

Blister, Straw, and Coal

At grandma's, at the old woman's, lay a Little Bottle in the storeroom. Once the old woman opened her storeroom—and out popped the Little Bottle. Out it popped and began to boast: "There is no fellow equal to me, Little Bottle; there is no one for me, a hero, to match strength with. I shall go to distant foreign lands, to the city of Jerusalem, to wage war against the Saracens." The Little Bottle gathered brave companions for itself, Little Coal and Little Straw, and off they went into unknown lands: across the threshold—into the entryway, from the entryway—onto the porch. And beside that porch the young fellows saw a wide lake: a whole bucket of water a girl had spilled.

Says Hero Little Bottle: "Stretch yourself across the lake from shore to shore, Little Straw: we shall cross over you." Little Straw stretched across. Little Coal—he is hot—jumped ahead first. Right in the middle of the lake, Little Coal's head grew cloudy with fear; he stopped... Then Little Straw cried out: "Oh dear heavens, it's hot! Oh my kin, I'm burning! Little Coal is scorching me!..." It burned through and then splash! together with Little Coal into the water. And Little Bottle laughed and laughed, chuckling, fell off the porch and smashed against a stone.

Had this misfortune not occurred—the Saracens would never have seen the city of Jerusalem!