

The Korrigan Groom

A clog-maker told his daughter one day to go give some clogs away and that he would go that evening in front of her, lest she encounter anything evil.

She left in a carriage. When she arrived in town, she surrendered them to two boutiques and they gave her money.

Upon returning, she passed the edge of a pond with many ducks and said to herself:

“If I could only catch a duck! It’s night, no one will see me. I have bread; I’ll throw it onto the shore, and maybe they will come to eat it.”

She threw it and they approached. She took them when she went back in her carriage after having attached their feet to it and she whipped her horse, but it made a loud noise.

When she was in the middle of the highway, two individuals leapt from the woods and jumped towards the horse’s head, stopping the carriage.

“What do you have!” they said. “Ducks that you have stolen? They belong to us. Hand them over, or we will take them back from you.”

At the moment that she gave them to the two men, three others came onto the road and said to her:

“What do you want to do to this young girl?”

“She stole ducks from us.”

“Leave them with her, and go your own way.”

All three sat down in the carriage and said:

“Young girl, don’t be afraid. Your father was still sick when he went to leave the house to meet up with you.”

“You know my father?”

“Yes, we know him, for we have spoken to him often.”

“But I have never seen you before.”

“You have, more than three times,” said one of them.

“Did you not see me when you sold the clogs?”

“No, I wasn’t paying attention.”

“I know how much you have touched and how much is in your pocket; without us, you are lost.”

“My brave men, what must you have for your trouble?”

“Well, when you arrive at your house, we will talk.”

She thought:

“They must be sorcerers.”

In the carriage, the whole way down the road, they talked.

“I’m not curious,” said the young girl, “but I would like to know who you are.”

“We are three korrigans and we are brave men; we will not do you any harm.”

“I heard it said, when I was little, that korrigans were bad, that they liked to dance and that they stole young girls.”

“That’s true,” said one of them.

“In our time,” said another, “we do not steal young girls anymore, and we do not dance as much as we used to.”

They arrived at the clog-maker’s house.

“We have arrived,” said the girl, and she called her father out to open the door.

One of the korrigans jumped out of the carriage, but the father was lying down and they began to care for him. At dawn, his condition improved and he said to the korrigans:

“Have you led my daughter home?”

“Yes,” they replied.

“I am happy for you. Thank you.”

His daughter prepared something for them and said to them:

“Tomorrow evening, you will come to dine with us; my father will get up, we will eat the ducks and we will speak of the present and the past.”

After their departure, her father said to her:

“My daughter, did you receive any money?”

“Yes, Father, a *sou* and a *liard*.”

“Well! I’m happy. I believe that, this evening, there will be a wedding arranged in this house. Six years ago, one of them asked me to marry you off to him and I promised him that you would not marry any other.”

“But, Father, where did you get the idea to marry me to a little man? I am twice as tall as he is. I have my beau, whom I played with when he kept the animals, and while you made clogs, and I can never love anyone else.”

“You will renounce your beau, because I have promised you to a korrigan, and, if you do not marry him, he will wish evil on us.”

“Well! Father, he must.”

At night, the dinner was over the fire. The three korrigans arrived and spoke to the father. The young girl was by the fireplace and listened to everything that they said:

“Do you remember the day when you promised me your daughter?”

“As if it were today. She wants it.”

“If she is happy,” said the two other korrigans, “arrange it.”

The young girl brought out the silverware, served them, and they ate, they drank, and, at the end of the meal, one korrigán, the fiancé, took a bottle from his vest pocket and placed it on the table.

“What a bottle,” said the young girl. “I can’t see what it contains!”

The bottle was covered in blue and gold paper. The korrigán said to his father-in-law to uncork it and presented a silver corkscrew to him. The father-in-law tried in vain, the three korrigáns laughed, and one of them said:

“Clog-maker, you’re not strong enough anymore.”

Fifteen days later, the wedding was held and the young girl invited some people. There were still six korrigáns¹ at the wedding, and not a single *ozegañnez*², and one of the six korrigáns was the best man. After having eaten, they went on a walk, and the maid of honor said to her comrade:

“I’m ashamed of him; the whole world is looking at us.”

Her comrade replied:

“How handsome he is! The outfit he is wearing is lovelier than the groom’s.”

The bride was beautiful and had on a blue dress and a red apron, the maid of honor a blue dress and a violet apron, and she had bought a yellow one.

“If you wear a yellow apron,” said the best man, “you will never have my hand.”

“It’s the style,” she said, “to wear yellow aprons.”

“We hate nothing on this earth more than that color.”

At night during dinner, he said to his partner:

“Tonight, let’s play a prank on the newlyweds. We’ll bring a *biniou*³ player and a bombard⁴ player to lead them to bed. When they are playing on top of the chest, you will go to the foot of the bed, you will quietly lift the curtain, and I will give you two ribbons, one blue and one white, and, if you can tie their feet together, you will reunite them first with the blue, because they will not notice while listening to the musicians play. When tying the white ribbon, you will have more difficulty, but pay attention to what I say to you. They won’t budge, and, under their heads, I will place ferns with packets of cherries, you will take a needle, some thread, and you will make a crown of cherries with two rows to put on the young girl’s head, and a heart of cherries to put over the heart of the young man.

¹ *Huih paotr ozegan*.

² Female korrigán. – Trans.

³ *Biniou*: “The form of bagpipe used in Brittany.” *Oxford English Dictionary*, s. v. “biniou,” accessed August 05, 2013, <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/19155>. – Trans.

⁴ Bombard: “A deep-toned wooden musical instrument of the bassoon family.” *Oxford English Dictionary*, s. v. “bombard,” accessed August 05, 2013, <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/21180>. – Trans.

The newlyweds were asleep, and they noticed nothing until the next morning, but, then, they could not budge in their bed. The best man and his partner, who did not sleep through the night, went to search for the wedding guests after having entered the bedroom in the morning. The bride was like a queen with her crown and she said to her husband:

“Why can’t I pull my feet away from yours?”

“And mine, too?”

The guests were dancing, laughing, and said to the wife:

“If you want to uncover your feet, you can see what they’re attached with.”

And the best man said to the groom:

“You must have thought that, in our country, when we are married, our feet are tied with two ribbons, one blue, the other white, to say that the newlyweds will only be separated by death.”

Joseph Frison. “Le korrigan marié.” *Revue des traditions populaires* 29:4 (April 1914): 162-65.

Translated by Michelle Collins.