

V

but they could never realize that that was only the instrument. Such difficulty is the symptom of a primitive and not a developed mind. You find it among primitive women who have not yet developed their animus, or the man who has not developed his anima. When the man's mind is in the course of awakening, it generally goes through this phase of entanglement, and needs a thorough realization that a further awakening is necessary. Women take the instrument for the deed, a typical error which keeps them from their creativeness but makes them useful for men. They are good secretaries for creative men, for then they need this function. They collect, and the man gratefully uses the material, but then the woman is reduced to collecting for the man and can never be creative herself.

There are many international variations of the story in which the miller realizes that he has sold his own daughter to the devil, or to the evil spirit, or, as this variation says, to the Evil One. The motif of not having hands, as far as I have seen, is one that only occurs to heroines; it is very widespread and has different causes. Here it happens because the girl has been sold to the devil.

Synopsis of : *THE HANDLESS MAIDEN*

A miller had fallen by degrees into great poverty until he had nothing left but his mill and a large apple tree. One day when he was going into the forest to cut wood, an old man, whom he had never seen before, stepped up to him and said, "Why do you trouble yourself with chopping wood? I will make you rich if you will promise me what stands behind your mill."

The miller thought to himself that it could be nothing but his apple tree; so he said "Yes" and concluded the bargain. The other, however, laughed derisively, and said, "After three years I will come and fetch what belongs to me."

As soon as the miller got home, his wife asked him the origin of the sudden flow of gold which was coming to the house. The miller told her that it came from a man he had met in the forest to whom in return he had promised what stands behind the mill. "For", said the miller, "we can very well spare the great apple tree."

"Ah, my husband", exclaimed his wife, "it is the Evil Spirit whom you have seen. He did not mean the apple tree, but our daughter, who was

V

behind the mill sweeping the yard."

The miller's daughter was a beautiful and pious maiden, and during all the three years lived in the fear of God. When the day came for the Evil One to fetch her, she washed herself quite clean and made a circle round herself with chalk, so that he could not approach her. In a rage he said to the miller, "Take her away from all water, that she may not be able to wash herself; else have I no power over her." The miller did so, for he was afraid. But the next morning when the Evil One came, the girl had wept upon her hands so that they were quite clean. He was baffled again and in his anger said to the miller, "Cut off both her hands, or else I cannot now obtain her."

The miller was horrified and said, "How can I cut off the hands of my own child?"

But the Evil One pressed him saying, "If you do not, you are mine, and I will take you yourself away!"

The miller told his daughter what the Evil One said and asked her to help him in his trouble and to forgive him for the wickedness he was about to do her. She replied, "Dear father, do with me what you will — I am your daughter." And her father cut her hands off.

For the third time now the Evil One came. But the maiden had let fall so many tears upon her arms that they were both quite clean. So he was obliged to give her up and after this lost all power over her.

The miller now said to her, "I have received so much good through you, my daughter, that I will care for you most dearly all your life long."

But she answered, "Here I cannot remain. I will wander forth into the world, where compassionate men will give me as much as I require."

Then she had her arms bound behind her back and at sunrise departed on her journey. In time she arrived at a royal garden and by the light of the moon she saw a tree standing which bore most beautiful fruits. She could not enter for there was water all round, but she was tormented by hunger, so she kneeled and prayed to God. All at once an angel came down, who made a passage through the water, so that the ground was dry for her to pass over. So she went into the garden, but the pears were all numbered. She stepped up and ate one to appease her hunger, but no more. The gardener perceived her do it, but because the angel stood by he was afraid, and thought the maiden was a spirit.

The next morning the king found that a pear was missing and asked the gardener whither it was gone. He replied, "Last night a spirit came,

who had no hands, and ate the pear with her mouth.”

The king then asked, “How did the spirit come through the water? And whither did it go after it had eaten the pear? ”

The gardener answered, “One clothed in snow-white garments came down from heaven and made a passage through the waters, so that the spirit walked over on dry land. And because it must have been an angel, I was afraid, and neither called out nor questioned it; and as soon as the spirit had finished the fruit, she returned as she came.”

The king said, “If it be as you say, I will this night watch with you.”

As soon as it was dark the king came into the garden, bringing with him a priest. At about midnight the maiden crept out from under the bushes and again ate with her mouth a pear off the tree, whilst the angel clothed in white stood by her. Then the priest went towards her and said, “Art thou come from God or from earth? Art thou a spirit or a human being? ”

She replied, “I am no spirit, but a poor maiden, deserted by all, save God alone.”

The king said, “If you are forsaken by all the world, yet will I not forsake you,” and he took her with him to his royal palace. Because she was so beautiful and pious, he loved her with all his heart, ordered silver hands to be made for her, and made her his bride.

After a year had passed, the king was obliged to go to war and left the young queen to the care of his mother. Soon afterwards a boy was born and the old mother wrote a letter to her son containing the joyful news. But the messenger rested and fell asleep on his way and the Evil One changed the letter for another saying that the queen had brought a changeling into the world. As soon as the king had read this letter, he was frightened and much troubled, but he wrote to his mother that she should take great care of the queen until his arrival. But the messenger again fell asleep on the way and the Evil One put a letter in his pocket saying that the queen and her child should be killed. When the old mother received this letter, she was struck with horror and wrote another letter to the king, but received no answer. Rather the Evil One placed another false letter for the mother into the messenger’s pocket saying that she (the mother) should preserve the tongue and eyes of the queen as a sign that she had fulfilled the order.

The old mother was sorely grieved to shed innocent blood so she cut out the tongue and eyes of a calf and said to the queen, “I cannot let you

be killed as the king commands, but you must remain here no longer. Go forth with your child into the wide world and never return here again.”

Thus saying, she bound the child upon the young queen’s back, and the poor wife went away, weeping bitterly. Soon she entered a large forest and there she fell upon her knees and prayed to God. The angel appeared and led her to a little cottage, over the door of which was a shield inscribed with the words: “Here may everyone live freely.”

Out of the house came a snow-white maiden who said, “Welcome, Lady Queen,” and led her in and said she was an angel sent from God to tend her and her child. In this cottage the queen lived for seven years and was well cared for; through God’s mercy to her, on account of her piety, her hands grew again as before.

Meanwhile the king had come home again, and his first thought was to see his wife and child. Then his mother began to weep and said, “You wicked husband, why did you write me that I should put to death two innocent souls? ” And showing him the two letters which the Evil One had forged, she continued, “I have done as you commanded,” and she brought him the tokens — the two eyes and the tongue.

The king then began to weep so bitterly for his dear wife and son that the old mother pitied him, and said, “Be comforted, she lives yet! I caused a calf to be slain, from whom I took these tokens; but the child I bound upon your wife’s back, and I bade them go forth into the wide world, and she promised never to return here because you were so wrathful against her.”

“So far as heaven is blue,” exclaimed the king, “I will go; and neither will I eat nor drink until I have found again my dear wife and child — if they have not perished of hunger by this time.”

Thereupon the king set out, and for seven long years sought his wife in every stony cleft and rocky cave, but found her not — and began to think she must have perished.

But God sustained him, and at last he came to the large forest and little cottage. Out of the house came the white maiden and leading him in said, “Be welcome, great king! Whence comest thou? ”

He replied, “For seven long years have I sought everywhere for my wife and child; but I have not succeeded.”

Then the angel offered him food and drink, but he refused them both and lay down to sleep, and covered his face with a napkin.

Now went the angel into the chamber where sat the queen, with her

V

son, whom she usually called "Sorrowful" and said to her, "Come down with your child. Your husband is here." So she went to where he lay, and the napkin fell from off his face.

So the queen said: "Sorrowful, pick up the napkin, and cover again your father's face." The child did as he was bid, and the king, who heard in his slumber what passed, let the napkin again fall from off his face.

At this the boy became impatient and said, "Dear mother, how can I cover my father's face? Have I indeed a father on the earth? I have learned the prayer, 'Our Father which art in heaven'; and you have told me my father was in heaven — the good God. How can I talk to this wild man? He is not my father."

As the king heard this, he raised himself up and asked the queen who she was. The queen replied, "I am your wife, and this your son, Sorrowful."

But when he saw her human hands, he said, "My wife had silver hands."

"The merciful God", said the queen, "has caused my hands to grow again"; and the angel going into her chamber, brought out the silver hands and showed them to him.

Now he perceived that they were certainly his dear wife and child and kissed them gladly, saying, "A heavy stone is taken from my heart." After eating a meal together with the angel, they went home to the king's mother.

Their arrival caused great rejoicings everywhere; and the king and queen celebrated their marriage again and lived happily together until the end of their lives.

The theme of the miller is very ambivalent in folklore. Looked at from the naive angle, the peasant's angle, a miller has not to bring in the corn. He is the only peasant who does not work, a primitive kind of Mercurius who has the trick of making water work for him. The use of water power is one of man's earliest inventions. Formerly, grinding had been done either by animals or slaves going round and round, which was terrible work. The Greek word *mechane* means "a trick" and the water mill would be the technical trick by which the work should be shortened. There are innumerable stories in folklore in which there is a rich miller who exploits the hardworking peasants in the neighborhood by putting up the price of flour. He sets the price for both sale and re-purchase; he knows the trick by which he can torment the primitive peasant, and is therefore at enmity with him. The peasants say: "He sits there and through his water trick can put up the price." He thus carries