

## **The Little Silver Dagger**

Once upon a time, back in the days when there were kings and queens and castles, there was a castle that had very special tools within it. They were talking tools, but only at night when every person in the castle was sound asleep. At one o'clock the household tools and utensils would gather in the kitchen to recount the exploits of the day.

The large butcher knife would brag. I have carved 8 roasts today for food on the king's table.

The ax would say, "I have chopped 8 cords of wood today to burn in the fires and keep the castle warm as well as to cook the food."

The dainty butter knife said "I was used to spread butter and jam on the queen's biscuit and my shiny silver is a beautiful decoration on the table.

The paring knives boasted in how many apples and potatoes they had peeled. The long hunting knife told of the stags he had skinned. The swords told of tales of battle and the foes they had defeated and the lives they had taken or saved.

Each night they met and shared their stories of what they had done that day. All were busy being used in the service of the king or queen. All except for one, the little silver dagger. She was hidden in a special sheath and worn concealed in the garments of the princess. The king had given this beautiful little dagger to the princess and told her to wear it always. But this little dagger spent all her time hidden away in the sheath and was never used. When she came to the gatherings, she had nothing to say. She could not report on the great or magnificent deeds she had done or how she had been used by the king. She felt she had no purpose. No one ever saw her. Only the princess and the king knew she existed. She was pretty, but what did that matter when she was never seen and never used. Each night she went away from the gathering sorrowful. All had tales of exploits, all except the little silver dagger.

Then one night the king was gone and few guards were left in the castle. The princess was just getting into bed and had taken off her gown and had put on her night dress. Her maids had left for the night when suddenly the door of her chamber swung open and a big burly man entered. He swayed slightly as he came towards her. He reeked of alcohol; "Come here my pretty," he said. "I have waited for this chance for a long time and now you will be mine."

The princess screamed, but no one answered or came to her assistance. He approached and tried to pull her towards him. She squirmed and twisted out of his grasp, but he came at her again, anger in his voice. "If you won't have me, no one will," he shouted, and he caught her again. When his fingers closed around her throat, the princess drew the little silver dagger from its sheath. As the man drew her towards him, the little silver dagger slipped quietly between his ribs and pierced his heart. He fell in a heap on the floor.

That night all the knives and tools told their stories as usual of what they had done. The little dagger was quiet as usual, until the others had finished. Then she spoke up and said simply, "I have not been used to do many deeds, but this one thing have I done. Tonight I saved the life of my princess. And the little dagger told the story. The other tools were amazed. For so long they had despised this one who had nothing to say. But in one event she had accomplished a more important task than any of them.