

Story

The Frog Prince

There was once a very beautiful princess. Her father, the king, made sure she had everything she could ever want. And so the princess had many toys and trinkets to entertain her. Her very favorite toy was a delightful golden ball. She would toss it in the air and bounce it on the ground all day long.

One day, when she was playing with her golden ball in the woods, it fell in a nearby well! The princess was dismayed and began to cry.

A frog, who lived in the woods, heard her cry and came to ask, "What is wrong fair princess? Why do you cry?"

"My ball has fallen into the well, and I cannot get it out," replied the princess.

"I can go down the well and get it for you..." the frog said.

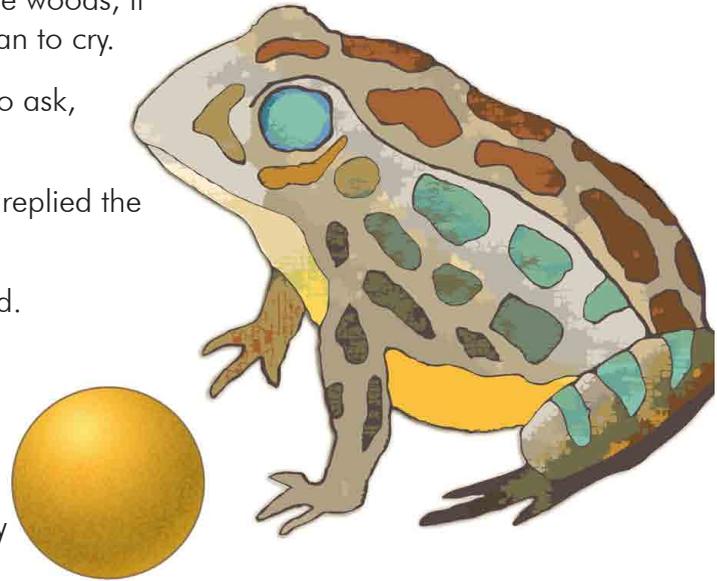
"You can?!" the princess asked eagerly.

"...If you give me a kiss!" said the frog.

The princess was disgusted at the thought of kissing the ugly, wart-covered frog, but she wanted her ball back very much.

"Alright," she agreed, reluctantly. And the frog went down into the well. After a time, he came back up with the princess's golden ball, and returned it to her.

"Alright, princess, it is time for that kiss," he said.



"Are you crazy?" exclaimed the princess. "I would never kiss an ugly thing like you!"

With that she ran off, away from the frog and back to the palace.

That evening, as she was eating supper with her father, one of the attendants announced, "Sir, you have a visitor. He insists on seeing you and will not go away."

"Let him enter," said the king.

In bounded the frog, much to the horror of the princess.

"Ah, there you are, princess. I have been looking for you. You left before I could get that kiss."

The king was confused and insisted on knowing what the frog meant. So the frog explained the agreement which he and the princess had made. The king, although somewhat disgusted by the frog, was upset that his daughter had gone back on her word.

"You will stay with us tonight, and my daughter will personally see to your every need and wish," proclaimed the king.

The princess was angry at the frog for coming to the palace. She was also angry at her father for letting the frog stay but did not dare disobey him. "Come along," she told the frog rudely.

"I think I would like to stay in your room tonight," said the frog.

"What?!"

“Yes, that way I can be closer to you should I need anything,” he said, and smiled.

One look from her father, and the princess agreed.

She led the frog to her bedchamber. She made a bed for him of soft pillows and lace. “There. Now tomorrow you are leaving, so just try not to be a pest for tonight!” the princess said.

“You have a nice home,” the frog observed.

“Yes, well, I am sure there are good things about living in the forest for a frog,” the princess said.

“Yes, but you get to live here with your father and have dinner with him and have people to help you all the time,” the frog said.

“Well, don’t you live with your family?” the princess asked, somewhat impatiently.

“No, my family won’t talk to me anymore.”

“Why not?”

“They think I am too different from them, too ugly,” he said.

The princess began to feel sad for the frog with no family. “Well, what about your friends? Surely they help you when you need things,” asked the princess.

“No, I don’t really have any friends. I am new to the forest, and the creatures don’t like to talk to me because of where I used to live.”

“Well, then who do you talk to? Who do you spend time with?”

“Nobody really, at least until you came by with your golden ball.”

The princess thought of what it would be like to have no friends, or family, or anyone at all to talk to. The princess began to shed a tear for the little frog.

“Oh, frog! I am so sorry I was so mean to you! I didn’t know!” she cried, and with that she gave the frog a kiss on the cheek.

Suddenly, something strange happened. Before her stood a handsome, kind-looking prince!

“What happened?” the princess asked, stunned.

The prince smiled, “You released me,” he said. “I was the prince in a kingdom nearby. One day, when I was hunting in the woods, I came across a beautiful fruit tree. I was hungry and took some of the fruit. It turned out it belonged to a witch of the woods. She was angry with me for eating the fruit and insisted I pay her back. I called her an ugly, old witch and ran off, so she turned me into a frog. I have been living in the woods since then, hoping to someday find a princess who could break the spell with a kiss.”

Both the prince and the princess were happy, for both had learned that it is not good to judge others by how ugly or beautiful they might be on the outside.