

to satisfy their hunger, that they remembered how cold they were; but now they began to shiver again. Indeed, it was only by cuddling up close to each other that they were able to keep life in themselves.

40. "I would that we had a fire, for we are like to die of cold!" said Arnara, sadly.

But, even as she spoke, there entered in at the passage-way a strange little old woman, so wrapped up in furs that you could hardly see her face.

41. Upon her back she carried what looked like a bundle, only that it glowed and burned with a fierce red light. In a few minutes she had placed this in the rough stove that stood in the middle of the room. "There is fire to warm you," she said, "and it is a fire that will never go out;" after which words, she turned away.

42. Gladly the two children ran to the warmth and brightness. It was a great comfort to feel the heat warming their numbed limbs. Life was indeed becoming better now. Who could this kind old woman be?

43. With these thoughts, they turned to thank her for bringing them the fire. But they found she was no longer there, though how she could have gone without their noticing, they were at a loss to make out; for they were sitting with their faces towards the only entrance to the hut.