

## The Star Dipper

Near the deep dark woods, there stood a little house, but it was big enough for a little girl and her mother.

One summer night the little girl's mother did not feel well. She tossed about on her bed and could not go to sleep.

"I am so thirsty," she said. "I wish I had a drink of cold water."

The little girl was very kind. "I will get to you a drink, mother," she said. She jumped out of bed and slipped on her dress and shoes. She took an old tin dipper and ran out to the well in the yard. She pulled up the bucket, but not a drop of water was in it. The well was dry.

"What should I do?" Said the kind little girl. "It is so warm and mother is so thirsty. She must have a drink of nice cold water. I will go to the spring. There will surely be some water there." Now the spring was a long way off in the woods and it was a very dark night. "I must try hard not to be afraid," said the kind little girl.

She ran down the dark road and took the path into the woods. It was still darker there and she could not see the path. Soon she had lost her way.

The sharp little stones cut through her thin shoes. She tumbled over the big stones. The branches of the trees caught her dress and tore it. But she did not turn back.

"Oh! Where is the spring?" cried the little girl. "I must find it. Mother is so very thirsty."

At last she heard a little trickling sound. She knew that she had found the spring. She knelt down and filled the old tin dipper. Then she started back home carrying it very carefully.

Soon she met a little dog. He was panting and his pink tongue was hanging out of his mouth.

"Little dog," she said aloud. "I will give you a drink of this cold water. I have filled the dipper for my mother, but there is enough for you too."

She poured some of the water into her hand and the little dog lapped it up eagerly. How good it tasted! He gave two sharp little barks to say thank you.

Then the little girl noticed that it had grown lighter. The light seemed to come from her hand. She looked down and saw that the old tin dipper had turned to silver. It was bright and shining like the silver moon.

Now the little girl could see her way plainly. She could walk much faster with the help of the silvery light from the dipper.

After a while she met an old man.

"Little girl," he asked, "can you tell me where I can get a drink of cold water? The brooks are all dry and I cannot find a spring. I am very thirsty and tired."

"I will give you a drink," said the kind little girl. And she gave him some of the cold water from her silver dipper.

"Thank you, kind little girl," said the old man. "Now I can go on my way."

And he said goodbye to the kind little girl.

As soon as he was out of sight, she saw it had grown even lighter than before. She looked down and saw that the silver dipper had turned to gold. It was very bright indeed and shown like the golden sun.

The kind little girl could see even better than before, so that it was not long before she reached home.

"I have brought you a drink of cold water from the spring," said the good little girl and she handed the golden dipper to her mother. How good the clear, cold water tasted! She drank and drank until there was not a drop left in the golden dipper.

"Thank you for going to the spring, my dear," said the mother. "Now I feel much better. I shall be able to get up in the morning and do my work."

Then the little girl and her mother noticed strange, bright lights flashing on the walls of the little house. They looked down at the golden dipper. Something very wonderful had happened.

The golden dipper had changed to sparkling diamonds.

Out of the window went the diamonds and up, up into the sky. The kind little girl and her mother stood in the doorway watching. In the sky the diamonds turned to seven, bright, twinkling stars. They made a dipper high in the sky.

The kind little girl and her mother lived many years ago, but if you look up into the sky some bright, starry night, you will see the dipper still there.

When you see it, think about the kind little girl, who was brave enough to go into the dark woods alone.