .

I. Resuscitation.

Three (four) suitors woo a girl who dies. They each perform a different task,

- (a) One watches her grave or funeral pyre,
- (b) One takes her ashes to the Ganges, etc.
- (c) One restores her to life by a charm, etc.

II. Reward. Query.

Which shall have her? (The problem is usually solved in a clever way. Example: the one who brought the girl back to life is like her father; the one who carried her ashes to the Ganges is like her son; the one who watched the funeral pyre is like her husband; therefore she marries him.)

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India 8.

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{AT653*} The Four Skillful Brothers.

They catch a wild reindeer and a bear [F660] ,

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