**suitable for children age 6 to 8 approx.**

**Brave knight.**

[Start of Story](file:///C%3A%5CDocuments%20and%20Settings%5CGMIT%5CMy%20Documents%5Cstorybud%20files%20dec%2012%5Cbrave_knight_page_1.htm#start)

**When Christ was on earth, He had a little band of disciples who loved him very much. The night before He went away from them, He took them to a little upstairs room and there had a supper with them. And it was said that at that supper, He used a beautiful golden cup in which He passed the wine to them, and when He went away from earth, the disciples loved everything He had touched, and they seemed to love most of all this golden cup. They called it the Holy Grail, and it was given to a very good man, who cared for it carefully, and for years it passed from one good man to another, for it was said that if it ever fell into the hands of a man who was not good and Christ-loving the cup would be lost. So for many years it was carefully kept, and people took long journeys to see the Holy Grail, which the Master himself used when He was on earth. But one day the cup passed into the hands of one who was not worthy, and, as it had been said, it was lost.**

**They searched for it far and near, but it could not be found. Finally there came some men who called themselves knights. They were brave, strong men, who did many wonderful things for the king, and many of them said: "We will spend our lives hunting for the Holy Grail. We will take long pilgrimages until we find it." And so the knights searched over land and sea, over mountain and plain, hunting for the Holy Grail, but still they found it not. Then there came a knight whose name was Sir Launfal. He was very young--so young that he had never made a journey, nor worn an armor, nor had he ever done a wonderful deed. But he was brave, and said in his heart: "I will find the Holy Grail." So he went to the silversmith and had a beautiful silver armor and golden spurs made, and to the helmet-maker, who made him a helmet of shining silver. Next he chose from the stables the finest steed, and he was then ready for the journey, and Sir Launfal's heart was full of hope.**

**On the night before the pilgrimage he lay in his room, and the armor hung on the wall before him, with the helmet beside it, and the horse stood ready in the stable. At the first ray of morning he was to begin his journey, and as he lay he slept, and dreamed a dream. He thought it was already morning--the morning of his pilgrimage. He had on his armor and his silver helmet, and was riding out of the castle gate on his beautiful steed. It was a June morning, and everything was beautiful. The very flowers and green grass beneath his feet seemed to bring Sir Launfal a message of hope. And as he rode his heart was very glad, and he said: "I shall find the Holy Grail." He was riding out of the great castle gate when he heard a voice which was tired and weak, and it said: "Will you please give me something?" Sir Launfal looked in surprise, and there, crouching beside the castle gate, was a beggar, poor and ragged and weak, and it was he who had asked in a tired voice, "Will you please give me something?"**

**Sir Launfal looked at him and frowned, and said in his heart, "Why does this beggar lie at my castle gate to spoil the beauty of the morning?" But, because he was a knight and felt that he must give something, he took from his purse a piece of gold and threw it to the beggar. But the beggar looked at him and said, seeing his scornful frown: "I do not wish your gold that you give with scorn. Better to me a poor man's crust." But Sir Launfal rode proudly down the road on his way, for he felt that he could no longer listen to the poor beggar. Then he rode over land and sea, over mountain and plain, searching everywhere for the Holy Grail, and, although it sometimes seemed very near, he did not find it. He had now grown to be an old man. The helmet and armor were rusted, his clothes had become thin and ragged, he was stooped and gray, and his eyes had grown dim with the years, but still he searched, and said in his heart: "I will find the Holy Grail."**

**Then he seemed to be near his old home one night, and he said to himself: "Before I go on my way I will once more look at my old home." And he entered the gate, and as he was walking up the path he heard a voice, tired and weak, and it said: "Will you please give me something?" He looked down, and there by his feet lay the beggar who had asked for something at his castle gate the morning he had started on his pilgrimage. This time Sir Launfal looked at him and smiled. Then he said: "I have only a crust of bread, but I will gladly share it with you." Then, taking from his pocket a single crust of bread, he stooped and gave the half to the beggar. Then Sir Launfal said: "I will get you water to quench your thirst," and he went to where the little spring ran merrily along in the twilight, and, taking from his pocket a little tin cup, battered and rusted from years of use, he filled it to the brim with clear, cold water, and returned with it to the beggar.**

**As soon as the tin cup touched the beggar's hand it turned into a shining cup of gold, and behold! the beggar was no longer there, but in his place there stood a man, tall, strong and beautiful, wearing shining white garments, and around his head there seemed a radiant glow of light. The beautiful man looked at Sir Launfal, and he said, in a voice full of love and gentleness: "In your own castle yard you have found the Holy Grail by doing kindly service to one of my needy ones." The beautiful man was gone. Sir Launfal lay in his room. The morning sunlight came in through the window, telling him it was time to arise and go on his journey. And his helmet and armor still hung on the wall, ready for him; but Sir Launfal lay long in thought. There was no need of his long pilgrimage, for the poor and the needy were close to his door, and he stayed to help them with gifts of love.**

**The end.**