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CHAPTER 1

One fine day a Tailor was sitting on his bench by the window in very high spirits, sewing away most diligently, and presently up the street came a country woman, crying, "Good jams for sale! Good jams for sale!"

This cry sounded nice in the Tailor's ears, and, poking his diminutive head out of the window, he called, "Here, my good woman, just bring your jams in here!" The woman mounted the three steps up to the Tailor's house with her large basket, and began to open all the pots together before him. He looked at them all, held them up to the light, smelt them,

and at last said, "These jams seem to me to be very nice, so you may weigh me out two ounces, my good woman; I don't object even if you make it a quarter of a pound." The woman, who hoped to have met with a good customer, gave him all he wished, and went off grumbling, and in a very bad temper.

"Now!" exclaimed the Tailor, "Heaven will send me a blessing on this jam, and give me fresh strength and vigour." Taking the bread from the cupboard, he cut himself a slice the size of the whole loaf, and spread the jam upon it. "That will taste very nice," said he; "but, before I take a bite, I will just finish this waistcoat." So he put the bread on the table and stitched away, making larger and larger stitches every time for joy.

Meanwhile the smell of the jam rose to the ceiling, where many flies were sitting, and enticed them down, so that soon a great swarm of them had pitched on the bread. "Holloa! Who asked you?" exclaimed the Tailor, driving away the uninvited visitors; but the flies, not understanding his words, would not be driven off, and came back in greater numbers than before. This put the little man in a great passion, and, snatching up in his anger a bag of cloth, he brought it down with a merciless swoop upon them.

When he raised it again he counted as many as seven lying dead before him with outstretched legs.

"What a fellow you are!" said he to himself, astonished at his own bravery.

"The whole town must hear of this." In great haste he cut himself out a band, hemmed it, and then put on it in large letters, "SEVEN AT ONE BLOW!" "Ah," said he, "not one city alone, the whole world shall hear it!" and his heart danced with joy, like a puppy-dog's tail.

The little Tailor bound the belt around his body, and made ready to travel forth into the wide world, feeling the workshop too small for his great deeds. Before he set out, however, he looked about his house to see if there were anything he could carry with him, but he found only an old cheese, which he pocketed, and observing a bird which was caught in the bushes before the door, he captured it, and put that in his pocket also.

CHAPTER 2

Soon after, he set out boldly on his travels; and, as he was light and active, he felt no fatigue. His road led him up a hill, and when he arrived at the highest point of it he found a great Giant sitting there, who was gazing about him very composedly.

But the little Tailor went boldly up, and said, "Good day, friend; truly you sit there and see the whole world stretched below you. I also am on my way thither to seek my fortune. Are you willing to go with me?"

The Giant looked with scorn at the little Tailor, and said, "You rascal! You

wretched creature!"

"Perhaps so," replied the Tailor; "but here may be seen what sort of a man I am;" and, unbuttoning his coat, he showed the Giant his belt. The Giant read, "SEVEN AT ONE BLOW"; and supposing they were men whom the Tailor had killed, he felt some respect for him. Still he meant to try him first; so taking up a pebble, he squeezed it so hard that water dropped out of it. "Do as well as that," said he to the other, "if you have the strength."

"If it be nothing harder than that," said the Tailor, "that's child's play." And, diving into his pocket, he pulled out the cheese and squeezed it till the whey ran out of it, and said, "Now, I fancy that I

have done better than you.”

The Giant wondered what to say, and could not believe it of the little man; so, catching up another pebble, he flung it so high that it almost went out of sight, saying, “There, you pigmy, do that if you can.”

“Well done,” said the Tailor; “but your pebble will fall down again to the ground. I will throw one up which will not come down;” and, dipping into his pocket, he took out the bird and threw it into the air. The bird, glad to be free, flew straight up, and then far away, and did not come back. “How does that little performance please you, friend?” asked the Tailor.

“You can throw well,” replied the giant; “now truly we will see if you are able to carry something uncommon.” So saying, he took him to a large oak tree, which lay upon the ground, and said, “If you are strong enough, now help me to carry this tree out of the forest.”

“With pleasure,” replied the Tailor; “you may hold the trunk upon your shoulder, and I will lift the boughs and branches, they are the heaviest, and carry them.”

The Giant took the trunk upon his shoulder, but the Tailor sat down on one of the branches, and the Giant, who could not look round, was compelled to carry the whole tree and the Tailor also. He being behind, was very cheerful, and laughed at the trick, and presently

began to sing the song, "There rode three tailors out at the gate," as if the carrying of trees were a trifle. The Giant, after he had staggered a very short distance with his heavy load, could go no further, and called out, "Do you hear? I must drop the tree." The Tailor, jumping down, quickly embraced the tree with both arms, as if he had been carrying it, and said to the Giant, "Are you such a big fellow, and yet cannot you carry a tree by yourself?"

Then they travelled on further, and as they came to a cherry-tree, the Giant seized the top of the tree where the ripest cherries hung, and, bending it down, gave it to the Tailor to hold, telling him to eat. But the Tailor was far too weak to hold the tree down, and when the Giant

let go, the tree flew up in the air, and the Tailor was taken with it.

He came down on the other side, however, unhurt, and the Giant said, "What does that mean? Are you not strong enough to hold that twig?"

"My strength did not fail me," said the Tailor; "do you imagine that that was a hard task for one who has slain seven at one blow? I sprang over the tree simply because the hunters were shooting down here in the thicket. Jump after me if you can." The Giant made the attempt, but could not clear the tree, and stuck fast in the branches; so that in this affair, too, the Tailor had the advantage.

Then the Giant said, "Since you are such

a brave fellow, come with me to my house, and stop a night with me." The Tailor agreed, and followed him; and when they came to the cave, there sat by the fire two other Giants, each with a roast sheep in his hand, of which he was eating. The Tailor sat down thinking. "Ah, this is very much more like the world than is my workshop." And soon the Giant pointed out a bed where he could lie down and go to sleep.

The bed, however, was too large for him, so he crept out of it, and lay down in a corner. When midnight came, and the Giant fancied the Tailor would be in a sound sleep, he got up, and taking a heavy iron bar, beat the bed right through at one stroke, and believed he had thereby given the Tailor his death-blow.

At the dawn of day the Giants went out into the forest, quite forgetting the Tailor, when presently up he came, quite cheerful, and showed himself before them. The Giants were frightened, and, dreading he might kill them all, they ran away in a great hurry.

CHAPTER 3

The Tailor travelled on, always following his nose, and after he had journeyed some long distance, he came into the courtyard of a royal palace; and feeling very tired he laid himself down on the ground and went to sleep. Whilst he lay there the people came and viewed him on all sides, and read upon his belt, "Seven at one blow."

"Ah," they said, "what does this great warrior here in time of peace? This must be some valiant hero." So they went and told the King, knowing that, should war break out, here was a valuable and useful man, whom one ought not to part with at any price. The King took advice, and

sent one of his courtiers to the Tailor to beg for his fighting services, if he should be awake. The messenger stopped at the sleeper's side, and waited till he stretched out his limbs and unclosed his eyes, and then he mentioned to him his message. "Solely for that reason did I come here," was his answer; "I am quite willing to enter into the King's service." Then he was taken away with great honour, and a fine house was appointed him to dwell in.

The courtiers, however, became jealous of the Tailor, and wished him at the other end of the world. "What will happen?" said they to one another. "If we go to war with him, when he strikes out seven will fall at one stroke, and nothing will be left for us to do." In their anger they came to the determination to

resign, and they went all together to the King, and asked his permission, saying, "We are not prepared to keep company with a man who kills seven at one blow."

The King was sorry to lose all his devoted servants for the sake of one, and wished that he had never seen the Tailor, and would gladly have now been rid of him. He dared not, however dismiss him, because he feared the Tailor might kill him and all his subjects, and seat himself upon the throne. For a long time he deliberated, till finally he came to a decision; and, sending for the Tailor, he told him that, seeing he was so great a hero, he wished to beg a favour of him.

"In a certain forest in my kingdom," said the King, "there are two Giants, who, by

murder, rapine, fire, and robbery, have committed great damage, and no one approaches them without endangering his own life. If you overcome and slay both these Giants, I will give you my only daughter in marriage, and half of my kingdom for a dowry: a hundred knights shall accompany you, too, in order to render you assistance."

"Ah, that is something for a man like me," thought the Tailor to himself: "a lovely Princess and half a kingdom are not offered to one every day."

"Oh, yes," he replied, "I will soon settle these two Giants, and a hundred horsemen are not needed for that purpose; he who kills seven at one blow has no fear of two."

CHAPTER 4

Speaking thus, the little Tailor set out, followed by the hundred knights, to whom he said, immediately they came to the edge of the forest, "You must stay here; I prefer to meet these Giants alone."

Then he ran off into the forest, peering about him on all sides; and after a while he saw the two Giants sound asleep under a tree, snoring so loudly that the branches above them shook violently. The Tailor, bold as a lion, filled both his pockets with stones and climbed up the tree.

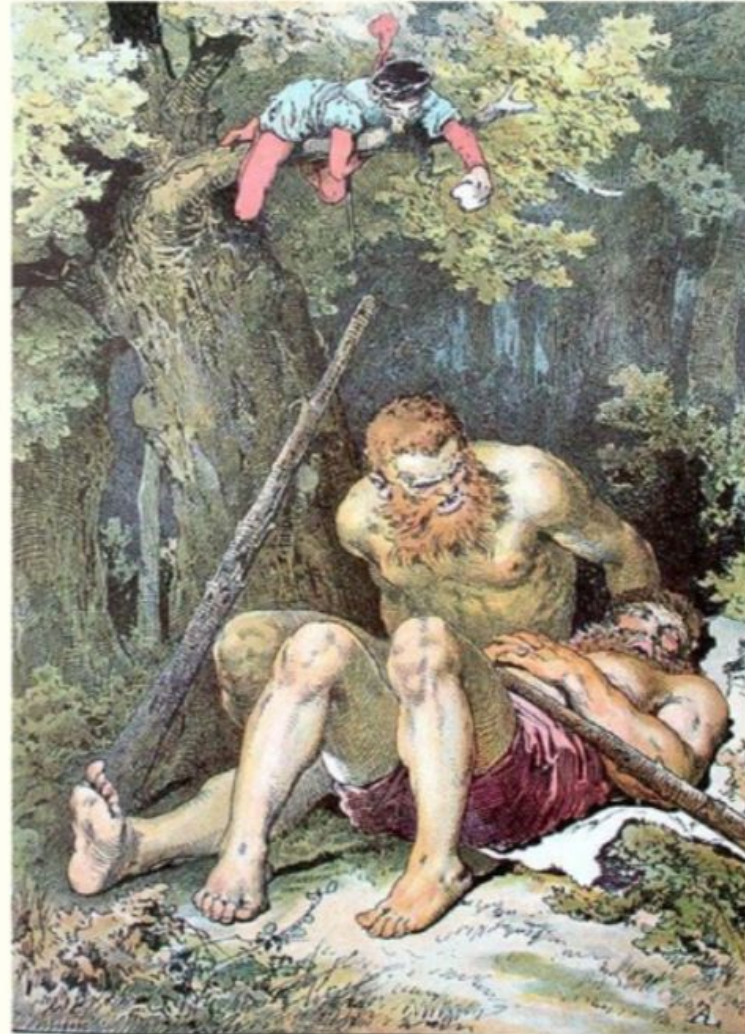
When he got to the middle of it he crawled along a bough, so that he sat just above the sleepers, and then he let fall one stone after another upon the body of one of them. For some time the Giant did not move, until, at last awaking, he pushed his companion, and said, "Why are you hitting me?"

"You have been dreaming," he answered; "I did not touch you." So they laid themselves down again to sleep, and presently the Tailor threw a stone down upon the other. "What is that?" he cried. "Why are you knocking me about?"

"I did not touch you; you are dreaming," said the first. So they argued for a few minutes; but, both being very weary

with the day's work, they soon went to sleep again. Then the Tailor began his fun again, and, picking out the largest stone, threw it with all his strength upon the chest of the first Giant. "This is too bad!" he exclaimed; and, jumping up like a madman, he fell upon his companion, who considered himself equally injured, and they set to in such good earnest, that they rooted up trees and beat one another about until they both fell dead upon the ground.

Then the Tailor jumped down, saying, "What a piece of luck they did not pull up the tree on which I sat, or else I must have jumped on another like a squirrel, for I am not used to flying." Then he drew his sword, and, cutting a deep wound in the breast of both, he went



to the horsemen and said, "The deed is done; I have given each his death-stroke; but it was a tough job, for in their defence they uprooted trees to protect themselves with; still, all that is of no use when such an one as I come, who slew seven at one stroke."

"And are you not wounded?" they asked.

"How can you ask me that? They have not injured a hair of my head," replied the little man. The knights could hardly believe him, till, riding into the forest, they found the Giants lying dead, and the uprooted trees around them.

CHAPTER 5

Then the Tailor demanded the promised reward of the King; but he repented of his promise, and began to think of some new plan to shake off the hero. "Before you receive my daughter and the half of my kingdom," said he to him, "you must execute another brave deed. In the forest there lives a unicorn that commits great damage, you must first catch him."

"I fear a unicorn less than I did two Giants! Seven at one blow is my motto," said the Tailor. So he carried with him a rope and an axe and went off to the forest, ordering those, who were told to

accompany him, to wait on the outskirts. He had not to hunt long, for soon the unicorn approached, and prepared to rush at him as if it would pierce him on the spot. "Steady! Steady!" he exclaimed, "that is not done so easily"; and, waiting till the animal was close upon him, he sprang nimbly behind a tree. The unicorn, rushing with all its force against the tree, stuck its horn so fast in the trunk that it could not pull it out again, and so it remained prisoner.

"Now I have got him," said the Tailor; and coming from behind the tree, he first bound the rope around its neck, and then cutting the horn out of the tree with his axe, he arranged everything, and, leading the unicorn, brought it before the King.

The King, however, would not yet deliver over the promised reward, and made a third demand, that, before the marriage, the Tailor should capture a wild boar which did much damage, and he should have the huntsmen to help him. "With pleasure," was the reply; "it is a mere nothing."

The huntsmen, however, he left behind, to their great joy, for this wild boar had already so often hunted them, that they saw no fun in now hunting it. As soon as the boar perceived the Tailor, it ran at him with gaping mouth and glistening teeth, and tried to throw him down on the ground, but our flying hero sprang into a little chapel which stood near, and out again at a window, on the other side, in a moment. The boar ran after

him, but he, skipping around, closed the door behind it, and there the furious beast was caught, for it was much too unwieldy and heavy to jump out of the window.

The Tailor now ordered the huntsmen up, that they might see his prisoner with their own eyes; but our hero presented himself before the King, who was obliged at last, whether he would or no, to keep his word, and surrender his daughter and the half of his kingdom.

If he had known that it was no warrior, but only a Tailor, who stood before him, it would have grieved him still more.

CHAPTER 6

So the wedding was celebrated with great magnificence, though with little rejoicing, and out of a Tailor there was made a King.

A short time afterwards the young Queen heard her husband talking in his sleep, saying, "Boy, make me a coat, and then stitch up these trousers, or I will lay the yard-measure over your shoulders!" Then she understood of what condition her husband was, and complained in the morning to her father, and begged he would free her from her husband, who was nothing more than a tailor. The King comforted her by saying, "This

night leave your chamber-door open: my servants shall stand outside, and when he is asleep they shall come in, bind him, and carry him away to a ship, which shall take him out into the wide world.”

The wife was pleased with the proposal; but the King’s armour-bearer, who had overheard all, went to the young King and revealed the whole plot. “I will soon put an end to this affair,” said the valiant little Tailor. In the evening at their usual time they went to bed, and when his wife thought he slept she got up, opened the door, and laid herself down again.

The Tailor, however, only pretended to be asleep, and began to call out in a

loud voice, “Boy, make me a coat, and then stitch up these trousers, or I will lay the yard-measure about your shoulders. Seven have I slain with one blow, two Giants have I killed, a unicorn have I led captive, and a wild boar have I caught, and shall I be afraid of those who stand outside my room?”

When the men heard these words spoken by the Tailor, a great fear came over them, and they ran away as if wild huntsmen were following them; neither afterwards dared any man venture to oppose him. Thus the Tailor became a King, and so he lived for the rest of his life.


THE END
