



# *The Flying King*

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Humor, Magic

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There was once a king who did nothing but sit on his throne, eat enormous drumsticks and drink flagon after flagon of cheap beer. He was a disgrace to his kingdom, but most of all to his son, the Prince. The Prince was ashamed of his father for never doing anything ever and vowed that when he was king, he would do things.

When his father finally did die...well, when that happened, it took a couple of days for people to notice it since he never did anything. But, eventually, when people noticed that he wasn't eating enormous drumsticks and hadn't drunk so much as one flagon of cheap beer, it was concluded that he had died and the prince became the new king, and he was known throughout the land as King Timmy.

True to his word, King Timmy did things. He learned to play the cello, he mastered chess, studied foreign languages, taught himself how to cook, dabbled in archery, needlepoint, earned his black belt in tae kwon do, starred in a production of King Lear, wrote seven books, trained dachshunds, won a trophy in jousting and invented the tricycle.

King Timmy was famous. He was known throughout the land as King Timmy Who Does Things and people told songs and sang stories about the things he did when he did the things that he did...sorry, that sort of got away from me, didn't it?

Indeed, everything was going quite well for the king until he happened to look out his window and see a bird flying past. And suddenly it struck him that there was yet one thing he had not yet done, nor had he even attempted: Flying! So he made another vow, the third he had made in his entire life (the second one was that he vowed he would ask out this girl he liked, but then he found out she was engaged, so that one doesn't quite

count), that he would learn how to fly!

Of course, most people were against this idea based on the fact that it's not possible for people to fly and, throughout history, they have gotten very badly hurt or even killed in attempting to do so. But this was not King Timmy Who Thinks About Doing A Thing Then Gives Up If It's Too Hard. This was King Timmy Who Does Things, and he would not be deterred. He hired the cleverest men and women in the kingdom to solve the problem of how a person could fly like a bird and after six years of research, they ultimately concluded that it couldn't possibly work.

"What if I made, like, big wings and glued feathers on them and..."

"No, sire, that won't do," explained the King's head wiseman, patiently. "Birds and people are built entirely differently. In order for you to be as aerodynamic as a bird, we'd have to take you apart and put you back together. We'd have to hollow out your bones, and that would kill you. I promise you, your majesty, that it is simply, plainly, entirely and utterly impossible for a human being to fly."

"Oh yeah? Then what's she doing?"

The wise man looked where the king was pointing and, sure enough, there was a woman flying in the air above their heads. Flapping her arms just like a bird. The King waved to her and she landed on the grass next to him.

"Good afternoon, your majesty," said the flying lady.

"How do you do that?"

"Do what?"

"Fly!"

"Oh, that! I saved a witch from drowning in quicksand and she granted me a wish. I wished to be able to fly so here I am."

Of course! It was scientifically impossible for a person to fly...but what does science have to do with magic? All he had to do was do a good deed for a witch and then she would give him the power to fly in return

But this turned out not to be as easy as King Timmy thought. For some reason he assumed he would have no trouble finding a witch who needed help with something. But after many weeks of traveling the world he had

not found a single witch who needed help. He had met a few witches, but they were all fine, thanks for asking, and didn't need any assistance.

He was just about to turn around and go home when he heard someone calling for help. Maybe, he thought, just maybe that's a witch! So he followed the voice only to find that it was not coming from a witch at all. In fact...it was a goose. A goose was calling for help. And small wonder, when you consider that the goose was being attacked by a snake.

"Help!" cried the goose. "This snake is going to kill me!"

"You're not a witch by any chance, are you?" asked the King.

"What?"

"Only I know witches sometimes disguise themselves as animals, so I thought maybe..."

"No, I'm not a witch! I'm just an ordinary talking goose who's about to be killed by a snake so can you help me, please?!?"

"Oh, right, sorry." And the king drew his sword and killed the snake.

"Gee, thanks," said the goose. "Would you mind helping me a little more? I need to get back to my farm, but I'm afraid of being attacked by another wild animal. Could you possibly carry me home?"

"Let me answer your question with a question, fair goose: Are you absolutely certain you're not a witch?"

"No, honestly, I'm a goose."

"Darn! I've been trying to find a witch to do a favor for so she'll give me the power to fly in return."

"Oh. I guess that means you won't help me get home, huh? Seeing as I'm just a goose."

"No, I'll be happy to help you." So saying, King Timmy picked the goose up and carried her home.

“Thanks for your help,” said the goose. “And now, I have a surprise for you!” And before the King’s eyes, the goose turned into a witch. “I was a witch all along! But I said I wasn’t to test you. You helped me even when you knew you would get nothing in return. So that means you deserve to get something in return! I think. I don’t know; this all made so much sense when I was a goose.”

Well, we all know what King Timmy’s wish was and soon he was not only known as King Timmy Who Did Things, but King Timmy Who Could Fly!

The moral to the story is that you should do nice things for people even if you don’t get anything in return. Because sometimes you’ll get something in return...or...something...I think...whatever, just be nice to people, okay?

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