

Wind is calm and gentle, the sea fairies bring the little Princess out to meet the Prince.

"But it is not always so, for sometimes the West Wind is cruel and angry, and, instead of carrying the Prince to the top of the ocean, she calls her armies in their black and grey armour, and races wildly over the sea, until the dark hue of their armour makes the sky and sea look both dull and black.

"It was many hundreds of years ago that the West Wind carried off the Rata Prince, but every evening it happened as I have said.

"The musician and the little child are dead, but the music and the song live on for ever.

"More Princes in coats of scarlet come every summer to the bush, but none are so merry or so beautiful as the one who sleeps in the West Wind's Palace beneath the sea.

"That is all my story," said the fairy, and she glided away down into the dark waters of her home, leaving me alone in the night.

I had asked her what the golden robe was like, but she would not tell me. It was too wonderful, she said.

But I have since seen it, my children, yet I cannot tell you what it is like, except that it is very, very beautiful.

Perhaps some day you will see it, and perhaps you will wear one, too. For many people in this world wear those robes that have been woven by the Angel of Sorrow. But you cannot always see them. They are holy, and the wearer wishes to keep them hidden from all eyes, save the King's, in whose land they were woven.

But on their faces there is a faint, very faint gleam of the gold. Some day you will see it, though as I have told you, you cannot always see the robe itself. If you gain one, you, too, will keep it hidden.

It is not a very wonderful story that I have told you, my children, but it was told me in the Land of Long Ago, and I have forgotten. You, I daresay, often talk with the fairies, and they tell you far more beautiful stories than I can. You dwell in that enchanted land, the Land of Little People, and we big folk have left it long ago. We can only look back across the misty lands of memory, for that Land of Little People is "another world than ours." Do not seek to leave its fields, my children, for you can never return to them. Gather all the sweet flowers now, listen to all the stories that the fairies tell you, for they make bright spots on the dusty road of life, golden gleams in the mists of memory.

