

Pompitie Finnds a Needle

(Based on a story by Agnes Grozier Herbertson)

Pompitie wes a wee gnome that bade on the Five-Stern Common near the Heuchie Knowe. It haed twa gairdens, ane ahint the houss an ane forenent it. In the front gairden, the war twal heich sunflouers aw in a raw; in the back gairden the war a whein aipil trees an thrie blawawa plants cuivert wi blawawas.

Ae day, as Pompitie wes fliein atowre the Common, he saw the Broun Ogre staunin crackin wi the Wutch-that-Mends Rainbows at hir houss dure. At aince, Pompitie hid in a curliebuss---he wes feart for the Broun Ogre, for *he* coud be rael nestie whyles.

Pompitie waitit an waitit, an at lest he saw the Broun Ogre gae lampin awa owre the Common---stramp, stramp, stramp, wi mukkil steps that shougilt the housses. Whan that happent, out cam Pompitie frae ahint the curlie-buss an flew on his wey.

But he haedna gaen ferr on his road whan he noticed, stickin intil a reid puddok stuil, sumthing that wes thin an bricht an skinklin.

Pompitie flew doun for ti hae a richt luik at it, an at first he thocht it wes a bit o bricht wyre; but whan he pickit it up an keikit at it, he saw it wes as bricht as a ray o shunshein.

“Guidness gracious me!” cryit Pompitie, “this maun be a needle that belongs the Wutch-that-Mends-Rainbows! Ah wunner hou she cam ti drap it!” An he lookit about here an thare, but the Wutch wes naewhaur ti be seen; but atwein you an me, Pompitie kent fyne that the Wutch never threw hir needles awa. No hir---! That wadna be lyke hir ava.

But he thocht til himsell that the threid in the needle wes verra lykeliie a threid the Wutch uised for mendin the rainbows; an he thocht, tae, whit graund fun it wad be for ti shew a whein steiks in the tourie o his best bonnet, sae that it wad skinkil lyke the sun. Sae he stuck the needle wi its threid intil his jaiket, an blyth as can be, awa he flew.

But he haed onlie wun as ferr as the wee-est buss o aw, whan he felt sumthing gae jag-jag; an that wes the lang needle stickin intil him.

Syne a wee wheipilie vyce---an that wes the vyce of the needle---said:

“Ah dinna lyke this road hame. Wad ye be sae guid as ti flie roun bi the Henwyfe’s!”

Whan Pompitie haird this he wes a bit pit out, an he said in an uppitie bummie vyce:

“No lykeliie! Ah’l no dae that. Ah AYE flie this road hame.”

“Aweill!” said the Needle, “mebbe that is true on ordinarie days, but THE-DAY, ye maun gang the wey Ah want ye ti gang an nae mair about it. Aither that or Ah wul shew yeir twa sleeves thegither an tak ye til the Broun Ogre, wha wul clour ye owre the heid wi his mukkil stick, stowe ye in his lerder an hank ye on a huik.”

Whan Pompitie haird this frichtsum speak, his een grew round wi dreid, an he began ti trummil an shak, an ti think til himsell whitna awfu thing it wad be gin he haed liftit a needle belangin the Broun Ogre, an no the Wutch-that-Mends-Rainbows.

But whyle he trummilt an shook, the Needle gaed jag-jag again, an Pompitie turnt himsell roun an stertit for ti gae hame bi the Henwyfe’s.

Nou as he wan ti the Hen Wyfe’s houss dure, thare she wes, cryin out in a waesum vyce:

“Wha wul gae an look for ma tint choukie that winna cum hame?”

Syne the Needle gaed jag-jag, an said ti Pompitie: “You say, ‘Ah wul,’ or Ah’l shew yeir twa sleeves thegither an tak ye hame ti the Broun Ogre, wha wul clour ye wi his mukkil stick, an stowe ye in his lerder, an hank ye on a huik”

Syne Pompitie tummilt an shook, an shook an trummilt, an at lest---kis the Needle jaggit him sair again---he cryit out: “Ah wul, Hen Wyfe.”

An the Hen Wyfe said: “Thenk ye, Pompitie. Thenk ye verra kyndlie,” an she gaed in an steikit hir houss dure.

“Nou Ah sal flie hame,” thocht Pompitie.

But the Needle gaed jaggitie-jag-jag an said: “Nou we sal gang an hunt for the Hen Wyfe’s choukie!”

Sae Pompitie the g-nome, tho he wes as cross as oniething, haed ti gang.

The Tea Wyfe’s houss wes ferr, ferr awa, an Pompitie wes no richt shuir hou ti finnd it. But whanever he airtit the wrang wey, the feather in his bonnet whuspert, “No that wey, Pompitie!” An sae at lest, he fand the pad that gaed to the Tea Wyfe’s dure.

Syne Pompitie the g-nome peyed the Tea Wyfe twa pennies an gat a thummilfu tea; an whan he set aff back for the toll road, he haed ti traivel cannilie, for fear he nicht skail the tea in the thummil. But at lest he wan ti the toll wi his thummilfu tea.

Syne the Toll Man wes blyth an cantie, an whan he saw Pompitie the g-nome, hou wabbitie he lookit, an worrit, an wobblie, an waebegaen, he taen a wee green leaf frae his press an gied it ti Pompitie, an said: “Tak this, Pompitie, for it wul bring ye the luck!”

Nou the leaf wes dry an wuzzent, no crisp an fresh, but Pompitie taen it for aw, an stuck it in his coat. An syne he stertit ti flie hame.

But at aince, the Needle in his coat gaed jag-jag, an wheipilt, “No that road, Pompitie!”

Syne Pompitie ryved at the Needle in his coat an tryit ti teir it awa; but Na, it wadna cum; it wes stuck thare fest as fest. Sae he said, “THIS is the nearest road ti ma wee houss. Ah aye gang THIS road hame.”

Aweill,” said the Needle, “that is on ordnarie days, but the-day ye maun gae roun bi the houss o the Wutch-That-Mends-Rainbows, for Ah want ti pass the tyme o day wi hir, sae Ah div.”

“Ah’l never, never dae that!” cryit Pompitie, for he didna want ti gae near the Wutch, she wes sae sherp an wyce.

“Aweill,” said the Needle, “syne Ah sal shew yeir sleeves thegither an tak ye hame ti the Brouin Ogre, an he wul clour ye wi his mukkil stick, an stowe ye in his lerder, an hank ye on a huik. Hou monie tymes dae Ah hae ti tell ye?”

Syne Pompitie the g-nome wes in a fell state, an he grat an grat an his saut tears splattert on the road, but the Needle never peyed onie heed an juist gaed jag, jag, jag, jag. Sae at lest he set out aff for hame bi the Wutch’s biggin, but daudlin as he gaed. An whan he wes about hauf-wey thare, he haird a stramp, stramp, stramp, an he kent that wes the Broun Ogre lampin owre the Green Common.

Syne he wad hae lykit fyne ti hyde in a curlie buss, but the Needle gaed jag-jag-jag intil him. He wad fain hae hung back ahint, but the Green Leaf in his coat whuspert, “Hoy on, Pompitie, ye maun hurrie an win ti the Wutch-That-Mends-Rainbows first!”

Syne Pompitie hurried an hurried; an his wee legs war sair, an his airms war sair, an he wes sair aw owre, but he wan ti the Wutch’s biggin afore the Broun Ogre did.

An thare wes the Wutch-that-Mends-Rainbows staunin at hir houss dure. An whan she set een on Pompitie, she cryit: “Wha wul finnd for me the needle Ah selt til the Broun Ogre for ti mend his verra best dream, that he gaed an tint on the Green Common.”

Syne the Needle jaggit Pompitie sair, an said: “You say, ‘Here it is!’”

An Pompitie cryit out at the tap o his vyce: “Here it is, Wutch! Here it is, stickin in ma coat! Here it is, Wutch!”

An aye the stramp, stramp o the Broun Opre wes cummin nearer an nearer.

Syne the Wutch lat out as gret sech, an said: “Ai Mercie, but afore Ah can tak it out, Ah maun finnd a whyte fether an a green leaf.”

An at this, Pompitie gied a mukkil lowp an cryit: “Here thay ir, Wutch! Here thay ir in ma bonnet an in ma jaiket! See, here thay ir!”

The Wutch lookit at the whyte fether an syne at the green leaf, an syne she gruppit the Needle an poued it as easie as ye lyke frae the coat o Pompitie the g-nome. An blyth an cantie wes she.

An whan she lookit at Pompitie an saw his face wes aw begrutten an hou wabbitie he lookit, an worrit , an wobblie, an waebegaen, she taen frae a drawer a tottie gray fluff an stuck it intil his shae. “You tak this, Pompitie,” said she, “an it wul ease yeir dule.”

Syne Pompitie flew frae hir door an awa. But he haedna gaen ferr whan the Feather in his bonnet whuspert: “Flie laich, Pompitie!” An Pompitie flew laich; an the Broun Ogre, that cam strampin alang on his road ti the Wutch’s biggin, passed Pompitie athout ever seein him at aw.

Syne Pompitie warsilt on an warsilt on; but he wes that hattert an worn out he coud haurlie move at aw.

An the Green Leaf in his coat whuspert: “Rest a meinit, Pompitie! Byde a wee!”

Sae Pompitie restit bi a curlie buss; an afore verra lang, wha soud cum fliein alang but Pepper the g-nome, that wes Pompitie’s neibor, an leevd bi the Breingie Burn.

Whan Pepper saw Pompitie, he said, “Mercie, Pompitie, ye puir sowl, whit hae ye been daein ti git sae wabbitie, an wobblie, an waebegaen, an weepie?”

An Pompitie said wi his begrutten face, “Ah canna tell ye nou, Pepper, but it is a sad an waesum storie.”

Syne Pepper hoyed awa, cryin, “Byde you here a meinit, Pompitie, Ah’l be back suin.”

An he gaed on an borraed a wheel-barrae frae the G-nome-That-Gaes-Biggin, an wheeled Pompitie hame til his wee houss bi the Heuchie Knowe. An thare, Pompitie sat in his bumflie chair bit the ingil an dovert an snoozed whyle Pompitie byled the kettle an maskit the tea. An the gray fluff in Pompitie’s shae gied him mair an mair easement, or hinnerlie, aw his aches an pains war aw lyke thay haed never been, an the awfu jags that the Needle hae made war aw haeled up, ilkane. An he thocht til himsell, “Ah wes aye feart for that auld Wutch, but she’s no sae bad. She’s walcum til hir needle.

At lest, Pepper said, “The tea is maskit, neibor,” an he drew his table in til the ingil. An whyle Pepper poued the tea, an toastit a whein crumpets, Pompitie telt his sad an waesum storie.