

office into that of the director. he was glad he had come into the office so early and was able to be of service immediately, nobody could seriously have expected that of him. the deputy directors office was, of course, still as empty as the middle of the night, the servitor had probably been asked to summon him too but without success. as entered the reception room two men stood up from the deep armchairs where they had been sitting. the director gave him a friendly smile, he was clearly very glad that was there, he immediately introduced him to the italian who shook k.s hand vigorously and joked that somebody was an early riser. did not quite understand whom he had in mind, it was moreover an odd expression to use and it took a little while to guess its meaning. he replied with a few bland phrases which the italian received once more with a laugh, passing his hand nervously and repeatedly over his blue grey, bushy moustache. this moustache was obviously perfumed, it was almost tempting to come close to it and sniff. when they had all sat down and begun a light preliminary conversation, was disconcerted to notice that he understood no more than fragments of what the italian said. when he spoke very calmly he understood almost everything, but that was very infrequent, mostly the words gushed from his mouth and he seemed to be enjoying himself so much his head shook. when he was talking in this way his speech was usually wrapped up in some kind of dialect which seemed to to have nothing to do with italian but which the director not only understood but also spoke, although ought all the other doors in the street. e the king puts a prohibitive price on meat, thinking that only the thief will be able to buy; but the thief steals a joint. however many the changes and additions of this sort kings move followed by thieves move rung in, almost all of the stories dealing with the robbery of the kings treasury end with the pardon of the thief and his exaltation to high rank in the royal household. in none of the score of versions of the rhapsinitus story cited by clouston is the thief subjected to any further tests of his prowess after he has been pardoned by the king. we shall return to this point. the master thief cycle has much less to do with our stories than has the rhapsinitus cycle: hence we shall merely enumerate the incidents to be found in it. for bibliography of stories containing these situations, see cosquin. a hero, the youngest of three brothers, becomes a thief. for various reasons the motives are different in grimm, and dasent xxxv he displays his skill: b theft of the purse conducted as a droll: the young apprentice thief, noodle like, brings back purse to robber gang after throwing away the money. b theft of cattle being driven to the fair. this trick is usually conducted in one of four ways: a two shoes in road; b hanging self; c bawling in the wood like a strayed ox; d exciting peasants curiosity, comedy of comedies, wonder of wonders. b theft of the horse. this is usually accomplished by the disguised thief making the grooms drunk. b stealing of a live person and carrying him in a sack to the one who gave the order. the thief disguises himself as an angel, and promises to shortly. now then, what about stores i propose that two of us decide what money will be necessary, and then go over to mainton with two mule carts and spend it on such things as we shall want. that will take a week, including the obtaining a sufficiency of ammunition. which means plenty, gentlemen, for we might be regularly besieged in our wagon, and have to beat the injuns off. i dont anticipate that, replied the doctor calmly, while the boys felt their nerves tingle; but we will be prepared. then we shall come back i mean those who undertake the task will come back, and that will be all that is necessary to be done, save having one or two good discussions as to the route we shall take. then well start upon our wild quest. wild indeed, im afraid, said bourne. nay not it, cried griggs. were got plenty of time. and plenty of room, said wilton, laughing. to be sure we have, continued griggs. lookye here, ive been thinking this little bit of a job over, and it seems to me as plain as a b c. indeed said the doctor, smiling. how do you make that out this way. were got the map of the part where it is. certainly, and all were got to find out is whereabouts that part lies. of course: and there lies the difficulty. difficulty, doctor not it. now, just look here. were got, say, three states where its likely to be. say, at a guess, colorado, arizona, and new mexico. oh yes, and california, texas, and you can join on old mexico. nay, nay; the three i said will do for a beginning. if neither of them turns out right well begin on one of the