

THE BOY IN THE JUG HOPI

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Once, long ago, in a Hopi village, a beautiful maiden lived with her old father. They had no one to hunt for them, or provide them with food, so the good people of the tribe gave them what they could spare.

One day the maiden saw the women making earthen jugs, and she said to herself, "I will make one too." So she took some clay, and kneaded it, and shaped it into a beautiful jug with two handles. Then she put it to bake. But when she went to fetch it home, she heard something cry inside it. She looked in, and what did she see but a little boy no bigger than her thumb.

She tried to take him out of the jug, but it was a magic one, and she could not do so. She took the boy in the jug home, and fed him on bits of food, and made him some pretty little clothes, saying, "Now I am your mother, and my old father is your grandfather."

The days passed and the boy grew bigger until his head reached the top of the jug, and when he wished to move about the house, he spun the jug around and around, and that is the way he walked.

Well, a Winter came when it was very cold, and the people had nothing to eat. So the young men of the tribe took their bows and arrows and started out to hunt. When the boy saw this, he said to his grandfather, "Give me a bow and arrows, for I want to hunt."

So his grandfather made him a fine red bow, and tied bright feathers to the arrows, and fastened them to the handles of the jug. Then he lifted up the boy in the jug, and carrying him outside the village, set him on the ground. "Now you may hunt," said he, "and you will soon see many Rabbit tracks."

The boy began to spin his jug, and he spun so fast that he left his grandfather far behind. Sure enough, in a little while he saw some tracks, and there was a Rabbit running away. The boy spun his jug harder, and it moved so fast that its mouth whistled like the wind.

Soon the boy in the jug caught up with the Rabbit, and the little creature, springing into the air, leaped into a bush. The jug, also, rose in the air, to spring into the bush, but fell to the ground with a crash. It split in two, and out bounced the boy—a full-grown Hopi lad!

He unfastened the bow and arrows from the handles of the jug, and following the Rabbit, killed it. Then he shot a dozen more, and tying them together, carried them back to the village.

When his mother saw him coming, she could not believe her eyes for joy. She ran out to meet him, and took the Rabbits, saying, “Now that I have this full-grown son, I shall never be hungry again!”

The grandfather, too, came hurrying to the door, as fast as his old legs could carry him. And when he saw the Rabbits, he said: “Thank you, thank you! Now you may hunt with the young men, and your mother and I will be glad!”

So after that, the boy hunted with the others, and his mother and his old grandfather always had plenty to eat.

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