



with Jill Haywood

Vocabulary

Orchard - camp de arbres fruters

Branch - branca

Ripe - madur

Sorrowfully - tristament

Drawer - calaix

Rotted - pudrida

Seed - llavor



The Three Apples (adapted from Ovid)

The old apple tree stood in the **orchard** with the other trees, and all summer long it had stretched out its branches wide to catch the rain and the sun to make its apples grow round and ripe.

Now it was autumn, and on the old apple tree were three huge apples, larger than any other apples in the whole orchard. The apple tree stretched and reached as far as it could, until the branch on which the three gold apples grew hung over the orchard wall. There were the three great apples, waiting for some one to pick them, and as the wind blew through the leaves of the apple tree it seemed to sing:

"Here in the orchard are apples three,
Who uses one well shall a treasure see."

And one morning Gerald came down the lane that passed by the orchard wall. He looked longingly at the three gold apples, wishing, wishing that he might have one. Just then the wind sang its song again in the leaves of the apple tree and, plop, down to the ground, right at Gerald's feet, fell one of the three gold apples.

He picked it up and turned it round and round in his hands. How sweet it smelled, and how juicy it was! Gerald could think of nothing so good to do with such a beautiful ripe apple as to eat it. He put it to his mouth and took a great bite of it, then another bite, and another. Soon there was nothing left of

the apple but the core, which Gerald threw away. He smacked his lips and went on his way, but the wind in the apple trees sang, sorrowfully, after him:

"Here in the orchard are apples two,
But gone is the treasure that fell for you."

And after a while Hilda came down the lane that passed by the orchard wall. She looked up at the two beautiful gold apples that hung on the branch of the old apple tree, and she listened to the wind as it sang in the branches to her:

"Here in the orchard are apples two,
A treasure they hold for a child like you."

Then the wind blew harder and, plop, an apple fell in the lane right in front of Hilda.

She picked it up joyfully. She had never seen such a large golden apple. She held it carefully in her clasped hands and thought what a pity it would be to eat it, because then it would be gone.

"I will keep this gold apple always," Hilda said, and she wrapped it up in the clean handkerchief that was in her pocket. Then Hilda went home, and there she laid away in a drawer the gold apple that the old apple tree had given her, closing the drawer tightly. The apple lay inside, in the dark, and all wrapped up, for many days, until it **rotted**. And when Hilda next went down the lane and past the orchard, the wind in the apple tree sang to her:

"Only one apple where once there were two,
Gone is the treasure I gave to you."

Last of all, Steven went down the lane one fine autumn morning when the sun was shining warm and the wind was out. There, hanging over the orchard wall, he saw just one great gold apple that seemed to him the most beautiful apple that he had ever seen. As he stood looking up at it, the wind in the apple tree sang to him, and it said:

"Round and gold on the apple tree,
A wonderful treasure, hanging, see!"

Then the wind blew harder, and down fell the last gold apple of the three into Steven's waiting hands.

He held it a long time and looked at it as Gerald and Hilda had, thinking how good it would be to eat, and how pretty it would be to look at if he were to save it. Then he decided not to do either of these things. He took his jack-

knife out of his pocket and cut the gold apple in half, straight across, and exactly in the middle between the blossom and the stem.

Oh, the surprise that waited for Steven inside the apple! There was a star, and in each point of the star lay a small black seed. Steven carefully took out all the seeds and climbed over the orchard wall, holding them in his hand. The earth in the orchard was still soft, for the frost had not yet come. Steven made holes in the earth and in each hole he dropped an apple seed. Then he covered up the seeds and climbed back over the wall to eat his apple, and then go on his way.

But as Steven walked down the lane, the orchard wind followed him, singing to him from every tree and bush,

"A planted seed is a treasure won.
The work of the apple is now well done."