

The Tale of the Seven Ravens



1 Once upon a time, there lived a man and a woman who had seven sons.
The couple wanted a daughter very much, and finally, they had a girl. She
was very pretty, and her parents loved her very much. One day, the father
needed water for the child. So he sent the seven brothers to a well in the
5 forest to get it. Once there, though, the boys began to fight and the wa-
ter jug fell into the well...

The **youths** looked into the well and thought of their father. They were
afraid to go home. Hours passed. “Where are those boys?” shouted the
father angrily. “They are probably playing a game and have forgotten
10 about the water. I wish they were all turned into ravens!” And when he
looked up, he saw seven black birds flying away. The father was **shocked**.
“What have I done?” he thought. But it was too late. He could not take
back his words.

In time, the girl grew up and discovered she had brothers. The story of
15 their misfortune¹ **affected** her **deeply**, and she decided to find them.
For years she searched and did not stop. She was **determined** to find
her brothers. Finally, she found their home. To enter, she needed a
special key made from a chicken bone, which she did not have. The
girl thought for a moment, and then took a knife and cut off² one of her
20 fingers. With it, she opened the front door and went inside. On a table,
there were seven plates and seven cups. She ate and drank a little from
each. In the last cup, she **accidentally** dropped a ring that her parents
had given her.

Eventually, the ravens returned for their meal. The girl **hid** behind the
25 door and watched. When the seventh raven drank from his cup,
something hit his mouth. The raven **recognized** it **immediately**—it was
his parents’ ring. “I wish our sister were here,” he said, “and then we
could be free.” At that moment, their sister ran to them and **suddenly**
the ravens were human again. The brothers kissed their sister and all
30 eight of them went home together happily.

“...and when
he looked up,
he saw seven
black birds
flying away.”

¹ **Misfortune** is bad luck.

² If you **cut** something **off**, or **cut off** something, you remove it with a knife or a similar tool.