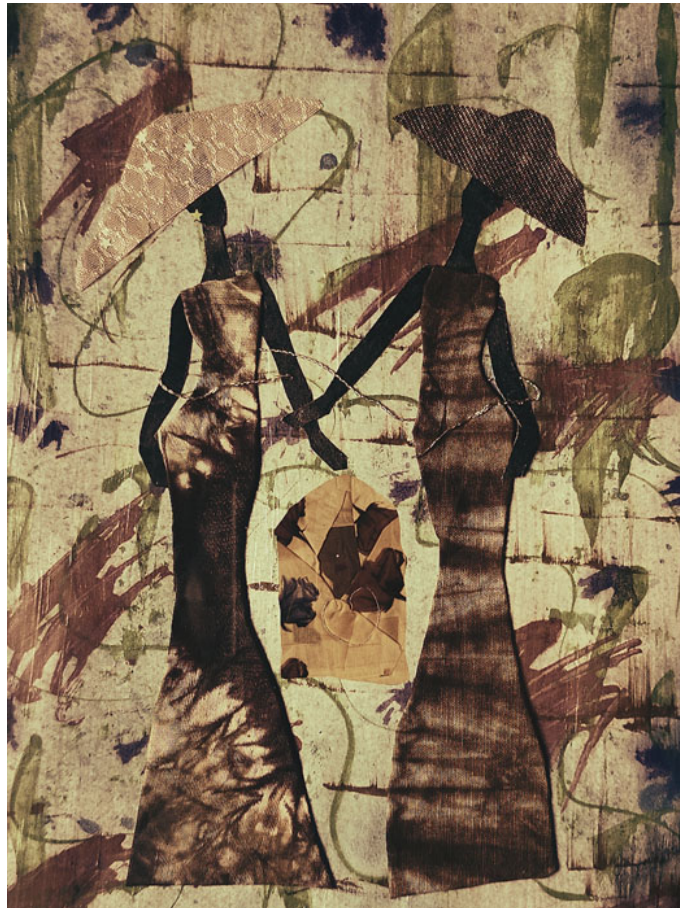


FLASH FICTION

The Willful Children

by Margit Marenich



"Have" by Esther Alimson

This is what had happened, so the story goes.

About a mother, her daughters and a grave, on which more than one beautiful flower still grows.

“Good Mother, I got rewarded with jewels for I saved the cursed princess.”

“A cursed princess, what a waste of time! Go and find a cursed prince to save and marry. And why didn’t you take your sister, who sits there useless, with you?”

“Mütterchen, why do you pester my poor sister?” asked a voice from the spinning wheel.

“It’s my sister’s duty to say, ‘Mother, you know best.’”

Yet if it is a question of marriage, it’s my sister’s right to say, “I know better, Mother.”

“Good Mother, I gave birth to a daughter today.”

“A daughter, are you stupid? Only a son inherits your husband’s house and grounds. And why didn’t you find your sister, who sits there useless, a match?”

“Mother, oh Mother, why do you pester my poor sister?” asked a voice from the nursery.

“It is my sister’s duty to say, ‘Mother, you’re the best.’

Yet if she has children of her own, it’s my sister’s right to say, ‘I am better, Mother.’”

“Good Mother, I am ill and dying.”

“Dying, how dare you? You are not to die before you’ve planted the most beautiful flowers on my gravestone. And why didn’t you spread the illness to your sister, who sits there useless, to get rid of her?”

“Oh Mother, why do you pester my dear sister?” asked a voice from beside the deathbed.

“She was dutiful to you all her life. So, I will thank her by doing her duty today. There is a wonderful grave, right under the window. And because you birthed and raised me dutifully, I want your wishes to come true today.”

Saying that, the second sister threw their mother out of the window into the freshly dug grave.

“Dear sister, do you want to place the nicest flowers gold can buy on our mother’s grave with me?”

“Like our good mother ordered me to.”

So, they left the sick chamber, which was never needed again.

Like that, the story ended.

Maybe, it taught some wisdom. Maybe, Brothers Grimm would’ve just been offended.