

The Blue Bird

TYLTYL

It's you. . . . Yes, yes, it's you!

MUMMY TYL

Yes, yes, it's I. . . . I haven't changed my face since last night. . . . Why do you stare at me in that wonderstruck way? . . . Is my nose turned upside down, by any chance?

TYLTYL

Oh, how nice it is to see you again! It's so long, so long ago! . . . I must kiss you at once. . . . Again! Again! Again! . . . And how comfortable my bed is! I am back at home!

MUMMY TYL

What's the matter? Why don't you wake up? Don't tell me you're ill. . . . Let me see, show me your tongue. . . . Come, get up and dress. . . .

TYLTYL

Hullo, I've got my shirt on!

MUMMY TYL

Of course you have. . . . Put on your

The Blue Bird

breeches and your little jacket. . . .

There they are, on the chair. . . .

TYLTYL

Is that what I did on the journey?

MUMMY TYL

What journey?

TYLTYL

Why, last year. . . .

MUMMY TYL

Last year?

TYLTYL

Why, yes! At Christmas, when I went away. . . .

MUMMY TYL

When you went away? You haven't left the room. . . . I put you to bed last night, and here you are this morning. . . . Have you dreamed all that?

TYLTYL

But you don't understand! It was last year, when I went away with Mytyl, the Fairy, Light—how nice Light is! —Bread, Sugar, Water, Fire: they did nothing but quarrel! You're

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not angry with me? . . . Did you feel very sad? . . . And what did daddy say? . . . I could not refuse . . . I left a note to explain. . . .

MUMMY TYL

What are you talking about? . . . For sure, either you're ill or else you're still asleep. . . . (*She gives him a friendly shake.*) There, wake up. . . . There, is that better? . . .

TYLTYL

But, mummy, I assure you. . . . It's you that's still asleep. . . .

MUMMY TYL

What! Still asleep, am I? . . . Why, I've been up since six o'clock. . . . I've finished all the cleaning and lit the fire. . . .

TYLTYL

But ask Mytyl if it's not true. . . . Oh, we have had such adventures! . . .

MUMMY TYL

Why Mytyl? . . . What do you mean? . . .

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TYLTYL

She was with me. . . . We saw grandad and granny. . . .

MUMMY TYL (*more and more bewildered*)

Grandad and granny? . . .

TYLTYL

Yes, in the Land of Memory. . . . It was on our way. . . . They are dead, but they are quite well. . . . Granny made us a lovely plum-tart. . . . And then the little brothers—Robert, Jean and his top—and Madeleine and Pierrette and Pauline and Riquette, too. . . .

MYTYL

Riquette still goes about on all fours! . . .

TYLTYL

And Pauline still has a pimple on her nose. . . .

MUMMY TYL

Have you found the key of the cupboard where daddy hides his brandy bottle? . . .

The Blue Bird

TYLTYL

Does daddy hide a brandy bottle? . . .

MUMMY TYL

Certainly. One has to hide everything when one has little meddlesome good-for-nothings like you. . . . But come, out with it, confess that you took it. . . . I would rather it was that. . . . I sha'n't tell daddy. . . . I sha'n't beat you. . . .

TYLTYL

But, mummy, I don't know where it is. . . .

MUMMY TYL

Just walk in front of me, so that I may see if you can walk straight. . . .
(TYLTYL *does so*) No, it's not that. . . . Dear heaven, what is the matter with them? . . . I shall lose them too, as I lost the others! . . . (*Suddenly mad with alarm, she calls out*)
Daddy Tyl! . . . Come, quick! The children are ill! . . .

(*Enter DADDY TYL, very calmly, with an axe in his hand.*)

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DADDY TYL

What is it? . . .

TYLTYL and MYTYL (*running up gaily to kiss their father*)

Hullo, daddy! . . . It's daddy! . . .
Good-morning, daddy! . . . Have you had plenty of work this year? . . .

DADDY TYL

Well, what's the matter? . . . They don't look ill; they look very well. . . .

MUMMY TYL (*weeping*)

You can't trust their looks. . . . It will be as with the others. . . . They looked quite well also to the end; and then God took them. . . . I don't know what's the matter with them. . . . I put them to bed quite quietly last night; and this morning, when they woke up, everything was wrong. . . . They don't know what they're saying; they talk about a journey. . . . They have seen Light and grandad and granny, who are dead, but who are quite well. . . .

The Blue Bird

TYLTYL

But grandad still has his wooden leg. . . .

MYTYL

And granny her rheumatics. . . .

MUMMY TYL

Do you hear? . . . Run and fetch the
doctor! . . .

DADDY TYL

Why, no, no. . . . They are not dead yet.
. . . . Come, let us look into this. . . .
(*A knock at the front door.*) Come
in! . . .

(*Enter NEIGHBOUR BERLINGOT, a little
old woman resembling the FAIRY in
ACT I and leaning on a stick.*)

THE NEIGHBOUR

Good-morning and a Merry Christmas to
you all! . . .

TYLTYL

It's the Fairy Bérylune! . . .

THE NEIGHBOUR

I have come to ask for a bit of fire for my
Christmas stew. . . . It's very chilly

The Blue Bird

this morning. . . . Good-morning,
children, how are you? . . .

TYLTYL

Fairy Bérylune, I could not find the Blue
Bird. . . .

THE NEIGHBOUR

What is he saying? . . .

MUMMY TYL

Don't ask me, Madame Berlingot. . . .
They don't know what they are saying.
. . . . They have been like that since
they woke up. . . . They must have
eaten something that wasn't good. . . .

THE NEIGHBOUR

Why, Tytyl, don't you remember Goody
Berlingot, your Neighbour Ber-
lingot? . . .

TYLTYL

Why, yes, ma'am. . . . You are the Fairy
Bérylune. . . . You're not angry with
us? . . .

THE NEIGHBOUR

Béry . . . what? Goodness gracious
me! . . .

The Blue Bird

TYLTYL

Bérylune.

THE NEIGHBOUR

Berlingot, you mean Berlingot. . . .

TYLTYL

Bérylune or Berlingot, as you please,
ma'am. . . . But Mytyl knows. . . .

MUMMY TYL

That's the worst of it, that Mytyl also. . . .

DADDY TYL

Pooh, pooh! . . . That will soon go; I will
give them a smack or two. . . .

THE NEIGHBOUR

Don't; it's not worth while. . . . I know
all about it; it's only a little fit of
dreaming. . . . They must have slept
in the moonbeams. . . . My little girl,
who is very ill, is often like that. . . .

MUMMY TYL

By the way, how is your little girl? . . .

THE NEIGHBOUR

Only so-so. . . . She can't get up. . . .
The doctor says that it's her nerves.
. . . . I know what would cure her,
for all that. She was asking me for it

The Blue Bird

only this morning, for her Christmas
box; it's a notion she has . . .

MUMMY TYL

Yes, I know; it's Tytyl's bird. . . . Well,
Tytyl, aren't you going to give it at
last to that poor little thing? . . .

TYLTYL

What, mummy? . . .

MUMMY TYL

Your bird. . . . It's no use to you. . . .
You don't even look at it now. . . .
And she has been dying to have it for
ever so long! . . .

TYLTYL

Hullo, that's true, my bird! . . . Where
is he? . . . Oh, there's the cage! . . .
Mytyl, do you see the cage? . . .
It's the one which Bread carried. . . .
Yes, yes, it's the same one, but there's
only one bird in it. . . . Has he eaten
the other, I wonder? . . . Hullo,
why, he's blue! . . . But it's my
turtle-dove! . . . But he's much
bluer than when I went away! . . .
Why, that's the blue bird we were look-

The Blue Bird

ing for! . . . We went so far and he was here all the time! . . . Oh, but it's wonderful! . . . Mytyl, do you see the bird? What would Light say? . . . I will take down the cage. . . .
(*He climbs on a chair and takes down the cage and carries it to the NEIGHBOUR.*) There, Madame Berlingot, there you are. . . . He's not quite blue yet, but that will come, you shall see! . . . Take him off quick to your little girl. . . .

THE NEIGHBOUR

Really? . . . Do you mean it? . . . Do you give it me like that, straight away and for nothing? . . . Lord, how happy she will be! . . . (*Kissing TYLTYL*) I must give you a kiss! . . . I fly! . . . I fly! . . .

TYLTYL

Yes, yes; be quick. . . . Some of them change their colour. . . .

THE NEIGHBOUR

I will come back to tell you what she says. . . .

The Blue Bird

(*She goes out.*)

TYLTYL (*after taking a long look around him*)

Daddy, mummy, what have you done to the house? . . . It's just as it was, but it's much prettier. . . .

DADDY TYL

How do you mean, it's prettier? . . .

TYLTYL

Why, yes, everything has been painted and made to look new, everything is clean and polished. . . . It was not like that last year. . . .

DADDY TYL

Last year? . . .

TYLTYL (*going to the window*)

And look at the forest! . . . How big and fine it is! . . . One would think it was new! . . . How happy I feel here! . . . (*Going to the bread-pan and opening it*) Where's Bread? . . . I say, the loaves are very quiet. . . . And then here's Tylô! . . . Hullo, Tylô, Tylô! . . . Ah, you had a

The Blue Bird

fine fight! . . . Do you remember, in
the forest? . . .

MYTYL

And Tylette. . . He knows me, but he
has stopped talking. . . .

TYLTYL

Mr. Bread. . . . (*Feeling his forehead*)

Hullo, the diamond's gone! . . .

Who's taken my little green hat? . . .

Never mind; I don't want it any
more. . . . Ah, Fire! . . . He's a

good one! . . . He crackles and
laughs to make Water angry. . . .

(*Running to the tap*) And Water?

. . . Good-morning, Water! . . .

What does she say? . . . She still

talks, but I don't understand her as
well as I did. . . .

MYTYL

I don't see Sugar. . . .

TYLTYL

Lord, how happy I am, happy, happy,
happy! . . .

MYTYL

So am I, so am I! . . .

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MUMMY TYL

What are you spinning round for like
that?

DADDY TYL

Don't mind them and don't distress your-
self. . . . They are playing at being
happy. . . .

TYLTYL

I liked Light best of all. . . . Where's her
lamp? . . . Can we light it? . . .

(*Looking round him again.*) Good-
ness me, how lovely it all is and how
glad I feel! . . .

MUMMY TYL

Why? . . .

TYLTYL

I don't know, mummy. . . .

(*A knock at the front-door.*)

DADDY TYL

Come in, come in! . . .

(*Enter the NEIGHBOUR, holding by the
hand a little girl of a fair and wonder-
ful beauty, who carries TYLTYL'S
dove pressed in her arms.*)

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THE NEIGHBOUR

Do you see the miracle? . . .

MUMMY TYL

Impossible! . . . Can she walk? . . .

THE NEIGHBOUR

Can she walk? . . . She can run, she can dance, she can fly! . . . When she saw the bird, she jumped, just like that, with one bound, to the window, to see by the light if it was really Tyltyl's dove. . . . And then, whoosh! . . . Out into the street, like an angel! . . . It was as much as I could do to keep pace with her. . . .

TYLTYL (*going up to her, wonderstruck*)
Oh, how like Light she is! . . .

MYTYL

She is much smaller. . . .

TYLTYL

Yes, indeed! . . . But she will grow bigger. . . .

THE NEIGHBOUR

What are they saying? . . . Haven't they got over it yet? . . .

The Blue Bird

MUMMY TYL

They are better, they are mending. . . . It will be all right when they have had their breakfasts. . . .

THE NEIGHBOUR (*pushing the LITTLE GIRL into TYLTYL's arms*).

Come along, child, come and thank Tyltyl. . . .

(TYLTYL, *suddenly frightened, takes a step back.*)

MUMMY TYL

Well, Tyltyl, what's the matter? . . .

Are you afraid of the little girl? . . .

Come, give her a kiss, a good big kiss. . . . No, a better one than that.

. . . You're not so shy as a rule! . . .

Another one! . . . But what's the matter with you? . . . You look as if

you were going to cry. . . .

(TYLTYL, *after kissing the*

LITTLE GIRL *rather awkwardly, stands before her*

for a moment and the two children look at each other

without speaking; then

The Blue Bird

TYLTYL *strokes the dove's head.*)

TYLTYL

Is he blue enough? . . .

THE LITTLE GIRL

Yes, I am so pleased with him. . . .

TYLTYL

I have seen bluer ones. . . . But those which are quite blue, you know, do what you will, you can't catch them. . . .

THE LITTLE GIRL

That doesn't matter; he's lovely. . . .

TYLTYL

Has he had anything to eat? . . .

THE LITTLE GIRL

Not yet. . . . What does he eat? . . .

TYLTYL

Anything: corn, bread, Indian corn, grasshoppers. . . .

THE LITTLE GIRL

How does he eat, say? . . .

TYLTYL

With his beak. You'll see, I will show you. . . .

The Blue Bird

(He moves in order to take the bird from the LITTLE GIRL's hands. She resists instinctively; and, taking advantage of the hesitation of their movements, the DOVE escapes and flies away.)

THE LITTLE GIRL *(with a cry of despair)*
Mother! . . . He is gone! . . . *(She bursts into sobs.)*

TYLTYL

Never mind. . . . Don't cry. . . . I will catch him again. . . . *(Stepping to the front of the stage and addressing the audience.)* If any of you should find him, would you be so very kind as to give him back to us? . . . We need him for our happiness, later on. . . .

CURTAIN



