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Puss in Boots

Charles Perrault

A miller's son stood at his father's grave. The mill had become the property of his older brother, and his middle brother had received the donkey. There was nothing left to divide except for a cat.

"Oh father," said the miller's son, "what am I to do now? I have no money, and now that the mill and donkey belong to my brothers, I have nothing left. How am I to make a living?"

"Fear not, master," he heard the cat say. The boy almost fell over in shock. "It's all right," said the cat, "I'm here to serve you. And if you do exactly as I say, it will bring you good fortune."

"If this cat can talk, I'd better listen!" thought the young man. The cat asked the boy for a bag and a pair of boots. His father still had a pair he could use. And there were plenty of bags of flour in the barn.

The cat put on the boots and took the bag to a meadow where hundreds of rabbits were hopping around. As fast as he could, he caught one and put it in the bag. He took his bounty to the king's castle. "Sire," said the cat politely, "I have the honor of offering you this rabbit on behalf of the Marquis of Carabas." He had come up with the name on the spot. The king was pleasantly surprised.



The next time, the cat caught a turkey and brought it to the king. For three months, the cat brought various catches, from free-range chickens to fresh fish. One day, the king and his beautiful daughter were to take a carriage ride through the countryside. That was exactly what the cat had hoped for. "Master," said the cat, "if you do exactly as I say, I will make you a wealthy man. All you have to do is take a bath in the river."



Meanwhile, the cat had visited all the farmers in the area. He asked them to tell the king that the land belonged to the Marquis of Carabas. As a thank you, he would reward them generously. The poor farmers could use a little extra and readily agreed.

As the carriage approached the river, the cat jumped onto the road and shouted, "Help! The Marquis of Carabas is drowning!" The king recognized the cat from the Marquis of Carabas and didn't hesitate to help him. The cat told the king that bandits had stolen the marquis's clothes. The king then had the finest clothes brought from his wardrobe.

In the king's clothing, the miller's son looked very handsome. The princess immediately found him very charming, and the feeling was mutual.

The marquis got into the carriage. Along the way, they stopped at beautiful landscapes. Each time, the king was told that the land belonged to the Marquis of Carabas.

The cat walked ahead of the carriage and stopped at a giant castle. This was inhabited by a giant who also owned the land of the farmers. "It is said that you can turn into any kind of animal," said the cat to the giant. "What do you mean, it is said?" replied the giant. "I'll show you!" The giant transformed into a lion. "Wow," exclaimed the cat, "that's the most amazing thing I've ever seen. But it certainly wouldn't be possible to transform into a small animal, given your large figure, would it?" The giant felt challenged and transformed into a mouse. The cat didn't hesitate to catch the mouse and do what cats do with mice.



"Welcome to the castle of the Marquis of Carabas!" said the cat when the carriage arrived at the giant's palace. The cat had arranged a grand feast with various catches. The king enjoyed it very much. After a few glasses of wine, he asked the marquis, "Would you happen to want to marry my daughter?" Of course, the same day, the marquis married the princess. And they lived happily ever after.

And the cat? He was doing well and living a luxurious life.



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