The Mare's Head

Once there were a grandfather and grandmother, and they had two daughters: one the grandfather's, and the other the grandmother's. The grandfather's daughter was such that she always got up early and did everything, while the grandmother's one as if did nothing! So once the grandmother sent them to spin: "Go now," she says, "and spin me a lot." The grandfather's daughter got up before dawn and spun everything, while the grandmother's only spun a little in the evening and then didn't spin anymore.

In the morning, when it became light, they went home; they had to climb through a gap in the fence in one place. The grandmother's daughter climbed over first and says: "Give me, sister, your skeins of yarn; I'll hold them while you climb over." And she gave them to her; so she, taking them, ran home and says: "Look, mama, how much I spun, and my sister, as she lay down in the evening, so she didn't get up until dawn!" And she, when she came, no matter how she swore that those were her skeins of yarn, but no — the grandmother didn't want to listen, because she didn't love her even before, and she pestered the grandfather: "Wherever you want, put your daughter there, only so that she doesn't eat my bread for nothing!"

So the grandfather harnessed the mare and put his daughter on the cart, and sat down himself, and they drove off. They drive through the forest, and there stands a hut on chicken legs. The grandfather took his daughter and led her into the hut, and the hut was open, and he says: "Stay here, daughter, while I go chop some firewood, so there's something to cook porridge with." And he himself went out of the hut and drove off, only he tied a little log to the window latch.

The little log knocks, and the daughter says, "That's my father chopping firewood!" When there's knocking, rumbling, a horse's head: "Who's in my hut, open up!" The girl got up and opened. "Girl, girl! Move me over the threshold." She moved her. "Girl, girl! Make my bed." She made it. "Girl, girl! Lay me on the floor." She laid her. "Girl, girl! Cover me." She covered her. "Girl, girl! Climb into my right ear, and climb out of the left."

When she climbed out of the ears, she became so beautiful that there's no one more beautiful. Immediately there appeared servants, and horses, and a carriage; she got into the carriage and drove to her father. She comes into the hut, and her father doesn't recognize her; and afterwards she told them what happened to her. So the grandmother again pestered the grandfather: "Take my daughter there too, where you took yours."

The grandfather took the grandmother's daughter there too and, having seated her in the hut, told her to wait for him while he chops firewood. But she waited a little, began to cry that she was left alone in the forest: and again there's knocking, rumbling, a horse's head: "Who's in my hut, open up!" — "I'm no great lady, open it yourself," says the girl. "Girl, girl! Move me over the threshold." — "I'm no great lady, climb over yourself." — "Girl, girl! Make my bed." — "I'm no great lady, make it yourself." — "Girl, girl! Lay me on the floor." — "I'm no great lady, lie down yourself." — "Girl, girl! Cover me." — "I'm no great lady, cover yourself."

Then the horse's head grabbed and ate the grandmother's daughter, and put the bones in a little sack and hung it up, and herself went away again. A little dog ran to the grandmother and began to bark: "Bow-wow, bow-wow! The grandfather's daughter is like a lady, and the grandmother's daughter's bones are in a bag!" However much the grandmother chased her away, she would run back again. Only the grandmother says to the grandfather: "Go and see what's happening with my daughter." So the grandfather went and brought back the bones in a little sack, and the grandmother got angry and killed the little dog.