

loft, and half of which was clinging to his head. His face, purple with anger, was daubed with cream from the tip of the nose to the end of the chin. He wriggled and twisted, but in vain, in Barbichon's large hand. In short, as I just told you, he made a sorry figure, and those who laughed at him had good reason for laughing.

Three persons only did not laugh: his father, whose face showed great vexation; his mother, whose eyes were full of tears; and the old fairy, who cast on him a threatening glance.

"Where have you come from, sir?" said she, "and why did I not see you on entering here?"

Instead of answering, he slipped from the hands of Barbichon, who had just set him on the floor, ran to his mother, and hid his head in her lap, stamping his foot with anger.

"Here is a child," said the fairy, "that likes to have his own way. Well, I will leave him a parting gift that will render him very happy. HE NEED NEVER DO ANYTHING THAT HE DOES NOT WISH. Adieu, Madam," said she, addressing the poor mother, who was involuntarily smoothing the disordered hair of her naughty boy with her white hand; "adieu, I pity you for having such a child. If you take my advice, the first thing you will do will be to wash his face, for he is really too dirty." And, rising majestically, she went in search of her carriage, followed by Barbichon bearing the train of her dress.

This was an unhappy household. The fairy Good Heart had gone away displeased, after all the pains that had been taken to entertain her, and the guests disappeared one by one, in haste to tell what had happened through the whole city. The father took his hat and went out angry, saying aloud that this rascal would disgrace them all in the end. The mother wept without saying a word, and continued mechanically to stroke the tangled hair of her dear torment, reflecting on the singular gift that had been made him.

Finally she rose, and taking Ravageot by the hand, "Come, my dear little boy," said she, "let us go and do what the fairy bid us."

She took him to her dressing-room, and plunging her large sponge into the beautiful clear water, prepared to wash his face and hands. Ravageot, still sulky from the reproaches which he had just drawn upon himself, at first made no resistance, but when he felt the cold water in his nose and

ears, he began to kick, and ran to the other end of the room, crying,

"Oh! it is too cold; I don't want my face washed."

His mother soon caught him, and passed the sponge over his face again, in spite of his struggles. But the fairy's fatal gift was already at work. The water obeyed Ravageot's orders. To avoid wetting him, it splashed to the right and left out of the basin, and ran from the sponge, which constantly remained dry, so that it was necessary to give up the undertaking. The room was full of water, while Ravageot's face, half washed, had not received a drop since the imprudent words were spoken.

His poor mother, in despair, threw herself in a chair, and, shaking her wet dress, said, "Come let me comb your hair, at least; you will not be quite so untidy." Saying this, she took him on her lap, and began to pass her beautiful gold comb through his hair. Before long, the comb encountered a twist around which five or six hairs were twisted.

"Oh! you hurt me," cried Ravageot. "Let me alone! I don't want my hair combed." And behold! the teeth of the comb bent backward and refused to enter the hair. His mother, frightened, seized another comb, which did the same. The servants of the house hastened thither at her cries, each bringing all their combs, but nothing would do. They even went to the stable in search of the curry-comb, but scarcely had its iron teeth touched the enchanted locks than they bent backward and passed over Ravageot's head without disturbing a single hair.

Ravageot opened his eyes wide, and began to repent of having been so hasty of speech. He was a little vain at heart, and did not dislike to be neat and clean, provided that it cost him neither pain or trouble. To see himself condemned to remain thus, with his hair full of dirt and his face half-washed, was not a pleasant prospect. To show his dissatisfaction, he began to cry with all his might—the usual resource of naughty boys when they know not what to say or to do.

"I want to be washed and to have my hair combed," sobbed he, but it was too late. The fairy had indeed exempted him from the necessity of doing what he did not like, but she had not told him that he could do what he pleased.

To comfort him, his mother wished to put on his beautiful new blouse and his pretty buckled shoes. He pushed them away. "I don't want them," he cried.