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IMAGINATION OVER KNOWLEDGE

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Tearful

Once upon a time there was a little girl named Tearful, because she cried so often.

If she could not have her own way, she cried; if she could not have everything for which she wished, she cried.

Her mother told her one day that she would melt away in tears if she cried so often. "You are like the boy who cried for the moon," she told her, "and if it had been given to him it would not have made him happy, for what possible use could the moon be to any one out of its proper place? And that is the way with you; half the things for which you cry would be of no use to you if you got them."

Tearful did not take warning or heed her mother's words of wisdom, and kept on crying just the same.

One morning she was crying as she walked along to school, because she wanted to stay at home, when she noticed a frog hopping along beside her.

"Why are you following me?" she asked, looking at him through her tears.

"Because you will soon form a pond around you with your tears," replied the frog, "and I have always wanted a pond all to myself."

"I shall not make any pond for you," said Tearful, "and I do not want you following me, either."

The frog continued to hop along beside her, and Tearful stopped crying and began to run, but the frog hopped faster, and she could not get away from him, so she began to cry again.

"Go away, you horrid green frog!" she said.

At last she was so tired she sat on a stone by the roadside, crying all the time.

"Now," replied the frog, "I shall soon have my pond."

Tearful cried harder than ever, then; she could not see, her tears fell so fast, and by and by she heard a splashing sound. She opened her eyes and saw water all around her.

She was on a small island in the middle of the pond; the frog hopped out of the pond, making a terrible grimace as he sat down beside her.

"I hope you are satisfied," said Tearful. "You have your pond; why don't you stay in it?"

"Alas!" replied the frog, "I have wished for something which I cannot use now that I have it. Your tears are salt and my pond which I have all by myself is so salt that I cannot enjoy it. If only your tears had been fresh I should have been a most fortunate fellow."

"You needn't stay if you do not like it," said Tearful, "and you needn't find fault with my tears, either," she said, beginning to cry again.



"Stop! stop!" cried the frog, hopping about excitedly; "you will have a flood if you keep on crying."

Tearful saw the water rising around her, so she stopped a minute. "What shall I do?" she asked. "I cannot swim, and I will die if I have to stay here," and then she began to cry again.

The frog hopped up and down in front of her, waving his front legs and telling her to hush. "If you would only stop crying," he said, "I might be able to help you, but I cannot do a thing if you cover me with your salt tears."

Tearful listened, and promised she would not cry if he would get her away from the island.

"There is only one way that I know of," said the frog; "you must smile; that will dry the pond and we can escape."

"But I do not feel like smiling," said Tearful, and her eyes filled with tears again.

"Look out!" said the frog; "you will surely be drowned in your own tears if you cry again."

Tearful began to laugh. "That would be queer, wouldn't it, to be drowned in my own tears?" she said.

"That is right, keep on smiling," said the frog; "the pond is smaller already." And he stood up on his hind legs and began to dance for joy.

Tearful laughed again. "Oh, you are so funny!" she said.

"I wish I had your picture. I never saw a frog dance before."

"You have a slate under your arm," said the frog. "Why don't you draw a picture of me?" The frog picked up a stick and stuck it in the ground, and then he leaned on it with one arm, or front leg, and, crossing his feet, he stood very still.

Tearful drew him in that position, and then he kicked up his legs as if he were dancing, and she tried to draw him that way, but it was not a very good likeness.

"Do you like that?" she asked the frog when she held the slate for him to see. He looked so surprised that Tearful laughed again. "You did not think you were handsome, did you?" she asked.

"I had never thought I looked as bad as those pictures," replied the frog. "Let me try drawing your picture," he said.

"Now look pleasant," he said, as he seated himself in front of Tearful, "and do smile."

Tearful did as he requested, and in a few minutes he handed her the slate. "Where is my nose?" asked Tearful, laughing.

"Oh, I forgot the nose!" said the frog. "But don't you think your eyes are nice and large, and your mouth, too?"

"They are certainly big in this picture," said Tearful. "I hope I do not look just like that."

"I do not think either of us are artists," replied the frog.

Tearful looked around her. "Why, where is the pond?" she asked. "It is gone."

"I thought it would dry up if you would only smile," said the frog; "and I think both of us have learned a lesson. I shall never again wish for a pond of my own. I should be lonely without my companions, and then, it might be salt, just as this one was. And you surely will never cry over little things again, for you see what might happen to you, and then you look so much prettier smiling."

"Perhaps I do," said Tearful, "but your pictures of me make me doubt it. However, I feel much happier smiling, and I do not want to be on an island again, even with such a pleasant companion as you were."

"Look out for the tears, then," said the frog as he hopped away.