



Silvercap, King of the Frost

Fairies

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Easy
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Silvercap lived far up among the white, fleecy clouds of north. All his life he had played with his brothers and sisters in the kingdom of his father, King Winter. But now he was grown, and he looked with disdain upon childish sports, and he longed for something great to do. So he was very happy, one day, to have a message from his father commanding him to come at once to the council chamber of the palace to discuss plans for a trip to Earthland.

Silvercap did not waste a minute, but rushed into the palace, where he found his father sitting upon a beautiful crystal throne, with all his servants about him. As soon as Silvercap had taken his place, the king rose and said:

“I have called you together, my dear subjects, because my son, West Wind, has just returned from a flying trip to the Earth. He says that Prince Autumn is staying longer than usual this year, so we must hasten to send him off.

“North Wind, you must start at once. Attack the trees, and scatter the leaves far and wide, for some of Autumn’s fairies are still at work painting them. Hurry to the gardens and the fields; snip off the heads of the goldenrod and aster. You understand your work—see that you do it well!

“Prince Snow, fill your bags with flakes from the mountains. Have them ready to-night, so that you may fly down early in the morning and scatter the crystals before the sun peeps out.”

When King Winter had given orders to Prince West Wind, Prince Ice, and all the rest, he turned to Silvercap.

“My son,” he said, “you are to be King of the Frost Fairies. They have been idle long enough. Just what they can do I leave to you; make your own plans, but never forget that you are a prince, and the son of King Winter.”

Silvercap made a low bow to King Winter and left the council chamber. All the rest of the day, he thought. All night he thought, but in the morning he called the Frost Fairies together and said: “My father has made me your king. West Wind has just returned telling of the wonders he has wrought. He has pulled the painted leaves from the trees, he has killed the flowers, and driven the birds away. I am sure he has made the little Earth-children unhappy. Let us gather the feathery leaves from our trees and our dainty crystal blossoms. Let us fill our chariots with building materials. Perhaps we may be able to make the children happy again.”

The Frost Fairies set up a shout for Silvercap. All day they worked filling their chariots, and when it came twilight they started out for Earthland. They flew to the trees and decked every bough with leaves of lace. They covered every plant in the garden, even the weeds and grasses, with their wonderful feathery blossoms.

“I don’t believe their own twigs and blossoms could look more beautiful,” said Silvercap, as the last twig was finished.

“Now for the castles,” said the Frost Fairies.

“Let us build them on the windows of the rooms where the children are sleeping,” said Silvercap.

So into the rooms, through chinks and crevices, the tiny fairies crept. Silently they began to build, not only grand castles, but high hills covered with silvery trees and rushing waterfalls, fields filled with rare ferns and flowers, and flocks of birds flying everywhere.

Just as the sun began to show in the eastern sky the last chariot was emptied. “Into your chariots!” shouted Silvercap. “We must be gone!”

And away flew the Frost Fairies just as the little Earth-children woke up, crying:

“O, the beautiful trees! O, the wonderful silver castles! O, the kind, loving Frost Fairies!”

And King Winter was so pleased with their work that he made Silvercap King of Frostland. Every winter since, he and his fairies come and work night after night to make the world beautiful for the little Earth-children.

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