

The Selfish Giant

I

Children in Giant's Garden

Children used to play in the Giant's garden every afternoon. They did so while coming from school. It was a large lovely garden. It had soft grass. There were fruit trees in it. They bore rich fruit. The birds sang sweetly. The children were happy to play in it.

The Return of the Giant

One day the Giant came back after seven years. He had stayed with his friend the Cornish Ogre. He saw the children playing in his garden. The children ran away as they saw him. He said that it was his own garden. He would not allow anyone to play there. He built a wall around it. He also put a notice-board. It had a warning on it "Trespassers will be prosecuted".

The Sad Children

The children had no other place to play. They used to wander round the high walls. They used to talk about the beautiful garden inside.

The Sadder Garden

The spring came. There were blossoms and little birds. But it was winter in the Giant's garden. The birds didn't sing as there were no children. Once a beautiful flower came out of the grass. But it saw the notice-board. It went back to sleep. In the Giant's garden there were the Snow and the Frost. Everything in it looked white. Then came the North Wind. It stayed with them. The Hail also came.

Fruit of Selfishness

The selfish Giant looked at the cold and white garden. The spring didn't come to his garden. There were golden fruit in the Autumn. But it didn't come to his garden. The Winter, the North Wind, the Hail, the Frost, the snow danced there.

Spring in the Garden

One morning the Giant heard some lovely music. It was very sweet. He thought that it must be the King's musicians. But it was a linnet. She was singing outside his window. The Giant found its song very sweet. Then the Hail stopped dancing. The North Wind stopped. The Giant felt that the spring had come.

II

The Most Wonderful Sight

The Giant saw the most lovely sight. The children had entered his garden through a little hole. They were sitting in the branches of the trees. The trees were very glad to have them. They had blossomed. The birds were flying about. They were chirping also. The flowers were also looking up. It was a lovely sight. But in one corner, there was still winter.

The Little Boy

In that corner a small boy was standing. He could not reach the branches of the trees. He was crying and wandering about. The North Wind blew and roared. The Tree asked the boy to climb. It bent its branches down. But the boy couldn't climb.

The Giant Repents

The Giant's heart melted at this scene. He said that he was really selfish. He also said that he now understood why the spring didn't come. He would put that little boy on the top of the tree. He would also pull down the wall. His garden shall be the children's playground forever. He was sorry for what he had done.

The Children and The Giant Play

When the children saw the Giant, they ran away. The garden became winter again. Only the little boy didn't run. He was weeping. He didn't see the Giant coming. The Giant put the boy up into the tree. The tree blossomed at once. The little boy kissed the Giant. The other children saw that the Giant was not wicked. They came running back. With them came the spring. The Giant told the children that it was their garden. He pulled down the wall. People saw the giant playing with the children during noon.

The Absent Child

Every afternoon the children came and played with the Giant. But the Giant wanted to see the little boy. The little boy did not come.

Most Beautiful Flowers

Years went over. The Giant grew very weak. He watched the children playing. He used to say that children were the most beautiful flowers.

The Return of the Little Boy

One winter morning the Giant suddenly rubbed his eyes. He saw a very beautiful scene. In one corner there stood a lovely tree with white blossoms. Its branches were golden. The little boy stood under it. The Giant saw that the little boy was

wounded. He had the print of two nails on his hands and feet. The Giant was very angry. He said that he would slay the man who had wounded him.

Paradise

But the boy told the Giant that those were the wounds of love. The Giant at once asked the boy who he was. A strange fear fell on the Giant. The boy smiled. He told the Giant to come with him to his garden. His garden was paradise.

The Giant Found Dead

The children found the Giant dead under tree. He was covered with white blossoms.