



Ririro

READ ANYWHERE, ANYTIME

Donkeyskin

Charles Perrault

Once upon a time, there was a king and queen who had a beautiful daughter. The royal couple was very happy and had no shortage of money, thanks to a remarkable donkey that was part of the throne. This donkey had a special gift: its droppings were not like those of its fellow creatures, but consisted of gold coins.

One day, disaster struck. The queen fell very ill. On her deathbed, she called the king and asked him to remarry. They had only one daughter together, and the country needed princes to succeed the king. While the princess had the qualities to rule the country, she would one day marry a stranger who would take her away with him.

Years passed, but the king could not bring himself to marry another woman. Statesmen pushed more and more for a second marriage, but the great grief of losing his wife eventually drove him mad. In his delusions, he saw himself as a young man again and began to think that his daughter was his queen. Living in the past, he demanded that the princess marry him.

Distraught, the princess decided to pay her godmother a visit. Her godmother was a good fairy. "Dear child," said the fairy, "I advise you to give the king permission for the marriage on the condition that he will give you a dress in the color of the weather. Despite his power and love, he will never be able to give you this."

But the good fairy was wrong. The king summoned the best tailors in the land and ordered them to make a dress according to the princess's wishes. It became a beautiful gown, in a breathtaking color as blue as the sky.

The princess was very upset that the king succeeded. The good fairy was very surprised that her plan had failed, and said: "Ask the king for another dress in the color of the moon. I am sure he will not be able to do it."

But again, the fairy was wrong. When the princess received the dress in the color of the moon, she found it the most beautiful dress she had ever seen. But it made her very unhappy, as marriage now seemed inevitable. "I don't understand," said the fairy, "this should not be possible, but ask the king one more time for a dress. This time, in the color of the sun, which should be impossible to achieve."

So the princess asked the king again for a dress as the fairy had requested. The lovestruck king spent many diamonds and rubies to buy this magnificent work. Nothing could be spared to make the dress as beautiful as the sun. And indeed, when the dress was brought, it shone like the sun and no one had ever seen a more beautiful gown.

When the fairy saw the dress, she turned red with anger. "This time, we will ask your father for the most impossible thing. Ask him for the skin of the donkey that he loves so much. It is certain that he will not be able to fulfill this request, and that will mean that you do not have to marry him."

When the princess asked the king for this favor, the king was very surprised, but he still gave in. The poor donkey was sacrificed for the princess, and she felt very unhappy.

After this, the fairy decided that the princess should leave the palace immediately. Hidden under the donkey's skin, she would slip out unnoticed. "Go now," said the fairy. "I'll give you my magic wand. Tap it on the ground and a chest with all your possessions, clothes, and jewels will appear."

Not only the king, but the entire country was in turmoil due to the disappearance of the princess. The king sent hundreds of soldiers to search for her, but no one could find her.

One day, the princess knocked on the door of a farm. The farmer's wife needed someone to take care of the geese and pigs, so the princess was allowed to stay and help in the kitchen. At first, the people on the farm teased her because she looked so dirty and unpleasant in her donkey skin, but she worked diligently and eventually everyone left her alone.

One day, she saw her own reflection in the water of the fountain and was shocked at how neglected and dirty she looked. She washed her face and hands, and her original beautiful color returned. But she had to put on the donkey skin again so as not to be noticed.

The next day was a holiday, and she was alone on the farm. She took the magic wand, and there was the chest with all her belongings. She dressed up and wore a dress in the color of the weather. From that moment on, she decided to alternate wearing the beautiful dresses on Sundays and holidays. Only the farm animals saw her, but they loved her just as much when she was dressed in her donkey skin, for which she was named on the farm.

On a holiday, the handsome prince of the land came to the farm to rest from the hunt. The princess had seen him coming, so she quickly went to her room to hide. The prince looked around until the closed door caught his attention. He looked through the keyhole and was amazed at what he saw.

He wanted to break open the door, but thought it would be inappropriate. So he asked the farmers who he had seen in the room. He heard that it was the room of Donkeyskin, and that no one bothered her or spoke to her because she was so dirty and unpleasant.

The prince then went home and was head over heels in love with the woman he had seen through the keyhole. Soon after, the prince became very sick. The best doctors couldn't help him.

One day, the queen sat with her son. The prince told her that he wanted the girl on the farm, named Donkeyskin, to bake a cake for him. The queen thought it was a strange request, but still did as her son had asked and requested Donkeyskin to bake a cake for the prince.

The princess was overjoyed when she heard that the prince had asked her to bake a cake for him. She locked herself in her room and put on her most beautiful dress and jewels. Then she baked a cake with the best eggs and the finest flour, and accidentally lost her ring in the batter. When the cake was ready, she put on her donkey skin again to give the cake to the messenger.

The prince ate the cake and almost choked on the ring. He examined the jewel carefully and knew without a doubt that it belonged to the beautiful young lady.

Shortly thereafter, the fever returned to the prince more intensely than ever before. The doctors told the queen that the prince's illness was caused by love. The king and queen wanted to know who the prince loved so much. The prince showed them the golden ring and said, "I want to marry the woman to whom this ring belongs."

The king had his soldiers search the entire kingdom for the person who the ring would fit. All the noble ladies were first in line, followed by the country girls, but none of them fit the ring. Finally, even the goose girls were asked to try the ring, but without success. "You haven't asked Donkeyskin, who made the cake for me," said the prince. Everyone laughed and said, "No, she's too dirty and unpleasant." But the king immediately had her brought.

Donkeyskin was pleasantly surprised that she was allowed to come to the prince's palace. She knew, of course, that it was her ring. She made herself beautiful, put on one of her gowns, and hid herself under her donkey skin. When she was brought to the prince, he could not believe what he saw. Was this the same girl he had seen through the keyhole? Confused, he asked, "Are you the one who stays in the little room on the farm?" "Yes, Your Highness," she answered. "Give me your hand," said the prince.

Everyone was amazed to see that a perfectly cared-for hand appeared from under the donkey's skin, and the ring slid effortlessly onto her beautiful finger.

Then the donkey skin slipped from her shoulders, and there she appeared in her beautiful form. The prince fell to his knees and held her so tightly that she blushed. The king and queen warmly embraced her and asked her if she wanted to marry the prince.

At that moment, the fairy appeared and told the whole story of the princess. The prince, king, and queen were then twice as happy with the princess. The prince could not wait to marry the princess, but the princess felt that she needed permission from her father first. So her father received an invitation without the bride's name mentioned.

The king came, and to everyone's infinite joy, the king regained his senses and was married for the second time to a beautiful, good woman. The king was very happy that he had found his daughter and gave his blessing to the marriage.

A big feast was given, and everyone lived happily ever after.

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