Illustrated Children’s and Puppet Theater

Second Group.

4.

Blanka and Roselinde.

A Play in Four Acts

Freely adapted for Children’s Theater
after
W. Grimm.

Published by Otto Spamer in Leipzig.
Characters.

*Mrs. Truelove.*

*Blanka.*

*Roselinde.*  
\}  
*Her daughters*

*A fairy.*

*King.*

*An envoy.*

*Two ladies in waiting.*

Setting

First act: in front of Mrs. Truelove’s house; second act: in Roselinde’s garden; *third* act: in the queen’s chamber; *fourth* act: in the queen’s chamber and in Roselinde’s garden.

This fairytale can be performed by four children. One takes over the role of both Mrs. Truelove and the first lady in waiting; the second the roll of Roselinde, the envoy and the second lady in waiting; the third the role of the fairy and the king; and the fourth is appointed the roll of Blanka.

Hints and Suggestions for the Performance

The decorations for this fairytale are very easy to make: the first act is performed in front of Mrs. Truelove’s house. A simple garden table stands in front of a garden bench and some trees, behind which one can see the door to the house. For the second act one needs to represent a garden in front of Roselinde’s house. Arrange the trees differently, place a few plants in between and replace the garden furniture with slightly more elegant chairs.

The third act is performed in the king’s castle in an elegantly, decorated chamber. The fourth act is played first in the queen’s chamber, then again in the garden in front of Roselinde’s house.

The fairy appears at first in the guise of a poor, old woman stooped over her staff. Later she casts off the poor exterior and stands there clothed all in white with a wreath atop her head and a small magic wand in her hand.
Act One.

In front of Mrs. Truelove’s house.

Mrs. Truelove, then the fairy, Blanka and Roselinde

Mrs. Truelove (sitting and working on the bench).
Yes it is true, I have it good! In addition to my daily bread, I have the strength to work and fresh courage. I have never suffered a great tragedy. (sighs) Though I admit, when I think about the death of my dear husband I often cry until my eyes are red. (cries) Alas! How painful is the death of a loved one! (happy) But it’s good that I have my daughters who can comfort me. They are so pretty and dear! (reflective) Only one thing grieves me—Blanka works hard in the house, but sets her sights too high on the outside world. Roselinde, on the other hand, has such a humble nature. She is my pride and joy. Blanka gives me much grief. She never gives to the poor, in fact, she keeps her distance.

(The fairy comes in, soon after Blanka and Roselinde enter.)

Mrs. Truelove (notices the fairy).
Look! Who is that? (She stands up and goes toward the fairy.) Mother, you must be hungry and tired. Sit next to me. (calls) Roselinde, bring me a chair! Hurry! (Roselinde comes quickly carrying a stool)
Fairy (sits on the stool).
Thank you! You are kind.
Roselinde (slides a footstool under the fairy’s feet).
Are you comfortable?
Fairy.
Yes, thank you. I am very tired.
Roselinde (sympathetically to Blanka, who is standing there indifferently).
Oh, how afflicted she looks!
Mrs. Truelove.
You are surely hungry, too?
Fairy.
Certainly. That would be wonderful if I could get a little something to eat.
Mrs. Truelove.
It’s quite easy, the meal is already prepared. If it pleases you, my daughters can bring you snacks and drinks. Blanka! Set the table! (Blanka goes in the house.) Roselinde, fetch here some fresh milk, bread and butter, so we can quickly finish the meal. (Blanka grumpily sets the table, without acknowledging the fairy. Roselinde kindly brings fresh bread, butter, and milk. Mrs. Truelove stands up and goes into the house.)
Fairy.
It makes me happy that you are so mild mannered.
Mrs. Truelove.
(comes back and places a plate with a big piece of cheese on it in front of the fairy)
I brought you cheese too.
Fairy (begins to eat).
Oh, how should I thank you?

Mrs. Truelove.
Oh, it’s nothing, dear Mother. I am pleased that you like it so much. (beckons Blanka) Listen, Blanka, dear child, the plums are so ripe. Bring me some please.

Blanka (to herself, very annoyed).
Yes, if I must. But it really bothers me!

Fairy (cheerfully).
Oh this tastes wonderful! What wonderful accommodations!

Mrs. Truelove.
I am pleased that you like it so much.

Roselinde.
Hm, I just remembered that my hen laid an egg. I’ll hurry and cook it, soft-boiled.

Blanka.
(comes quickly and rudely places a small basket full of plums in front of the fairy)
Here are the plums. (Mrs. Truelove looks at Blanka, astonished)

Fairy (friendly).
Thank you very much for these, dear child. (eats the plums)

Blanka (to herself, sullenly).
Mother looks at me likes she’s angry. I’m unhappy because the old woman has eaten everything that was grown for me. (Roselinde comes)

Mrs. Truelove.
Ah, here you come, Roselinde!

Roselinde (puts a saltshaker on the table).
Here is the salt. I’ll fetch some fresh eggs, my dear mother.

Fairy (sees her also).
She is a really lovely child! Are both of them your daughters?

Mrs. Truelove.
Yes, they are both mine. (Roselinde comes in with the eggs)

Fairy.
Good, you should be pleased. (Stands up and throws her disguise off)

Blanka (to Roselinde).
Look! Did you see what just happened? Oh! We have just seen a miracle.

Roselinde (to Blanka).
Do my eyes deceive me? The woman isn’t poor, she looks like a fairy.

Blanka.
She is noble and rich.

Roselinde.
And very friendly, too.

Mrs. Truelove (bows).
Tell me, how did I come to such an honor?

Fairy.
Good lady, you have made me happy for a long time already. Because you have been so good and sweet to me with your faithfulness and your hard work, I shall bless you with praise and treasures. Today I came here to look at your daughters and I have already chosen for each her reward. Blanka, come here. (Blanka obeys) You will become a queen.
Blanka *(delighted).*
A queen! Oh bliss! A queen! I am ready!

Fairy *(turns to Roselinde).*
You will marry a country farmer. This way you will both be happy. Everything will soon happen—and children—farewell!

*(Curtain falls)*

**Act Two.**

*In Roselinde’s Garden*

Mrs. Truelove, Blanka, Roselinde, and finally the King

Roselinde.
Oh, how beautiful everything looks!

Mrs. Truelove.
How richly you have been blessed!

Roselinde.
What a court, what a house!

Blanka *(with contempt).*
It looks a little small.

Roselinde.
And then of course my good husband!

Mrs. Truelove.
You could not wish for more.

Roselinde *(happily).*
This garden is also mine. I go in and out happily, and then my love comes back home, resting from his work. We are so content and happy. May it always stay like this! Yes, I have a lucky lot. My joy is so great. My sweet sister, may you be as glad as me!

Blanka *(laughing).*
I’m not jealous of your luck. Every moment I hope that the fairy’s promise to me will come true. Once the kind becomes my husband, you will be envying me.

Mrs. Truelove *(reprovingly).*
Roselinde isn’t an envious person. Your happiness brings her happiness.

(exits with Roselinde)

Blanka *(alone).*
*(sounding of horns in the back)*
Listen! What is that? What kind of sound? Is a king coming? *(goes to the side and looks through the bushes)* Yes, I think he’s coming here. Oh, my heart is beating so fast.
*(the King rides up)*

Blanka *(making a low bow).*
My King, greetings.
King (sees Blanka admiringly).
Wow! How beautiful that woman is. (condescendingly) Tell us your name.
Blanka (bowing again).
My name is Blanka.

King (to himself).
I have never seen such a beautiful young woman. (friendly to Blanka) Tell me quickly—I am the
King—how would you like it if I made you my wife?
Blanka (excited).
Oh! Certainly, that is what I have wanted more than anything. It would be a great honor.

King (kisses her).
Good my love. I’m riding home. Make sure you are always ready.

Blanka.
I will come right away, for already I love you very much.

King.
Darling, I must go now. Take care! Good-bye. (exits)

Blanka.
How noble he looks on his horse. (looks through the bushes) Mother! (calls) Sister! Come here!
Come now! Come here quickly! (Mrs. Truelove and Roselinde step in)

Mrs. Truelove (comes in a hurry).
Blanka! You scared me. What has happened to you, my child?

Blanka.
Just come! Come see the King.

Mrs. Truelove (looks through the bushes).
Which king? Oh, the man that rode into the mountains?

Roselinde.
Was the king just with you now?

Blanka (boasting).
Yes, and he really pleases me, and I please him. And think, what joy, just in the first moment he
found me so wonderfully beautiful. He couldn’t get enough of my beauty. And soon he will take
me as his wife!

Roselinde (reflective).
Really? Look now, look how each of us has received according to the fairy’s will.

Mrs. Truelove.
I wish you luck beloved child.

Blanka.
Dear mother, now just worry about the wedding dress. It won’t be too long before the envoy
comes. Mother, help me, I beg you.

Mrs. Truelove.
I would like to help you, my child, but I don’t have a lot of money. I don’t have much to give
you.

Blanka.
Oh, if you could just give me a new wedding dress. That would make me happy. Later I will
have so much more than I will ever need. Oh, how happy I am that I will be the queen!

(Curtains fall)
Act Three.

*In the King’s chamber*

**Blanka, Envoy, and then the King**

*(Blanka sits on an armchair; the envoy stands in front of her)*

**Blanka.**
Were you at my sister’s house?

**Envoy.**
It was my honor to serve you Queen. But—

**Blanka (very lively).**
Now I am eager to hear your message. What did Roselinde say?

**Envoy.**
She thinks of you kindly and well, she thanked you for the gift and greeting—unfortunately, I must report that she doesn’t want to come here. Here there is only difficulty and worry. She lives a peaceful, quiet life there, and she likes it. She doesn’t think she fits in the city.

**Blanka (surprised).**
What peculiar taste she has! *(reproachful)* Did you tell her that I long for her every hour? Did you say that I can find a husband for her here—

**Envoy (regretfully).**
Queen, your sister is a reasonable woman. But she thinks that her husband is as good as anyone, she does not want another, and his rustic looks suit her above all else. *(shrugs his shoulders)* That’s what she told me.

**Blanka.**
And she doesn’t want to come stay here with me for a few days?

**Envoy.**
No, she wants to stay at home, and that’s all she told me.

**Blanka (patronizing).**
Fine, you are dismissed now. *(the Envoy leaves the room with a deep bow.)* Yes, most likely nothing can be done—if my sister Roselinde is so narrow minded, I’ll let her think what she wants for now. Still, I am glad that the fairy is willing to give me things exactly how I want them! Oh! Here comes the king. *(gets up and walks toward him)* Hello, my dear husband!

**King (kisses her).**
Hello, beloved wife, I am happy to see you—and don’t you look lovely in that dress! Unfortunately, and I am sorry about this, I cannot stay here with you for long today, for I must attend to the affairs of the kingdom. Listen, child, there is a dinner and dance tonight. Darling, put on your best.

*(Curtain falls)*
Act Four.

In the Queen’s chamber.

The two ladies-in-waiting, then the King, and lastly Blanka

First.
Did you see? It went quite well!

Second.
She had it coming—what arrogance!

First.
Finally! The king realizes that she is not as intelligent or skillful as she could be.

Second.
And certainly, nothing will stop it. Soon he will send her away to a village in the country.

First.
Yes, I think now he understands that a peasant girl is not fit for a king’s throne.

Second.
Soon she’ll be a burden to him! (Steps back a little) Quiet, here he comes—let’s see if he’ll say anything about it to us. (the King steps in. Both ladies in waiting bow reverentially)

King (hurriedly).
Where is your Queen? Call her!

First.
Right away, your majesty! (leaves)

King (angrily).
I am always left waiting for her!

Second (mockingly).
That’s the way of the country people.

First (comes back).
Her Majesty comes straightaway. She asked that you have patience.

King.
She leaves me waiting everyday, and I cannot take it anymore.

Second (aside to the first).
You did that cleverly.

First (aside to the second).
‘Twas, I told her that she still had time—(laughs) And she is so vain—how she tarries in front of the mirror!

Second.
Let’s see, if, left to act on his own, one of us will win—perhaps the king will quickly have the farm girl dragged home.

King (sees the time).
All my time, wasted!

Second.
Our Queen is busy getting ready.

King.
This vexes me.

Second.
Your Majesty, consider it, how could she know that it’s not right to leave people waiting, being a
peasant and all?

**King.**

Surely she knows well. *(Blanka enters)*

**King (unfriendly).**

Finally, you’re here! Look at the hour. It is unacceptable to leave one waiting like this.

**Blanka (self-consciously).**

My dear husband, I didn’t know—

**King (angrily).**

You say this to my face? You’ve brought shame to my land by only thinking of draperies and rhinestones. Yesterday I saw you standing there awkward and embarrassed, and today you made me wait!

**Blanka (gently).**

Dear Husband, I beg you, just have patience with me. It is not my fault.

**King.**

Indeed it is your fault and I do not have patience. See to it that tonight’s party leaves nothing to be desired.

**Blanka (fearfully).**

How should I prepare it to be?

**King (fiercely).**

How? Fantastic, lively, stunning, and sophisticated; I don’t have time to explain it now. You’ve wasted my time. Now I must leave you.

*(goes quickly away, both women follow him; Blanka sinks into a chair sobbing)*

**Blanka.**

Oh, everything is so sad for me! The king is so angry and it’s so hard for me to be the way he wants me to be. Oh, this is an unlucky day. *(walks around wringing her hands)*

Everyday it gets worse for me. Should I stay here longer? When I came to this court I took everything into consideration and the king loved me, but now he is always so dreadful. *(sits down and puts her head in her hands)*

Couldn’t I be more clever? Yes, now I can appreciate being a queen on my own and without a husband. I never thought that I would have to think about so many different things, or that I would always have to be so careful about my behavior.

When Roselinde asked me to go visit her at home – Oh, my pride and over-zealousness are being punished. If only I could go far away from this tragic place! Since my husband does not love me he will probably allow me some time away, time that I would like to spend living alone with my sister. *(the King comes)*

**King (hesitantly).**

You’re alone?

**Blanka (meekly).**

Don’t be angry. I would like to ask you something.

**King (impatiently).**

Well, what?

**Blanka (to herself).**

His eyes are full of hate!

**King (fiercely).**

Well, what is it? Be quick!

**Blanka (anxiously).**
Dear husband, I am afraid when you are so full of wrath. *(very sadly)* But, I see how things are no longer they way they were before. You are upset by this union with a poor peasant girl.

**King (angrily).**
This bores me. Tell me quickly what it is you want.

**Blanka (timidly).**
I would like some time far from court living at my sister’s home.

**King (amused).**
That can be allowed. *(to himself)* This is very convenient for me since she is making me so uncomfortable. And it seems best to me if she leaves this court. How can anyone argue this? *(wants to leave)*

**Blanka.**
Well, good-bye my dear husband.

**King (while walking away).**
Farewell wife.

**Blanka (sighing).**
He seems so happy to send me far away. Oh, how bitterly I must atone because of my overconfidence.

*(scene change)*

*In Roselinde’s Garden*

**Blanka, Roselinde, Mrs. Truelove, and then the Fairy**

**Blanka (hurrying).**
Dear Mother! Roselinde!

**Mrs. Truelove (hugs Blanka).**
Blanka! Is that you, my child?

**Roselinde.**
What a delight! What a joy it is to see you after being apart for so long!

**Blanka (sighing).**
Oh, how good it is to see you!

**Roselinde.**
Please stay with us for a long time! *(concerned)* Were you sick? You look so pale and you keep sighing.

**Blanka (crying).**
I’m sad, not sick.

**Mrs. Truelove.**
Sad? Oh, you are making me anxious!

**Blanka (sobbing).**
Oh! I don’t think my husband can stand me anymore.

**Roselinde (sympathetic).**
Poor Blanka! What pain, how awful that must be!! Oh, how happy I am that my husband thinks differently about me, that he is so good and friendly.
Blanka.
Sister, how happy you are! Oh, the fairy treated me badly and unjustly. She made me a queen, but didn’t stop to think that glamour and grandeur won’t bring happiness. Now, how much more I prefer contentment and rest. *(the fairy appears and they all bow before her)*

Fairy *(very serious).*
Don’t judge me so quickly my dear child. Yes, I made you a queen, but I surely didn’t do it for my own benefit! You had to be punished because you unwillingly brought me your plums that one time. Notice that glamour and grandeur and glitter don’t bring happiness, only contentment can bring that. When you have what is necessary and are grateful for it, then that become enough for your good fortune and happiness.

Blanka *(lively).*
Truly, I now long for these moments more than ever! *(Humbly)* Thank you for the good lesson, but be so kind now as to end my punishment and help me end my pain so that I can find peace and rest.

Fairy *(friendly).*
Everything has happened so that, if you are content with that, you can live here piously and well. Only make sure to avoid pride and overconfidence. Yesterday, your evil husband died. *(goes off)*

Blanka.
I can’t complain about this!

Roselinde *(pleading).*
And now, my dear sister, you can live with us forever.

Blanka *(kisses Roselinde with great tenderness).*
Thank you with all my heart!

Mrs. Truelove *(to herself).*
How changed her thoughts are! *(to Blanka)* Yes, my dear daughter, I can finally be happy now.

*(The curtain falls)