



Once upon a time there lived an Enchanter and an Enchantress. They were growing old, and it was their dearest wish to have some children.

One day the Enchanter was out hunting in the forest, when he saw a deer suckling a little boy and a little girl. The animal fled as soon as she saw the Enchanter, and he took up the two children and carried them home with him to his castle.

“Wife, see what I have found in the forest,” he said.

“Oh, two dear little children,” cried the Enchantress. “You shall take care of the boy, and I will have the girl.”

So they brought up the two children, in the way each thought best. They taught them many strange things, and the girl, who was cleverer than her brother, remembered everything she was told.

The Enchantress soon took a dislike to the boy whose name was Arzur. The girl was called Azénor and, growing afraid for her brother whom she loved dearly, she went to him.

“We are brother and sister,” she said, “but we are not the children of the Enchanter and the Enchantress. The Enchanter found us in the forest, suckling a deer, and carried us home to his wife. She wishes you ill, and longs to be rid of you. She will set you very difficult tasks, which you must carry out or lose your life. But do not be afraid; do everything I tell you, and all will be well – I have read all her books of magic and I know them better than she does herself.

“Tomorrow she will give you a wooden axe, and tell you to chop down a forest that covers over a hundred journeaux of land. What is more, you must make all the wood into spoons before sunset, or you will lose your life.

“But do not fear; take this wand and when you are in the wood strike it against the trunk of an old oak which is over a thousand years old, and

which stands at the end of a great avenue, with these words – ‘By the power of my wand, old oak, cut yourself down!’ The oak will immediately fall down onto the tree beside it, and that will fall onto the tree beside that, and so on until the entire forest has been felled.

“At midday the Enchantress will come to you, and when she sees all the felled trees she will not be pleased. She will tell you that all the wood must be made into spoons before sunset, or you will lose your life. As soon as she is gone, touch the trunk of the old oak with the tip of your wand and say, ‘By the power of my wand, let all this wood become spoons’, and your wish will immediately be carried out.”

The next day everything fell out as Azénor had predicted, and Arzur set off for the forest with his wooden axe. He was very anxious, in spite of his sister’s words, and when he found the oak tree he looked at it for some time without daring to strike it. At last he plucked up courage and as soon as he had uttered the magic words the old oak fell down onto the tree beside it, and so on and so on, until the whole forest lay on the ground.

Arzur went whistling back to the castle, very pleased with his work.

“Well?” said the Enchantress, when she saw him. “What are you doing here?”

“I have finished,” he said calmly.

“You are lying – it is impossible.”

“Come and see if you don’t believe me.”

The Enchantress followed him, and when she saw all the fine trees on the ground, she was very angry.

“Oh unhappy day,” she cried. “All my beautiful trees! But I told you to make them into spoons.”

“Yes, but you gave me until sunset. Never fear – you shall have your spoons by supertime.”

The Enchantress left, still grumbling, and as soon as she was gone Arzur struck the old oak tree with his wand and said:

“By the power of my wand, let all the wood become spoons.”

Immediately the branches and trunks changed into spoons, and soon a mountain of spoons reached up to the sky.

When the sun began to set the Enchantress returned.

“Oh, unhappy, unhappy day!” she cried. “My beautiful forest made into spoons! And what am I supposed to do with them all?”

“I only did what you commanded,” said Arzur. “You asked for spoons, and I hope you have enough there for the rest of your life.”

“You must have been helped with this; you could not have done it alone,” said the Enchantress.

But I will set you another task tomorrow, and you shall not succeed so easily.”

The next day the Enchantress called Arzur to her.

“The Enchanter and I are going away for a few days, and we are taking Azénor with us. We must cross an inlet of the sea and as we have no vessel you must build us a bridge out of feathers. If it is not ready in time, you must die.”

Arzur went to tell his sister about his new task.

“This is what you must do,” said Azénor. “Tomorrow I will say I am unwell so that I can stay behind. They will take you with them in their carriage. When you get to the sea, strike it with your wand and say: ‘By virtue of my wand, may a bridge of feathers appear, so that the carriage can cross over.’ When the bridge appears the Enchantress will ask you to come with them. Do not accept, but hurry back to this castle as soon as they are on the bridge. Then we will escape together.”

The next day Azénor said that she was unwell, and stayed in bed. The Enchantress was angry, but she set off with the Enchanter and Arzur.

When they arrived at the sea, Arzur struck it with his wand and repeated the magic words.



Immediately there appeared a beautiful feather bridge.

“He has become an Enchanter,” thought the Enchantress. “He must have found and read my little red book – it is high time we were rid of him. He shall come with us onto the bridge, and we will throw him into the sea.”

The Enchantress pretended to be pleased, and asked Arzur to walk on ahead, to show them the way.

“No, I will give you the honour of being the first to cross my beautiful bridge,” said Arzur. “But I will follow close behind.”

As soon as the carriage was on the bridge, Arzur struck it with his wand and cut it off from the land; this done, he ran home to his sister.

“Let us be off at once,” said Azénor. “They will soon be back. But first we must silence the big bell that hangs in the highest tower. It can be heard for 700 leagues around. Its rope is tied to the foot of the Enchanter’s dromedary, and he rings it to warn his master when anything is wrong.”

They ran to the bell and stuffed it with soot and carpets, and then they filled their pockets with gold and precious stones. Next, they mounted the two best horses in the stable.

“I have forgotten an important thing,” said Azénor. “Run back and fetch the curry comb, the brush and the wisp, which are used for grooming the horses. We will have need of them.”

Arzur obeyed, and at a special word the horses rose up into the air and set off as swiftly as two birds. They had to travel seven hundred leagues to escape from the Enchanter’s dominions. Once they had crossed the border he would no longer have any power over them.

When they had travelled five hundred leagues they heard the bell. The dromedary had tugged so hard at the rope that the soot and carpets had fallen out.

“The Enchanter and Enchantress will soon be after us,” said Azénor. “Fortunately, we have got a good start on them.”

The Enchanter and the Enchantress had rushed home at the sound of the bell. They went to consult their books of spells, but Azénor had taken them all, save one, which was not the best.

“Mount the dromedary, take the greyhound, and try to bring them back,” said the Enchantress to the Enchanter. “They are flying through the air, but they will come back to the ground. At about five hundred leagues from here you will see a beautiful spring. It is paved with golden stones, and the rim and the roof are made from silver stones. At the bottom of the water are two golden frogs. These frogs are Arzur and Azénor; the horses have been changed into the water in the spring, and the gold and precious stones

which they carried away have become the gold and silver pebbles, and the leaves of the trees growing round about. Leave now, and do not come back without them.”

The old Enchanter set off, followed by his greyhound and mounted on his dromedary, which went as fast as lightning.

At the same time Azénor said to Arzur:

“The Enchanter and the Enchantress have returned home, and are very angry at our flight. They are particularly angry about the disappearance of their spell books. I can hear the Enchantress telling the Enchanter to follow us – she says that he will find us changed into two golden frogs, at the bottom of a spring. But I will make him forget her advice. He is travelling faster than us – turn round and see if you can see him.”

“I can see a greyhound
in the distance,
travelling like
lightning,”
said Arzur.
“He is



followed by the Enchanter on his dromedary.”

“Then let us return to the ground,” said Azénor.

As soon as they touched the earth, their horses were changed into a spring, their treasure into gold and silver stones and yellow and white leaves, and themselves into two little gold frogs.

A moment later the Enchanter arrived. He stopped in wonder before the beautiful spring, which he had never seen before, and dismounted to admire it.

“How beautiful!” he exclaimed. “I did not know I had such a wonder in my domains.”

Next he saw the golden frogs at the bottom of the water.

“Oh what pretty little frogs,” he cried “they look as if they were made from gold. I will take them home for my wife.”

He stepped into the water and tried to catch them, but they kept slipping through his fingers. At last he lost patience and decided to return home.

When his wife saw him coming back alone she cried out:

“What? Couldn’t you find them?”

“No, I did not see them,” said the Enchanter.

“That is your own fault; did you see anything unusual?”

“Oh yes indeed – I saw a fine gold and silver spring, and two little golden frogs.”

“Did you forget what I told you?” cried the Enchantress. “The frogs were Arzur and Azénor, and you were not to come back without them!”

“Goodness – I forgot everything you told me,” said the old Enchanter.

“Well, hurry after them. This time they will have turned their horses into two handsome trees; their gold and precious stones will be the leaves, and they will be two little birds, singing in the branches. Remember what I told you, and bring them back to me.”

This time the old Enchanter set off in the form of a cloud.

“I can hear the Enchantress scolding the Enchanter,” said Azénor to Arzur. “She is telling him what we will change ourselves into next, but I will make him forget her words. Look back, and tell me if you can see him.”

“I can see a great black cloud that is catching up with us,” said Arzur.

“Then let us return to the ground.”

The moment they touched the earth their horses became trees, their treasure gold and silver leaves, and they themselves became two little birds, singing sweetly in the branches.

The cloud arrived and the Enchanter said to himself: “These are the trees

my wife described to me.”

However, when he returned to earth he was so delighted by the birds’ song that he stood listening to them open-mouthed, and quite forgot his wife’s advice.

At sunset he returned home.

“What?” cried the Enchantress. “Why are you alone?”

“I did not see them,” said the Enchanter in confusion.

“Did you see anything unusual?”

“No – except for two trees, and two birds that sang so sweetly, I have never heard anything so delightful.”

“But that was them! I told you!” cried the Enchantress, “You are a poor enchanter! I shall go after them myself and I shall bring them back, even though they have almost left our dominions.”

With these words the Enchantress set off, in the form of a black cloud. It was sending forth forks of lightning, and thundered with a terrible sound. By this time, Azénor and Arzur were close to the edge of the Enchanter’s dominions.

“Now the Enchantress herself is after us, and she is very angry. Look back and tell me if you see anything,” said Azénor.

“I see a great black cloud coming towards us,” said Arzur. “It is sending forth lightning and thunder and making a terrible noise.”

“It is the Enchantress,” said Azénor. “Throw down the wisp that we brought from the stable.”

Arzur obeyed and immediately there sprang up thousands of haystacks. They were so large and so high that the cloud had to stop. However, the Enchantress turned herself into a sparrowhawk and flew over them; once she reached the other side she became a cloud again, and resumed the chase.

“Look back and tell me if you see anything, dear brother,” said Azénor.

“I see the great black cloud again, sending forth lightning and thunder.”

“It is the Enchantress – quick, throw down the brush.”

Arzur obeyed and a vast pool appeared behind them. The cloud stopped and began to suck up the water. Soon the pool had dried up, and the cloud continued on its way, but slower now, for it was full of water.

“Look back again and tell me what you see,” said Azénor.

“I see the same cloud coming towards us – it is blacker and angrier than ever,” said Arzur.

“It is the Enchantress again – throw down the curry-comb.”

Arzur obeyed and lo and behold, a great town rose up behind them. It was full of houses and tall towers, and these hindered the cloud's progress; however, it still continued to move forward with thunder and lightning and a terrible noise.

"Look back and tell me what you see," said Azénor.

"I still see the cloud coming towards us – it is very close: it is going to catch up with us!"

"Do not be afraid – we are almost at the border!"

At the same moment Arzur and Azénor crossed an inlet of the sea and came back down to earth. They had left the Enchanter's dominions and he had no more power over them. The Enchantress could not cross the water and stood gnashing her teeth and shaking her fist at them.

"May the thunder crush you!" she cried. "Worst of all, you have taken my little red book, in which are all my spells!"

"Yes, I have it here, and I have no more care for you," said Azénor, and she and her brother laughed at the Enchantress and showed her the little red book.

Then the old Enchantress once again assumed the form of a cloud and returned home, destroying everything that lay in her path.

Azénor and Arzur set off together, happy to be free at last. They entered a great forest and continued walking until nightfall. Then they made a bed of grass and dry leaves against the trunk of an old oak, and quickly fell asleep.

The next day Azénor awoke at daybreak. She tapped the ground with her wand and said:

"By the power of my wand, may a beautiful castle appear here immediately. Let it be furnished like the palace of the King himself, and let my brother and I each find ourselves in bed in a splendid bedchamber, decorated with gold and jewels."

When Arzur awoke he could not understand where he was. He saw Azénor lying in a bed beside his, and asked her what had happened.

"I have the Enchantress's wand and her little red book," said Azénor. "They have caused all this to appear, and so long as we have them, we can satisfy our every desire."

They arose and went down to the dining room. The table was laden with dishes and baskets of the choicest fruit, and they were served by invisible hands. Next they walked through the rooms of the castle, all of which were filled with jewels and treasure. The gardens were also very beautiful, and they passed through them, looking at the flowers and fruits.

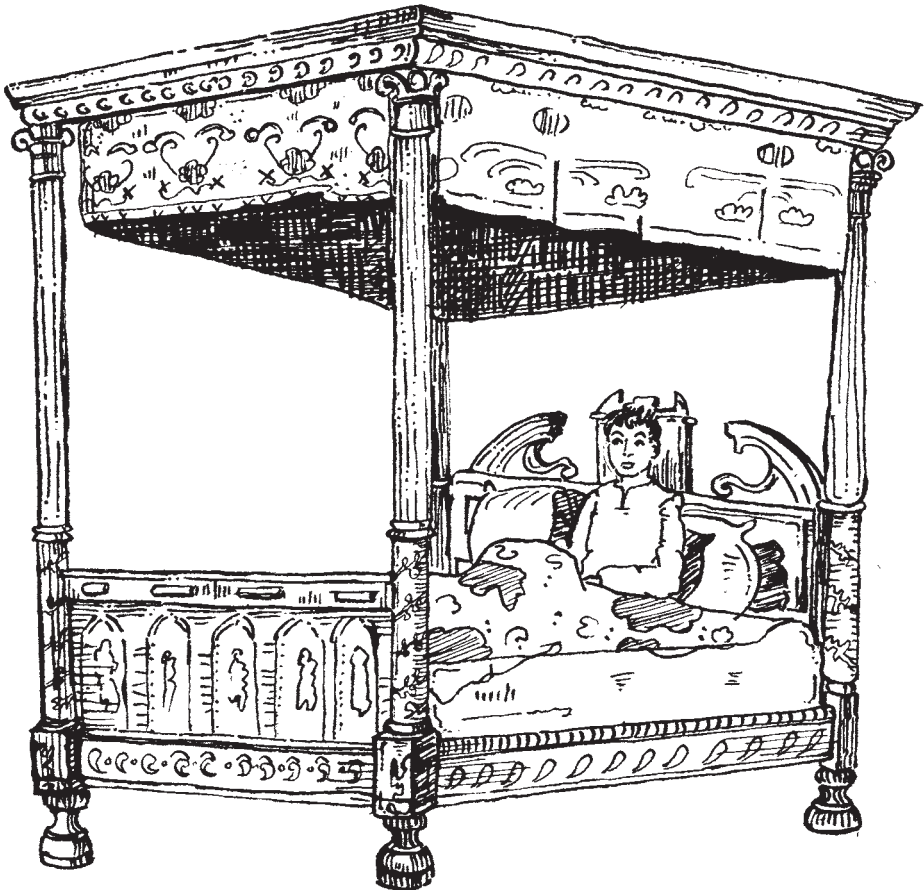
“There are many animals in these gardens,” said Azénor to Arzur, “and you may hunt them if you wish. However, you must never leave here, or else you will meet with misfortune.”

For some time the brother and sister lived happily in the beautiful castle. However, one day Arzur went beyond the garden walls. Immediately, the castle disappeared, and he sank down in a marsh up to his armpits.

Azénor heard his cries and came running to his aid. She pulled him out and the castle immediately reappeared, but from that day forth Arzur lost all memory of the Enchanter and of their flight from the Enchantress. He even forgot that Azénor was his sister, and asked her to marry him. She refused, but he would not give up, and she became very sad.

One day the King’s two sons were out hunting in the forest. They reached Azénor’s castle, and they were filled with surprise.

“What castle is this, and who has built it?” they said. “They certainly did not seek our father’s permission. Let us go in and find out.”



They entered the courtyard and were met by Azénor.

“To whom does this castle belong, gentle lady?” they asked.

“To me, noble sirs,” she replied.

“Who built it?” asked the Princes.

“I did,” said Azénor.

“And you did not ask our father’s permission – even though these are his lands?”

“No, I can do without it.”

“The King will be displeased, he will raze your castle to the ground,” said the Princes.

“I would like to see him try,” Azénor replied.

Angered by the young woman’s manner, the two princes left the courtyard. As soon as they stepped outside the castle they fell into the same ditch as Arzur, and stayed there, unable to climb out. The castle once more disappeared.

Azénor heard their cries and soon came running towards them.

“Pull us out of here!” they said.

“What! So you can go and tell your father to raze my castle?” said Azénor.

“No, you can keep your castle,” said the Princes.

“That is not enough. What else can you give me?”

“I will marry you,” said the elder prince.

“And what about my brother? Will you give him the hand of your sister?” asked Azénor.

“Yes, he shall marry our sister,” the Princes replied.

Azénor pulled them out of the ditch, and the castle reappeared. Then all four set off for the court of the King.

The King listened to all they told him, but before he would agree to anything he asked to see Azénor’s marvellous castle for himself. He visited it and was so struck with wonder that he gave his consent to the two marriages.

Invitations were sent far and wide, and preparations began for the celebrations.

On the first day, towards the end of the feast, Azénor pulled two little golden frogs from her pocket and set them before her on a silver platter. They began to speak to each other, and the guests listened in silent wonder.

“Do you remember, dear little brother, the Enchantress and the forest, and how I helped you to fell all the trees?” said the first frog.

“I remember it very well, dear little sister,” said the second frog.

“Do you remember, dear little brother, the bridge of feathers which the Enchantress told you to build and how once again I came to your aid?”

“I remember it well, dear little sister.”

“And do you remember how we escaped and the Enchanter pursued us on his dromedary, and how I changed our horses into a spring, and ourselves into two little golden frogs?”

“I remember that too, dear little sister.”

All the guests were listening closely to this conversation, and Arzur closest of all, for his memory was slowly returning to him, and he knew that his own story was being told.

“And do you remember, dear little brother, how I next changed our horses into trees and ourselves into two little birds, and how once again we



escaped the Enchanter?"

"I remember it very well, dear little sister," said the second frog.

"And you have not forgotten have you dear little brother, how the Enchantress pursued us in the form of a black cloud, and how I succeeded in baffling all her enchantments?"

"No, dear little sister, I have not forgotten."

Then Arzur knew that the bride was none other than his sister and protectress. He arose and tenderly embraced her.

"Forgive me, my dear little sister," he said. "I owe you my life and I love you, and will always love you until the day I die."

Everyone was touched by this reunion, and the next day there were fresh celebrations for the marriage of Arzur and the King's daughter. She was the fairest Princess under the eye of the sun, and the festivities, games and feasting lasted a whole month.

The great great great grandmother of the great great grandmother of my grandmother was a cook at the court, and this is how the memory of all I have told you remained in our family.

Told in 1872 by Françoise Simon, a serving-woman at Trégrom, Côtes d'Armor