

marriage. They went through all those performances which are at once tributes to beauty, and so allurements to its possessors. They danced, they strutted, they howled, they beat their breasts; they ran up the tallest trees and jumped from the tops, landing plump before her at the most unexpected moments, and in the most extraordinary and indescribable positions. They stood on their heads and clapped the palms of their hands and the soles of their feet together, howling at the same time so enchantingly that they could be heard for miles around. One of them even applied the thumb of one distended hand to his nose, and the thumb of his other distended hand to the little finger of the former, and so with the thumbs and fingers of his feet, and grinned in the most bewitching manner. But alas, she sat unmoved before all these demonstrations of strength, agility, and affection. To none of them did she seriously incline. True, there remained untried the form of mingled courtship and marriage, a seizure by main force and an elopement, which has been so common, and which is said to be not without its charms to many of her sex of all races, and in all climes, and which is one of those time-honored institutions, the abrogation of which would seem like the upheaving of the foundations of society. But her size and strength were so great that none of her suitors ventured upon this method of courtship; for it was understood that she lacked that willingness to be seized which alone gives this method its charm and its success. In fact, she was the Brunhilda of our race, for whom there were Gunthers enough, but no Siegfried. She had let it be understood that if any lover pressed his attentions upon her she would bind his hands and feet together, and, bending down the biggest sapling she could find, tie him to its tops and let it spring up with him into the air again. And so she was not molested, and passed through the woods in maiden-meditation, fancy free.

One day she sat upon the sea-shore, lonely and pensive, gazing upon the water, when suddenly there appeared in the distance an enormous, oval head, with moon-like eyes, followed by many roods of body and tail, that rose and fell like the waves of the ocean. It was the Sea-serpent. She looked at first with wonder, then with curiosity, at last with admiration.

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