

Ririro

The Frog Prince

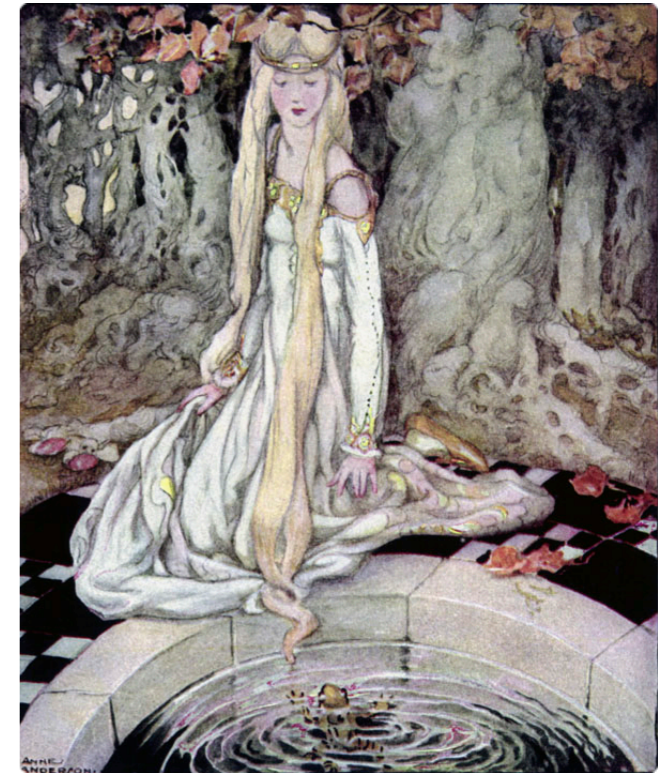


Once upon a time there was a king's daughter who was bored out of her mind. She took a golden ball and went into the forest. In the middle of the forest she sat down, threw the ball up and caught it again. A whole while this game was going fine, until she threw the ball so high that she couldn't catch it and the ball fell on the ground and rolled into the water. The princess ran after the ball, but it sank too fast and the water was too deep to grab the ball.

When the ball disappeared, the girl started wailing: "Oh no! My golden ball! I wish I still had it! I would give anything! My clothes, my gems, my pearls and even my golden crown." When she was finished speaking, suddenly a frog appeared and spoke: "King's daughter, why are you crying?"

'Oh', she said, 'you ugly frog, how could you possibly help me? My golden ball has fallen into your pond.' The frog answered: 'Your clothes, your gems, your pearls and golden crown are not of interest to me, but if you make me your friend and playmate, if I can sit at your table, if I can eat from your golden plate, if I can drink from your cup and sleep in your bed, then I will fetch your ball.'

The king's daughter thought to herself: 'What is that stupid frog going on about! A frog is not human and must stay in the water, but maybe he can fetch me my ball...' So she said to the frog: 'First, bring me my golden ball, then I shall oblige to all your wishes.' After she had spoken, the frog dove into the water and within no time fetched the ball.



The princess was delighted! The frog yelled: 'Now you have to take me with you, king's daughter.' But she didn't. She quickly grabbed her ball, went home and didn't think of the frog at all. When she was having breakfast with the king the next day and was eating from

her golden plate, something came jumping up the stairs and knocked on the door. 'Daughter, please open the door, will you', the king said.

She went to the door to see who was knocking, but when she opened the door and saw the frog, she quickly threw the door shut and came back to the table shaking. 'Why are you shaking?', asked the king. 'Is there a giant at the door coming to get you?' 'No', said the child. 'It's not a giant, but an ugly frog who helped me yesterday when my golden ball fell into the pond. I had to promise him that he would be my playmate, but I never ever thought that he would be able to climb out of the water. But here he is.'



In the meantime the frog knocked again and yelled: 'O, king's daughter, open the door! Don't you remember what you promised me at the pond? O, king's daughter, open the door!' Then the king said: 'You promised, now you have to keep your promise. Go and open the door.' She opened the door and the frog hopped in behind her. She sat down on her chair. 'Let me sit in your chair too', said the frog. The girl didn't want to, but the king ordered her to do it.

When they were sitting together in the chair, the frog spoke: 'Now, place your golden plate a bit closer to me, we shall eat together.' Reluctantly the princess did it and the frog enjoyed the meal. Then he said: 'I have eaten enough and I'm tired. Carry me to your room, make your bed and we shall sleep together.'

When she heard this, the king's daughter started to bicker. She was scared of the ugly frog! She barely dared to touch him and now he wanted to sleep in her bed. The king told her again: 'You promised him, so you have to do it.' She got angry and picked up the frog with two fingers and carried him upstairs. When she laid down, she threw the frog against the wall and said: 'Now you will rest! Ugly frog.'

But what fell to the ground was not a dead frog, but a gorgeous, kind, king's son and she instantly fell in love. He was truly her playmate now and they slept together peacefully. When the sun woke them, a wagon came riding towards them with eight white horses covered in feathers and gold chains. In the back was Hendrik, a loyal servant.

That servant was so upset when his prince was turned into a frog, that he had three iron bands forged around his heart. This wagon would bring the young prince back to his kingdom. Loyal Hendrik let both of them in, in awe of his prince's salvation. When they were on the road for a while the prince thought he heard something break and yelled: 'Hendrik, I think I heard something breaking.' Hendrik answered: 'You are right my king, but it's not the chariot. It is one of the bands that was forged around my heart when you turned into a frog. My happiness for your salvation makes the bands break and I feel warmth in my heart again.'