ZELINDA AND THE MONSTER

OR BEAUTY AND THE BEAST
The Story of Zelinda and the Monster
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THE STORY OF
ZELINDA AND THE MONSTER
OR
BEAUTY AND THE BEAST
RE-TOLD
AFTER THE OLD ITALIAN VERSION AND DONE
INTO PICTURES
BY
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COUNTESS OF LOVELACE

J.M. Dent & Co x Aldine House
London
MDCCCXCV
TO THE BELOVED MEMORY

OF

LADY MARIAN ALFORD

WHO FIRST OPENED TO ME THE GARDEN AND TREASURE-HOUSE OF ITALY

I DEDICATE THIS BOOK
Preface

It is to be hoped that, to the majority of my readers, the history of Zelinda and her Monster will count as incontestably belonging to the region of sober fact, and that they will never ask, nor care to know, when, how and where it was first told. But to those children of riper years into whose hands this little book may chance to fall, I feel I owe a few words of explanation.

The story of Beauty and the Beast is
almost solely known to English readers in the form given to it by certain French authoresses of the eighteenth century. In this version the Beast always appears as four-footed, with a snout, and hoofs—an altogether impossible figure to present pictorially as courting a human damsel. For this reason, doubtless, this lovely old romance has been almost entirely neglected by artists. For me it always had a great attraction, and I have still by me some childish drawings in which the Beast—horns, hoofs, and all—is pleading his suit with the tears running down his snout. I cannot remember what chance first directed me to Italian folk-lore as the probable source of the French story, but my joy was great when I discovered
that, according to this, the Beast was not originally a quadruped. In one form of the story he is a “Moro,” viz., a black man; in another he is quite vaguely described as a Monster “hideous and terrible as the devil himself.” In another, best of all, he is a “salvatico,” satyr, half a man and half a goat. It was also satisfactory to learn that “Beauty” had really a proper name, and that her enchanted lover was King of the Oranges.

I will not pretend that this little narrative is word for word a reproduction of any one of these versions. I found that the story had existed in many countries, and had been told a hundred times, so I have ventured to tell it for
the hundred and first, taking all those incidents which seemed to me most fitted for illustration. I have endeavoured to depart as little as possible from the legend that is traditional in our nursery series, and in this I had no difficulty, as the main facts of the Italian narrators are identical with those of Mesdames de Villeneuve and de Beaumont and their translators.

I must acknowledge my obligations to Miss R. H. Busk (Folk-lore of Rome), to Mr T. F. Crane (Italian popular Tales,) and to Signors Nerucci and G. Pitré.

M. C. LOVELACE.

CHELSEA, 1895.
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The Story of Zelinda and the Monster

Once upon a time there dwelt in a great city, very far from here, a rich Merchant who had three daughters. They were all beautiful, but the loveliest of all was Zelinda, the youngest; so that the people called her Beauty, or Zelinda the Fair. And her two elder sisters were vain and haughty, and they hated Zelinda, and could not endure to hear the people call her Beauty. And in vain she strove, by the modesty and gentleness of her demeanour, to appease their wrath. But her father saw how sweet and good she was, and loved her better than either of her sisters.
And one day the Merchant returned home and said to his daughters, “Children, know ye what has happened? Half of my ships that were at sea have been lost in a great storm, and the other half have been taken by pirates with all that was in them.” And they were very much cast down. And that same night the Merchant’s house caught fire and was burnt to the ground with all that it contained, and his warehouses also perished and the merchandise that was in them. And the next day he called his daughters together and said to them, “Children, I have lost all that I had in this place and upon the seas, and now nothing remains to me but a little house and a few fields up on the mountain-side, and thither must we go.” And the two elder sisters filled the air with lamentations, and bitterly reproached their father for his ill-fortune. But Zelinda sought only how she could best console and hearten him.
So they all left the city and travelled through a great forest till they reached the mountain, and half-way up its side they found the little house, and there they dwelt. And the Merchant worked all day in the fields like a peasant, and Zelinda tended the house, and cooked, and was the servant of all. But the two elder sisters sate idly lamenting. And instead of thanking Zelinda for her service to them, they scorned her and said to each other, "See, now, this is what she is really fit for, to be our servant." But her father loved her more than ever.

And after many weeks, one day there came a messenger from the city to seek the Merchant, and when he had heard the message, the Merchant went in hastily to his daughters, and said, "Children, know ye what has happened? One of my ships that was thought to be lost in a storm, has after all come safely into port." Then they all, and especially the two
elder sisters, rejoiced greatly, for they were convinced that their former prosperity was now returned to them, and they urged their father to lose no time in hastening to the city in order to prepare for their return thither. And the eldest sister said, "I must have fitting raiment in which to return to the city. Bring me, I pray thee, a silk gown of the colour of the air." And the second sister said, "Bring me, I pray thee, a silk gown of the colour of a peach." But Zelinda said nothing, and her father turned to her and said, "Zelinda, wilt not thou also ask me for a gift?" And Zelinda said, "Dear father, bring me a rose."

So the Merchant set out and went as quickly as he could to the city. And there in truth was his ship safe in the harbour. But when he examined the cargo he found that the greater part of it had been spoilt by sea-water, because the ship had been long buffeted about in a great storm. And for what was left of
and the Monster

the merchandise he could not get any great price. But as soon as he had the money he went and sought all over the city for a silk gown of the colour of the air; and at last he found it and bought it. And then he sought for a silk gown of the colour of a peach, and he found that also and bought it. And then he said, "I must have an ass to carry these things," so he went and bought one. And when he had done all this, his money was all gone and he had no more wherewith to pay his lodging. So he said, "There is no time to seek a rose for Zelinda, for I must return at once to the mountains."

And he set out from the city with his ass. And when he came to the great forest his heart was heavy because the ship had brought him so little wealth, and he had now spent all, and was no richer than before. And being full of sad thoughts he let the ass go where it would, and presently he found that he was not in the
right way, and knew not where he was. And he wandered about for a long time, hither and thither among the trees, till he and the ass were both very weary. At last he came to a path, and at the end of it he saw a most beautiful castle, surrounded by a grove of large orange trees all covered with flowers and fruit. So he followed the path and passed under the orange trees till he came to the foot of the marble steps which led up to the door of the castle. And he knocked at the door, but no one came to answer, and he listened and could hear no sounds within. And he looked in and he saw a splendid hall, and in it were many statues standing on pedestals against the wall, some of marble, some of gold, and some of bronze, but no living man or woman could he see. And he feared to go in, so he sought all round the castle if he could find but a single servant, and there was no one. So he led his ass into
the empty stable, where was food and water prepared, and then he took courage and entered the castle. And he went through the great hall and into one room after another, and all were sumptuously furnished and prepared as though for the entertainment of a great company; but there was no living thing in them, only the statues on their pedestals against the walls. And presently he smelt the smell of roast meat, and, going towards it, he found a table spread with all manner of dainty dishes. And, being very hungry, he sate down and ate, and so soon as he had had his fill of any dish it vanished, and a new one came in its stead. After this he again wandered through the palace till he came to a bedchamber, and the bedstead was of ivory and the hangings were embroidered with gold. And, being very weary, he lay down and slept.

When he awoke in the morning the sun
was shining, and he saw that the palace was surrounded by a most fair garden. And he went out, and when he saw all the flowers and especially the roses, he rejoiced and said, "Now I can carry a gift to Zelinda." And he plucked a rose. Then straightway there was a great clap of thunder, and there appeared a Monster who was half a goat and half a man, and black and terrible as the Devil himself, with a drawn sword in his hand.

And he said, "Ungrateful man, thou hast been hospitably entertained in my house, and now would'st thou steal my roses? Thou shalt surely die!"

And the wretched Merchant fell down with fear, and besought piteously for his life, saying, "I did but gather one rose according to my promise to my daughter, who is so sweet and fair." And the Monster said, "If thou hast spoken truth, no harm shall befall thee. Go home now and fetch this beautiful
daughter of thine and bring her hither. And see that thou doest my bidding within three days, or destruction shall fall upon thee and upon thy house.”

And the Monster vanished. The Merchant now arose trembling, and went and loosed his ass and journeyed home most sorrowfully. And he gave to his two elder daughters the precious dresses that he had bought for them, and then he gave Zelinda the rose, saying, “Be content with it, for it has cost more than the gifts of both thy sisters.” And Zelinda asked, “What meanest thou, dear father?” And at first he would say nothing, but when all his daughters entreated him, he related all that had happened; and how the Monster had bid him go and bring back one of his daughters. And when he said this, he hoped that one of his elder daughters would consent to go to the Monster, in the place of Zelinda. But they both fell upon Zelinda with bitter
reproaches, saying, "All this is thy fault, and thou must pay the penalty." And Zelinda said, "Indeed I am quite willing." And she kissed and comforted her father, and bade him be of good courage.

So on the third day the Merchant set forth with Zelinda, and led her through the forest to the enchanted palace. And at the top of the marble steps there stood the Monster, and he came down to meet them. And he bade the Merchant to go home and leave Zelinda. And the Merchant dared not disobey, so he went home in great sadness, not knowing if he should see his dear daughter evermore.

And now the Monster took Zelinda by the hand and led her into the hall, and he made a sign with his hand to the statues that stood against the wall, and they all moved and came down from their pedestals. And he said to Zelinda, "These be thy slaves, and all that thou seest is thine." And the statues led
Zelinda to a door, over which was written, "To the most Beautiful," and inside there were many rooms filled with treasures of all kinds. And they brought Zelinda all manner of rich raiment and jewels and flowers as many as she would. And some of them took her to the bath, and taking away her work-a-day clothes, they dressed her in silk of the colour of the morning cloud, and covered her with precious stones like a princess.

And when evening came a table was set upon the terrace laden with all sorts of dainties, and the Monster came and supped with Zelinda. And after they had eaten and talked together a good while, he said,

"Zelinda, canst thou love me?"

And she was overcome with fear, and answered,

"No, I cannot."

And the Monster said no more, but he went away sorrowful.
PART II.

And now for many days and weeks Zelinda lived in the enchanted palace, and the statues attended upon her, and she had all that the heart can desire, and wandered at will in the beautiful garden. And every evening the Monster came to sup with her. And always when they had finished he said, "Zelinda, canst thou love me?" and she always answered, "No, I cannot," and then he went away sorrowful. For though she had lost her fear of him, yet she said to herself, "He is a Monster, and not fit for the love of woman."

And after a long while Zelinda began to weary for the sight of her father and sisters, and many times she entreated the Monster, saying, "Let me return to them, if only for one day." And at last the Monster said,
and the Monster

“Thou shalt go and abide with them eight days, but thou must promise to return to me on the ninth day, and if thou breakest thy promise then I shall die.” And Zelinda promised that she would return faithfully on the ninth day.

So the Monster gave her a litter, and servants to attend upon her. And when she bade him farewell he put a ring upon her finger, and he said, “Every morning and evening thou must look into the stone of this ring. If it be clear then all is well, but if it be cloudy the meaning is that I am sick, and if it turns black the meaning is that I am dead.” And Zelinda promised that she would look into the stone of the ring every morning and every evening. And she set forth in the litter, and journeyed through the forest till she came to the foot of the mountain. And there she alighted and bade the servants wait for her, and she began to climb the mountain-path on
foot. And her father saw her a long way off and ran to meet her and embraced her with tears of joy. And when she had come to her sisters and they saw how richly she was dressed, and heard her tell of the splendour in which she lived at the enchanted palace, they were filled with envy, and said to each other, "Why should she have so much while we have nothing?" And the elder said to the younger, "If she does not return after eight days then the Monster will die, and she will lose all. Let us persuade her to linger." So they began to feign great love and affection for Zelinda, and said to her, "O, dear sister, stay with us now for evermore. Do not go back to the horrible Monster with goat's legs." But Zelinda answered, "Nay, I must go back to him. He has been very good to me, and, moreover, I have promised."

And for the first three days Zelinda looked at her ring every morning and evening, and
and the Monster

saw that the stone was clear. And her sisters asked her why she did this, and she told them. And the younger said to her elder, "So long as she has the ring she will not forget the Monster." So they agreed together that they would steal the ring; and while Zelinda slept they took it from her finger and hid it. And when Zelinda awoke, she was in great distress and sought everywhere for her ring, but she could not find it. And the days passed one by one, until it was the eighth day. And the sisters asked Zelinda again if she meant to return to the Monster. And she said, "Assuredly I shall return to him to-morrow, according to my promise." And the elder sister said to the younger, "Let us put her into a heavy sleep so that the ninth day may pass without her knowing it, and then the Monster will die." So they mixed a sleeping potion, and that night they brought it to Zelinda, telling her it was a cordial, and she
drank it and fell at once into a very deep sleep. The next morning she did not wake at all, but slept all day long, and after the sun was down until past midnight, and just before the dawn upon the tenth day she had a dream. And in her dream she saw the fountain that was in the garden of the enchanted palace and the Monster lying beside it at full length, and he seemed to be dying. And he raised himself up and stretched out his arms, crying,

"O faithless Zelinda, thou hast forsaken me, and I must die."

And now at last Zelinda awoke and she ran to her sisters' chamber and said to them, "O, for pity's sake, if you know where my ring is, give me it back that I may see how it fares with my poor Monster." And because the ninth day was now past they gave her back the ring. And when Zelinda looked into the stone, alas! it was very cloudy and almost
and the Monster

black. So now Zelinda was in sore distress, for she knew that her dream must be true, and she dressed herself hastily, and ran down the hillside till she came to the place where she had left the servants and the litter, and bade them take her with all speed back to the enchanted palace. And when she got there the Monster was nowhere to be seen. All was silent and empty, and the statues stood once more stock-still against the wall.

And Zelinda ran out into the garden and down to the place where the fountain was, and there she found the Monster lying stiff and cold as one dead. And she knelt by him, weeping sorely, and raising his head in her arms she kissed him, crying, “O live once more that I may love thee truly.”

And there was a great thunder-clap, and the Monster began to stir and move his limbs, and in a moment he sprang up, flinging his cloak from him, and lo! his goat’s legs were gone and
he was no longer black, but a most fair and beautiful youth. Zelinda stood utterly amazed, but he knelt and clasped her with his arms, saying,

"O fairest one, by thy sweet kiss hast thou done this. For years have I lain under a most foul spell, and only by the love of a pure maiden could I be delivered. I am in truth no monster, but the King of the Oranges, and thou art my Queen."

And they spent some time in loving and happy conversation until the evening. And as the sun went down he led her home. And lo, at the door of the house there was the King of Love himself with outspread wings, who laid a wreath upon Zelinda's head, "O fair one," said he, "have now thy reward for the tender pity that moved thy heart to love. Now are ye two made one, and the greatest happiness in the world shall be yours for evermore."

And so they were married.