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Princess Goldilocks

Madame d'Aulnoy

Once upon a time, there was a beautiful princess with long golden hair. She was called Princess Goldilocks.

A young king in a neighboring country had heard a lot about the beauty of Goldilocks. And although he had never seen her in person, he was madly in love with her. Therefore, he sent his ambassador to Goldilocks to propose to her. But the princess wasn't interested, so she refused the proposal and sent the ambassador back. When the ambassador brought the king the bad news of the rejection, the king was inconsolable.



Now, there was a young man at the court named Charming, who was more handsome and gifted than anyone in the kingdom. Everyone loved him, but there were also jealous people who didn't like that the king was close friends with him.

One day, Charming overheard those jealous people talking about the princess's rejection. Without much thought, Charming said, "If the king had sent me to Princess Goldilocks, I am sure she would have come back with me."

They ran straight to the king and said, "Your Majesty, what do you think Charming said? That if he had been sent to Princess Goldilocks, he would have brought her back. He thinks he's more handsome than you, and that she would have fallen so in love with him that she would have followed him anywhere."

The king was furious and locked Charming up in his tall tower.

One day, when Charming desperately cried out, "What could I have done to offend the king? I've never done him any harm!" the king happened to pass by. He opened the tower door, and Charming threw himself at the king's feet and said, "What have I done to deserve this cruel treatment?"

"You mocked me and my ambassador," said the king. "You said that if Princess Goldilocks had sent for you, you would have brought her back."

"That's true," Charming replied. "I wanted to tell her so many good things about you that she couldn't have refused you. But I don't understand why this is seen as a bad deed."

The king understood that he had misinterpreted Charming's words and regretted the injustice he had done to his friend. So the king asked Charming if he still wanted to go to Princess Goldilocks as his ambassador and propose to her on his behalf. Charming was happy to do that for his king.

The next morning, Charming set off on his horse.

One morning, he stopped at a stream. There he saw a big golden carp lying on the grass. The fish was gasping for air. It had jumped too far out of the water while chasing a fly. And now, it was almost dying on the shore. Charming carefully picked up the fish and put it back in the flow of the stream. The fish swam happily back to the shore, where it said to Charming, "Thank you. You saved my life. One day, I will reward you for your good deed."

The next day, Charming came across a raven in great distress. The bird was being chased by a big eagle. Charming took his bow and arrow and shot the eagle down. The raven gratefully perched on a branch and said, "Charming, that was very kind of you. I won't forget it. One day, I will repay you."

Shortly after, in the night when it was so dark that he could barely see the way, he heard an owl hooting. He found an owl caught in a hunter's net. Charming took his knife and cut the net, so the owl could escape.

"Charming," said the owl. "I am grateful that you saved me, and I won't have to die. One day, I will repay you."



Charming had brought beautiful clothes that he put on carefully before heading to the palace. He carried a little dog under his arm that he had bought along the way.

"Charming," repeated the princess when she was told of his arrival. "The name promises much. I'm sure he's handsome and that everyone loves him."

"Indeed, that's true," all her court ladies said at once. "We saw him from the attic

window and we couldn't do anything but look at him as long as he was in sight."

"Oh, is that what you do all day?" joked the princess. "Look out the window at handsome strangers? Come, get my beautiful blue dress for me and have someone comb my hair. I want him to see me as the beauty that is spoken of."

Charming was led into the throne room and was momentarily distracted by the princess's beauty. But shortly thereafter, he gathered his courage and made his speech, asking the princess to accept the king's marriage proposal.

"Charming," said the princess. "I would like to give an answer, but a month ago, I was walking by the river with my court ladies. When I took off my glove, a ring slipped off my finger and rolled into the river. This ring is more precious to me than my kingdom, and you can imagine how sad I was to lose it. I swore then that I would never listen to a marriage proposal unless the ambassador first returned my ring to me."

Charming was very surprised by this answer, but he made a deep bow to the princess and took the little dog back to his residence. There he went to bed without eating anything. His small dog, named Happy, also didn't want to eat and lay down beside him.

"How will I ever find a ring that fell in the river a month ago?" sighed Charming. "It's pointless. She has given me a task that she knows will be impossible."

Happy heard him and said, "My best master, do not despair. You always have good luck. And besides, you are too good not to be happy. Let's go to the river as soon as it is day."

The next morning, they went to the river together, where he heard someone calling, "Charming! Charming!"

It was the golden carp that called him. "You saved my life and now I can repay you. Look, here is the ring of Princess Goldilocks."

The princess had never thought it possible to retrieve the ring from the river. But Charming came in and gave her the ring, saying, "Princess, I have done what you wanted. Will you now marry my king?"

"I am very surprised that you found the ring," said the princess.

"I am happy to have found the ring to please you," said Charming.

"In that case," said the princess, "I would like you to do something else for me. Otherwise, I will never marry. I want you to defeat the giant Galifron, because he insists that we marry. I find him repulsive. So before I listen to your marriage proposal, you must kill the giant and bring me his head."

The princess hoped this would deter Charming so she could refuse the marriage

proposal. But Charming replied, "Very well, Princess Goldilocks. I will try to defeat the giant."

The princess was shocked by this. She tried to talk him out of it, but it was in vain.

Charming took all his weapons and the little Happy on his way to the land of Galifron. On the way there, they heard the most terrible stories about the mean, evil giant.

When they arrived at the castle, Charming called out to him. The giant stormed angrily towards him with a club, which he would have used to kill him if the raven hadn't landed on the giant's head at that moment. The raven pecked out both of the giant's eyes, so he could no longer see anything around him. This gave Charming the opportunity to chop off the giant's head. The raven, which perched in a nearby tree, said, "See, I have helped you and thus repaid you for your good deed."



In the kingdom of Princess Goldilocks, Charming was received as a hero. "Charming has killed the giant!" was shouted with joy throughout the land.

Charming brought the head to the princess and said, "Princess, I have killed your enemy. I hope you will no longer refuse my king."

"I have to," said Goldilocks, "unless you can bring me water from the Cave of Darkness. The cave is guarded by two dragons. The water has a great power for those who bathe in it. If you're beautiful, you'll stay that way. If you're young, you'll never get old. Charming, you must know that I really couldn't leave my kingdom without taking some of this water with me."

"Princess," said Charming, "you're so beautiful that you'll never need this water. But I'll do anything for my king."

Charming was determined to fulfill the tasks the princess had assigned him so as not to disappoint his king. The Cave of Darkness was hidden in a terribly dangerous rock. Suddenly, one of the fiery dragons appeared. Charming took the bottle the princess had given him. As he walked towards the cave, he said to Happy: "I know I'm going to die. If I don't come back, go to the princess and tell her that I died trying to fulfill her wish."

While he spoke, he heard a voice calling, "Charming, Charming!"

Then he saw an owl sitting in a tree, who said, "You saved my life and I promised

to repay you. Now I can. Give me your bottle. I know all the paths through the Cave of Darkness and I'll get the water for you."

Charming gave him the bottle, and the owl flew into the cave and came back in less than a quarter of an hour with the bottle filled to the brim. Charming thanked him profusely and left for the city.

He went straight to Princess Goldilocks, who had nothing more to say. She thanked Charming and got ready to go with him. On the way, they had so much fun together that she sometimes said to him, "Why did we ever leave my kingdom? I could have made you king, and then we could have been happy together."

But Charming replied, "I couldn't do it. I think you're more beautiful than the sun, but I promised the king, and I can't do anything but fulfill my promise."

The wedding was celebrated with great joy in the kingdom. But Goldilocks was so in love with Charming that she couldn't be happy with the king. She was only happy when Charming was around.

Charming's jealous enemies noticed this and said to the king, "You don't seem jealous, but don't you see how the queen looks at Charming and amuses herself with him all day long?"

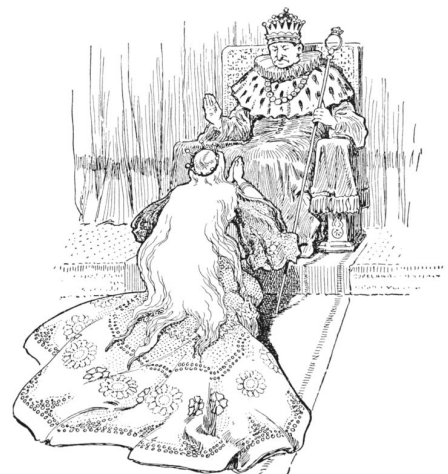
"Well, now that I think about it, I believe you're right," said the king. "Let him be chained hand and foot and thrown in the tower."

And that's exactly what happened. Happy came to comfort Charming every day and brought him all the news.

When Goldilocks heard what the king had done to Charming, she begged him to set Charming free. The king understood from this that she loved Charming and that made him so angry that she understood that pleading was no longer of any use.

The king thought that Goldilocks might not find him handsome enough. So he thought of the water that Goldilocks had taken from the Cave of Darkness. The bottle was on a shelf in the queen's room. Now there had been a day when a maid, while dusting the shelf, accidentally knocked over the bottle, causing it to break on

Now, the water in the king's bottle was filled with poison. It was used to poison enemies of the kingdom.



So one evening, the king took the bottle and washed his face with the water. Then he fell asleep and never woke up again.

Happy was the first to find out what had happened. He ran to Princess Goldilocks. Together, they ran straight to the tower to free Charming. Then, Goldilocks placed a crown on his head and hung a royal mantle over his shoulders.

She said: "Charming, I want to marry you."

Charming threw himself at her feet and thanked her.

Everyone was delighted that he would become king. The wedding, which took place immediately, was the most beautiful anyone had ever seen, and Prince Charming and Princess Goldilocks lived happily ever after!

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