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The Swineherd

Hans Christian Andersen

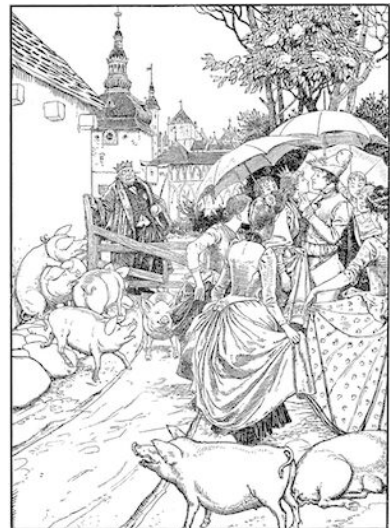
Once upon a time, there was a handsome prince of a small kingdom. He wanted to marry the emperor's daughter. So he sent her the most beautiful rose in the kingdom. This rose smelled so good that if you were to smell it, you would forget all your worries. He also sent her a nightingale who could sing so beautifully that it seemed you could hear all the melodies of the world.



But the Princess was not at all pleased with these fantastic gifts. She thought it was dirty and strange that the rose and the bird were real, and therefore didn't want to have anything to do with the Prince. Whilst her court ladies and father loved the bird and the rose, the Princess would not be swayed. She did not want to get to know the prince.

But the Prince did not let himself be put off so easily. He put on dirty clothes and a cap. Then he reported to the emperor's castle and asked if they had any work for him. And they did. They gave him a job as a swineherd.

In between work, the swineherd was always tinkering. He made a miraculous little pot that played a beautiful tune when it was boiling. You could also smell what was cooking on every cooker in town if you held your finger in the steam.



When the princess walked by and heard the merry tune, she sent a court lady into the room of the swineherd to ask what the instrument would cost. "Ten kisses from the Princess." replied the clever swineherd.

"How naughty!" said the Princess, when the court lady returned. "Go and ask him if he will give it for ten kisses from a court lady. " But the swineherd insisted and demanded ten kisses from the Princess. The Princess was very keen to have the pot and decided to pay the price anyway. Oh what fun she had that evening

with the pot! She knew exactly what was cooking everywhere.

The swineherd did not sit still and this time he crafted a rattle. When the instrument rotated, you could hear all the beautiful pieces of music ever made in the world. Of course the princess wanted that as well. This time the swineherd was only satisfied with a hundred kisses from the Princess. The Princess tried to find a way out, but the swineherd stuck to his guns. And again, the Princess gave in.

Her court ladies stood around the princess and the swineherd and counted the kisses. It had to be done fairly, of course. Which is why they did not realize that the Emperor had come to hear the noise. When he caught the Princess and the swineherd, he threw them out of his castle immediately.



Oh how sad the Princess was. "If only I had married that handsome Prince." she wailed. At that moment the swineherd took off his dirty clothes, took off his cap and got out his beautiful prince's suit.

The Princess looked at him with hope. Now there was that handsome Prince standing before her! But the Prince said: "You didn't want an honest Prince. You didn't want anything to do with the rose or the nightingale, but you did kiss a swineherd for a little instrument. You're not for me after all." And with these words the Prince walked away, leaving the Princess alone in the rain.



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