The giant and the tailor

A certain tailor who was great at boasting but ill at doing, took it into his head to go abroad for a while, and look about the world. As soon as he could manage it, he left his workshop, and wandered on his way, over hill and dale, sometimes hither, sometimes thither, but ever on and on. Once when he was out he perceived in the blue distance a steep hill, and behind it a tower reaching to the clouds, which rose up out of a wild dark forest. "Thunder and lightning," cried the tailor, "what is that?" and as he was strongly goaded by curiosity, he went boldly towards it. But what made the tailor open his eyes and mouth when he came near it, was to see that the tower had legs, and leapt in one bound over the steep hill, and was now standing as an all powerful giant before him. "What dost thou want here, thou tiny fly's leg?" cried the giant, with a voice as if it were thundering on every side. The tailor whimpered, "I want just to look about and see if I can earn a bit of bread for myself, in this forest." If that is what thou art after," said the giant, "thou mayst have a place with me." - "If it must be, why not? What wages shall I receive?" - "Thou shalt hear what wages thou shalt have. Every year three hundred and sixty-five days, and when it is leap-year, one more into the bargain. Does that suit thee?" - "All right," replied the tailor, and thought, in his own mind, "a man must cut his coat according to his cloth; I will try to get away as fast as I can." On this the giant said to him, "Go, little ragamuffin, and fetch me a jug of water." - "Had I not better bring the well itself at once, and the spring too?" asked the boaster, and went with the pitcher to the water. "What! the well and the spring too," growled the giant in his beard, for he was rather clownish and stupid, and began to be afraid. "That knave is not a fool, he has a wizard in his body. Be on thy guard, old Hans, this is no serving-man for thee." When the tailor had brought the water, the giant bade him go into the forest, and cut a couple of blocks of wood and bring them back. "Why not the whole forest, at once, with one stroke. The whole forest, young and old, with all that is there, both rough and smooth?" asked the little tailor, and went to cut the wood. "What! the whole forest, young and old, with all that is there, both rough and smooth, and the well and its spring too," growled the credulous giant in his beard, and was still more terrified. "The knave can do much more than bake apples, and has a wizard in his body. Be on thy guard, old Hans, this is no serving-man for thee!" When the tailor had brought the wood, the giant commanded him to shoot two or three wild boars for supper. "Why not rather a thousand at one shot, and bring them all here?" inquired the ostentatious tailor. "What!" cried the timid giant in great terror; "Let well alone to-night, and lie down to rest."

The giant was so terribly alarmed that he could not close an eye all night long for thinking what would be the best way to get rid of this accursed sorcerer of a servant. Time brings counsel. Next morning the giant and the tailor went to a marsh, round which stood a number of willow-trees. Then said the giant, "Hark thee, tailor, seat thyself on one of the willow-branches, I long of all things to see if thou art big enough to bend it down." All at once the tailor was sitting on it, holding his breath, and making himself so heavy that the bough bent down. When, however, he was compelled to draw breath, it hurried him (for unfortunately he had not put his vgoose in his pocket) so high into the air that he never was seen again, and this to the great delight of the giant. If the tailor has not fallen down again, he must be hovering about in the air.

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