

# Princess Rosette

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French

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*35 min read*

Once upon a time there lived a King and Queen who had two handsome boys; so well-fed and hearty were they, that they grew like the day.

Whenever the Queen had a child, she sent for the fairies, that she might learn from them what would be its future lot. After a while she had a little daughter, who was so beautiful, that no one could see her without loving her.

The fairies came as usual, and the Queen having feasted them, said to them as they were going away, “Do not forget that good custom of yours, but tell me what will happen to Rosette”—for this was the name of the little Princess.

The fairies answered her that they had left their divining-books at home, and that they would come again to see her.

“Ah!” said the Queen, “that bodes no good, I fear; you do not wish to distress me by foretelling evil; but, I pray you, let me know the worst, and hide nothing from me.”

The fairies continued to make excuses, but the Queen only became more anxious to know the truth. At last the chief among them said to her, “We fear, madam, that Rosette will be the cause of a great misfortune befalling her brothers; that they may even lose their lives on her account. This is all that we can tell you of the fate of this

sweet little Princess, and we are grieved to have nothing better to say about her.”

The fairies took their departure, and the Queen was very sorrowful, so sorrowful that the King saw by her face that she was in trouble. He asked her what was the matter. She told him she had gone too near the fire and accidentally burnt all the flax that was on her distaff.

“Is that all?” replied the King, and he went up to his store-room and brought her down more flax than she could spin in a hundred years.

But the Queen was still very sorrowful, and the King again asked her what was the matter. She told him that she had been down to the river and had let one of her green satin slippers fall into the water.

“Is that all?” replied the King, and he sent for all the shoemakers in the kingdom, and made the Queen a present of ten thousand green satin slippers.

Still the Queen was no less sorrowful; the King asked her once more what was the matter. She told him that, being hungry, she had eaten hastily, and had swallowed her wedding-ring. The King knew that she was not speaking the truth, for he had himself put away the ring, and he replied, “My dear wife, you are not speaking the truth; here is your ring, which I have kept in my purse.”

The Queen was put out of countenance at being caught telling a lie—for there is nothing in the world so ugly—and she saw that the King was vexed, so she told him what the fairies had predicted about little Rosette, and begged him to tell her if he could think of any remedy.

The King was greatly troubled, so much so, that at last he said to the Queen, “I see no way of saving our two boys, except by putting the little girl to death, while she is still in her swaddling clothes.”

But the Queen cried that she would rather suffer death herself, that she would never consent to so cruel a deed, and that the King must try and think of some other remedy. The King and Queen could think of nothing else, and while thus pondering over the matter, the Queen was told that in a large wood near the town, there lived an old hermit, who made his home in the trunk of a tree, whom people went from far and near to consult.

“It is to him I must go,” said the Queen; “the fairies told me the evil, but they forgot to tell me the remedy.”

She started early in the morning, mounted on her little white mule, that was shod with gold, and accompanied by two of her maids of honor, who each rode a pretty horse. When they were near the wood they dismounted

out of respect, and made their way to the tree where the hermit lived.

He did not much care for the visits of women, but when he saw that it was the Queen approaching, he said, "Welcome! what would you ask of me?"

She related to him what the fairies had said about Rosette, and asked him to advise her what to do. He told her that the Princess must be shut up in a tower, and not be allowed to leave it as long as she lived. The Queen thanked him, and returned and told everything to the King. The King immediately gave orders for a large tower to be built as quickly as possible.

In it he placed his daughter, but that she might not feel lonely and depressed, he, and the Queen, and her two brothers, went to see her every day. The elder of these was called the big Prince, and the younger, the little Prince. They loved their sister passionately, for she was the most beautiful and graceful Princess ever seen, and the least glance of hers was worth more than a hundred gold pieces.

When she was fifteen years old, the big Prince said to the King, "Father, my sister is old enough to be married; shall we not soon have a wedding?" The little Prince said the same to the Queen, but their Majesties laughed and changed the subject, and made no answer about the marriage.

Now, it happened that the King and Queen both fell very ill, and died within a few days of one another. There was great mourning; everyone wore black, and all the bells were tolled. Rosette was inconsolable at the loss of her good mother.

As soon as the funeral was over, the dukes and marquises of the kingdom placed the big Prince on a throne made of gold and diamonds; he wore a splendid crown on his head, and robes of violet velvet embroidered with suns and moons. Then the whole Court cried out, "Long live the King!" and now on all sides there was nothing but rejoicing.

Then the young King and his brother said one to another, "Now that we are the masters, we will release our sister from the tower, where she has been shut up for such a long and dreary time."

They had only to pass through the garden to reach the tower, which stood in one corner of it, and had been built as high as was possible, for the late King and Queen had intended her to remain there always.

Rosette was embroidering a beautiful dress on a frame in front of her, when she saw her brothers enter. She

rose, and taking the King's hand, said, "Good-day, sire, you are now King, and I am your humble subject; I pray you to release me from this tower, where I lead a melancholy life," and with this, she burst into tears.

The King embraced her, and begged her not to weep, for he was come, he said, to take her from the tower, and to conduct her to a beautiful castle. The Prince had his pockets full of sweetmeats, which he gave Rosette.

"Come," he said, "let us get away from this wretched place; the King will soon find you a husband; do not be unhappy any longer."

When Rosette saw the beautiful garden, full of flowers, and fruits, and fountains, she was so overcome with astonishment, that she stood speechless, for she had never seen anything of the kind before. She looked around her, she went first here, then there, she picked the fruit off the trees, and gathered flowers from the beds; while her little dog, Fretillon, who was as green as a parrot, kept on running before her, saying, yap, yap, yap! and jumping and cutting a thousand capers, and everybody was amused at his ways.

Presently he ran into a little wood, whither the Princess followed him, and here her wonder was even greater than before, when she saw a large peacock spreading out its tail. She thought it so beautiful, so very beautiful, that she could not take her eyes off it. The King and the Prince now joined her, and asked her what delighted her so much.

She pointed to the peacock, and asked them what it was. They told her it was a bird, which was sometimes eaten.

"What!" she cried, "dare to kill and eat a beautiful bird like that! I tell you, that I will marry no one but the King of the Peacocks, and when I am their Queen I shall not allow anybody to eat them."

The astonishment of the King cannot be described. "But, dear sister," said he, "where would you have us go to find the King of the Peacocks?"

"Whither you please, sire; but him, and him alone, will I marry."

Having come to this decision, she was now conducted by her brothers to their castle; the peacock had to be brought and put into her room, so fond was she of it. All the Court ladies who had not before seen Rosette now hastened to greet her, and pay their respects to her.

Some brought preserves with them, some sugar, and others dresses of woven gold, beautiful ribbons, dolls,

embroidered shoes, pearls, and diamonds. Everyone did their best to entertain her, and she was so well brought up, so courteous, kissing their hands, curtsying when anything beautiful was given to her, that there was not a lord or lady who did not leave her presence gratified and charmed.

While she was thus occupied, the King and the Prince were turning over in their minds how they should find the King of the Peacocks, if there was such a person in the world to be found. They decided that they would have Rosette's portrait painted; and when completed it was so life-like, that only speech was wanting.

Then they said to her, "Since you will marry no one but the King of the Peacocks, we are going together to look for him, and will traverse the whole world to try and find him for you. If we find him, we shall be very glad. Meanwhile take care of our kingdom until we return."

Rosette thanked them for all the trouble they were taking; she promised to govern the kingdom well, and said that, during their absence, her only pleasure would be in looking at the peacock, and making her little dog dance. They all three cried when they said good-bye to each other.

So the two Princes started on their long journey, and they asked everyone whom they met, "Do you know the King of the Peacocks?" but the reply was always the same, "No, we do not." Each time they passed on and went further, and in this way they travelled so very, very far, that no one had ever been so far before.

They came to the kingdom of the cock-chafers; and these were in such numbers, and made such a loud buzzing, that the King feared he should become deaf. He asked one of them, who appeared to him to have the most intelligence, whether he knew where the King of the Peacocks was to be found.

"Sire," replied the cock-chaffer, "his kingdom lies thirty thousand leagues from here; you have chosen the longest way to reach it."

"And how do you know that?" asked the King.

"Because," answered the cock-chaffer, "we know you very well, for every year we spend two or three months in your gardens."

Whereupon the King and his brother embraced the cock-chafer, and they went off arm in arm to dine together, and the two strangers admired all the curiosities of that new country, where the smallest leaf of a tree was worth a gold piece.

After that, they continued their journey, and having been directed along the right way, they were not long in reaching its close. On their arrival, they found all the trees laden with peacocks, and, indeed, there were peacocks everywhere, so that they could be heard talking and screaming two leagues off.

The King said to his brother "If the King of the Peacocks is a peacock himself, how can our sister marry him? it would be folly to consent to such a thing, and it would be a fine thing for us to have little peacocks for nephews."

The Prince was equally disturbed at the thought. "It is an unhappy fancy she has taken into her head," he said. "I cannot think what led her to imagine that there was such a person in the world as the King of the Peacocks."

When they entered the town, they saw that it was full of men and women, and that they all wore clothes made of peacocks' feathers, and that these were evidently considered fine things, for every place was covered with them. They met the King, who was driving in a beautiful little carriage of gold, studded with diamonds, and drawn by twelve peacocks at full gallop. This King of the Peacocks was so handsome, that the King and the Prince were delighted; he had long, light, curly hair, fair complexion, and wore a crown of peacocks' feathers.

Directly he saw them, he guessed, seeing that they wore a different costume to the people of the country, that they were strangers, and wishing to ascertain if this was so, he ordered his carriage to stop, and sent for them.

'Oh, you are jesting;' replied the King of the Peacocks.

The King and the Prince advanced, bowing low, and said, "Sire, we have come from afar, to show you a portrait." They drew forth Rosette's portrait and showed it to him. After gazing at it a while, the King of the Peacocks said, "I can scarcely believe that there is so beautiful a maiden in the whole world."

"She is a thousand times more beautiful," said the King. "You are jesting," replied the King of the Peacocks.

“Sire,” rejoined the Prince, “here is my brother, who is a King, like yourself; he is called King, and my name is Prince; our sister, of whom this is the portrait, is the Princess Rosette. We have come to ask if you will marry her; she is good and beautiful, and we will give her, as dower, a bushel of golden crowns.”

“It is well,” said the King. “I will gladly marry her; she shall want for nothing, and I shall love her greatly; but I require that she shall be as beautiful as her portrait, and if she is in the smallest degree less so, I shall make you pay for it with your lives.”

“We consent willingly,” said both Rosette’s brothers.

“You consent?” added the King. “You will go to prison then, and remain there until the Princess arrives.”

The Princes made no difficulty about this, for they knew well that Rosette was more beautiful than her portrait. They were well looked after while in prison, and were well served with all they required, and the King often went to see them.

He kept Rosette’s portrait in his room, and could scarcely rest day or night for looking at it. As the King and his brother could not go to her themselves, they wrote to Rosette, telling her to pack up as quickly as possible, and to start without delay, as the King of the Peacocks was awaiting her. They did not tell her that they were prisoners, for fear of causing her uneasiness.

The Princess scarcely knew how to contain herself with joy, when she received this message. She told everybody that the King of the Peacocks had been found, and that he wanted to marry her.

Bonfires were lit, and guns fired, and quantities of sweetmeats and sugar were eaten; everyone who came to see the Princess, during the three days before her departure, was given bread-and-butter and jam, rolled wafers, and negus.

After having thus dispensed hospitality to her visitors, she presented her beautiful dolls to her best friends, and handed over the government to the wisest elders of the town, begging them to look well after everything, to spend little, and to save up money for the King on his return.

She also prayed them to take care of her peacock, for with her she only took her nurse, and her foster-sister, and her little green dog, Fretillon. They set out in a boat on the sea, carrying with them the bushel of golden crowns, and sufficient clothes for two changes a day for ten years.

They made merry on their voyage, laughing and singing, and the nurse kept on asking the boatman if they were nearing the Kingdom of the Peacocks; for a long time, all he said was, "No, no, not yet."

Then at last, when she asked again, "Are we anywhere near it now?" he answered, "We shall soon be there, very soon."

Once more she said, "Are we near, are we anywhere near it now?" and he said, "Yes, we are now within reach of shore."

On hearing this, the nurse went to the end of the boat, and sitting down beside the boatman, said to him, "If you like, you can be rich for the remainder of your life."

He replied, "I should like nothing better."

She continued, "If you like, you can earn good money."

"That would suit me very well," he answered. "Well," she went on, "then to-night, when the Princess is asleep, you must help me throw her into the sea. After she is drowned, I will dress my daughter in her fine clothes, and we will take her to the King of the Peacocks, who will only be too pleased to marry her; and as a reward to you, we will give you as many diamonds as you care to possess."

The boatman was very much astonished at this proposal; he told the nurse that it was a pity to drown such a pretty Princess, and that he felt compassion for her; but the nurse fetched a bottle of wine and made him drink so much, that he had no longer any power to refuse.

Night having come, the Princess went to bed as usual, her little Fretillon lying at her feet, not even stirring one of his paws. Rosette slept soundly, but the wicked nurse kept awake, and went presently to fetch the boatman.

She took him into the Princess's room, and together they lifted her up, feather bed, mattress, sheets, coverlet, and all, and threw them into the sea, the Princess all the while so fast asleep, that she never woke.

But fortunately, her bed was made of Phoenix-feathers, which are extremely rare, and have the property of

always floating on water; so that she was carried along in her bed as in a boat.

The water, however, began gradually first to wet her feather bed, then her mattress, and Rosette began to feel uncomfortable, and turned from side to side, and then Fretillon woke up. He had a capital nose, and when he smelt the soles and cod-fish so near, he started barking at them, and this awoke all the other fish, who began swimming about.

The bigger ones ran against the Princess's bed, which, not being attached to anything, span round and round like a whirligig. Rosette could not make out what was happening.

"Is our boat having a dance on the water?" she said. "I am not accustomed to feeling so uneasy as I am to-night," and all the while Fretillon continued barking, and going on as if he was out of his mind.

The wicked nurse and the boatman heard him from afar, and said: "There's that funny little beast drinking our healths with his mistress. Let us make haste to land," for they were now just opposite the town of the King of the Peacocks.

He had sent down a hundred chariots to the landing-place; they were drawn by all kinds of rare animals, lions, bears, stags, wolves, horses, oxen, asses, eagles, and peacocks: and the chariot which was intended for the Princess was harnessed with six blue monkeys, that could jump, dance on the tight rope, and do endless clever tricks; they had beautiful trappings of crimson velvet, overlaid with plates of gold.

Sixty young maids of honour were also in attendance, who had been chosen by the King for the amusement of the Princess; they were dressed in all sorts of colours, and gold and silver were the least precious of their adornments.

The nurse had taken great pains to dress her daughter finely; she had put on her Rosette's best robe, and decked her all over from head to foot with the Princess's diamonds; but with all this, she was still as ugly as an ape, with greasy black hair, crooked eyes, bowed legs, and a hump on her back; and, added to these deformities, she was besides of a disagreeable and sulky temper, and was always grumbling.

When the people saw her get out of the boat, they were so taken aback by her appearance, that they could not utter a sound.

"What is the meaning of this?" she said. "Are you all asleep? Be off, and bring me something to eat! A nice set of

“beggars you are! I will have you all hanged.”

When they heard this, they murmured, “What an ugly creature! and she is as wicked as she is ugly! A nice wife for our King; well, we are not surprised! but it was scarcely worth the trouble to bring her from the other side of the world.”

Meanwhile she still behaved as if she were already mistress of all and everything, and for no reason at all, boxed their ears, or gave a blow with her fist to everybody in turn.

As her escort was a very large one, the procession moved slowly, and she sat up in her chariot like a queen; but all the peacocks, who had stationed themselves on the trees, so as to salute her as she passed, and who had been prepared to shout, “Long live the beautiful Queen Rosette!” could only call out, “Fie, fie, how ugly she is!” as soon as they caught sight of her.

She was so enraged at this, that she called to her guards, “Kill those rascally peacocks who are insulting me.” But the peacocks quickly flew away, and only laughed at her.

The treacherous boatman, seeing and hearing all this, said in a low voice to the nurse, “There is something wrong, good mother; your daughter should have been better looking.”

She answered, “Hold your tongue, stupid, or you will bring us into trouble.”

The King had word brought him that the Princess was approaching. “Well,” he said, “have her brothers, I wonder, told me the truth? Is she more beautiful than her portrait?” “Sire,” said those near him, “there will be nothing to wish for, if she is as beautiful.” “You are right,” replied the King, “I shall be well content with that. Come, let us go and see her,” for he knew by the hubbub in the courtyard that she had arrived. He could not distinguish anything that was said, except, “Fie, fie, how ugly she is!” and he imagined that the people were calling out about some little dwarf or animal that she had brought with her, for it never entered his head that the words were applied to the Princess herself.

Rosette’s portrait was carried uncovered, at the top of a long pole, and the King walked after it in solemn state, with all his nobles and his peacocks, followed by ambassadors from various kingdoms.

The King of the Peacocks was very impatient to see his dear Rosette; but when he did see her—well, he very nearly died on the spot. He flew into a violent rage, he tore his clothes, he would not go near her, he felt quite

afraid of her.

“What!” he cried, “have those two villains I have in prison had the boldness and impudence to make a laughing-stock of me, and to propose my marrying such a fright as that? They shall both be killed; and let that insolent woman, and the nurse, and the man who is with them, be immediately carried to the dungeon of my great tower, and there kept.”

While this was going on, the King and his brother, who knew that his sister was expected, had put on their bravest apparel ready to receive her; but instead of seeing their prison door open and being set at liberty, as they had hoped, the gaoler came with a body of soldiers and made them go down into a dark cellar, full of horrible reptiles, and where the water was up to their necks; no one was ever more surprised or distressed than they were.

“Alas!” they said to one another, “this is indeed a melancholy marriage feast for us! What can have happened that we should be so ill-treated?” They did not know what in the world to think, except that they were to be killed, and they were very sorrowful about this. Three days passed, and no news reached them of any kind.

At the end of that time, the King of the Peacocks came, and began calling out insulting things to them through a hole in the wall.

“You called yourselves King and Prince, that I might fall into your trap, and engage myself to marry your sister; but you are nothing better than two beggars, who are not worth the water you drink. I am going to bring you before the judges, who will soon pass their verdict upon you; the rope to hang you with is already being made.”

“King of the Peacocks,” replied the King, angrily, “do not act too rashly in this matter, or you may repent it. I am a King as well as you, and I have a fine kingdom, and rich clothing, and crowns, to say nothing of good gold pieces. You must be joking to talk like this of hanging us; have we stolen anything from you?”

When the King heard him speak so boldly, he did not know what to think, and he felt half inclined to let them and their sister go without putting them to death; but his chief adviser, who was an arrant flatterer, dissuaded him from this, telling him that if he did not revenge the insult that had been put upon him, all the world would make fun of him, and look upon him as nothing better than a miserable little King worth a few coppers a day. The King thereupon swore that he would never forgive them, and ordered them to be brought to trial at once.

This did not take long; the judges had only to look at the real Rosette’s portrait and then at the Princess who

had arrived, and, without hesitation, they ordered the prisoners' heads to be cut off as a punishment for having lied to the King, since they had promised him a beautiful Princess, and had only given him an ugly peasant girl.

They repaired with great ceremony to the prison to read this sentence to them; but the prisoners declared that they had not lied, that their sister was a Princess, and more beautiful than the day; that there must be something under this which they did not understand, and they asked for a respite of seven days, as before that time had expired their innocence might have been established.

The King of the Peacocks, who had worked himself up to a high pitch of anger, could with great difficulty be induced to accord them this grace, but at last he consented.

While these things were going on at the Court, we must say something about poor Rosette. Both she and Fretillon were very much astonished, when daylight came, to find themselves in the middle of the sea, without a boat, and far from all help.

She began to cry, and cried so piteously, that even the fishes had compassion on her: she did not know what to do, nor what would become of her. "There is no doubt," she said, "that the King of the Peacocks ordered me to be thrown into the sea, having repented his promise of marrying me, and to get rid of me quietly he has had me drowned. What a strange man!" she continued, "for I should have loved him so much! We should have been so happy together," and with that she burst out crying afresh, for she could not help still loving him.

She remained floating about on the sea for two days, wet to the skin, and almost dead with cold; she was so benumbed by it, that if it had not been for little Fretillon, who lay beside her and kept a little warmth in her, she could not have survived. She was famished with hunger, and seeing the oysters in their shells, she took as many of these as she wanted and ate them; Fretillon did the same, to keep himself alive, although he did not like such food. Rosette became still more alarmed when the night set in. "Fretillon," she said, "keep on barking, to frighten away the soles, for fear they should eat us."

So Fretillon barked all night, and when the morning came, the Princess was floating near the shore. Close to the sea at this spot, there lived a good old man; he was poor, and did not care for the things of the world, and no one ever visited him in his little hut.

He was very much surprised when heard Fretillon barking, for no dogs ever came in that direction; he thought some travellers must have lost their way, and went out with the kind intention of putting them on the right

road again.

All at once he caught sight of the Princess and Fretillon floating on the sea, and the Princess, seeing him, stretched out her arms to him, crying out, "Good man, save me, or I shall perish; I have been in the water like this for two days."

When he heard her speak so sorrowfully, he had great pity on her, and went back into his hut to fetch a long hook; he waded into the water up to his neck, and once or twice narrowly escaped drowning. At last, however, he succeeded in dragging the bed on to the shore. Rosette and Fretillon were overjoyed to find themselves again on dry ground; and were full of gratitude to the kind old man.

Rosette wrapped herself in her coverlet, and walked bare-footed into the hut, where the old man lit a little fire of dry straw, and took one of his dead wife's best dresses out of a trunk, with some stockings and shoes, and gave them to the Princess. Dressed in her peasant's attire, she looked as beautiful as the day, and Fretillon capered round her and made her laugh.

The old man guessed that Rosette was some great lady, for her bed was embroidered with gold and silver, and her mattress was of satin. He begged her to tell him her story, promising not to repeat what she told him if she so wished. So she related to him all that had befallen her, crying bitterly the while, for she still thought that it was the King of the Peacocks who had ordered her to be drowned.

"What shall we do, my daughter?" said the old man. "You are a Princess and accustomed to the best of everything, and I have but poor fare to offer, black bread and radishes; but if you will let me, I will go and tell the King of the Peacocks that you are here; if he had once seen you, he would assuredly marry you." "Alas! he is a wicked man," said Rosette; "he would only put me to death; but if you can lend me a little basket, I will tie it round Fretillon's neck, and he will have very bad luck, if he does not manage to bring back some food."

The old man gave her a basket, which she fastened to Fretillon's neck, and then said, "Go to the best kitchen in the town, and bring me back what you find in the saucepan."

Fretillon ran off to the town, and as there was no better kitchen than that of the King, he went in, uncovered the saucepan, and cleverly carried off all that was in it; then he returned to the hut. Rosette said to him, "Go back and take whatever you can find of the best in the larder."

Fretillon went back to the King's larder, and took white bread, wine, and all sorts of fruits and sweetmeats; he

was so laden that he could only just manage to carry the things home.

When the King of the Peacocks' dinner hour arrived, there was nothing for him either in the saucepan or in the larder; his attendants looked askance at one another, and the King was in a terrible rage.

"It seems, then, that I am to have no dinner; but see that the spit is put before the fire, and let me have some good roast meat this evening."

The evening came, and the Princess said to Fretillon, "Go to the best kitchen in the town and bring me a joint of good roast meat."

Fretillon obeyed, and knowing no better kitchen than that of the King, he went softly in, while the cooks' backs were turned, took the meat, which was of the best kind, from the spit, and carried it back in his basket to the Princess. She sent him back without delay to the larder, and he carried off all the preserves and sweetmeats that had been prepared for the King.

The King, having had no dinner, was very hungry, and ordered supper to be served early, but no supper was forthcoming; enraged beyond words, he was forced to go supperless to bed.

The same thing happened the following day, both as to dinner and supper; so that the King, for three days, was without meat or drink, for every time he sat down to table, it was found that the meal that had been prepared had been stolen.

His chief adviser, fearing for the life of the King, hid himself in the corner of the kitchen to watch; he kept his eyes on the saucepan, that was boiling over the fire, and what was his surprise to see enter a little green dog, with one ear, that uncovered the pot, and put the meat in its basket. He followed it to see where it would go; he saw it leave the town, and still following, came to the old man's hut.

Then he went and told the King that it was to a poor peasant's home that the food was carried morning and evening. The King was greatly astonished, and ordered more inquiries to be made. His chief adviser, anxious for favour, decided to go himself, taking with him a body of archers. They found the old man and Rosette at dinner, eating the meat that had been stolen from the King's kitchen, and they seized them, and bound them with cords, taking Fretillon prisoner at the same time.

They brought word to the King that the delinquents had been captured, and he replied, "Tomorrow, the last

day of reprieve for my two insolent prisoners will expire; they and these thieves shall die together.”

He then went into his court of justice. The old man threw himself on his knees before him, and begged to be allowed to tell him everything. As he was speaking, the King looked towards the beautiful Princess, and his heart was touched when he saw her crying.

When, therefore, the old man said that she was the Princess Rosette who had been thrown into the water, in spite of the weak condition he was in from having starved for so long, he gave three bounds of joy, ran and embraced her, and untied her cords, declaring the while that he loved her with all his heart.

They at once went to find the Princes, who thought they were going to be put to death, and came forward in great dejection and hanging their heads; the nurse and her daughter were brought in at the same time.

The brothers and sister recognised one another, as soon as they were brought face to face, and Rosette threw herself on her brothers' necks. The nurse and her daughter, and the boatman, begged on their knees for mercy, and the universal rejoicing and their own joy were so great, that the King and the Princess pardoned them, and gave the good old man a handsome reward, and from that time he continued to live in the palace.

Finally, the King of the Peacocks did all in his power to atone for his conduct to the King and his brother, expressing the deepest regret at having treated them so badly. The nurse restored to Rosette all her beautiful clothes and the bushel of golden crowns, and the wedding festivities lasted a fortnight. Everyone was happy down to Fretillon, who ate nothing but partridge wings for the rest of his life.

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