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**BLUEBEARD**



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June



## BLUEBEARD.

ONCE on a time there lived a man  
hated by all he knew,  
Both that his ways were very bad,  
and that his beard was blue ;  
But as he was so rich and grand, and  
led a merry life,  
A lady he contrived at last to induce  
to be his wife.

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For a month after the wedding they  
lived and had good cheer,  
And then said Bluebeard to his wife,  
“ I ’ll say good-bye, my dear ;  
“ Indeed, it is but for six weeks that I  
shall be away,  
“ I beg that you ’ll invite your friends,  
and feast and dance and play ;  
“ And all my property I ’ll leave con-  
fided to your care :  
“ Here are the keys of all my chests,  
there ’s plenty and to spare.

*From the Library of*  
*MISS ELIZABETH KEAN*  
*Ursino :: Elizabeth :: New Jersey*



“ But this small key belongs to one small  
room on the ground-floor,—

“ And this you must not open, or you  
will repent it sore.”

And so he went; and all the friends  
came there from far and wide,

And in her wealth the lady took much  
happiness and pride;

But in a while this kind of joy grew  
nearly satisfied,







And oft she saw the closet door, and longed  
to look inside.

At last she could no more refrain, and turned  
the little key,

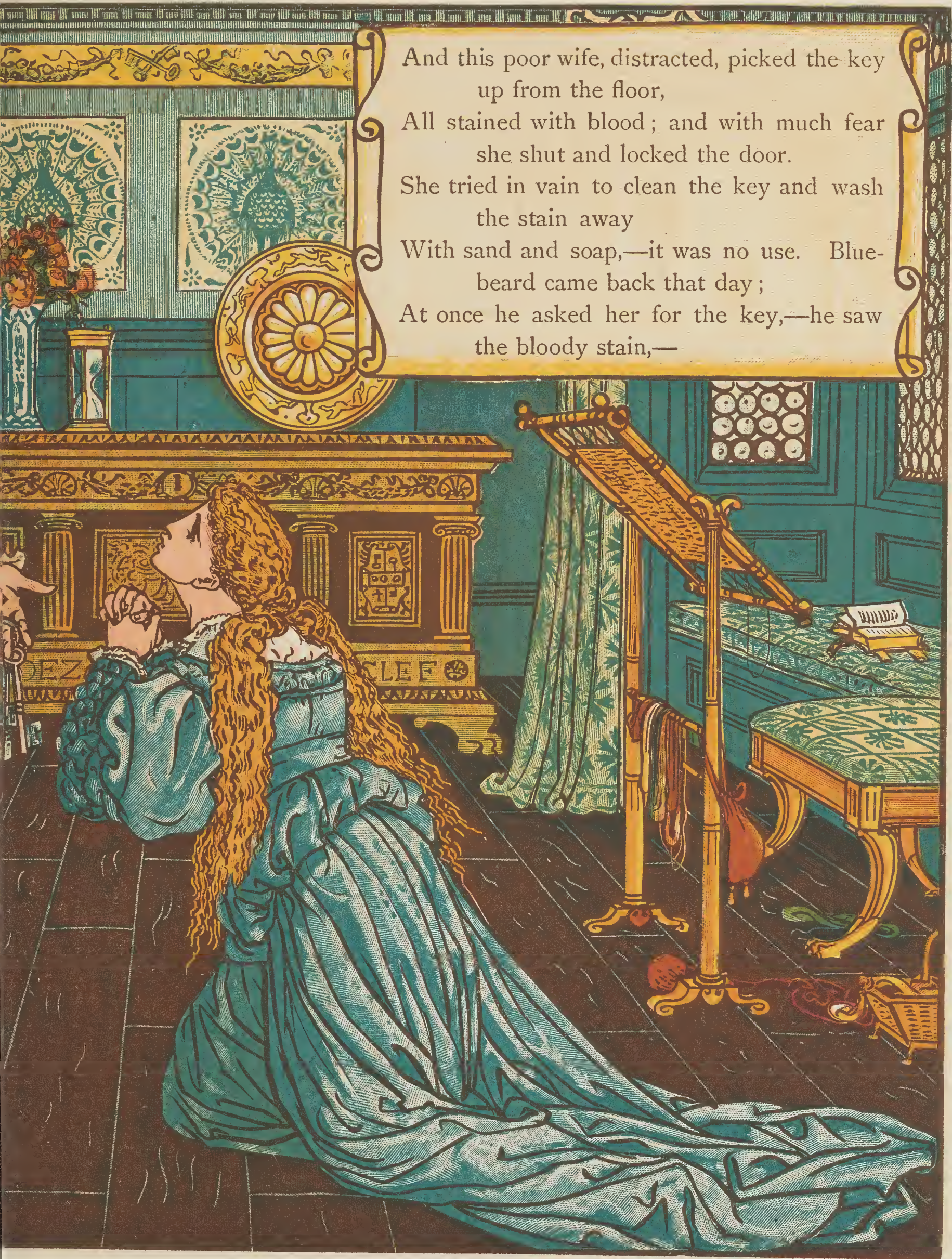
And looked within, and fainted straight the  
horrid sight to see ;

For there upon the floor was blood, and on  
the walls were wives,

For Bluebeard first had married them, then  
cut their throats with knives.



And this poor wife, distracted, picked the key  
up from the floor,  
All stained with blood ; and with much fear  
she shut and locked the door.  
She tried in vain to clean the key and wash  
the stain away  
With sand and soap,—it was no use. Blue-  
beard came back that day ;  
At once he asked her for the key,—he saw  
the bloody stain,—







*"You have been in the closet once,  
and you shall go again!"*

*"O spare me, spare me! give me  
time, nor kill me hastily!"*

*"You have a quarter of an hour,—  
then, madam, you must die!"*

*"O sister Anne, go up, go up, and  
look out from the tower ;*

*"I'm dead unless my brothers come  
in a quarter of an hour!"*

And Anne looked once, and Anne  
looked twice, and nothing saw  
abroad,

But shining sun and growing grass,  
and dust upon the road.







"Come down!" cried Bluebeard, "time is up!" With many a sigh and moan, She prayed him for a minute more; he shouted still, "Come down!"

"O sister Anne, look out, look out! and do you nothing see?"

"At last I see our brothers two come riding hastily."

"Now spare me, Bluebeard,—spare thy wife!" but as the words were said,



And just as Bluebeard's cruel blade was  
descending on her head,  
In rushed the brothers with their swords,—  
they cut the murderer down,  
And saved their sister's life, and gained  
much glory and renown ;  
And then they all with gold and plate and  
jewels rare made free,  
And ever after lived content on Blue-  
beard's property.



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