

Fifty Fables in German

A Parallel Reader

Sample

“Mutter^{1!}” sagte² einst³ Sophie⁴, “warum⁵
heißt⁶ *man*⁷ die^{8a} schönen⁹, himmelblauen¹⁰
Blümchen^{8b} hier¹¹ an¹² dem^{13a} klaren¹⁴
Bächlein^{13b}, Vergißmeinnicht^{15?}”

“Mother^{1!}” Sophie⁴ once³ said², “why⁵ **do**
*they*⁷ call⁶ the^{8a} beautiful⁹ sky-blue¹⁰
flowers^{8b} here¹¹ by¹² the^{13a} clear¹⁴ stream¹³
forget-me-not^{15?}”

Clinton Sheppard

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Introduction

WHEN learning a language it is very useful to have the same text available in both your native language and in the language you are learning. This gives you the opportunity to study the differences between the two languages, and enables you to expand both your vocabulary and your grammatical intuition through reading. Reading trains your mind to notice differences between the two languages and to make informed guesses about new vocabulary, conjugations, and grammatical patterns. You also become aware of places where English words are translated differently in different contexts, or are potentially left out of the translation entirely, thus giving you a more nuanced understanding of the language you are learning.

The fables in this book were written by Christoph von Schmid in the early 1800's. While the stories have quite a lot of vocabulary in common, each also has unique words that help you train your ability to intuit meaning at the sentence level when you don't know every word. In order to facilitate vocabulary reuse and consistent translation at the word level, the English version of each story was translated from the German one. Because the two languages are related it is usually possible to translate while preserving the structure of the sentence and verb tenses. Where this is not possible the English in this text will be literal in order to preserve the word level translation. This should not pose a problem to the native English speaker's ability to use this book to practice reading German.

The various annotations used in this book.

- Equivalent words and phrases have the same^{superscript number}.
- Underlined words go together.
- When multiple words go together but are not co-located, their superscripts have a letter suffix so you know to expect multiple parts, see for example picked^{2a}..up^{2b} in the sample below.
- *Italicized words have a different literal meaning.*
- **Bold words do not have a corresponding word in the other translation.**

The following line from Der Stein (The stone) provides examples of most of the above:

Der Arme¹ hob^{2a} den Stein³ auf^{2b}, schob^{4a}
*ihn*⁵ ein^{4b}, und⁶ dachte⁷:

The poor man¹ picked^{2a} the stone³ up^{2b},
shoved^{4a} *it*⁵ in^{4b} **his pocket**, and⁶ thought⁷:

Using both translations together you may get a better mental picture of the intent of a word or phrase than with either translation alone.

1: Der Weinstock (The grapevine)

1	Ein Gärtner ¹ hatte ² an ³ seinem ⁴ Hause ⁵ einen Weinstock ⁶ gepflanzt ⁷ , der ⁸ die ^{9a} ganze ¹⁰ Hauswand ^{9b} mit ¹¹ seinen ¹² Blättern ¹³ bedeckte ¹⁴ , und ¹⁵ sehr ¹⁶ köstliche ¹⁷ Trauben ¹⁸ trug ¹⁹ .	A gardener ¹ had ² planted ⁷ at ³ his ⁴ house ⁵ a grapevine ⁶ , that ⁸ covered ¹⁴ the ^{9a} whole ¹⁰ wall of the house ^{9b} with ¹¹ its ¹² leaves ¹³ , and ¹⁵ bore ¹⁹ very ¹⁶ delicious ¹⁷ grapes ¹⁸ .
2	Sein ¹ Nachbar ² beneidete ³ ihn ⁴ darum ⁵ , und ⁶ schnitt ^{7a} einmal ⁸ bei ⁹ Nacht ¹⁰ mehrere ¹¹ der ¹² schönsten ¹³ Rebzweige ¹⁴ ab ^{7b} .	His ¹ neighbor ² envied ³ him ⁴ for it ⁵ , and ⁶ one time ⁸ cut off ⁷ several ¹¹ of the ¹² most beautiful ¹³ vine branches ¹⁴ at ⁹ night ¹⁰ .
3	Als ¹ der Gärtner ² am ³ Morgen ⁴ den Weinstock ⁵ erblickte ⁶ , ward ⁷ er ⁸ sehr ⁹ betrübt ¹⁰ .	When ¹ the gardener ² saw ⁶ the grapevine ⁵ in the ³ morning ⁴ , he ⁸ was ⁷ very ⁹ sad ¹⁰ .
4	Denn ¹ damals ² wußte ³ man ⁴ noch nicht ⁵ , wie ⁶ gut ⁷ dem Weinstocke ⁸ das Beschneiden ⁹ sei ¹⁰ .	Because ¹ at that time ² they ⁴ did ^{3a} not yet ⁵ know ^{3b} , how ⁶ good ⁷ pruning ⁹ was ¹⁰ for the grapevine ⁸ .
5	“Ich ¹ möchte ² weinen ³ ,” sprach ⁴ der Gärtner ⁵ , “wie ⁶ jetzt ⁷ der Weinstock ⁸ über ⁹ seine ¹⁰ Verstümmelung ¹¹ zu ¹² weinen ¹³ scheint ¹⁴ !”	“I ¹ would like to ² cry ³ ,” said ⁴ the gardener ⁵ , “like ⁶ the grapevine ⁸ now ⁷ seems ¹⁴ to ¹² weep ¹³ over ⁹ its ¹⁰ mutilation ¹¹ !”
6	Allein ¹ sieh da ² ! der Weinstock ³ trug ⁴ in ⁵ diesem ⁶ Jahre ⁷ so ⁸ viele ⁹ und ¹⁰ so ¹¹ schöne ¹² Trauben ¹³ , wie ¹⁴ noch ¹⁵ in ¹⁶ keinem ¹⁷ der ^{18a} vorigen ¹⁹ Jahre ^{18b} .	But ¹ behold ² ! the grapevine ³ bore ⁴ so ⁸ many ⁹ and ¹⁰ such ¹¹ beautiful ¹² grapes ¹³ in ⁵ this ⁶ year ⁷ , as ¹⁴ yet ¹⁵ in ¹⁶ none ¹⁷ of the ^{18a} previous ¹⁹ years ^{18b} .
7	Der Gärtner ¹ kam ² aber ³ auf ⁴ den ^{5a} glücklichen ⁶ Gedanken ^{5b} , die Weinstöcke ⁷ durch ⁸ Beschneiden ⁹ fruchtbarer ¹⁰ zu ¹¹ machen ¹² .	But ³ the gardener ¹ came ² up with ⁴ the ^{5a} lucky ⁶ idea ^{5b} , to ¹¹ make ¹² the grapevines ⁷ more fruitful ¹⁰ through ⁸ pruning ⁹ .

Vocabulary unique to this story:

- **bedeckte** - [covered] 1
- **beneidete** - [envied] 2
- **Beschneiden** - *das* [pruning] 4;
[pruning] 7
- **Blättern** - [leaves] 1
- **damals** - [at that time] 4
- **fruchtbarer** - [more fruitful] 7
- **Gedanken** - *den* [the idea] 7
- **gepflanzt** - [planted] 1
- **Hauswand** - *die* [the wall of the
house] 1
- **möchte** - [would like to] 5
- **Nachbar** - [neighbor] 2
- **Rebzweige** - [vine branches] 2
- **Verstümmelung** - [mutilation] 5
- **vorigen** - [previous] 6
- **Weinstocke** - *dem* [the
grapevine] 4
- **Weinstöcke** - *die* [the
grapevines] 7

Ready for more?

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