

CLASSICS TO GO
A GALLERY OF
CHILDREN



A. A. MILNE

A Gallery of Children

A. A. Milne

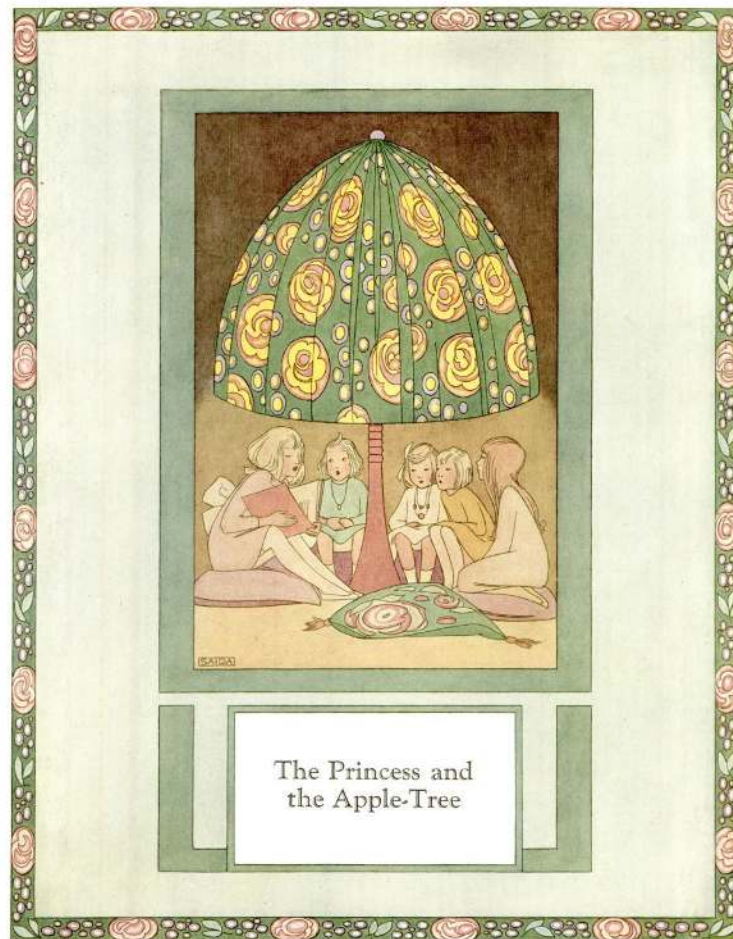
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THE PRINCESS AND THE APPLE-TREE



ONCE upon a time there was a beautiful Princess, who loved all lovely things, and most she loved the flowers and the blossoming trees in her father's garden. Now there was a humble man called Silvio, whose business it was to tend the flowers and the trees in the King's garden, and to him also they were a never-ending happiness, because of their beauty. So it was that their love for lovely things drew them

together, and Silvio loved the Princess, and sometimes they walked hand-in-hand together.

But the King was angry, for it was in his mind that the Princess should marry a greater man than this; and he came upon Silvio in the garden, and commanded him to leave that country, and never to be found there again. And Silvio said, "How can I leave the garden which I love?" Whereupon the King laughed, and said, "Stay, then," and touched him with the wand which he carried ... and in a moment there was no Silvio there, but only another apple-tree in the garden. For the King of that country was a great magician, and many were afraid of him.

The days went by, and still the Princess sought Silvio in the garden, but he did not come. So she went to her father, the King, and asked of him. And the King laughed, and said, "He was pruning an apple-tree. I did not like the way he pruned it. He will never come back." Then the Princess said, "Which was the tree he was pruning?" And the King led her to the window, and showed her the tree. And the Princess was astonished, for she did not know that there had been an apple-tree there. And, when she was alone, she went to the apple-tree, saying, "It is the last thing which he touched;" so she touched it with her hand. And the apple-tree trembled gently, and the blossom fell upon her head. So it was on the next day, and the next....

And Summer came, but Silvio did not come, and Autumn came, and still she thought of Silvio. One day, while she was beneath the apple-tree, she cried out suddenly, "O Silvio, let me not forget you!"—and the tree shook, and an apple fell into her lap. The Princess took a little silver knife, and peeled the apple, so that the peel was unbroken, and she threw the peel over her shoulder, saying, "See whom I love!" And she looked behind her, and there was the letter "S" upon the ground. So it was upon the next day and the next. And upon the fourth day she took an apple from