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IMAGINATION OVER KNOWLEDGE

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The Sorceress And The Pearl

Once upon a time, in a far-off land, there lived a very good King who was always kind to his subjects.

However, an old sorceress residing in a forest cave despised him and desired her son to become the King.

One day, while the King was hunting in the forest, he accidentally strayed from his servants and passed by the sorceress's cave. Seizing the opportunity, the sorceress exclaimed, "Ah! Now is my chance. My son shall replace you as the King."

Approaching the King, she offered him a cup filled with a clear fluid resembling water. Unbeknownst to the King, it was a magic drink that the sorceress always kept. As soon as the King consumed it, he and his horse began to wither and shrink.

Amused, the sorceress cackled, "Ha! Ha! You will soon dry up and blow away, and my son will reign in your place. No, I will transform you into a toad and your horse into a rock. Then, I can relish in your misfortune," she proclaimed, waving her cane over the shrinking King and his horse.

In no time, a gigantic toad was hopping near a massive rock that appeared by the entrance of the cave. The sorceress laughed heartily at the wickedness she had unleashed.

The King's servants searched everywhere for their missing ruler and eventually returned to the castle,

assuming he was lost. Much to their astonishment, they found the King seated on the throne, seemingly safe and sound. However, unbeknownst to them, it was the sorceress's son disguised as the King.

Despite possessing the King's form, his heart was not that of a benevolent ruler, and the people began to wonder what had changed their once good and kind King into a tyrannical leader. He confiscated their lands and wealth, amassing immense power and riches. All the neighboring kings feared engaging in war with him. Those who refused to surrender their wealth were imprisoned, leaving the people in despair and misery. Meanwhile, the poor toad, formerly a King, could only hop around the rock that had once been his horse. He realized that he could never escape the forest in his present form, and the sorceress delighted in poking him with her cane, relishing in his predicament.

"One opportunity remains," she announced one day. "If you can find the magic pearl for me, I long to possess it. In return, I will restore you to your true form."

This magic pearl held great significance for the sorceress as it granted eternal life. With the pearl and her magical prowess, she believed there would be no limits to her power. However, she had been unable to find the pearl despite knowing it was in the forest and belonged to the fairies.

The toad deemed finding the pearl in the forest as likely as discovering the moon. Nonetheless, he hopped beneath the rock, struggling to hold back his tears.



That night, he was awakened by the fluttering of wings nearby. Opening his eyes, the toad witnessed two little fairies rolling a beautiful object next to him. "We will leave it here until tomorrow night," one fairy said. "This pearl must not be found by anyone. If the sorceress gains

possession of it, our Queen will be in grave danger." The toad did not wish to harm the fairy Queen but yearned to regain his true form. The next morning, he took the pearl in his mouth and hopped to the entrance of the sorceress's cave.

Upon seeing the pearl, the sorceress shrieked with delight and prepared to raise her cane to transform the toad back into the King. However, she hesitated, realizing that doing so would mean relinquishing the throne from her son.

Instead, she decided to kill the toad and seize the pearl. Yet, the toad held the pearl in his mouth, prepared to swallow it unless she restored him to his original form.

"Die, wretch!" she exclaimed, bringing her cane down on the toad's head. However, the magic did not unfold as she expected. A blinding flash of light and thunderous noise shook the forest, and when it subsided, the true King stood before her, along with his horse. The sorceress had vanished, and her cave was nowhere to be found.

On the ground behind him, the King noticed the pearl. He picked it up and concealed it beneath a nearby rock, ensuring the fairies could find it. Then, he rode out of the forest and returned to his castle.

Despite the sorceress's son still occupying the throne, oblivious to what had transpired, the people recognized their true and benevolent King. They ousted the wicked imposter from the castle.

The good King restored the land and wealth the impostor had seized from the people, bringing peace back to the kingdom. A search of the forest led to the discovery of the sorceress's son. The King, harboring no animosity towards him, appointed him as a servant in the castle, a role he had once occupied as the King. The sorceress's son became a loyal and devoted servant, mending his ways. From that point on, everyone lived happily in the castle and throughout the land, as the sorceress was never heard from again.