

## The Princess wi the Whyte Peiticoat

The war aince a keing that haed but the ae dochter, cawed Jennie, but wi hir mither diein whan she wes an infant bairn, here did the Keing no mairrie anither wumman that haed a dochter o hir ain, but no sae bonnie as the Keing's dochter. The new Queen taen ill at this, the mair sae whan aw the princes peyed court ti the Keing's dochter, an nane peyed mukkil heed til hir ain lassie, that wes grumfie an ugsum. Syne the Queen becam bentset ti git quut o Jennie ae wey or anither, for it wes in hir mynd that aince she wes out the road, hir ain ill-faured dochter wad be lyker mairriein ane o the yung princes that war aye eftir Jennie.

The first thing she tryit wes ti mairrie Jennie aff on ane auld dottilt keing wi a slaiverie mou that wes a frein o hirs, sae that Jennie wad nae langir staun in hir ain dochter's licht. Houanever, Jennie wad hae nane o the auld keing an his dreiblin mou, for aw his yerpin on an fleitchin at hir ti cum til his bed.

Hinnerlie, the Queen saw that aw wadna dae, sae she sent Jennie intil a wuid nearhaund for a braith o caller air, wi hir wey o't. But aw the tyme she haed ettilt that the auld slaiverie keing wi sum o his men, wad cairrie Jennie awa whan she wes ayont the rax o hir faither's help. The princess gaed inti the wuid as she wes telt an wes divertin hirsell pouin sum o the dentie littil flouers that war growein on aither syde hir path, whan a burd flichtert owre hir heid an wheipilt oot a wairnin til hir:

“Flee, Jennie, flee,  
or ye mairrit be!”

This gied Jennie a richt fleg, for she haed taen an awfie skunner at the slaiverie keing, an she taen til hir heels and stertit ti rin. An she ran and she ran or she tint hir road awthegither. The nicht cam down an she sat down an grat in the pit-mirk, myles frae hir hame. Syne she luikit, wi hir begrutten face, this wey an that, for sum beild frae the wund an the cauld. An eftir a whyle, she gliskit a licht glimmerin at hir throu a bourach o brammils. She made for this licht an here it cam frae a wee biggin staunin bi itsell in the wuids. The war naebodie aboot, sae she gaed inby,. An here the houss wes tuim but the war an ingil wi a richt guid gleid lowin i the fyreplace.

Nae suiner haed she stertit ti warm hirsell at the ingil whan she haird a clatter o horses an the clash o men's vyces. Wi it be-in wyld an cauld ootby, she wes sweir ti gang owre the dure again, sae she joukit intil a press ti hyde, juist in tyme afore a haill cumpanie o yung lairds graithed for the hunt, prinkit inti the houss. She wes in a huntin ludge. At aince, thay aw sat down ti aet an drink, an whan thay haed etten an drukken thair fill, ane o thaim stuid up an threipit at the ithers that the war sumbodie dernit in the houss, forby thairsells.

The lave aw leuch at this, but thay chynged thair tuin whan oot cam Jennie, chitterin wi fricht, frae hir hydie-hole.

“Gentil knichts,” says she, “dae me nae skaith for Ah im a puir traivlar an mint ye nae herm! Ah hae lost ma wey an ye’l shuirlye no grudge me cummin intil yeir ludge out the cauld on siccan a nicht as this!”

“But bi this tyme, maist o the callants war rairin fou an thay aw made for hir ti lay haunds on hir an ill-uisse hir—aw but ane that stuid forenent the dure.

“Cum in ahint me, ma bonnie quyne!” Says he. Naebodie wul lichtlie ye as lang’s Ah can staun.”

Sae she ran ahint this prince but he didna staun for lang. The ithers set on him an bure him ti the fluir, an ane o thaim grippit Jennie bi the gowden girdil she wure roun hir bodie. But the girdil brak an she wan free out the dure inti the mirk o the nicht, an the callants war owre thrang fechtin amang thairsells, or owre fou, for ti follae hir.

A gey cauld nicht Jennie spent in the wuids, Ah can tell ye, an afore the dawin she wes nithert til the bane. Houanever, afore verra lang, she cam til a keing’s castel. She spiered thare gin she nicht byde the nicht, an the neist day she wes taen on as a sairvant ti the faimlie. Whan she wes askit hir name, she said it wes Jennie Whyte-Peiticoat an said she wad be gled ti wurk at oniething she wes telt ti dae. At first, she wes gien course darg in the kitchen helpin the cuiik, but she wes that guid at awthing she turnt hir haund til, she rase frae post ti post, or she becam ane o the maids o honor ti the yung princess o the hous. An hir name wes Eilidh.

Nou the prince in the castel wes nane ither but the braw callant that haed stuiden up for Jennie in the huntin ludge. He wes nane the waur for the tousin he haed gotten thare, an whan Jennie saw him, she kent him at aince, but he didna ken hir, the wey she wes nou buskit in hir different claes. But she never lat on she kent him—no hir! The prince haed made luiv til a whein o the lassies at Courtr, an it wesna verra lang or it cam Jennie’s turn ti please him. Aweill she pleased him that weill she fair gat roun his hert, sae that he wantit hir for his wyfe. Sae ae day, he says til his sister, Eilidh:

“Eilidh, Ah fand a gray hair in ma heid yestrein an Ah dout it’s tyme nou, Ah’m thinkin, Ah taen a wyfe. Naebodie pleises me better nor yeir maid, Jennie. An she wesna sae ferr anaith ma station, Ah wad be gled ti mairrie hir the-morn, but aiblins Ah soud think about the faimlie an mairrie a leddie that’s better born. Whit dae ye think Ah soud dae, Eilidh?”

An Eilidh aunsert him:

“For a lass o laich degree, Jennie is unco weill-faured an haes byordnar guid mainners. The main thing is that ye wale the best wumman we can finnd ti be yeir guidwyfe. The’r no mukkil Ah miss, an sum o the braw leddies aboot the Court is nae better nor thay soud be. But Ah hae thocht o a wey ti finnd out wha is the best wumman for ye.”

At that, she whuspert in his lug an telt him about hir skame, an the prince gried that she soud gang aheid wi it.

The first thing Eilidh did, wes ti tak til hir chaumer an mak oot she wes seik. Syne she set for ane o the leddies ti cum an veisit hir. An whan the leddie spiered whit ailed hir, she telt hir she haed been bairned bi the steward an ti keep it a saicret.

“Howt,” said the leddie, “Hir Grace soudna bather hir heid about that at aw. No that lang syne, Ah haed a bairn ti the staig-chiel, an nou, as ferr as oniebodie kens, Ah’m as guid a maid as the best o thaim, sae Ah im!”

Syne Eilidh sent for anither leddie, an this ane telt hir she haed haen twa bairns, ane til the staig-chiel an anither til the chaumer loun, but wes nou as guid a maid as ever she wes. A third leddie wes sent for an whan she wes telt the same yairn, she said that Eilidh need never mismak hirsell. Ae bairn wes naething ava! She haed haen thrie: ane til the staig-chiel, ane til the chaumer loun an ane til the orra man, an serred for a maiden as weill as oniebodie at the Court.

Hinnerlie, Eilidh sent for Jennie Peiticoat an telt hir the same storie as aw the ithers, but frae hir she gat a different aunser.

“Yeir Grace,” says Jennie. Ye ir an affront til yeuir Ryal Houss an soud be brunt at the stake. An Ah’l tell ye anither thing, Ah wad be gled ti help at yeir burnin.”

“Haud on, Jennie,” says the princess. “Ye’r owre forritsum. That’s nae wey wi speak til yeir mistress. Ah’m no the jaud ye think Ah im. Ah im saikless. Whit hae Ah adae wi the lykes o the steward? That wes juist a ploy ti finnd oot wha haes been mensefu at Court. Nou Ah ken wha ir the wallie-draigils, an frae this day on, ma brither wul pey court ti naebodie but yeirsell.”

Jennie wes fyne an pleased at this an suin telt the prince that she wes a princess hirsell an the quyne that he haed stuiden up for at the huntin ludge, whan his freins haed yokit on hir. At first, he coudna credit whit she wes sayin, but whan she shawed him the tither hauf o the brukken gowden girdil, he kent she wes tellin the truith. Eftir that, thay war mairrit an she telt the prince awthing that haed befawn hir. Syne she sent wurd til hir auld faither the Keing, for ti let him ken she wes weill mairrit an blyth. He wes richt gled ti hear this an cam for ti pey thaim a veisit, whan Jennie haird the dottilt auld keing wi the slaiverie mou wes deid an awa. Syne she an hir guidman leaved weill content for monie a lang year.