

***FREE PREVIEW***

*Once Upon a Time when the*

***Princess***

***Rescued***

***THE***

***Prince***

THIRTEEN FAIRY TALES

by

**Rosemary Lake**

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**Dragon Tree Press**

[www.dragontree.com](http://www.dragontree.com)

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*EXCERPT FROM*

**The Enchanted Crab**

[*After meeting an enchanted prince and promising to rescue him,*] Fiona swam back to the castle, went straight to her father, and said: "I would like to learn a little music and singing."

Her father, who spoiled her in every way, sent for the best music teachers in the land.

The princess practiced every day, till she could play the flute, harpsichord, and dulcimer quite well. Then she went to her father. "I'd like to give a concert," she told him. "Will you promise to let me choose the location?"

Her father was suspicious. "Is it in my kingdom?"

"Oh, yes. It's very close by."

"Very well. I promise."

"Good," she said. "I want to give it on that big rock that sticks out over the ocean."

"But nobody lives on that lonesome shore to hear you," her father protested. "What kind of a concert is that?"

"A rock concert."

Her father sighed. "I might have known. But you can't go there alone. I'll have seven sailors row you down there, and you must choose seven baronesses to accompany you."

"Very well," said Fiona. She chose the oldest and laziest of the baronesses of the kingdom, and told them to wear their fullest hoop skirts. On the day of the concert, the seven sailors rowed them all down the river in a big

rowboat, and the baronesses all stood on the beach while Fiona climbed up on the rock alone.

*End of free excerpt.*

Source material from 'El granzio" in Bernoni's Fiabe popolari veneziane, originally published circa 1873, pp. 58-64. See Bibliography.

The whole story is in ONCE UPON A TIME WHEN THE PRINCESS RESCUED THE PRINCE: Thirteen Fairy Tales by Rosemary Lake. The book is available in paperback or as ebook for Adobe Reader, MS Reader, or Palm Reader. See <http://www.rosemarylake.com>

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*EXCERPT FROM*

## **The Vampire Grandmother**

*Like Little Red Riding Hood, Cappy takes some cakes to her grandmother and meets a monster who pretends to be her grandmother.*

“Come and get in bed with me,” said the vampire.

Cappy got in the bed. She touched the old vampire’s hand. “Excuse me, Granny,” she said, “but why is your hand so hairy?”

“From baking too many cookies,” said the vampire.

Cappy touched the old vampire’s ear. “Excuse me, Granny,” she said, “but what hairy ears you have.”

“The better to hear you with.”

Cappy touched the old vampire’s tail. “Excuse me, Granny,” she said, “but I have to go to the bathroom.”

“All right,” the old vampire sighed. “Go to the outhouse by the barn. But just a minute—” The vampire tied one end of the rope around Cappy’s leg and the other end around her own waist. “Now go down.”

Cappy climbed to the ground and ran straight to the barn. “There’s a vampire in there!” she whispered to the animals. “Somebody help me get this rope off!”

“Of course,” said the goat. “You gave me your roasted nuts.” With his sharp teeth, he gnawed the rope in two.

“You gave me your big green apple,” said the horse. “Now, tie the rope to me.”

Cappy tied the rope to the horse. Just then the vampire yelled: “What's going on? What are you doing out there?”

“Number two!” Cappy yelled back.

“I don't believe it!” the vampire yelled, and climbed down the rope and ran to the barn.

*End of free excerpt.*

[ Source material from “L'orca” in Usi e Costum: Abruzzesi, Fiabe descrite da Antonio de Nino, Volume Terzo (penciled “I”). Avezzano: Studio Bibliografico Adelmo Polla. Ristampo dell Edizione Barbera, 1883. The story is numbered XII and is on pages 65-69. ]

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*EXCERPT FROM*

**The Crystal Sphere**

*Dina runs away from a cruel wizard who lives on a mountain.*

At the foot of the mountain, Dina came to a crossroads, with one sign, which said:

*TO THE CASTLE  
OF THE  
GOLDEN SUN*

Below the sign was a placard which said:

*HEROES, DESPAIR! THREE AND TWENTY HAVE DIED ALREADY. ONE MORE FOOL, AND MY SPELL WILL BE COMPLETE. THE ROYAL PRINCE IVAN LIES BEWITCHED IN MY POWER; WHEN ONE MORE HAS DIED IN THE VAIN ATTEMPT TO SAVE HIM, THE PRINCE WILL BE MINE FOREVER. – SIGNED, SORCERESS OF THE GOLDEN SUN*

Dina took the road leading to the Castle of the Golden Sun. But the road soon became a path in dark tangled woods, and then no path at all; so she wandered long and far in the woods without finding any castle, and became totally lost herself.

Dina wandered for a long time, ate the last of her lunch, and began to get worried.

Then she met three giants riding in a donkey cart. They were quarrelling over a cloak and cruelly beating the donkey because he could not pull the cart fast enough. “Hey, girl,” they cried, “come and judge for us!”

“Judge about what?” said Dina.

“About our traveling cloak,” said the biggest giant, showing her a tattered gray cloak. “My brothers and I have forgotten whose turn it is to wear it. You little human people are very clever. Please decide for us, so we can leave this stupid donkey and go on our way.”

“What does the cloak have to do with the donkey?”

“I told you. This is our traveling cloak. Using it, we would not need the donkey. Whoever wears the cloak, can just wish himself wherever he likes, and anyone he is touching goes there too.”

“Very well,” said Dina “I will hold the cloak while I decide.”

“See,” said the giant to his brothers, “I told you a human was as smart as a magistrate.” He handed Dina the cloak.

Quickly Dina put on the cloak, grabbed the donkey’s mane, and wished herself and the donkey to be at the Castle of the Golden Sun.

Hardly had these words passed from her lips, when a great whirlwind picked up both her and the donkey, leaving the giants shouting far below.

The wind whisked and swirled Dina and the donkey through the air, then set them down by a green meadow near a great, black, deserted castle.

*End of free excerpt.*

This story was liberated from Grimm. The CMU Hunt site calls it “The Crystal Ball.”

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## ***EXCERPT FROM***

### **Sir Marzipan**

Once there was a princess whose father wished her to choose a husband, but she did not like any of the men she knew. “Just what kind of a man *do* you want?” her father demanded.

“That’s an interesting question,” said the princess, whose name was Bianca. “I will think it over.” After a few days, she returned to her father and said: “I want a husband who is handsome, but not too handsome. I want him to be sharp, but not too sharp. I want him to be sweet, but not too sweet. I want him to be spicy, but not too spicy....”

The king became angry. “You cannot just make up a man to suit yourself, like ordering a cake from the baker!”

“That’s a good idea,” said the princess.

The king began jumping up and down and screaming, so the princess went away to the kitchen. There she ordered the cooks to bring her twenty pounds of flour, twenty pounds of sugar, and twenty pounds of powdered almonds.

After they brought the ingredients, she sent the cooks home. She mixed the ingredients well, added water, and molded a handsome man just like she wanted. She worked very, very carefully for a long time till she got him just right. Then just after moonrise, she used a wheelbarrow from the garden to carry him to the woods where there was a fairy ring of mushrooms in the moonlight.

Luckily it was Midsummer Eve. Bianca laid the man on a bed of clover near the fairy ring, surrounded him with flowers, and waited for the moon to rise all the way to the center of the sky. While she waited, she sang softly over and over, "Fairies, good fairies, help me."

*End of free excerpt.*

This story is much changed from a Southern European fairytale which usually appears under titles with food in them, such as "Mr. Semolina."

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# ***COMPLETE STORY***

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## **Delian Little Red Riding Hood**

Once upon a time in the world of Delos there was a little girl who was loved by everyone in her village, and most of all by her Grandmother, who would give her anything she asked for. One day the little girl wanted a hood, so her Grandmother sewed her a pretty little hood of red velvet; which suited the girl so well that everybody immediately began calling her Little Red Riding Hood.

Not so long afterwards, Little Red Riding Hood's mother made some cakes, and said, "Red Riding Hood, I heard that your Grandmother is ill. Take her sewing basket, which she left here, and carry her these cakes and a little bottle of dandelion wine, to thank her for your new hood." So Little Red Riding Hood put the cakes into the sewing basket and set out at once for her Grandmother's cottage, which was lay across the woods and beyond the mill.

As Red Riding Hood was walking through the wood, she met a hungry Wolf, who had a great mind to eat the little girl up. But he dared not do anything just there, because some wood-gatherers were nearby. So the Wolf asked her where she was going.

"I am going to see my Grandmother, and carrying her some cakes and a little bottle of dandelion wine, for she is ill," said Little Red Riding Hood.

"Does your Grandmother live far away?"

“Oh, yes, her house is far beyond the mill, under three big oak trees.”

“And which way will you take?”

“I don't know. Whichever path looks prettiest today.”

The Wolf thought to himself, If I attack her on a muddy path, the wood-gatherers will find my tracks and hunt me down. So he said: “Promise me you will stay on the cobblestone road.”

“Well, I don't know....”

But the Wolf followed closely, saying things like “The woods are full of dangerous animals, I'm just trying to help you,” till finally, just to get rid of him, she had to promise.

“Goodbye, then,” said the Wolf, and he bounded ahead and hid by a deserted bend in the cobblestone road, ready to eat the little girl as soon as she arrived there.

For a while Little Red Riding Hood kept her promise and walked along the cobblestone road. But then a beautiful butterfly came by and said to her: “Little Red Riding Hood, why aren't you looking at the flowers? Why aren't you listening to the birds? All of us forest people are happy, but you act like you were walking to jail.”

“I promised the Wolf,” Red Riding Hood said, and told the butterfly the whole story.

The butterfly said, “Promises to weird people don't count.”

So Little Red Riding Hood raised her eyes and saw the sunbeams dancing through the green leaves and the bees and butterflies circling around all kinds of flowers, and ran off the cobblestone road to join them.

*It is early, she thought, I can pick some flowers for Grandmother and still get there in good time.* So she

followed the flowers instead of the road, and whenever she had picked one blossom, she saw a prettier one still farther on, and so all day the little girl wandered on toward Grandmother's cottage by way of the pretty woodland paths.

The Wolf waited and waited by the cobblestone road. Finally he thought to himself, *That girl must have gone another way after all. I'll head her off at the cottage.* So he ran straight to the grandmother's cottage and knocked on the door.

"Who is there?" called Grandmother.

Imitating the little girl's voice, the Wolf said, "It's Little Red Riding Hood. I've brought you some cakes."

"Your voice sounds strange," said Grandmother.

"I've got a bad cold," said the Wolf.

So Grandmother opened the door. The hungry Wolf took the old woman by surprise and swallowed her all in one bite.

Then the Wolf heard Little Red Riding Hood coming along the path. Quickly he put on Grandmother's spare nightgown and nightcap, jumped into her bed, and hid under the covers.

Little Red Riding Hood knocked at the door.

Imitating Grandmother's voice, the Wolf called, "Who's there?"

"It's me," said Little Red Riding Hood. "But your voice sounds strange."

"I've got a bad cold," said the Wolf. "Just pull the latch-string and come in."

So Little Red Riding Hood came into the dark room.

"Bring the cakes to me in bed," said the Wolf.

Little Red Riding Hood came near. “Grandmother, how big your ears look!”

“That is the better to hear you, my dear.”

“Grandmother, how big your eyes look!”

“That is the better to see you, my dear.”

“Grandmother, how big your hands look!”

“That is the better to hold you, my dear.”

“Grandmother, how big your teeth look!”

“The better to eat you up!”

And the Wolf jumped out of bed and swallowed Little Red Riding Hood all in one bite. Then he lay down for a nap.

Inside the Wolf's stomach it was very dark. Little Red Riding Hood felt very frightened. “Who's there?” said Grandmother's voice, which sounded muffled but not strange at all, and very close. Grandmother was right beside her in the Wolf's stomach!

“Oh, Grandmother, is your cold better?”

“What cold? – Oh, Little Red Riding Hood, I'm so glad to see you, at least, I mean, not that I can see anything in here, but you know what I mean...”

In the darkness inside the Wolf's stomach, Little Red Riding Hood felt her Grandmother's arms around her. “How did the Wolf get you?” the little girl asked.

“He told me he was you,” said Grandmother. “He said he had a bad cold.”

They laughed together, then Little Red Riding Hood said, “Oh, Grandmother, how are we going to get out of here?”

Her Grandmother sighed. “I'd get us out in a minute, if I had my sewing things.”

Luckily Little Red Riding Hood was still clutching the sewing basket. “Grandmother, I’ve brought your whole sewing basket! And some cakes and a little bottle of dandelion wine.”

“First give me my sewing scissors!” said Grandmother.

Little Red Riding Hood felt around in the basket till she found the sewing scissors, then handed them to Grandmother, very carefully, so they would not be dropped and lost in the dark.

“Ah,” said Grandmother. “That was all I needed.”

And snip, snip, snip, Grandmother cut a hole in the Wolf’s stomach; and she and Little Red Riding Hood jumped right out.

“Now, old Wolf,” said Grandmother, “You just get out of my house!” Grandmother picked up the poker, and Little Red Riding Hood picked up the broom, and together they chased the Wolf out the door and down the path and across the field and into the river, and watched till the current had carried him out of sight.

Then they went back inside the cottage, and Grandmother washed the poker soot off her hands and made Little Red Riding Hood wash her hands too.

“So that’s that,” Grandmother said. “Now, what kind of cakes did you bring me?”

### *MORAL*

*WOLVES SHOULD ALWAYS  
CHEW THEIR FOOD WELL.*

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*EXCERPT FROM*

## **The Enchanted Tree**

*Left alone in the forest, Katryn is befriended by a little white dove, who shows her a tree with a magical cupboard of food inside it. She lives happily with the forest animals till one day the dove disappears.*

Next day when the dove did not appear, Katryn missed him and began asking her animal friends if they had seen him.

“Don't worry,” they laughed. “It is springtime. Probably he has gone to seek a mate.”

“No,” said Katryn, “he would not have left without bidding me goodbye. Something must have happened to him.”

Katryn sat down and thought and thought and made a plan. With the brass key she opened the food cupboard and took out all the food, every single dish, before closing the door. She packed herself a lunch, then set the rest of the dishes on the ground for the animals. Then she opened the cupboard again.

Magically, the cupboard had filled itself with all new dishes of different food. “I thought it would,” Katryn said. “Now, I am going to serve a feast to all the forest animals. Invite them all to come here right now!”

The birds carried the invitation all over the forest, and Katryn kept locking and unlocking the cupboard and setting the dishes on the ground, till she had covered a large area fit for a great feast.

From far and wide, all over the mountain, the animals came to the feast. As each animal arrived, Katryn asked if anyone had seen the white dove.

None had seen the dove, and Katryn was beginning to lose hope, when finally the little skunk arrived, trailing behind the others on account of his lame leg. “I saw the dove last night,” he said. “An old woman turned him to ice and carried him away in a bag.”

“A bag?” said a wolf. “I saw an old woman carry a bag into that dirty castle down the mountain.”

“That dirty castle?” said a deer. “Then it must have been the witch!”

“What witch?”

“The witch who used to catch animals for experiments” ... “You know, eye of newt and hair of dog and all that...”

When all the animals had finished talking, Katryn stood up. “I am going to that castle to rescue the white dove,” she said. “Who will come with me?”

The animals all wanted to go, and Katryn did not know how to choose among them. Then a young owl said, “Let us ask my father for advice.” So they went to the tree of an old sleepy owl and asked, “What shall we do?” ... “What shall we do?”

“Be quiet,” said the owl. “Let me think...” He yawned and blinked and scratched his head. “Ah, I remember. The witch's power is in a little plain gold ring. When you go into her castle, take the door to the right. You will see a table with a pile of fancy jeweled rings. Ignore all of them and look for the plain ring. – And Katryn, I think you must go alone!”

At this all the animals whined and growled. “But how will she get past the witch all alone?” the little skunk asked.

The father owl yawned. “I don't remember, but my great-grandmother should know. Katryn, you go alone and ask my great-grandmother. You other animals stay home, you make too much noise.”

So Katryn left her keys with the little skunk and went alone to the tree of the father owl's great-grandmother. “Excuse me for waking you during the day, ma'am,” Katryn said, “but will you please tell me how can I get past the witch at the castle?”

“Be quiet,” said the great-grandmother owl, and went back to sleep.

Katryn waited a few minutes, then asked again, “Please, it is important. How can I get past the witch?”

“Be quiet,” said the owl.

Then Katryn got mad. “The witch has kidnapped my friend!” she shouted. “I'm going to rescue him. Now please tell me how—”

The owl opened one eye. “I just did.”

“Huh? What?”

“Be quiet.”

Katryn said firmly: “I don't understand. And if you don't tell me in plain words what you mean, I'm going to stand here and shout at you till sundown, so you won't get any sleep all day!”

The owl sighed. “Be quiet – at the witch's castle. If, no matter what she does or says, you do not speak to the witch, then she has no power over you. You can just walk in and get whatever you want.”

“Thank you very much for your help,” Katryn said.  
“Is there any service I can do you in return?”

“Be quiet,” said the owl.

Katryn sighed. Then she hurried down the mountain to the witch's castle. She walked straight into the front room. The witch, who was sitting there sewing, looked up and said with a false smile, “Well, my little pretty, what do you want?”

*End of free excerpt.*

Source material from a very short old European story.

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# ***COMPLETE STORY***

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## **The Bear Princess**

Long ago there lived a king and queen who had no children. They ruled a splendid kingdom and the queen was famous for her beauty and her long shining golden hair which reached to her feet; but nevertheless she spent all her time wishing for a child just like herself. Then finally after many years the queen's wish was granted: a child was born, a lovely little girl with shining golden hair just like her mother's.

The whole kingdom celebrated, but at the christening the visiting fairies became troubled. It was the custom in those days for the fairies to tell the fortune of the new baby, but this time the fairies just whispered and shook their heads.

"Go on," the king urged them. "Do you see some misfortune for our baby? Have we forgotten to invite someone?"

"Do we need to get rid of all the spindles?" said the queen. "Good riddance, I'd say."

"No," sighed the eldest fairy, "it is not spindles this time. We are not sure what strange fate is in store for Princess Preziosa. Only, in spite of all the riches of your palace, it seems that she will find her happiness alone in the woods."

"Wearing nothing but a fur coat," added the youngest fairy; but everyone immediately shushed her, saying it

was not nice to wear fur. “Unless you're a bear, or something,” said the youngest fairy.

“Oh, hush!”

Since there were no prohibitions to be broken, everyone soon forgot the fairies’ prophecy – except for one old nurse, a little gray lady who took care of the princess while she was a baby. And as Preziosa grew up, the old woman continued to visit and bring her lotions and perfumes and dress her golden hair.

When Princess Preziosa was almost grown, a tragedy struck the kingdom. The queen fell ill, and the best doctors of the world could not save her life. As she lay dying, the queen’s mind wandered, and she said to the king, “Promise me that no other woman will sit on my throne, unless she has golden hair just as long as mine.”

In his grief, the king made the promise; and the queen died content.

Soon the state ministers said to the king: “By our laws, only a son or grandson of the king can inherit the kingdom. It is your duty to marry again so that you can have a son to be your heir.”

Sadly the king agreed. “I will choose a new queen. But I will not break the vow I gave my dear wife. The new queen must have golden hair just as long as hers.”

With this the ministers had to be content.

So the king searched high and low for a new queen. He held a contest of beauty, calling all the women of the kingdom to parade before him. But none had such long golden hair, so finally the king began to despair of keeping his vow.

Then one day the king caught a glimpse of a young woman in the shadows, letting down long golden hair that

fell to her feet. "It is my dead wife come alive again," he shouted, running to her. "Guards! Light all the candles! Mademoiselle, come to the throne room at once!"

"Of course, Father," said Princess Preziosa, for she was the golden-haired young woman. "Is something wrong?"

At this, the poor king lost his wits and went quite insane. "Preziosa, only you have golden hair like your mother's. You must sit on the queen's throne. You must marry my old servant and immediately have a son to be my heir. I will continue in charge, and you will *All Do Exactly as I Tell You.*"

Preziosa got mad. "Change the law, and I will be your heir myself. But I will not be your puppet! And I will not marry anyone just to produce a grandson for you!"

"Yes, you will!" shouted the king. "You are My daughter, and you will follow My commands."

"No, I won't!" shouted Preziosa. And she ran and locked herself in her room and cut off all her hair!

Soon the old nurse knocked at her door. Preziosa let her in.

"Whatever have you done?" the nurse said, seeing the long golden tresses all over the floor.

"My father wants a blonde puppet for the throne! He can take this hair and stuff it!" And the princess told her old friend everything.

The nurse hugged her and comforted her. "You are right, this is terrible!"

"I feel like running away," said Preziosa. "But where could I go? The whole kingdom knows me."

The old nurse mused, “Maybe this is the time to follow the prophecy.”

“What prophecy?” said Preziosa.

So the nurse told her what the fairies had prophesied.

“Find my happiness in the woods, alone...?” Preziosa mused. “That would be a nice change! But how would I survive?”

“As an animal, no one would recognize you, and you could eat berries and such.... Is there an animal you would like to be?”

Preziosa grinned. “A big black bear! Twice as big as my father!”

The old nurse took a small wooden hair clip out of her pocket. “Put this in your hair. You can change back and forth from bear to woman as often as you like.”

“Are you serious?” Preziosa sat down on the bed and fastened the clip in what was left of her hair.

Immediately she saw her hands and feet turn into black bear paws. Then the bed collapsed under her weight. She scrambled up and looked in the mirror and almost screamed at the sight of a great black bear in the middle of her pink and white room. Then she clawed the clip off and stared at the mirror till she had changed all the way back to normal.

“Well?” said the nurse.

“This is great!” Preziosa hugged the old nurse, then sighed, looking around at the luxurious chamber she would have to leave: the lacy curtains, the thick rugs, the satin bedspread. Then she looked at the broken bed and laughed. “I suppose a bear will be quite comfortable in the woods without any bed at all.”

“That is my brave girl! But I hear the king coming.”  
The old woman slipped away just in time.

The king pounded on the door. “Come downstairs! I have set your wedding in one hour!”

Preziosa put out all but one candle. “Stuff it.”

The king burst into the room. “Come Now! That is a Royal Command!”

In the shadows, Preziosa put the clip in her hair, and watched her hands turn to bear paws.

“Come at once and be married!” shouted the king.

“Grrr,” said the princess.

“Don't be silly,” said the king, who was somewhat nearsighted. “Take off that fur coat and put on a white dress.”

“Grrrrrrrrrr,” said the princess.

“I must have a grandson before the year is out!”

“GGGRRRRRRRRRRRR!!!” said the princess, and stepped into the light.

The king was so scared he immediately hid under the broken bed.

Preziosa the Bear stalked out of the room and down the hall, her claws scratching the polished marble floors, and out of the palace. All the servants, nobles, guards, and soldiers ran away from her.

Preziosa the Bear stalked through the garden and climbed over the wall, then walked all night through the cool moonlight, far away into the peaceful forest. She found a hollow tree to sleep in, and indeed as a bear she was quite warm and comfortable with no bed or quilt except her own heavy bear-fur.

Next morning Preziosa the Bear explored the forest glade. At first the smaller animals who lived there ran

away from her just as the nobles in the palace had done. But soon she learned to walk gently with her bear-feet and soften her bear-growl, so eventually they lost their fear and became quite tame.

It was not long till all the little animals grew to love this gentle quiet bear. The birds showed her the sweetest fruit, the moles found truffles for her, the bees built their hive in her glade and shared their honey with her, and the small furry creatures slept around her feet. In turn, she protected the animals and trees from hunters and woodcutters; and all lived happily together.

After a while Preziosa the Bear lost her memories of her old life as a human. She loved the bear-life: the fresh fruit, the living flowers all around, the warm animal friends. And so she lived happily for a long time.

Then one day the prince of a neighboring kingdom strayed into the glade. When he saw Preziosa the Bear looming over him, the prince froze in surprise. "Excuse me, good bear, and I will just leave very quickly," he said, backing away. "*Gooood bear, niiiice bear...*"

The youth's kind face and gentle voice attracted Preziosa. Carefully, as carefully as she had tamed the smaller animals, she approached him, wagging her tail, and putting her head under his hand to be petted.

The prince also quickly began to act tame and even scratched her behind the ears. "What a good bear you are," he said. "Beautiful bear, sweet bear. But I must go home now. Would you like to come with me?"

Preziosa the Bear liked this strange tall animal so much that she followed him home.

When they reached his forest castle, the prince, whose name was Jerome, led the Bear to a beautiful

marble pavilion in the garden and told his servants: "This bear is very special. Serve her just as you would me." Soon all the servants of the castle became the Bear's friends, and she visited often and spent more and more of her time in the castle garden.

All went well till one day when Preziosa the Bear was resting all alone by the prince's lily pond, and the magical wooden clip happened to fall out of her fur.

At once the Bear turned into a beautiful golden-haired princess (for there had been time for her hair to grow long again). *Oh, dear*, she thought, looking at her reflection in the pool, *what is wrong with me? Where is my nice black fur?* Because of course she had forgotten all about her life as a human.

Just then Jerome happened to look down from his tower window and saw in his pool the reflection of a strange golden-haired woman in his garden. He ran to a balcony and burst through the rose-trellis, landing at Preziosa's feet just as she put the clip back in her hair and turned into a bear again.

Unfortunately, in his haste, the prince had plunged through a thick canopy of roses and wounded his eyes. So he caught only a glimpse of the transformation, and could not believe what he saw. Stunned, he sank to the ground.

Concerned, the Bear bent over him and gently licked his face.

Just then the prince's mother came into the garden and saw the prince lying on the ground with the Bear bending over him. "What have you done to the prince?" the queen screamed. "Servants, slay that bear!"

With the servants in pursuit, Preziosa the Bear fled back into the forest. She did not want to hurt the servants,

so she hid for a while and then went home to her glade. Her animal friends were very glad to see her, and she soon resumed her wild bear-life there. But she missed Jerome, and every day she would take the clip from her fur, look at her fair skin and golden hair, and wonder what it all meant.

\*

Now, when the queen's servants had chased the Bear from the garden, as soon as they were out of sight of the queen, they had said to each other: "That bear is tame, she would not hurt the prince. Let her go."

"But the queen ordered us to slay her." So the servants went back and lied to the queen, saying that they had slain the Bear.

When Prince Jerome heard this, he jumped out of bed like a madman and was about to make mincemeat of the servants. Just in time they whispered the truth to him: "Your bear is alive in the forest."

Then the prince jumped on his horse and, forgetting his injuries, rode back and forth through the forest for days and nights, nights and days, till finally he found Preziosa the Bear in her old glade again. "Please come back with me," he coaxed her, "please, dear bear, goooood bear. My mother is sorry, and the servants would never have really harmed you."

So Preziosa the Bear went back to Jerome's garden, but she was careful never to take out the hair clip again, since that had caused so much trouble before. She remained in bear-form, and the prince, remembering his golden-haired vision, sank deeper and deeper into love-

sickness, till finally his injury worsened and he became quite ill.

In his illness the prince would not accept any food or nursing, nor any physician except the Bear. Finally his mother had his bed carried to the garden pavilion, and the Bear took charge of his care. Her animal friends brought him herbs, fresh fruits, and honey. Soon the prince was as good as new, and his mother thanked the Bear and gave her a hug.

Jerome asked the Bear, "May I kiss you too, please?"

Shyly the Bear nodded. The prince kissed her and kissed her again, so hard and so many times that finally the wooden clip fell out of her fur. There in his arms she changed into a beautiful woman.

"You sweet girl! What is this?" said the prince's mother. "Why were you disguised as a bear? Are you in trouble?"

Now Preziosa's memories came back, and she told them the whole story.

"You were quite right to run away from your father!" said the queen.

The prince just said: "Will you marry *me*?"

Preziosa agreed, and then and there they knelt down before his mother and she gave them her blessing. They sent for the old nurse to come and live in their castle, and Preziosa and Jerome were married in a splendid wedding in the pavilion, with all the animals from the glade in attendance.

Soon after, the queen gave them her kingdom to rule; but they all continued living in the castle by the forest, in great joy and gladness for the rest of their lives.

As with "Queen-of-the-May and the Vampires", many details are mine but the plot follows a *Pentameron* story, "The She-Bear." For other stories where a princess runs away from her father, lives disguised and meets a prince, then finally is revealed, search for the Cinderella Project.

This story is from ONCE UPON A TIME WHEN THE PRINCESS RESCUED THE PRINCE: Thirteen Fairy Tales by Rosemary Lake. The book is available in paperback or as ebook for Adobe Reader, MS Reader, or Palm Reader. See <http://www.rosemarylake.com>

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*EXCERPT FROM*

**The Little Brother Who Cried “Wolf!”**

*As in Aesop’s fable, the little boy raises false alarms, and so the villagers will not come to help when a real wolf arrives.*

So Hans ran down to the village and cried: “Wolf, wolf! A wolf is at the sheepfold! Come everyone and help us! Wolf, wolf!”

But the villagers just said: “Ho-hum. You have cried ‘Wolf’ too many times.” And they shook their brooms at Hans, and would not come out of their warm houses at all. So Hans had to climb back up the trail alone.

While he was gone, Griselda had jumped down to the fence and was holding the break together, shouting at the sheep to stay in the fold and the wolf to go away. Together the children kept the wolf away through the night, and next morning they repaired the fence (as best they could, for the villagers would no longer help them).

So after this the wolf came every night, knowing that sooner or later he could get past the children, or panic the sheep and drive them out of the fold. Every night it was harder to shout him away, and every day the children grew more weary; and at last an old owl who lived in a tree by the sheepfold began to complain of the noise. “You, you, you two—” called the owl. “Why do you two not do something more wise?”

Griselda sighed. “I’m sorry about the noise. What would be wise?”

“Build a big raft,” said the owl. He pointed to a grassy island in the middle of the river. “When the wolf comes again, take the sheep to that island. The wolf will not follow, for he cannot swim.”

“That is a good idea,” said Griselda. “Thank you.” So next day she and Hans cut reeds and willow limbs and made a raft, and moored it at the back of the sheepfold.

That night the wolf came again. Hans kept the wolf standing back while Griselda poled the raft back and forth to the island, till all the sheep were safe.

For three nights the wolf came and the children did this; and every night they grew more and more weary. Then a deer who lived on the island said to them: “Your sheep are eating all my sweet grass. Please do something wiser.”

Griselda sighed. “I’m sorry about the grass.” And she went to the owl and told him the problem.

“Build a big cage on the raft,” said the owl.

“What!?”

“Take strong rods and strong vines and build a big cage. Make a strong door for it which you can tie closed. Then, take a big lump of tar, and a little wool from each sheep, and make a toy lamb and put it in the cage.”

“Er, very well.... Then what?”

“Wait and see.” The owl yawned, tucked his head under his wing, and would say no more.

*Well,* thought Griselda, *it can't hurt to try.* So she took strong rods and strong vines and built a cage on the raft. She made a strong door for it which she could tie closed. Then she took a big lump of tar, and a little wool from each sheep, and made a toy lamb and put it in the cage.

That night the wolf came again. All the sheep were tightly shut in the fold. Griselda hid near the raft, and Hans stood on the roof and threw clods at the wolf to keep him away from the gate.

The wolf sniffed all around the sheepfold, round and round. When he came to the raft he saw the toy lamb in the open cage, and pounced on it to eat it up.

Immediately the wolf's all four paws stuck fast in the tar!

Quick as thought, Griselda ran and closed the cage and tied the door shut.

The wolf growled and kicked, but he could neither get loose from the tar nor out of the cage. He was caught fast!

Hans came running. "We got him, we caught the wolf! Now, what shall we do with him?"

Griselda smiled. "I have an idea...."

*End of free excerpt.*

The whole story is in ONCE UPON A TIME WHEN THE PRINCESS RESCUED THE PRINCE: Thirteen Fairy Tales by Rosemary Lake. The book is available in paperback or as ebook for Adobe Reader, MS Reader, or Palm Reader. See <http://www.rosemarylake.com>

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*EXCERPT FROM*

**Under the Glass Mountain**

*A beautiful young princess is kidnapped by an evil troll named Old Rinkrank, who takes her down to his cavern.*

In the wide darkness below there was only one little dim red-orange light: the hearth fire of Old Rinkrank's house, which stood all alone in the center of this dark chamber. The walls of his house were full of small windows, from which dim rays flickered in all directions. The house had no door, but the ladder carried them straight down the chimney into the main room.

[....]

“Now,” Old Rinkrank said to Princess Helena, before he even untied the rope which bound her arms, “I will make sure you do not try to escape.” And speaking some quite unpronounceable words, he cast a spell on the princess.

As the evil troll spoke, Princess Helena felt herself twisting and shrinking, becoming small and crooked.

“Now, my Princess, look in the mirror!”

Helena looked, and gasped in horror. The troll's spell had turned her into a tiny old woman, half bald, with a red nose covered with warts. She was so ugly that she could scarcely bear to look at herself.

“Princess,” the troll said, “listen well and understand me now. You are my slave. Your name will be Mother

Mansrot, and you must call me Old Rinkrank. Now wash my dishes and make my bed, or I will kill you!”

*So Helena stayed and did the troll's chores, not wanting anyone to see how ugly she had become.*

But one morning, tangled in a clump of wild chicory, she found some violets with fresh dewdrops on them.

Helena buried her warty nose in the flowers, and was overcome by longing for the upper world. *If I must be an ugly old woman, she thought, it is better to be a free one than a slave. It is better for this ugly nose at least to smell beauty. I shall go back to the world of sun and rainbows, somewhere far away from my father's kingdom. I will build a little hut, plant nine rows of beans, and keep bees, and tell no one who I used to be.*

So the Princess set herself to think of some plan for escape, and soon decided what to do.

The next evening, as soon as Old Rinkrank was safely away, she barricaded the chimney with the iron grate, the heavy metal soup-kettle, and everything else in the house that would not burn. Then she closed all the curtains and locked all the windows except one little window which was just big enough for the troll's head. Next to this window she slid a heavy cabinet, blocking almost all the view.

When it was near time for Old Rinkrank to return home, Helena began beating on the pile of pans with spoons, and singing and dancing. As she did this, some of the soot fell off the pots and she discovered that they were all made of silver and gold. So she began to sing:

*Gold pan, silver pan,  
Nasty food is all the same!*

*End of free excerpt.*

From a very short old European story.

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*EXCERPT FROM*

## **Queen-of-the-May and the Vampires**

Once there was a pretty country girl whom everyone called Queen-of-the-May, because she seemed to have an almost-perfect life. She had charming manners, and everything she tried turned out well. She won all the village honors, whether for playing or dancing or crafts, and was chosen Queen of the May every single year; so that became her name.

*She and the Prince fall in love, but her jealous sisters poison him. May travels through the woods to visit him, and in the middle of the woods she stops at a strange house.*

When she drew closer to the house, she saw that its fence was made of bones and the lanterns on the gateposts were human skulls. “Woops, not a safe place to get water!” she murmured, patting the horse. “Vampires must live here.... But didn't my sister say something about vampires having an antidote that might help the prince?”

May tethered her horse in a thicket out of sight, then tiptoed back and circled the gloomy mansion. At the back she found a giant oak tree whose limbs overspread the bony fence and grew close to a lighted upstairs window.

Stealthily she climbed the tree and peered in the window. Inside was a dining room with a wall hung with trophies: stuffed animal heads, human heads, elf heads ... swords, lances, maces ... suits of armor and the like. A fat vampire was sitting at the table with a red napkin tied around his neck, and his wife was setting down a big

platter holding a roasted whole dwarf with a toadstool in its mouth.

May held her breath and listened for whatever the vampires might say.

“Oh handsome fat hairy one,” the female vampire said, “what is the news of the world?”

The male answered: “Well, those two girls used our poison and Prince Randolph is about to die. The king has announced a reward for his cure, but of course the doctors are wasting their time.”

The female asked, “Why cannot the doctors cure him?”

“Because,” the male boasted, holding up a tiny bottle, “the only cure for Vampire Special Poison Ivy Extract is this Vampire Special Antidote.”

May did not wait to hear more! She climbed down the tree, hurried to the front of the house, and knocked loudly with the knocker, without even noticing what it was made of.

“Who is there?” called the male vampire.

“I am a poor helpless maiden,” May answered, “lost and hungry, oh, dear, what will become of me?”

From a window above, the female vampire threw her a loaf of stale bread.

“My thanks for your mercy,” said May. “But I am a poor tender plump tasty maiden, and where shall I spend the night?”

Smacking his lips hungrily, the male vampire let the girl in and led her upstairs to their dining room. “Just sit down, my dear girl. Wife, bring her the ... special ... wine.”

May sat down and ate some bread and butter and fruit, pretending not to notice the roasted dwarf. The tiny bottle of antidote was still sitting on the table.

With an evil smile, the male vampire closed and locked the window. While his back was turned, May grabbed the bottle of antidote and put it in her pocket.

The female vampire returned with a glass of wine. May pretended to drink some, then pretended to get sleepy. “Do you have a bed for me?” she murmured.

“*That—*” said the male vampire, standing up and baring his fangs, “—will not be necessary.”

“Roast pickled dwarf is all very well,” added the female vampire, “but it cannot compare with fresh warm blood. Fresh warm frightened blood...”

They both came toward her, blocking the door.

There was nothing to do but fight!

Queen-of-the-May threw the wine in the female vampire's face, grabbed an elfin sword from the wall of trophies, and slashed at the male.

*End of free excerpt.*

Source material from “Verde Prato”, Second Diversion of the Second Day, in the Pentameron by Basile, translated by Sir Richard Burton.

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*EXCERPT FROM*

**The Girl Who Could Not Shudder**

Once a rich merchant had two daughters, whom he loved dearly. The older sister always wore fancy clothes and minded her dignity; but the younger sister, Portia, wore old clothes, played in the mud, and carried bugs and snakes out of the house in her bare hands. “They never bite me,” she told her big sister, “because they know I mean them no harm, poor things.”

“You will never get on in the world that way,” sniffed the older, who was named Priscilla, and who was getting ready for her first ball.

Their father agreed. “Men do not want a girl who is braver than they are. You are supposed to shriek and toss your hair around ineffectually.”

“And shudder in a ladylike way,” said Priscilla. “And call for smelling salts, and be prissy and quaint.”

Portia sighed. “I ain't the kind.”

“Ooh, such language! But can't you at least shudder *occasionally*?”

Portia wasn't quite sure what that meant. “I can wiggle my ears,” she said. “Would that do?”

Priscilla thought about it. “No, that wouldn't work as well. I don't think.”

Their father thought it over, then agreed. “Suitable husbands are not found by wiggling ears. I shall hire you a Governess at once.”

So next week the Governess arrived: a very nice lady who wore lots of beads and shawls pinned together by

cameo brooches. She set up a school-room on the top floor of their house, in a turret with bay windows all around, most of which were held closed by the branches and leaves of a beautiful green elm tree (for the shutters had fallen into disrepair long ago). The room was like a tree house, and both girls fell in love with it and with their Governess immediately.

One day when they were all in the schoolroom happily studying (in the dancing shadows of the elm leaves) a chapter in the Etiquette Manual on *Polite Subterfuges for Declining Unwanted Invitations*, Portia asked, "Why not just tell the truth?"

"Because it would be quite improper," the Governess sighed. "What will happen when you go out in Society, I shudder to think—"

"What does 'shudder' mean?" asked Priscilla.

The Governess gasped. "You don't even know *that*?"

"Well, no," said Portia. "I know about window shutters, of course." She pointed to the wooden shutter outside the window, which had begun knocking back and forth in the wind, letting distracting amounts of sun and air into the schoolroom.

The Governess sighed and took up her mantle of instruction, pinning it on carefully with two brooches. "No, this is S H U D D E R, with two D's." She wrote the word on the blackboard and demonstrated a shudder (though not very well).

Portia tried to imitate the shudder, but all that happened was she sneezed.

"No, no!" The Governess demonstrated again.

Portia tried again, but all that happened was she yawned.

“Well, if you are getting bored, we can stop for today,” the Governess said, offended.

“I’m not bored,” said Portia. “I just can’t shudder right.”

The Governess demonstrated again.

Portia tried again, but all that happened was her ears wiggled.

The Governess gave a heartfelt sigh. “Never mind, enough for today. I feel a spell of the vapours coming on. Doubtless it will last all week, with any luck....”

*To cheer up the sick Governess, Portia determines to learn how to shudder. She and Priscilla begin by visiting a Governess Supply Store.*

It was a neat little gray house with white zinnias growing in the window boxes. “How can I learn to shudder properly?” Portia asked the shopkeeper. “It is a surprise for my dear Governess.”

The shopkeeper frowned. “Shuddering is supposed to Come Naturally to young ladies,” she said.

“Unfortunately,” said Priscilla, “it has not. Do you have a remedy for difficult cases?”

The shopkeeper thought for a while, then fetched a little golden Butler Doll, in a little black lacquer box just the right size for a pocket. “Perhaps the doll will know,” she said. “He is full of general knowledge: he was designed to accompany young persons on the Grand Tour, and knows protocols in three hundred languages.”

Thinking of this, Portia almost shuddered accidentally, but unfortunately controlled herself.

“That is very – many,” Priscilla said politely.

“He can answer many questions, and can tell you about academies for learning all sorts of things.”

So the girls bought the Butler Doll, and took him into the park and sat down on the cleanest bench they could find, and Portia opened the box.

The Butler Doll said: “What would you like to learn to-day?”

Portia asked: “Can you tell me where I can go to learn to shudder?”

The Butler Doll said: “First, do not run a-way from home. That on-ly works in fair-y tales. It is sym-bol-ic of find-ing ones In-ner Re-sour-ces. Nev-er run a-way no mat-ter how man-y Im-poss-i-ble Tasks you are giv-en.”

“I am not running away,” said Portia. “And shuddering is not impossible. Priscilla does it, our Governess does it, so why then oh why can’t I?”

“It’s to make our Governess feel better,” Priscilla added helpfully.

“Nev-er un-der-take an un-auth-or-iz-ed quest for a Med-i-cin-al Tok-en. Con-sult a li-censed phy-si-ci-an.”

Portia sighed: “Could we get our money back?”

“Do you have your re-ceipt?”

Priscilla said, “I have an idea.” She put the Butler Doll back in his box and closed the lid for a minute. Then she took him out again.

The Butler Doll said: “What would you like to learn to-day?”

Priscilla said: “Are there any places with legends about shuddering?”

The Butler Doll said: “Look up the Haunt-ed Cas-tle of Shud-ders in Up-per Ha-vi-sham. At-tached to it is an in-ter-est-ing so-lar myth—”

Priscilla put him back in the box and took him out again.

The Butler Doll said: “What would you like to learn to-day?”

“What is the geography of Upper Havisham? Where is it?”

“This small vil-lage lies in the foot-hills of the Moun-tains of Mad-ness, and its prin-ci-pal in-dus-try is min-ing sil-ver nug-gets...”

Both girls took notes on what the Butler Doll said; then they thanked him politely and put him back in his box. The following morning Portia put on her traveling clothes (with the Butler Doll in her pocket), saddled her horse, and set out for Upper Havisham.

*End of free excerpt.*

[ Source material from a story in Grimm. ]

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*EXCERPT FROM*

## **The Flying Turnips**

Once there was a poor little girl named Nora who lived all alone with her mean stepfather, in a lighthouse tower on a tiny island.

*Nora meets friendly elves who have stolen her stepfather's turnips. The elves give her magic treasures which her stepfather takes away. Finally they give her a magic stick.*

"It's very pretty," Nora said politely, "What does it do?"

"We'll show you," the elves said. "This rug needs cleaning anyway." So they carried the rug outside and hung it over a clothesline, then spoke to the stick: "Magic stick the rug."

The tiny stick jumped into the air, grew to the size of a broom, and began beating the rug. Then another elf caught the stick (which shrunk immediately), carried it to an apple tree, and said, "Magic stick the apples." The stick again jumped into the air, grew to the size of a broom, and began knocking apples down from the tree.

"This magic stick is very useful," they said. "It can also churn butter and knead bread."

"But you already gave me your magic tablecloth and your magic goat," said Nora. "Don't you need this magic stick yourself?"

"You need it," the elves laughed. "Believe us, you need it!"

Nora thanked the elves and went home, carrying the tiny magic stick in her pocket.

When Nora got home, her stepfather said: “You've been gone long enough! Where are my turnips? Did you get the thieves arrested?”

“I couldn't find any thieves,” Nora lied.

So he spanked her. While he was spanking her, Nora's stepfather felt the magic stick in her pocket and took it out. “What's this?”

Nora sighed. “It's a magic stick.”

“Magic stick my left foot!” growled her stepfather.

Immediately the tiny stick jumped into the air! It grew to the size of a broom and began beating her stepfather's left foot.

Her stepfather hopped all round the room shouting curses. The magic stick followed him everywhere and kept on beating his left foot.

“This is all your fault!” the stepfather shouted at Nora and began chasing her. The magic stick kept right on beating his left foot.

Nora ran outside and climbed up the shaky ladder to the roof.

The stepfather was so mad that he climbed the ladder after her, and the magic stick kept on beating his left foot.

Just as the stepfather got to the top of the shaky wooden ladder, the ladder collapsed. The wicked stepfather fell down and down to the rocks below and was smashed into a hundred pieces. And the magic stick kept beating his left foot, till finally the tide had washed all the pieces away. Then it shrunk itself tiny again and flew back to Nora.

*End of free excerpt.*

Material from many sources; much is mine.

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# ***COMPLETE STORY***

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## **The False Dragonfly Queen**

Once upon a time a Caterpillar and a Dragonfly shared a home in a big white calla lily by the river. The Caterpillar stayed home and did all the cleaning and mending and cooking, while the pretty Dragonfly spent her time hovering over the water admiring her own reflection.

In fact, she was a rather commonplace Blue Dragonfly, but she was also quite vain; and any Dragonfly looks more colorful than a little gray Caterpillar. “It is only fair that I should do the work,” said the Caterpillar, who was of a sweet and humble nature, “since you are so beautiful with your shimmery blue-green wings, and I am so plain and gray.”

One day the King of the Dragonflies happened by, and smelled a dish of bay-laurel pollen in chamomile sauce which the Caterpillar was busily preparing.

“You are very industrious, Mistress Caterpillar,” he said. “For whom are you taking so much trouble to prepare this excellent meal?”

The Caterpillar smiled. “It is worth taking some trouble for my friend the Dragonfly, who is so beautiful with her big shimmery wings.”

Now, the King was rather proud of his own big shimmery wings, so he was a bit surprised by this remark, and took care to let his own wings show for a moment,

alongside his chair, apparently by accident. And very fine wings they were, green and polished and quite well manicured.

But the Caterpillar's fondness for her friend was so great, that to her, the blue Dragonfly's wings would always appear more beautiful than any other wings, however royal. So she hesitated and said, "Well, saving your presence, sir, I'm still a bit partial to hers. Er, the color, you see...."

"Ah," said the King, "Your friend must be a great beauty indeed. A member of the Dragonfly nobility herself, doubtless. Living in seclusion for some romantic reason, waiting for just the right Dragonfly to come along...."

"Oh, well, I wouldn't say that," said the Caterpillar, truthfully.

But the King would not listen to her. "I can see it all," he said, "She must be the ideal Dragonfly Lady whom I have dreamed of marrying, with royal purple wings, a mutation to cultivate for future generations. You must allow me to court her."

The Caterpillar was puzzled. "But--"

"Ah, she is very modest, I'm sure. Well, let me just come back at twilight and have a glimpse of her." So, wrapped in his daydreams, the Dragonfly King took his leave.

When her friend the blue Dragonfly came home, the Caterpillar told her the whole story.

"Purple wings?" the blue Dragonfly laughed. Then a cold, calculating look came over her shiny blue face. "This may be my chance to become Queen of the Dragonflies," she said. "If I can just deceive the King till

after the wedding—”

“But that wouldn't be very honest....”

“No matter. Once I am Queen, likely the King would not admit his mistake.” So the Dragonfly gave the Caterpillar her instructions; and the Caterpillar, sighing but loyal, did everything as the blue Dragonfly ordered.

First they tried using white petals from a jasmine vine to cover the Dragonfly's blue wings, then laying purple petals from a morning glory vine on top of them. But the result was not shimmery at all, and was so heavy that the Dragonfly could scarcely move; and the wings were too bulky to fold either. “Ooof, worse than crinolines!” said the Dragonfly, shaking off the petals.

The Caterpillar thought and thought, then said: “Your wings are blue already, and blue plus red makes purple. So let us add some red.” So they took some red cherry juice and brushed the blue wings lightly with it. This made a very nice purple, which even shimmered for a moment, in places, till it dried.

The Dragonfly flexed the wings. “A little stiff, but better than the petals! Now for the King!”

So they invited the King of the Dragonflies to supper that very night – a late supper, by candlelight. The blue Dragonfly sat in the darkest corner and kept her wings folded demurely, so that only a little purple showed, in spite of all the King's entreaties. “How wonderfully modest you are!” said the King. “What must I do to see them spread?”

“Um ... I am saving that for my future husband,” said the blue Dragonfly demurely.

“Then you must marry me at once!” said the King.

“Well ... since you command it, my King, I must

obey....”

The King went away immediately to fetch the Parson, and the Caterpillar and the blue Dragonfly jumped up and down and hugged each other.

“It worked! We fooled him! I’m going to be Queen of the Dragonflies!” gloated the blue Dragonfly.

The Caterpillar was not so happy about fooling the King – but he had seemed so eager, that she supposed it was none of her business, really. Certainly the King was quite happy when he returned with the Parson, who at once performed the ceremony and pronounced them dragonfly and wife. “And now–” said the King.

“Oh,” yawned the new Queen, “I am so sleepy. Let us go home to our castle first. I am quite anxious to meet all my new servants. And the nobles and others too, of course.” For she thought that once she had been introduced as Queen, then if the King found out her deception, it would be too late for him to back out of the marriage.

The Royal Couple rode to the castle at once; but everyone had gone to bed already, so they went straight to the royal chamber at the top of the castle. There the new Queen pretended to be so sleepy that she had to pull the covers over her head at once; thus she was able again to postpone spreading her wings.

But during the night all of the red cherry juice rubbed off on the covers, leaving her wings plain blue again.

Next morning the King of the Dragonflies woke at sunrise, and pulled the covers back to look at his sleeping bride. What a shock! Instead of the royal purple Dragonfly he had imagined, here was a common blue Dragonfly! “Fraud! Fraud!” the King shouted. “Get out of

here, you false Queen! Fly away home!” And he picked up the blue Dragonfly and threw her out the window.

Now, just outside the King's window, there was a large spider web. When the King threw the false Queen out the window, she became entangled in the web and tore it half-loose. So there, below the window, the Queen dangled, bobbing and turning gently in the wind.

“Will you get out of that!” the Spider said crossly. “You are much too big to eat, and you are tearing my good sticky silk.”

“I would be happy to get out of it,” said the would-be Queen, with as much dignity as she could muster in the situation, “except that I cannot.” For with every puff of wind, the silk was winding more and more web around her, like a cocoon; and she could scarcely do other than jerk clumsily this way and that.

But as luck would have it, just then, it happened that three little old gray witches were out for a sunrise walk in the neighborhood. They saw the dangling Dragonfly and scolding Spider, and broke out laughing. “How very silly that Dragonfly looks!” ... “She is in no danger, the Spider just wants her silk back.” ... “Look at the wind spin her round and round” ... “Cavorting that way, at her age!”

The witches laughed till they could laugh no more. Finally the oldest said, “That poor bobbing Dragonfly has given us so much fun, let us do some good deeds for her. I'll wish her free of the web, and unharmed.”

“I'll wish her safe on the ground, with a good breakfast before her,” said the middle witch.

The youngest witch thought for a minute. “Hmm ... I'll wish her to be the royal purple Dragonfly that the King has been searching for! That should make her fortune!”

The other witches applauded. “Now,” they said, “that will be three good deeds done before breakfast.” So they all cast their spells, then went on their way.

When the Dragonfly found herself on the ground – safe, free of the web, royal purple-colored, and with a good breakfast of pollen cakes and honeysuckle nectar on a neat little rosewood table before her – she thought she must be dreaming! So she sat down to eat the cakes without a worry.

While she was eating, the King came out of the castle. When he saw a beautiful purple Dragonfly eating breakfast on his lawn, he fell in love with her instantly. “Madame, will you marry me?” he said at once.

“We did that last night,” the purple Dragonfly said crossly.

The King looked more closely. “Madame – I beg your forgiveness. I must have been bewitched. There seemed to be an imposter in your bed.... Or was I dreaming?”

At this point, the purple Dragonfly began to take the conversation more seriously. If she now looked purple to the King again, as well as to herself– “I do not know what has been happening,” she said. “My color never changed in the past.” (Which was true enough!) “But if it should change again–”

“I vow,” said the King contritely, “no more hasty actions. You shall be my Queen just the same from now on, purple or blue as you like!”

So the now-purple Dragonfly became Queen after all; and she and the King were very happy together, flying about the river and admiring their appearances. After a while the Queen ceased to worry about what had been

dreams and what had not, and finally came to half-believe that, from her first peek out of her egg-case, she had been truly hatched to the purple.

\*

Now all this time, the Caterpillar, left alone in their old home in the calla lily, had been missing her friend; and finally she became so lonesome that she undertook the considerable journey to visit the Queen.

The Queen was by no means glad to see her – the only person who knew her true blue past!

“How well you look, my dear,” the Caterpillar said. “And your new purple color! How did you manage it?”

The Queen thought, *I must get rid of her before the King hears this sort of talk!* “Er, it is quite easy really.... Why don't you try it yourself? Just go home and make a nice silky cocoon, and stay in it till you turn whatever color you like.... Do go and try it, right now!”

So the caterpillar went home, climbed a fragrant bay tree, and wove herself a silky cocoon; then she crawled inside the cocoon and fell asleep.

Weeks went by. Spring changed to summer. On Midsummer morning the cocoon split, and the Caterpillar woke and stretched – and the summer wind lifted her into the air! For she was now a beautiful butterfly with wide silver and golden wings!

At first the Caterpillar – or the Butterfly, as we must now call her – thought that she must be dreaming (as she had often dreamed of flying), and determined to enjoy the dream as much as possible. She flew to the nearest field of flowers to dance with the other butterflies, and they invited her home to live with them. And next morning

when she woke with the other butterflies and found herself still a butterfly, and remembered the previous day, she began to believe it was all real.

So for many days our Butterfly lived happily among the flower fields with the other butterflies.

Then one day the flock of butterflies happened to fly near the palace of the King and Queen of the Dragonflies, and our Butterfly saw there her old friend the blue, er, purple, Dragonfly, who was busily counting the palace linens.

Our Butterfly was having so much joy with her new family of butterflies that she wanted to just fly on past; but she thought, *That would not be nice, it would be very ungrateful to my old friend who gave me such good advice.* So she lit on the palace windowsill and said: “Thank you!”

“What for?” said the Dragonfly Queen, who did not recognize her at all. “Who are you?”

“Why, I was your companion for a long time,” said the Butterfly. “We—”

“What nonsense,” said the Queen, who supposed some strange Butterfly was making fun of her. “A plain purple Dragonfly like me, once the companion of a beautiful silver and golden butterfly like you? Who would ever believe that? Go away with your nonsense!”

So the Butterfly, having done her courteous duty (or tried to), never troubled the Dragonfly Queen again. She rejoined her new butterfly family (who had been flying round in circles waiting for her), and they all flew back to their meadow of flowers; where she lived with the other butterflies happily ever after.

Tales such as Lang's "The King Who Would Have a Beautiful Wife" are about humans and end less happily. The pretty insect characters and the happy ending here are all mine!

The whole story is in ONCE UPON A TIME WHEN THE PRINCESS RESCUED THE PRINCE: Thirteen Fairy Tales by Rosemary Lake. The book is available in paperback or as ebook for Adobe Reader, MS Reader, or Palm Reader. See <http://www.rosemarylake.com>

Here are some other stories complete in this Free Preview.

**Delian Little Red Riding Hood (COMPLETE STORY)**  
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## For Teachers Only

FKGL <sup>1</sup>	FRE <sup>2</sup>	Words	Title	Page
3.7	89.0	725	<b><u>The Vampire Grandmother</u></b>	11
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Young confident girl adventurer with magic tools and book of wizardry.				
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**Note 1)** *Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level*

**Note 2)** *Flesch Reading Ease*

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