

Notice: All texts in this document are the work of Kathryn I. W. Sparks and may be used only with explicit permission from and credit to the author. No fees are charged for such use except as required by law or the regulations of third-party agreements.

Fantasies, Fables & Fairytales

Garden Fairy

A tiny lady wreathed in blooms Who tiptoes through the leafy rooms
Of lawn and garden, flits along As though on double wings of song;
Like hummingbirds, she sips the cup Of nectar as she hovers up
Above the blossoms, skirts the trees In loops as pretty as you please,
And then at last, as evenings fall, Finds out the softest bloom of all
And curls up in the petals' silk To dream among her fairy ilk.

Why the Sailors Went Overboard

One day a delicious deceit
Came over the men of the fleet
That some mermaids swam near
And enticed them to hear
Songs of something I dare not repeat

Wave Goodbye to that Meal

Dorinda Beecher went ashore
For dinner, but will go no more
As she discovered on the sand
Food she rejected out of hand
And rather wants to share a dish
At home with all the other fish

The Return of Dorinda Beecher

Restless sailors far from shore seek in the stars, and furthermore,
In deepest seas, hoping to sight some change to break the endless night,
The ceaseless day, the infinite long year's dull drone, for what's in it
To charm the man who's been abroad and has forgot his native sod,
Who knows no home and has no friend, just sailing, sailing to the end
Of Earth, the seven seas, the Known? Yet one such sailor, one alone,
Found in the foamy waves that dream the others sought, caught in a beam
Of phosphorescent, moonlit flash: the slightest bubbling roll and splash
Betrayed the presence of a maid; he started, would have leapt to aid
Her but that she was smiling wide, dolphin and otter at her side
Bearing her up in playful bounding swoops. He did not make a sound,

But smiled back, struck by her grace; and when she saw this on his face,
She beckoned gently, drew him on. Another splash! The sailor'd gone
And dived into the depths to meet this mystery, so grand, so sweet.
Could he? Would she? He fell in love, quite literally, from above
Her water empire, and he went full willingly, no accident
Of fate or fearsome, deathly wish: he'd rather fade among the fish
Than risk to lose this chance he'd seen to meet and mate his mermaid queen.
Once in the water, swift he sank, quite full of joy, and glad to thank
His lucky stars; he saw her swim in swiftest darts to rescue him;
She laid a soft hand on his brow—he thought it felt quite different now—
And gazed on him, and in her eyes, he saw reflected, with surprise,
That he'd become an otter, too. Yet not affronted with this view,
He thought their states a pleasant match; his mermaid queen was quite a catch.
Off, then, they swam, mermaid and men, her willing slaves not seen again.

Iris

When goddess Iris flits her wing
Wild hues encompass everything
To light what had been dull and void
And make all spirits overjoyed

Diana

Walking abroad in dawn's bright light,
She bears the jewels of the night
To feed with wisdom and with grace,
With wild, sweet beauty, still apace,
The earthbound Lady's angel soul
Embraces all to make them whole.

Law of Unforeseen Consequences

[An homage to Hansel & Gretel]

Late, when the children want to play, When chores are a burden at end of day,
Why, what harm can come of it, anyway?
Who would begrudge their choice, this chance To lay down the work and pick up
a dance? Who would look on this sweet play askance?
What if their Schottische, when lightning flashed, Upset the pitcher and milk was
splashed? Ah, suddenly, their mother's lashed
At them with her anger in surprise At such wild waste of the poor folk's prize, And
tears are smarting in all their eyes!
The rich folk scarcely would give a fig At spilling milk over one swift jig, But their
consequence never did loom so big.
No innocent children ever guess That a tiny slip and a modest mess Will afford
their mother such deep distress,
Nor mother foresee that her sorrowed scold Will send, heavy-hearted, into the cold

Her little ones, lost to the family fold.
And how could their father know what would fall
If they failed to answer his panicked call
And foraged instead far from safety's wall?
Too distant from hearth and garden run,
Could the children know that their crimeless fun
Would lead to endangering anyone?
So off to the forest's gloom, replete
With wild strawberries, so good to eat,
They skip unconcerned, when a wilder sweet
Appears before their young, hungry eyes
In the most appealingly false disguise
Of a gingerbread palace, whose luring lies
Present irresistibly tempting charms
To lead them directly into the arms
Of the wicked witch whose most horrid harm's
The deceptive sweetness her cottage seems
To hold in its sugary halls of dreams—
What covers in icing the children's screams!
*(How could these tender young cherubs guess
That under the sparkling prettiness
Was a ravening monster intent to fress
On their flesh and bones in a gory mess!)*
But the most nefarious in the tale
Was also most ignorant that such frail
And tender tidbits might possibly fail
To end up feeding her heart's desire,
Instead being fueled by fear and ire
To shove her into her own oven's fire!
The story is old, that in unformed youth
We may lack the wisdom to see in truth,
That apparent delights may be foul, forsooth—
But we still hold on to our foolish ways
Of dreaming and hoping in wishful haze
And never considering that this daze
Can blind us to sanity—in its mire,
Can lead to such unexpected, dire Results—
unintentionally, Desire Makes us leap from the frying pan into the fire.

Icarus, My Cousin

A bird, aloft on updrafts in the sun
Above the path, could see one tiny soul,
Alone as if in death, yet singly, whole,
Complete and full contented as that One—
For on that path, and in that blessed place,
He knew such deep delight, such peace and calm
From drawing in each breath of nature's balm
With that sweet sun so gentle on his face—
It seemed that like the bird, he too could fly,
Could rise above the green enchanted wood,
Need only think it and, behold, he could
Leap up at will, suspended in the sky—
Yet, knowing he could not thus really do,
He suddenly wept, bitter now with rue—
So turns the heart of merely mortal man,
Full in one moment of outlandish joy;
The next, despairing like a little boy,

Because the joy's imperfect, as it can
Be seen by clearer eyes to truly be;
So rose that wanderer up to the crest,
Where soon the path was free of trees, and best,
Clear-viewed down from the cliff there to the sea—
He bound upon his shoulders feathered wings,
Sleek as the bird's, to take by force his flight
And steal the sky, but its great burning light,
The blazing sun, had no use for such things,
And cast him, melted, in the ocean swell,
Gravity's slave, thrown back from heav'n to hell.

Seeking Persephone

Under earth, Persephone
cries out and wills that help should come,
but silent Death with stony clay
fills up her mouth to strike her dumb,
and while the icy silence reigns
and pressing, weights her underground,
only a whispered hope remains,
the faint insistence of the sound
an icicle makes as it melts,
and drop by plangent drop is found
power enough to break the freeze
and wake the sleeping, mordant earth,
wash cold Persephone's shut eyes
awake, to tantalize rebirth
in pomegranate seed, in soil,
in root and heart held in suspense,
'til all rise up and re-commence
their dance and bloom and so uncoil
the bonds that bounded her in death,
revive Persephone with breath,
'til spring with brilliance flowers the earth.

The Cuddlesome Kraken

You think that I'm all hands, my love,
Controlling, holding tightly so?
Don't wriggle, struggle, push and shove;
This is the only way I know!
I love you, darling, s'truth I do,
So let's just cut right to the chase—
Let me wrap all my arms 'round you—
Embrace, embrace, embrace, embrace!

Arachne

Lissome lady, spinning, weaves ★ her silken gossamer form leaves
To light, to air, to rain; to tell ★ the finite hours' fatal knell
And tighten web's glissading strand; ★ to lock the lych-gate; bind the grand,
Still mausoleum—shuttered, cool— ★ and trim with lace the lambent pool
Where lilies bend to weep their last ★ upon the spinner's shadow, cast
In moonlight equally with day, ★ as mortal hours sift away.

Plucking her harp, a tremor sends ★ among the network that she tends—
A note, a grace, a pardon kiss— ★ Arachne's song begins like this:
No end, but rather, knitting new ★ beginnings threaded, sparked with dew
And spun from chilly marble lips ★ to alabaster fingertips,
Connecting loves that once lay dead ★ with her reanimating thread.

So strung, and tuned, and breathed, and then, ★ both end life and begin again;
Her lifeline filaments are drawn ★ between the midnight and the dawn
To lure those rays of morning light ★ that blush with life the Dead of night.