



# *The Snake and the Princess*

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Russian

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*Easy*  
*3 min read*

There was an emperor and empress who had three daughters. The emperor fell ill, and sent his eldest daughter for water. She went to fetch it, when a snake said: 'Come! will you marry me?' The princess replied: 'No, I won't.' 'Then,' said he, 'I won't give you any water.'

Then the second daughter said: 'I'll go; he'll give me some.' She went; the snake said to her: 'Come! will you marry me?' 'No,' she said, 'I won't.' He gave her no water.

She returned and said: 'He gave me no water. He said: "If you will marry me I will give it."' The youngest said: 'I will go; he will give me some.'

She went, and the snake said to her: 'Come! will you marry me?' 'I will,' she said. Then he drew her water from the very bottom, cold and fresh. She brought it home, gave it her father to drink, and her father recovered.

Then on Sunday a carriage came, and those with it said:

'Open the door,

Princess!

Why did the dear one love?

Why draw water from the ford,  
Princess?’

She was terrified, wept, and went and opened the door. Then they said again:

‘Open the rooms,  
Princess!

Why did the dear one love?

Why draw water from the ford,  
Princess?’

Then they came into the house and placed the snake in a plate on the table. There he lay, just as if he were of gold! They went out of the house, and said:

‘Sit in the carriage,  
Princess!

Why did the dear one love?

Why draw water from the ford,  
Princess?’

They drove off with her to the snake’s abode. There they lived, and had a daughter born to them. They also took a godmother to live with them, but she was a wicked woman. The child soon died, and the mother died soon after it. The godmother went in the night to the place where she was buried, and cut off her hands. Then she came home, and heated water-gruel, scalded the hands, and took off the gold rings. Then the princess—such was the ordinance of God—came to her for the hands, and said:

‘The fowls are asleep, the geese are asleep,  
Only my godmother does not sleep.  
She scalds white hands in water-gruel,  
She takes off golden rings.’

The godmother concealed herself under the stove. She said again:

'The fowls are asleep, the geese are asleep,  
Only my godmother does not sleep.  
She scalds white hands in water-gruel,  
She takes off golden rings.'

The next day they came and found the godmother dead under the stove. They didn't give her proper burial, but threw her into a hole.

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