



THE FAIRY

In a wooden cottage at the edge of a village, there once lived a widow and her two daughters. The older one was lazy and mischievous, while the younger one took after her kind and goodhearted father. Their mother loved the older daughter much more because they were both so similar. The younger daughter was only good to her as a maid and had to do all the dirty chores around the house while the other two rested, laughed and sneered at her, treating her with spite and malice. One of the hardest tasks around the house was to fetch water from a well far away by the forest and the younger daughter was always the one who had to do it.

One day, when she was drawing water from the well as usual, a poor old woman stopped by her and asked for a jug of water. The good daughter didn't hesitate a second and gladly offered the woman some water. When the old lady satisfied her thirst, she decided to reward the girl.

"I've never met such a kind and humble lassie before. Ye should know that I'm nae the kind of granny you usually stumble upon in these parts. I'm a fae and I'll reward ye with this: with every word ye say, a precious stone will fall from yer mouth."

When the girl returned back home, her mother scolded her for coming so late: "What took you so long? Because of you, we had no water to cook the stew with."

THE FAIRY

“Please forgive me, mother, I didn’t mean to keep you waiting,” told her the scared daughter. Each and every word she said was followed by a gemstone falling out of her mouth.

When the mother saw the stones, her frown melted away and a broad smile appeared on her face. “Where did you find these stones, my sweet daughter?” she asked.

The girl was so stunned when she heard her mother call her “her daughter” that she told her everything about her encounter by the well.

The mother immediately sent her older daughter to the well as well, stressing to her that if she met an old crone asking for water, she had to smile and help her politely. The older daughter didn’t like that one bit. She had no love for work and the thought of having to help some strange old bag nearly made her faint. But in the end, the vision of an easy fortune was stronger than her disgust for helping others, so she left the house and made her way to the woods.

Just as she arrived at the well, a beautiful maiden in rich clothing came out of the forest and asked her for some water.

“You think I came here to run around getting water for you?! Get out of my way!” snapped the arrogant daughter and kept on waiting for the old woman. But she waited in vain. Today, the fae decided to take on the appearance of a beautiful maiden.

“Ye’re big-headed, mean and lazy. I’ll reward ye thus: with every word ye say, twa frogs and twa snakes will fall from yer mouth,” decided the fairy.

It was already getting dark, but the mother was still sitting tight and waiting for her older daughter. She couldn’t wait for the heaps of diamonds falling from her mouth.

When the daughter finally arrived, the mother immediately jumped to her: “Well, honey? Go on, say something.”

“Oh mum, it’s bad,” said the girl and two frogs hopped to the floor, followed by two hissing snakes. The mother jumped away in fright.

“That’s all your sister’s doing. I bet they made a deal with that witch to curse you like this!” screamed the mother and ran after the younger daughter to do away with her.

When the poor terrified child heard her mother, she quickly fled the house and

THE FAIRY

ran away to a distant forest. As she was running, she stumbled upon a handsome boy. It was the royal prince, who was just returning from a hunt. As soon as he saw how beautiful she was, he fell in love with her. He bent down to her and asked her why she was running alone in a forest, crying her eyes out.

“Oh, my dear lord, my mother banished me from our home,” answered the girl. She told him everything about her hardships and then they talked and talked for a long time. Finally, they rode together to the king’s palace where they got married.

And what happened to the older daughter? The mother was bad-tempered and soon started despising the girl with the awful frogs and snakes coming out of her mouth. Finally, she drove her out of the house as well. The poor wretch spent many long years walking around the world, but she never found anyone who would want to marry her.