



## The golden hair beauty

### Description

Once upon a time, there was a king's daughter who was so beautiful that there was no one more beautiful in the world; for this reason she was called the Golden-Haired Beauty: for her hair was finer than gold, wonderfully blond, curly, and fell to her feet.

She always went covered with her curly hair, with a crown of flowers on her head and clothes embroidered with diamonds and pearls; one could not see her without loving her.

There was a young king of her neighbors who was not married, and who was beautiful and rich.

When he heard all about the golden-haired beauty, even though he had never seen her, he became so fond of her that he lost his hunger and thirst, and decided to send an ambassador to ask her to marry him. He had a magnificent carriage made for his ambassador; he gave him more than a hundred horses and a hundred lackeys, and the ambassador left to find the princess.

When he had taken leave of the king and was gone, all the court spoke of nothing else; and the king, who did not doubt that the Golden-haired Beauty accepted his request, had already made her beautiful dresses and pretty furniture.

In the meantime, the ambassador arrived at the Golden-haired Beauty's house, and gave her his message; but, either she was not in a good mood that day, or the compliment did not seem to her to be to her liking, she answered to the ambassador that she thanked the king, but that she did not want to get married.



The ambassador went back, very sad not to bring her with him; he brought back all the presents he had brought her from the king: for she was very wise, and knew well that one must not accept any gift if one wants to remain free. She kept only a quarter of a pin from England.

When the ambassador arrived in the king's great city, where he was so eagerly awaited, everyone was distressed that he did not bring the Golden-Haired Beauty, and the king began to cry like a child: he was comforted but could not be helped.

There was a young boy at court who was as handsome as the sun, and the best made in the whole kingdom: because of his good grace and his spirit, he was called Avenant. Everyone loved him, except the envious ones, who were jealous that the king liked him and entrusted him with his affairs.

Avenant heard about the return of the ambassador, and that he had not been successful in his journey; so he said, with an innocent air: "If the king had sent me to fetch the Golden-Haired Beauty, I am sure she would have come with me." Immediately the slanderers went to tell the king: "Sire, do you know what Avenant says? That if you had sent him to fetch the Golden-Haired Beauty, he would have brought her back. Consider well his malice, he pretends to be more beautiful than you, and that she would have loved him so much, that she would have followed him everywhere."

Here was the king getting angry, so angry that he was beside himself.

Ha! ha!" he said, "this pretty one makes fun of my misfortune, and he thinks himself more beautiful than me; let's go, let them put him in my big tower, and let him die of hunger there! The king's guards went to Avenant, who no longer thought about what he had said; they dragged him to prison and mistreated

him. This poor boy had only a little straw to lie on, and he would have died if it weren't for a little fountain that flowed in the foot of the tower, from which he drank a little to refresh himself: for hunger had dried up his mouth.

One day, when he could not take it anymore, he said with a sigh: "What is the king complaining about? He has no one more loyal to him than I. I have never offended him. The king, by chance, was passing near the tower: and, when he heard the voice of him whom he had loved so much, he stopped to listen to him, in spite of those who were with him, who hated Avenant and who said to the king: "What are you amusing yourself with, sire? do you not know that he is a rascal?" The king answered, "Leave me here, I want to listen to him." Having heard his complaints, tears came to his eyes; he opened the door of the tower and called him.

Avenant came and knelt before him in sorrow, and kissed his feet: "What have I done to you, Sire," he said, "to treat me so harshly?

– You made fun of me and of my ambassador," said the king. You said that, if I had sent you to the Belle aux Cheveux d'Or, you would have brought her well.

– It is true, sire," replied Avenant, "that I would have praised your great qualities so well that I am convinced she would not have been able to resist; but I do not understand why this angered you."  
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The king found that indeed there was no harm in this; he looked sideways at those who had spoken ill of his favorite, and he took him with him, repenting well for the trouble he had caused him.

After having made him supper wonderfully, he called him in his cabinet, and said to him: "Advent, I always love the Golden-haired Beauty, her refusals did not put me off; but I do not know how to make her want to marry me: I ask you to go there to see if you can convince her. Avenant replied that he was disposed to obey her in all things, that he would leave the next day.

Good!" said the king, "I'll give you a large crew.

– That is not necessary," replied Avenant; "I only need a good horse and a letter from you.

The king embraced him, for he was delighted to see him ready.

The next morning he took leave of the king and his friends, and went away alone, without pomp and without noise. He was thinking about how to convince the Golden-Haired Beauty to marry the king. He had a notebook in his pocket, and when he had a good idea, he would get off his horse and sit under a tree to write it down, so as not to forget anything.



Il prit congé du roi et de ses amis. (Page 134.)

One morning when he was out at dawn, passing through a large meadow, a very good idea came to him; he put his foot down, and stood against a willow tree near a small river that flowed at the edge of a meadow. After he had written, he looked around, delighted to be in such a beautiful place. On the grass he saw a big golden carp yawning and dying, because it had tried to catch some small gnats and had jumped out of the water.

Avenant took pity on it, and although he could have taken it with him for dinner, he decided to put it gently back into the river. As soon as the carp felt the coolness of the water, it rejoiced, and let itself sink to the bottom; then returning all happy to the edge of the river, it began to speak:

"Avenant," she said, "I thank you for saving my life; I will repay you." And having said this, she sank into the water; and Avenant remained quite surprised at the spirit and great civility of the carp.

Another day, as he continued his journey, he saw a crow in trouble: this poor bird was being pursued by a large eagle (a great eater of crows): this one was close to catching it, and it would have swallowed it as if in a mouthful, if Avenant had not had pity on the unfortunate bird. "How sad," he said, "that the



stronger always oppress the weaker: what reason has the eagle for eating the crow?"

He took his bow, which he always carried on his back, as well as an arrow; then, aiming well at the eagle, croc! he shot the arrow into its body and pierced it through and through; The eagle fell dead, and the raven, delighted, came to perch on a tree nearby. The eagle fell dead, and the raven, delighted, came to perch on a nearby tree. "Avenant," he said, "you are very generous to have helped me, I who am only a miserable raven; but I will not remain ungrateful, I will repay you."

Avenant admired the good spirit of the raven and continued on his way. As he entered a large wood, so early that he could hardly see, he heard an owl crying out in despair. "Oulà!" he said, "here is a very distressed owl; he might have been caught in some trap." He looked around, and at last he found one of those great nets that birders used to spread at night to catch the chicks. "What a pity!" he said; "men are only made to make war on each other, or to persecute poor animals that do them neither harm nor damage."

He drew his knife and cut the cords. The owl took flight; but, flying back, he said to him, "Avenant," he said, "it is not necessary for me to give you a long harangue to make you understand how much I owe you: the hunters were going to come, I was caught, I was dead without your help; I have a grateful heart, I will repay you."

These were the three most notable adventures that befell Avenant during his journey. He finally arrived at the palace of the Golden-Haired Beauty. Everything there was admirable; diamonds were piled up like stones; the beautiful clothes, the candy, the money; they had nothing but wonderful things; and he thought to himself that, if she left all this to come to the king his master, he would have to be very lucky. He took a brocade suit, red and white feathers; he combed, powdered and washed his face; he put a rich embroidered scarf around his neck, with a small basket, and in it a beautiful little dog, which he had bought while passing through Bologna. Avenant was so well made, so amiable, he did everything with so much grace, that when he presented himself at the door of the palace, all the guards made a great reverence to him; and one ran to tell the Belle au Cheveux d'Or that Avenant, ambassador of the king her neighbor, asked to see her.

On this name of Avenant, the princess said: "With such a name, I would bet that he is pretty and that he pleases everyone."

– We saw him from the attic where we were preparing your yarn, and as long as he remained under the windows we stood there with our mouths wide open without being able to do anything else but admire him.

– That's beautiful," laughed the Golden-haired Beauty, "to amuse yourself by looking at the boys! Let them give me my big blue satin dress with embroidery, and let them scatter my blond hair well; let them make me garlands of new flowers; let them give me my heeled shoes and my fan; let them sweep my room and my throne: for I want it to be said everywhere that I am really the Belle with Golden Hair."

Here were all her women rushing to adorn her like a queen; they were in such a hurry that they were crowding each other and hardly making any progress.

At last the princess passed into her gallery of great mirrors, to see if there was anything missing; then she climbed onto her throne of gold, ivory and ebony, which smelled like a balm, and she ordered her

daughters to take instruments and sing softly.

Avenant was led into the audience room: he was so overcome with admiration that he could hardly speak; nevertheless he took courage and transmitted his message with dignity, praising the merits of his king.

"Kind Avenant, she said to him, all the reasons which you have just told me are very good, and I assure you that I would be well at ease to favour you more than another. But it is necessary that you know that a month ago, while I was walking near the river with all my ladies, while removing my glove to drink, I drew from my finger a ring which fell by misfortune in the river: I cherished it more than my kingdom. I leave you to judge what my sadness was. I have since sworn not to accept any proposal of marriage, unless the ambassador who proposes a husband to me brings back my ring.

Avenant was very surprised by this answer; he made a deep bow to her and asked her to receive the little dog, the basket and the scarf; but she answered that she did not want any present, and that he should think about what she had just told him.

When he returned home, he went to bed without supper; and his little dog, whose name was Cabriole, did not want to eat either: he came to stay with him. As long as the night was long, Avenant never stopped sighing. "Where can I take a ring that has fallen in a big river for a month? he said: it is impossible. The princess said that because she wants to be sure not to get married.

He sighed and became very sad. Cabriole, who was listening to him, said: "My dear master, I beg you, do not despair of your good fortune: you are too kind not to be happy. Let us go, as soon as it is light, to the river bank."

Avenant gave him two little caresses and answered nothing; but, all overwhelmed with sadness, he fell asleep.

Cabriole, seeing the day, capered so much that he woke him up, and said to him: "My master, dress yourself, and let's go out." Avenant got up, dressed, and went down into the garden, to the river bank, where he walked with his hat over his eyes and his arms crossed over each other, thinking only of his departure, when all of a sudden he heard him called, "Avenant! Avenant!" He looked around and saw no one; he thought he was dreaming. He continued his walk, but they called him again: "Avenant! Avenant!"

– Who is calling me?" he said.

Cabriole, who was very small, and who looked towards the water, answered him: "You will not believe me, if I say to you that it is a golden carp which speaks."

Immediately the big carp approached him, and said: "You saved my life in the meadow of the Aliziers, where I would have remained to desiccate myself without you; I promised you to reward you. Here, dear Avenant. Here is the ring of the Belle aux Cheveux d'Or."

Avant bent down and took the ring from the mouth of his friend the carp, whom he thanked a thousand times.

Instead of returning to his room, he went straight to the palace with the little Cabriole, who was very

happy to have brought his master to the water's edge. One went to say to the princess that he asked to see her. "Alas!

she said, the poor boy, he has come to take leave of me; he has understood that what I want is impossible, and he is going to tell his master."

Avenant was brought in, who presented her with his ring and said, "Madam Princess, here is your wish fulfilled; will you now be able to take the king my master for your husband?"

When she saw her ring, the Golden-Haired Beauty was so astonished, so surprised, that she thought she was dreaming. Really," she said, "beautiful Avenant, you must be loved by some fairy; for this is not possible without the help of a supernatural power.

– Madam," he said, "I don't know of any, but I really wanted to obey you.

– Since you are so willing," she continued, "you must do me another favor, without which I will never marry. There is, not far from here, a prince called Galifron, who has also taken it into his head to marry me. He has declared his intentions to me, and has added terrible threats, and that if I refuse he will destroy my kingdom. But judge for yourself if I could accept him: he is a giant who is higher than a high tower; he eats men like a monkey eats a banana. When he goes to war, he carries cannons in his pockets, which he uses like pistols; and when he speaks loudly, those who are near him become deaf.

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I told him that I did not want to get married and that he would excuse me, but he never stopped persecuting me and killed all my subjects. Before he can ask me to marry anyone, it will be necessary to fight against him and bring me his head."

Avenant remained a little stunned by this new request; he thought for a few moments, then he said:

"Well, madam, I will fight Galifron. I believe I will be defeated; but I will die a brave man."

The princess was surprised at his answer: she begged him a thousand times to give up this enterprise. But it was of no use: he withdrew to fetch weapons and all that he needed. When he was ready, he put the little Cabriole back in his basket, mounted his beautiful horse, and set off towards the country of Galifron. When he asked his way to those he met, they told him that he was a real demon that nobody dared to approach: the more he heard that, the more he was afraid. Cabriole reassured him, saying: "My dear master, while you are fighting, I will bite his legs; he will lower his head to chase me, and you will kill him." Avenant admired his little dog's intelligence, but he knew his help would not be enough.



Finally, he arrived near the castle of Galifron. There, all the paths were covered with the bones and carcasses of men he had eaten or torn to pieces. No sooner had he recovered from his shock, than he saw Galifron coming through the woods. His head was sticking out of the tallest trees, and he was singing in a terrible voice:

Where are the little children, That I may munch them to my heart's content?

I need so many, so many, and so many, That the world is not enough.

Soon Avenant began to sing the same tune:

Come, Galifron, here is Avenant, who will pull out your teeth.

Although he is not the greatest, to beat you he is enough.

The rhymes were not very regular; but he made the song very fast, and it is even a miracle that he did not make it worse, because he was terribly afraid. When Galifron heard these words, he looked around and saw Avenant with his sword in his hand, who spoke two or three insults to irritate him. It did not take so much: he got into a frightful anger, and taking a club all of iron, he would have knocked out the kind Avenant, if a raven had not come to put itself on the top of his head, and stinging his eyes with its beak, until gouging them.

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His blood was running down his face; he had gone mad, striking from all sides. Avenant avoided him and gave him great blows with his sword, which he thrust to the hilt, and which caused him a thousand wounds, through which he lost so much blood that he finally fell. Then Avenant cut off his head, very happy to have been so lucky.

The raven, who had perched on a tree, said to him: "I have not forgotten the service you did me by killing the eagle that pursued me; I promised you to fulfill it: I believe I have done it today.

– I owe you everything, Master Raven,” replied Avenant; “I remain your servant.

He went up at once on horseback, charged with the frightful head of Galifron.

When he arrived in the city, everyone followed him and shouted: “Here is the brave Avenant who has just killed the monster;” so that the princess, who heard a lot of noise and who was trembling that they would come to tell her about Avenant’s death, did not dare to ask what had happened to him; but she saw Avenant enter with the giant’s head, which still frightened her, even though there was nothing to fear anymore.

Madam,” he said to her, “your enemy is dead; I hope that you will no longer refuse the king, my master, now?



– Ah, yes,” said the Golden-haired Beauty, “I will refuse it if you cannot find a way to bring me water from the dark cave. There is close to here a deep cave which is six leagues deep; one finds two dragons which guard the entry; they have fire in the mouth and in the eyes; and, when one is in the cave, one finds a large underground corridor by which it is necessary to go down: it is full of toads, snakes and snakes. At the bottom of this hole, there is a small cellar where the fountain of beauty and health flows: it is this water that I absolutely want. All that one wets in it becomes marvelous: if one is

beautiful, one remains always beautiful; if one is ugly, one becomes beautiful; if one is young, one remains young; if one is old, one becomes young. You judge well, Avenant, that I will not leave my kingdom without taking a flask.

– Madam, he said to her, you are so beautiful that this water is quite useless to you; but I am an unhappy ambassador whose death you want: I will go to seek you what you wish; with the certainty of not being able to return. The Golden-haired Beauty did not change her mind, and Avenant left with the little dog Cabriole, to go to the dark cave to look for the water of beauty. Everyone he met on the way said, “What a shame to see such a nice boy go and die like that; he’s going to the cave all alone, and even if there were a hundred of them, they couldn’t get through it. Why does the Princess only want impossible things?” He kept walking, and did not say a word; but he was very sad.

He came to the top of a mountain where he sat down to rest for a while, and he let his horse and Cabriole run after flies.

He knew that the dark cave was not far from there, he looked if he would not see it; indeed he saw an ugly rock black as ink, from which came out a big smoke, and after a while, he saw one of the dragons coming out, which threw fire by the eyes and by the mouth: it had the yellow and green body, claws and a long tail which made more than one hundred turns. When he saw this, Cabriole did not know where to hide, so much he was afraid.

Avenant, determined to die, drew his sword and went downstairs with a vial that the Golden-Haired Beauty had given him to fill with the water of beauty. He said to his little dog Cabriole: “It is done with me! I will never be able to have this water which is guarded by dragons; when I am dead, fill the vial with my blood, and carry it to the princess, so that she sees what it costs me; and then go to the king my master and tell him my misfortune.

As he spoke thus, he heard it called, “Avenant! Avenant!”

He said, “Who is calling me?” and he saw an owl in the hole of an old tree, which said to him, “You pulled me out of the hunters’ net where I was caught, and you saved my life; I promised you that I would repay you: now the time has come. Give me your vial: I know all the ways to the dark cave; I will fetch you water of beauty.”

Good heavens! who was well pleased? I leave it to you to think. Avenant quickly gave him his vial, and the owl entered the cave without any hindrance.

In less than a quarter of an hour, he came back with the well-filled bottle. Avenant was delighted; he thanked him wholeheartedly, and, going up the mountain, he took the road to the city very happily.

He went straight to the palace; he presented the flask to the Golden-haired Beauty, who had nothing more to say: she thanked Avenant, and gave order to all that she needed to leave; then she set out on her journey with him.

She found him very amiable, and sometimes said to him: “If you had wanted, I would have made you king; we would not have stayed in my kingdom. But he answered, “I would not play such a bad trick on my master for all the kingdoms of the earth, though I find you more beautiful than the sun.”

At last they came to the great city of the king, who, knowing that the Golden-haired Beauty was



coming, went to meet her and gave her the most beautiful gifts in the world. He married her with so much rejoicing that nothing else was spoken of; but the Golden-haired Beauty, who loved Avenant in her heart, was only very happy when she saw him, and she always praised him. I would not have come without Avenant," she said to the king; "he had to do impossible things for me to come: you must be grateful to him; he gave me water of beauty, I shall never grow old, I shall always be beautiful.

The envious ones who listened to the queen said to the king, "You are not jealous, though you have reason to be. The queen loves Avenant so much that she loses her hunger and thirst; she only talks about him and the obligations you have to him, as if no one would have done the same in his place."

The king said, "It is true, let him be locked up in the tower with irons on his hands and feet." Avenant, who had served the king so well, was locked up. He saw no one but the jailer, who threw him a piece of black bread through a hole, and water in an earthen bowl. However, his little dog Cabriole did not leave him; he comforted him and came to give him all the news.

When the Golden-haired Beauty knew of his disgrace, she threw herself at the feet of the king, and, all in tears, she begged him to let Avenant out of prison. But the more she begged him, the more he became angry, thinking: "It is that she loves him", and he would do nothing about it. She didn't talk about it anymore: she was very sad.

The king thought that perhaps she did not find him beautiful enough; he wanted to rub his face with beauty water, so that the queen would love him more than she did. This water was in a flask on the edge of the fireplace in the queen's room, she had put it there to look at it more often; but one of her maids, wanting to kill a spider with a broom, unluckily threw the flask on the floor, which broke, and all the water was lost. She quickly swept it up, and, not knowing what to do, she remembered that she had seen in the king's chamber a similar vial full of clear water like the beauty water; she took it without saying anything, and put it on the queen's mantelpiece, in place of the beauty water.

But the water that was in the king's cabinet was used to kill princes and great lords when they were criminals; instead of cutting off their heads or hanging them, they rubbed the water on their faces: they fell asleep, and never woke up again. One evening, the king took the vial and rubbed his face well, then he fell asleep and died.

The little dog Cabriole heard about it first and didn't fail to tell Avenant, who told him to go and find the Golden-haired Beauty and make her remember the poor prisoner.

Cabriole slipped quietly into the crowd; for there was a great noise at court because of the king's death. He said to the queen, "Madame, Avenant is locked up in the tower." The queen was very pleased to hear this news. She went out without speaking to anyone, and went straight to the tower, where she herself removed the fetters from Avenant's feet and hands; and, putting a golden crown on his head and the royal mantle on his shoulders, she said to him: "Come, kind Avenant, I make you king and take you for my husband."





He threw himself at her feet and thanked her. Everyone was delighted to have him as their master. He had the most beautiful wedding in the world, and the Golden-haired Beauty lived long with the handsome Avenant, both happy and content.

MORALITY.

*If by chance a wretch asks your assistance, do not refuse him generous help: A kindness sooner or later receives its reward.*

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