

He was a very selfish Giant.

The poor children now had nowhere to play. They tried to play on the road, but the road was very dusty and full of hard stones, and they did not like it. They used to wander  
5 round the high wall when their lessons were over, and talk about the beautiful garden inside. “How happy we were there,” they said to each other.

( 2 )

Then the Spring came, and all over the country there were little blossoms and little birds. Only in the garden of  
10 the Selfish Giant it was still winter. The birds did not want to sing in it as there were no children, and the trees forgot to blossom. Once a beautiful flower put its head out from the grass, but when it saw the notice-board it was so sorry for the children that it slipped back into the ground again, and  
15 went off to sleep. The only people who were pleased were the Snow and the Frost. “Spring has forgotten this garden,”

they cried, “so we will live here all the year round.” The Snow covered up the grass with her great white overcoat, and the Frost painted all the trees silver. Then they invited the North Wind to stay with them, and he came. He was wrapped in furs, and he roared all day about the garden,  
5 and blew the chimney-pots down. “This is a delightful



“For a red rose?” they all cried; “How ridiculous!” said the little Lizard, who was something of a cynic, laughed.

But the Nightingale understood the secret of the Student’s sorrow, and sat silent in the Oak-tree, thinking  
5 about the mystery of Love.

Suddenly she spread her brown wings and flew like a shadow across the garden.

In the centre of the lawn was a beautiful Rose-tree. She flew to it and sat on a spray.

10 “Give me a red rose,” she cried, “and I will sing you my sweetest song.”

But the Tree shook its head.

“My roses are white,” it answered; “as white as the foam on the sea, and whiter than the snow on the mountain. But  
15 go and see my brother who grows around the old sun-dial. Perhaps he will give you what you want.”

So the Nightingale flew over to the Rose-tree that was growing around the old sun-dial.

20 “Give me a red rose,” she cried, “and I will sing you my sweetest song.”

But the Tree shook its head.

“My roses are yellow,” it answered; “as yellow as mermaid’s hair, and yellower than daffodils that grow in the meadow. But go and see my brother who grows below the  
5 young Student’s window. Perhaps he will give you what you want.”

So the Nightingale flew over to the Rose-tree that was growing under the young Student’s window.

“Give me a red rose,” she cried, “and I will sing you my  
10 sweetest song.”

But the Tree shook its head.

“My roses are red,” it answered; “as red as dove’s feet, and redder than the great fans of coral that waves in the ocean. But the winter has damaged my growth and I cannot  
15 give any new roses this year.”

“One red rose is all that I want,” cried the Nightingale. “Is there no way by which I can get it?”

“There is a way,” said the Rose-tree; “but it is so terrible that I dare not tell you.”