



The King's Witch

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Humor, Magic

Once upon a time, a girl kissed a frog and he turned into a handsome prince. They married and lived happily ever after.

Well, they lived happily, at least, until their son was born. He looked so much like a frog that his mother couldn't stand him. He had long skinny arms and long skinny legs and a wide mouth and flat nose and big popeyes. Every time she looked at him, she wanted to throw him into the pond where she had found his father.

The infant croaked and hiccupped all the time. She couldn't possibly show him off to any of her friends! She kept pretending he was sick — he had colic, he was teething, he had a little fever (probably not catching, but best to be safe) — so she couldn't possibly let them see him.

Perhaps the worst part of all was that his father loved the little croaker! When the baby was three months old, his mother suggested he was old enough for boarding school. His father looked at her and said, "How did you ever break my enchantment? You couldn't possibly have loved the froggy me!"

She replied, "I have a very vivid imagination. I pictured myself living with a handsome prince in a castle, and I put all the love I had for that vision into that kiss. That was a lotta love."

For some reason, they weren't as happy together after that.

One day, the young mother read about a new fairy godmother school opening in the neighboring country. It seemed the perfect opportunity for her to escape the intolerable life she was living. She could even feel good

about abandoning her family, by telling herself she was doing it for all the unfortunate children — like her son — who needed a fairy godmother to help them overcome the handicaps with which unjust fate had burdened them. So she left.

She was fairly successful at the school. She didn't graduate with honors, but she did graduate and begin an internship. Things were going well, and she was feeling very pleased about all the children she was helping, until the day she saw Wilhelmina. Beautiful, thrice-blessed Wilhelmina. The child who should have been hers. A child any mother would be proud to show off to her friends.

When she saw this beauty the other fairy godmothers had created, she snapped, "This poor kid will be inundated with admirers, you crazy old women! Your brains must have come out of bubble gum packets. I will protect this unfortunate child from the consequences of your ill-considered blessings! May anyone who touches this lovely girl skin-to-skin break out in hives."

She was convinced she had done the best thing for the child — she was very good at convincing herself she had done the best thing — but the Council of Fairy Godmothers sent her to the moon in disgrace.

While she was sulking there, the Council of Witches came to her and said, "We think you have enormous potential. Would you like to hear our offer?" They told her there was a warrior king they had been cultivating, and they thought she was the perfect woman to assist him in his kingdom-conquering. She just needed a little training in how to turn her exceptional talents toward king-making rather than god-mothering.

And that is how the Frog's princess became the King's witch.

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