

Death and the goose herder

A poor herder went along the shore of a large and stormy water, herding many white geese. To this on came Death over water, and was asked by the herder, whence he came from, and whence he wanted to go? Death answered, that he came out of the water and wanted to go out of the world. The poor gooseherder asked futher: how does one go forth out of the world? Death said, that one had to go over the water into the new world, which lies beyond. The herder said, that he tired of this life, and asked Death, he should take him over with him. Death said, that it was not yet time, and he had now otherwise to do. But there was unfar from there a greedy-neck, he by night thought in his lair, how he could bring even more money and goods together, this one Death led the to the great water and pushed him in. Because he could no swim, he drowned to bottom, before he could reach the shore. His dogs and cats, who so ran after him, also drowned with him. Several days after that Death came also to the goose herder, found him singing merrily and said to him: "Will you now go with me?" He was willing and came with his white geese well over, which were all transformed into white sheep. The goose herder looked upon the beautiful land and heard, that the herders of the places became kings, and as he rightly looked about him, the chief herders Abraham, Isaac and Jacob came towards him, placed a kingly crown upon him, and led him to the herder's palace, there he is still to be found.

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