



# Grimm's Fairy Tales

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# The Frog-King

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Close by the King's castle lay a great dark forest, and under an old lime-tree in the forest, was a fountain. When the day was very warm, the King's Child went out into the forest and sat down by the side of the cool fountain, and when she was dull she took a golden ball, and threw it up in the air and caught it. And this ball was her favorite plaything.

Now, it so happened one day, the King's Daughter's golden ball did not fall into the little hand which she was holding up for it, but on to the ground, and rolled straight into the water. The King's Daughter followed it with her eyes; but it vanished, and the well was deep, so deep that the bottom could not be seen. On this she began to cry, and cried louder and louder, and could not be comforted.

And as she thus lamented, some one said to her, "What ails you, King's

Daughter? You weep so that even a stone would show pity."

She looked round to the side from whence the voice came, and saw a Frog stretching its thick, ugly head from the water. "Ah! old water-splasher, is it you?" said she; "I am weeping for my golden ball, which has fallen into the fountain."

"Be quiet, and do not weep," answered the Frog, "I can help you. But what will you give me if I bring your plaything up again?"

"Whatever you will have, dear Frog," said she—"my clothes, my pearls and jewels, and even the golden crown which I am wearing."

The Frog answered, "I do not care for your clothes, your pearls and jewels, or your golden crown, but if you will love me and let me be your companion and playfellow, and sit by you at your little table, and eat off your little golden

plate, and drink out of your little cup, and sleep in your little bed—if you will promise me this, I will go down below, and bring your golden ball up again."

"Oh, yes," said she, "I promise you all you wish, if you will but bring my ball back again." She, however, thought, "How the silly Frog does talk! He lives in the water with the other frogs and croaks, and can be no companion to any human being!"

But the Frog, when he had received this promise, put his head into the water and sank down. In a short time he came swimming up again with the ball in his mouth, and threw it on the grass. The King's Daughter was delighted to see her pretty plaything once more, and picked it up, and ran away with it.

"Wait, wait," said the Frog. "Take me with you. I can't run as you can." But what did it avail him to scream his croak, croak, after her, as loudly as he could? She did not listen to it, but ran home and soon forgot the poor Frog,

who was forced to go back into his fountain again.

The next day, when she had seated herself at table with the King and all the courtiers, and was eating from her little golden plate, something came creeping splish splash, splish splash, up the marble staircase. When it got to the top, it knocked at the door, and cried:

"King's Daughter, youngest.  
Open the door!"

She ran to see who was outside, but when she opened the door, there sat the Frog in front of it. Then she slammed the door in great haste, sat down to dinner again, and was quite frightened.

The King saw plainly that her heart was beating violently, and said, "My Child, what are you so afraid of? Is there a Giant outside who wants to carry

you away?"

"Ah, no," replied she, "it is no Giant, but a disgusting Frog."

"What does the Frog want with you?"

"Ah, dear Father, yesterday when I was in the forest sitting by the fountain, playing, my golden ball fell into the water. And because I cried so, the Frog brought it out again for me. And because he insisted so on it, I promised him he should be my companion; but I never thought he would be able to come out of the water! And now he is here, and wants to come in."

In the meantime, it knocked a second time, and cried:

"King's Daughter, youngest! Open to me! Don't you remember yesterday, And all that you to me did say, Beside the cooling

fountain's spray? King's Daughter, youngest!  
Open to me!"

Then said the King, "That which you have promised you must perform. Go and let him in."

She went and opened the door, and the Frog hopped in and followed her, step by step, to her chair. There he sat still and cried, "Lift me up beside you."

She delayed, until at last the King commanded her to do it. When the Frog was once on the chair, he wanted to be on the table, and when he was on the table, he said, "Now, push your little golden plate nearer to me that we may eat together."

She did this, but it was easy to see that she did not do it willingly. The Frog enjoyed what he ate, but almost every mouthful she took, choked her.

At length he said, "I have eaten and am satisfied. Now I am tired, carry me into your little room and make your little silken bed ready; and we will both lie down and go to sleep."

The King's Daughter began to cry, for she was afraid of the cold Frog, which she did not like to touch, and which was now to sleep in her pretty, clean little bed.

But the King grew angry and said, "He who helped you when you were in trouble, ought not afterward to be despised."

So she took hold of the Frog with two fingers, carried him upstairs, and put him in a corner. But when she was in bed, he crept to her and said, "I am tired, I want to sleep as well as you; lift me up or I will tell your father."

Then she was terribly angry, and took him up and threw him with all her



might against the wall.

"Now, you will be quiet, odious Frog," said she.

But when he fell down, he was no Frog but a King's Son with beautiful kind eyes!

He, by her father's will, was now her dear companion and husband. Then he told her how he had been bewitched by a wicked Witch, and how no one could have delivered him from the fountain but herself, and that to-morrow they would go together into his kingdom.

Then they went to sleep, and next morning when the sun awoke them, a coach came rolling up drawn by eight white horses, with white ostrich feathers on their heads. They were harnessed with golden chains, and behind stood the young King's servant, Faithful Henry. Faithful Henry had been so unhappy

when his master was changed into a Frog, that he had three iron bands laid round his heart, lest it should burst with grief and sadness.

The coach was to conduct the young King into his kingdom. Faithful Henry helped them both in, and placed himself behind again, and was full of joy because of this deliverance. And when they had driven a part of the way, the King's Son heard a cracking behind him as if something had broken. So he turned round and cried:

"Henry, the coach does break!"

"No, no, my lord, you do mistake!

It is the band around my heart,

That felt such great and bitter smart,

When you were in the fountain strange,

When you into a Frog were changed!"

Again and once again, while they were on their way, something cracked; and each time the King's Son thought the carriage was breaking. But it was only the bands which were springing from the heart of Faithful Henry because his master was set free and was happy.

# Rapunzel

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There was once a man and a woman, who had long in vain wished for a child. At length, the woman hoped that God was about to grant her desire.

These people had a little window at the back of their house from which a splendid garden could be seen. It was full of the most beautiful flowers and herbs. It was, however, surrounded by a high wall, and no one dared to go into it because it belonged to a Witch, who had great power and was dreaded by all the world.

One day, the woman was standing by this window and looking down into the garden, when she saw a bed which was planted with the most beautiful rampion (rapunzel), and it looked so fresh and green that she longed for it, and had the greatest desire to eat some.

This desire increased every day, and as she knew that she could not get any of it, she quite pined away, and looked pale and miserable.

Then her husband was alarmed, and asked, "What ails you, dear Wife?"

"Ah," she replied, "if I can't get some of the rampion to eat, which is in the garden behind our house, I shall die."

The man, who loved her, thought, "Sooner than let your wife die, bring her some of the rampion yourself, let it cost you what it will!"

In the twilight of evening, he clambered over the wall into the garden of the Witch, hastily clutched a handful of rampion, and took it to his wife. She at once made herself a salad of it, and ate it with much relish.

She, however, liked it so much—so very much—that the next day she longed

for it three times as much as before. If he was to have any rest, her husband must once more descend into the garden. In the gloom of evening, therefore, he let himself down again. But when he had clambered down the wall he was terribly afraid, for he saw the Witch standing before him.

"How dare you," said she with angry look, "descend into my garden and steal my rampion like a thief? You shall suffer for it!"

"Ah," answered he, "let mercy take the place of justice! I had to do it out of necessity. My wife saw your rampion from the window, and felt such a longing for it that she would have died, if she had not got some to eat."

Then the Witch let her anger be softened, and said to him, "If the case be as you say, I will allow you to take away with you as much rampion as you will, only I make one condition, you must give me the child which your wife will bring into the world. It shall be well treated, and I will care for it like a

mother."

The man in his terror consented to everything, and when the woman at last had a little daughter, the Witch appeared at once, gave the child the name of Rapunzel, and took it away with her.

Rapunzel grew into the most beautiful child beneath the sun. When she was twelve years old, the Witch shut her into a tower, which lay in a forest, and had neither stairs nor door. But quite at the top was a little window. When the Witch wanted to go in, she placed herself beneath this, and cried:

"Rapunzel, Rapunzel, Let down thy hair."

Rapunzel had magnificent long hair, fine as spun gold, and when she heard the voice of the Witch, she unfastened her braided tresses and wound them round one of the hooks of the window above. And then the hair fell twenty

ells down, and the Witch climbed up by it.

After a year or two, it came to pass that the King's Son rode through the forest and went by the tower. Then he heard a song, which was so charming that he stood still and listened. This was Rapunzel, who in her solitude passed her time in letting her sweet voice resound.

The King's Son wanted to climb up to her, and looked for the door of the tower, but none was to be found. He rode home, but the singing had so deeply touched his heart, that every day he went out into the forest and listened to it.

Once when he was thus standing behind a tree, he saw that a Witch came there, and he heard how she cried:

“Rapunzel, Rapunzel, Let down thy hair.”



Then Rapunzel let down the braids of her hair, and the Witch climbed up to her.

"If that is the ladder by which one mounts, I will for once try my fortune," said he.

The next day when it began to grow dark, he went to the tower and cried:

"Rapunzel, Rapunzel, Let down thy hair."

Immediately the hair fell down, and the King's Son climbed up.

At first Rapunzel was terribly frightened when a man, such as her eyes had never yet beheld, came to her. But the King's Son began to talk to her quite like a friend, and told her that his heart had been so stirred, that it had let him have no rest, so he had been forced to see her.

Then Rapunzel lost her fear, and when he asked her if she would take him for her husband, and she saw that he was young and handsome, she thought, "He will love me more than old Dame Gothel does;" and she said yes, and laid her hand in his.

She said also, "I will willingly go away with you, but I do not know how to get down. Bring with you a skein of silk every time that you come, and I will weave a ladder with it. When that is ready I will descend, and you will take me on your horse."

They agreed that until that time, he should come to her every evening, for the old woman came by day. The Witch remarked nothing of this, until once Rapunzel said to her, "Tell me, Dame Gothel, how it happens that you are so much heavier for me to draw up, than the young King's Son—he is with me in a moment."

"Ah! you wicked Child!" cried the Witch. "What do I hear you say! I thought I had separated you from all the world, and yet you have deceived me!"

In her anger she clutched Rapunzel's beautiful tresses, wrapped them twice round her left hand, seized a pair of scissors with the right, and snip, snap, they were cut off, and the lovely braids lay on the ground. And she was so pitiless that she took poor Rapunzel into a desert, where she had to live in great grief and misery.

On the same day, however, that she cast out Rapunzel, the Witch, in the evening, fastened the braids of hair which she had cut off, to the hook of the window; and when the King's Son came and cried:  
"Rapunzel, Rapunzel, Let down thy hair,"  
she let the hair down.

The King's Son ascended. He did not find his dearest Rapunzel above, but the

Witch, who gazed at him with wicked and venomous looks.

"Aha!" she cried mockingly, "you would fetch your dearest! But the beautiful bird sits no longer singing in the nest. The cat has got it, and will scratch out your eyes as well. Rapunzel is lost to you! You will never see her more!"

The King's Son was beside himself with grief and in his despair he leapt down from the tower. He escaped with his life, but the thorns into which he fell, pierced his eyes. Then he wandered quite blind about the forest, ate nothing but roots and berries, and did nothing but lament and weep over the loss of his dearest wife.

Thus he roamed about in misery for some years, and at length came to the desert where Rapunzel lived in wretchedness. He heard a voice, and it seemed so familiar to him that he went toward it. When he approached, Rapunzel knew him, and fell on his neck and wept. Two of her tears wetted his eyes and

they grew clear again, and he could see with them as before.

He led her to his Kingdom where he was joyfully received, and they lived for a long time, happy and contented.