Truth and Falsehood — Variant 3

There were two brothers; one rich, the other poor. The rich one gave a feast, invited guests, and invited his brother too. The brother arrived first of all; after him the guests began to gather. When there were many of them, the host began pushing his brother lower and lower; he says to him: "Go on, brother, lower down!" The brother moved and moved and got pushed right to the door: there was no more room! And the guests kept arriving... At last the rich man said to the poor one: "Go to the devil, make room for the others!"

The poor brother went out into the street and ran to the river. A miller was walking along the bank; the poor man asked him: "Tell me, where does the devil live?" He answered: "There, go on — jump into the deep hole." So the poor man jumped in there and found himself in a hut — in that hut there was no one. He hid there so he would not be seen, and sat there quietly and still. Soon little devils gathered in the hut; they gathered and began boasting to one another. One, a lame one, says: "I dug under the mill — there's no way to strengthen it!" And the others answered him: "How can it not be strengthened? The miller will strengthen it!" — "With what?" — "He'll pile on blackthorn and briar; that's how the matter will be settled!" The peasant listened to their talk...

When the devils ran out of the hut and the peasant was left alone, he at once leaped out of there, surfaced from under the water and found himself on top. The miller was still walking along the bank, not knowing how to strengthen the mill. The poor man said: "Reward me, I will strengthen your mill." — "Take whatever you like; I'll give you a whole cartload of money, only strengthen it, please!" — "Drag in blackthorn and briar, that's how you'll do it!" The miller at once drove in piles, heaped on blackthorn, threw on briar, leveled it over with earth on top — and strengthened the mill, and poured a whole cartload of money for the peasant.

The poor man carted the money home; he needed to carry it into the storeroom, but had nothing to carry it in. So he sent his son to the rich brother and told him to ask for a bushel basket. The rich man asks: "What do you want the basket for?" — "To carry money from the cart to the storeroom." — "What money? Are you laughing at me? You've never had any money!" — and he did not give the basket. The boy came back empty-handed and told his father: "Uncle didn't give the basket, says: what do you want it for!" The father sent the son a second time: "Go again, and ask properly." The boy went to his uncle again. "Give me," he says, "the basket; I need to carry money." The rich man was amazed, did not believe it: "Go away, I'll bring it myself!" He brought the basket to the poor brother, saw a full

cart of money and began to ask: "Tell me, brother, where did you get the money! Look, you've got whole heaps of it piled up!" — "Do you remember how you sent me to the devil? Well, I went to the devil and got wealth."

The rich man was stung with envy and went to look for the devil. He ran to the river, and the miller was walking along the bank rejoicing that he had strengthened his mill. The rich man asked him: "Where does the devil live?" — "There, go on into the deep hole!" He rushed in and found himself in the hut. The little devils began gathering in the hut again and talked among themselves: "So the miller did strengthen the mill with blackthorn and briar; now it can't be broken!" The lame little devil began to say: "Hey, brothers, isn't someone eavesdropping on our talk?" They started searching everywhere and found the rich brother in the corner: "Ah! So it's you carrying our words?" They seized him, crushed him and threw him into the deep pool.