

### **Thumbelina.**

There was once a woman who lived in a tiny cottage which had a beautiful garden. She was very happy tending her garden, but over time she became sad. She had no children who could share her garden with her. She decided to ask the old witch in her village for her help. When the woman explained that she wanted a child, the old witch thought for a moment. Then she pulled a tiny bag out of a pocket in her cloak. "Plant these wildflower seeds and look after them. Soon you will have your wish." The woman was overjoyed that the witch had given her a solution to her problem. She took the seeds home with her. The next day, she planted them in a sunny corner of her garden. It was the prettiest spot that she could find. She watered and watched over the seeds every day. Soon, tiny green sprouts began to poke up out of the ground. Before long, the sprouts grew and blossomed into a beautiful patch of wildflowers. In the corner of the wildflower patch grew a single, beautiful tulip. Its deep pink petals were closed up tightly. The flower was so lovely that the woman could not resist bending down to smell it. As she knelt in front of the flower, its petals suddenly opened. The woman was amazed to find a tiny girl sitting inside. She wore a tulip petal for a dress and had long, gleaming hair. "You are the most beautiful child I have ever seen! And you are hardly even as big as my thumb. Would you like to stay with me in my garden?" asked the woman. "Oh, yes!" replied the girl. "I will call you Thumbelina," said the woman. At home, she made Thumbelina a tiny bed out of an acorn shell. Thumbelina slept soundly under rose petal blankets. She and her mother lived very happily in the garden the whole summer long. She loved to play in the little pond in the middle of the garden, so her mother made her a tiny boat out of a maple leaf. She rowed around the pond using two blades of grass for oars. Her mother sat by the side of the pond and read stories to her while she played. Sometimes, Thumbelina sang as she rowed. She had the most beautiful, silvery voice that her mother always loved to hear. One day, a frog was hopping by the garden pond. He heard Thumbelina's beautiful voice. When he saw the tiny girl rowing her maple leaf boat, he said, "What a lovely creature! I must take her away to my lily pad to be my wife."