

## **Taming The Shrew**

by Sir George Webbe Dasent  
from *Popular Tales from the Norse*

Once on a time there was a king, and he had a daughter who was such a scold, and whose tongue went so fast, there was no stopping it. So he gave out that the man who could stop her tongue should have the Princess to wife, and half his kingdom into the bargain. Now, three brothers, who heard this, made up their minds to go and try their luck; and first of all the two elder went, for they thought they were the cleverest; but they couldn't cope with her at all, and got well thrashed besides.

Then Boots, the youngest, set off, and when he had gone a little way he found an ozier band lying on the road, and he picked it up. When he had gone a little farther he found a piece of a broken plate, and he picked that up too. A little farther on he found a dead magpie, and a little farther on still, a crooked ram's horn; so he went on a bit and found the fellow to the horn; and at last, just as he was crossing the fields by the king's palace, where they were pitching out dung, he found a worn-out shoe-sole. All these things he took with him into the palace, and went before the Princess.

'Good day', said he.

'Good day', said she, and made a wry face.

'Can I get my magpie cooked here?' he asked.

'I'm afraid it will burst', answered the Princess.

'Oh! never fear! for I'll just tie this ozier band round it', said the lad, as he pulled it out.

'The fat will run out of it', said the Princess.

'Then I'll hold this under it', said the lad, and showed her the piece of broken plate.

'You are so crooked in your words', said the Princess, 'there's no knowing where to have you.'

'No, I'm not crooked', said the lad; 'but this is', as he held up one of the horns.

'Well!' said the Princess, 'I never saw the match of this in all my days.'

'Why, here you see the match to it', said the lad, as he pulled out the other ram's horn.

'I think', said the Princess, 'you must have come here to wear out my tongue with your nonsense.'

'No, I have not', said the lad; 'but this is worn out', as he pulled out the shoe-sole.

To this the Princess hadn't a word to say, for she had fairly lost her voice with rage.

'Now you are mine', said the lad; and so he got the Princess to wife, and half the kingdom.