



## NANNY WHO WOULDN'T GO HOME TO SUPPER

THERE was once upon a time a woman who had a son and a goat. The son was called Espen and the goat they called Nanny. But they were not good friends, and did not get on together, for the goat was perverse and wayward, as goats will be, and she would never go home at the right time for her supper. So it happened one evening that Espen went out to fetch her home, and when he had been looking for her

a while he saw Nanny high, high up on a crag :

“My dear Nanny, you must not stay any longer up there ; you must come home now, it is just supper time. I am so hungry and want my supper.”

"No, I shan't," said Nanny, "not before I have finished the grass on this tussock, and that tussock—and this and that tussock."

"Then I'll go and tell mother," said the lad.

"That you may, and then I shall be left to eat in peace," said Nanny.

So Espen went and told his mother.

"Go to the fox and ask him to bite Nanny," said his mother.

The lad went to the fox. "My dear fox, bite Nanny, for Nanny won't come home in time. I am so hungry, and I want my supper," said Espen.

"No, I don't want to spoil my snout on pig's bristles and goat's beard," said the fox.

So the lad went and told his mother.

"Well, go to the wolf," said his mother.

The lad went to the wolf: "My dear wolf, tear the fox, for the fox won't bite Nanny, and Nanny won't come home in time. I am so hungry, and I want my supper."

"No," said the wolf, "I won't wear out my paws and teeth on a skinny fox."

So the lad went and told his mother.

"Well, go to the bear and ask him to slay the wolf," said the mother.

The lad went to the bear. "My dear bear, slay the wolf, for the wolf won't tear the fox, and the fox won't bite Nanny, and Nanny won't come home in time. I am so hungry and want my supper."

"No, that I won't," said the bear; "I don't want to wear out my claws for that."

So the lad went and told his mother.

"Well, go to the Finn and ask him to shoot the bear."

The lad went to the Finn. "My dear Finn, shoot the bear, for the bear won't slay the wolf, the wolf won't tear the fox, the fox won't bite Nanny, and Nanny won't come home in time. I am so hungry and want my supper."

"No, I will not," said the Finn; "I am not going to shoot away my bullets for that."

So the lad went and told his mother.

"Well go to the fir," said his mother, "and ask it to crush the Finn."

The lad went to the fir-tree: "My dear fir, crush the Finn, for the Finn won't shoot the bear, the bear won't slay the wolf, the wolf won't tear the fox, the fox won't bite Nanny, and Nanny won't come home in time. I am so hungry and want my supper."

"No, I will not," said the fir, "I am not going to break my boughs for that."

So the lad went and told his mother.

"Well, go to the fire," said his mother, "and ask it to burn the fir."

The lad went to the fire: "My dear fire, burn the fir, for the fir won't crush the Finn, the Finn won't shoot the bear, the bear won't slay the wolf, the wolf won't tear the fox, the fox won't bite Nanny, and Nanny won't come home in time. I am so hungry and want my supper."

"No, I will not," said the fire, "I am not going to burn myself out for that."

So the lad went and told his mother.

"Well, go to the water, and ask it to quench the fire," she said.

The lad went to the water. "My dear water, quench the fire, for the fire won't burn the fir, the fir won't crush the Finn, the Finn won't shoot the bear, the bear won't slay the wolf, the wolf won't tear the fox, the fox won't bite Nanny, and Nanny won't come home in time. I am so hungry and want my supper."

"No, I will not," said the water, "I am not going to waste myself for that."

So the lad went and told his mother.

"Well, go to the ox," said she, "and ask him to drink up the water."

The lad went to the ox: "My dear ox, drink up the water, for the water won't quench the fire, the fire won't burn the fir, the fir won't crush the Finn, the Finn won't shoot the bear, the bear won't slay the wolf, the wolf won't tear the fox, the fox won't bite Nanny, and Nanny won't come home in time. I am so hungry and want my supper."

"No, I will not," said the ox. "I'm not going to burst myself for that."

So the lad went and told his mother.

"Well, go to the yoke," said she, "and ask it to throttle the ox."

The lad went to the yoke. "My dear yoke, throttle the ox, for the ox won't drink the water, the water won't quench the fire, the fire won't burn the fir, the fir won't crush the Finn, the Finn won't shoot the bear, the bear won't slay the wolf, the wolf won't tear the fox, the fox won't bite Nanny, and Nanny won't come home in time. I am so hungry and want my supper."

"No, I will not," said the yoke. "I'm not going to break myself in two for that."

So the lad went and told his mother.

"Well, go to the axe," said she, "and tell it to split the yoke."

The lad went to the axe. "My dear axe, split the yoke, for the yoke won't throttle the ox, the ox won't drink the water, the water won't quench the fire, the fire won't burn the fir, the fir won't crush the Finn, the Finn won't shoot the bear, the bear won't slay the wolf, the wolf won't tear the fox, the fox won't bite Nanny, and Nanny won't come home in time. I am so hungry and want my supper."

"No, I will not," said the axe. "I am not going to blunt my edge for that."

So the lad went and told his mother.

"Well, go to the smith," said she, "and ask him to hammer the axe."

The lad went to the smith. "My dear smith! hammer the

axe, for the axe won't split the yoke, the yoke won't throttle the ox, the ox won't drink the water, the water won't quench the fire, the fire won't burn the fir, the fir won't crush the Finn, the Finn won't shoot the bear, the bear won't slay the wolf, the wolf won't tear the fox, the fox won't bite Nanny, and Nanny won't come home in time. I am so hungry and want my supper."

"No, I will not," said the smith. "I'll not burn my coals and wear out my sledge-hammers for that."

So the lad went and told his mother.

"Well, go to the rope," said she, "and ask it to hang the smith."

The lad went to the rope. "My dear rope, hang the smith, for the smith won't hammer the axe, the axe won't split the yoke, the yoke won't throttle the ox, the ox won't drink the water, the water won't quench the fire, the fire won't burn the fir, the fir won't crush the Finn, the Finn won't shoot the bear, the bear won't slay the wolf, the wolf won't tear the fox, the fox won't bite Nanny, and Nanny won't come home in time. I am so hungry and want my supper."

"No, I will not," said the rope. "I'm not going to break in two for that."

So the lad went and told his mother.

"Well, go to the mouse," said she, "and ask her to gnaw the rope."

The lad went to the mouse. "My dear mouse, gnaw the rope, for the rope won't hang the smith, the smith won't hammer the axe, the axe won't split the yoke, the yoke won't throttle the ox, the ox won't drink the water, the water won't quench the fire, the fire won't burn the fir, the fir won't crush the Finn, the Finn won't shoot the bear, the bear won't slay the wolf, the wolf won't tear the fox, the fox won't bite Nanny, and Nanny won't come home in time. I am so hungry and want my supper."

"No, I will not," said the mouse. "I'm not going to wear out my teeth for that."

So the lad went and told his mother.

"Well, go to the cat," said she, "and ask her to catch the mouse."

The lad went to the cat. "My dear cat, catch the mouse, for the mouse won't gnaw the rope, the rope won't hang the smith, the smith won't hammer the axe, the axe won't split the yoke, the



yoke won't throttle the ox, the ox won't drink the water, the water won't quench the fire, the fire won't burn the fir, the fir won't crush the Finn, the Finn won't shoot the bear, the bear won't slay the wolf, the wolf won't tear the fox, the fox won't bite Nanny, and Nanny won't come home in time. I am so hungry and want my supper."

“Yes, but give me a drop of milk for my kittens, and then——” said the cat.

Yes, that she should have. So the cat caught the mouse, and the mouse gnawed the rope, and the rope hanged the smith, and the smith hammered the axe, and the axe split the yoke, and the yoke throttled the ox, and the ox drank the water, and the water quenched the fire, and the fire burned the fir, and the fir crushed the Finn, and the Finn shot the bear, and the bear slew the wolf, and the wolf tore the fox, and the fox bit Nanny, and Nanny took to her heels, scampered home, and ran against the barn wall and broke one of her legs.

“M—a—h—a—h!” bleated the goat. There she lay, and if she isn't dead she is still limping about on three legs. But Espen said it served her right, because she would not come home in time for supper that day.