

and active than water, as it rushes along in the swift brook, or dashes over the stones, or spouts up in the fountain, or trickles down from the roof, or shakes itself into ripples on the surface of the pond as the wind blows over it? But have you never seen this water spell-bound and motionless? Look out of the window some cold frosty morning in winter, at the little brook which yesterday was flowing gently past the house, and see how still it lies, with the stones over which it was dashing now held tightly in its icy grasp. Notice the wind-ripples on the pond; they have become fixed and motionless. Look up at the roof of the house. There, instead of living doves merely charmed to sleep, we have running water caught in the very act of falling and turned into transparent icicles, decorating the eaves with a beautiful crystal fringe. On every tree and bush you will catch the water-drops napping, in the form of tiny crystals; while the fountain looks like a tree of glass with long down-hanging pointed leaves. Even the damp of your own breath lies rigid and still on the window-pane frozen into delicate patterns like fern-leaves of ice.

All this water was yesterday flowing busily, or falling drop by drop, or floating invisibly in the air; now it is all caught and spell-bound—by whom? By the enchantments of the frost-giant who holds it fast in his grip and will not let it go.

But wait awhile, the deliverer is coming. In a few weeks or days, or it may be in a few hours, the brave sun will shine down; the dull-grey, leaden sky will melt before him, as the hedge gave way