

A typical Italian fairy tale

-The Prince who married a frog

by ITALO CALVINO



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PowerPoint content:

- 1.) Narration of the fairy tale
- 2.) Comic
- 3.) Typical features in the fairy tale
- 4.) Sources

Narration

of the fairy tale

„The prince who married a frog“

Narration of the fairy tale

There was once a king who had three sons of marriageable age. In order to avoid any dispute over their choice of three brides, he said, "Aim as far as you can with the sling. There where the stone falls you will get your wife."

The three sons picked up their slings and shot. The oldest boy sent his stone flying all the way to the roof of a bakery, so he got the baker girl. The second boy released his stone, which came down on the house of a weaver. The youngest son's stone landed in a ditch.

Immediately after the shots, each boy rushed off to his betrothed with a ring. The oldest brother was met by a lovely maiden as fresh as a newly baked cake, the middle brother by a fair girl with silky hair and skin, while the youngest, after looking and looking, saw nothing but a frog in that ditch.

Narration of the fairy tale

They returned to the king to tell him about their betrothed. "Now," said the king, "whoever has the best wife will inherit the kingdom. Here begin the tests." He gave them each some hemp to be spun and returned within three days, to see which betrothed was the best spinner.

The sons went to their betrothed and urged them to spin their best. Highly embarrassed, the youngest boy took the hemp to the rim of the ditch and called:

"Frog, frog!"

"Who calls?"

"Your love who loves you not."

"If you love me not, never mind. Later you shall, when a fine figure I cut."



Narration of the fairy tale

The frog jumped out of the water onto a leaf. The king's son gave her the hemp, telling her he'd pick up the spun thread three days later.

Three days later the older brothers anxiously hastened to the baker girl and the weaver girl to pick up their spun hemp. The baker girl produced a beautiful piece of work; the weaver girl, who was an expert at this sort of thing, had spun hers to look like silk. But how did the youngest son fare? He went to the ditch and called:

"Frog, frog!"

"Who calls?"

"Your love who loves you not."

"If you love me not, never mind. Later you shall, when a fine figure I cut."

Narration of the fairy tale

She jumped onto a leaf holding a walnut in her mouth. He was somewhat embarrassed to give his father a walnut while his brothers brought spun hemp. He nevertheless took heart and presented the king with the walnut. The king, who had already scrutinized the handiwork of the baker and the weaver girls, cracked open the walnut as the older brothers looked on, snickering. Out came cloth as fine as gossamer that continued to unroll until the throne room was covered with it. "But there's no end to this cloth!" exclaimed the king. No sooner were the words out of his mouth than the cloth came to an end. But the father refused to accept the idea of a frog becoming queen. His favorite hunting bitch had just had three puppies, which he gave the three sons. "Take them to your betrothed and go back for them a month later. The one who's taken the best care of her dog will become the queen." A month later, the baker girl's dog had turned into a big, fat mastiff, having got all the bread he could eat. The weaver's dog, not nearly so well supplied, was now a half-starved hound. The youngest son came in with a small box. The king opened it and out jumped a tiny, beribboned poodle, impeccably groomed and perfumed, that stood on its hind legs and marched and counted.

Narration of the fairy tale

"No doubt about it," said the king, "my youngest son will be king, and the frog will be queen."

The wedding of all three brothers was set for the same day. The older brothers went for their brides in garlanded carriages drawn by four horses, and the brides climbed in, decked with feathers and jewels.

The youngest boy went to the ditch, where the frog awaited him in a carriage fashioned out of a fig leaf and drawn by four snails. They set out. He walked ahead while the snails followed, pulling the fig leaf with the frog upon it. Every now and then he stopped for them to catch up with him, and once he even fell asleep. When he awakened, a gold carriage had pulled up beside him. It was drawn by two white horses, and inside on velvet upholstery, sat a maiden as dazzling as the sun and dressed in an emerald-green gown.

"Who are you?" asked the youngest son.

"I am the frog."

Narration of the fairy tale

•He couldn't believe it, so the maiden opened a jewel case containing the fig leaf, the frog skin, and four snail shells. "I was a princess turned into a frog, and the only chance I had of getting my human form back was for a king's son to agree to marry me the way I was."

•The king was overjoyed and told his two older sons, who were consumed with envy, that whoever picked the wrong wife was unworthy of the crown. So the youngest boy and his bride became king and queen.

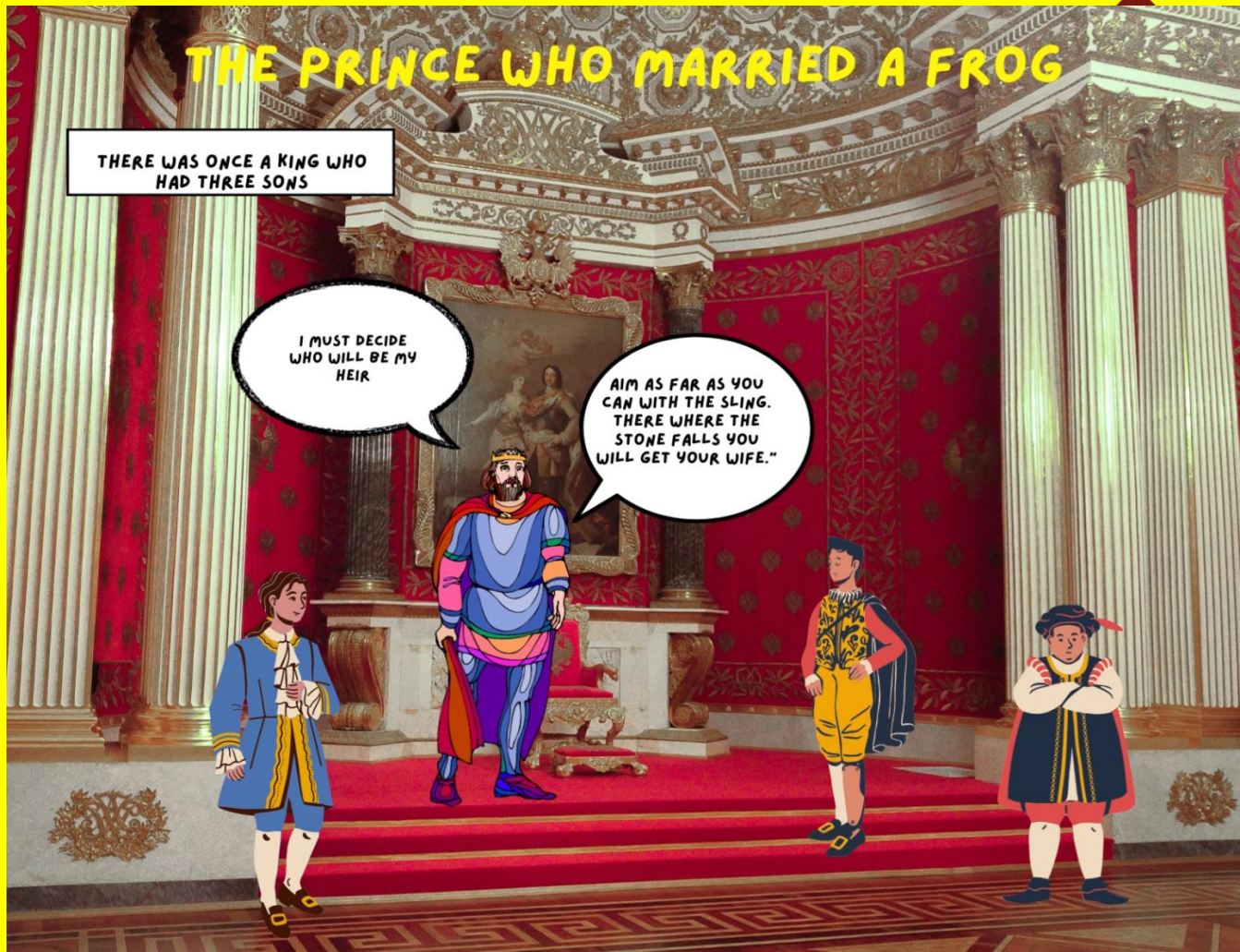


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Typical fairy tale features in "The prince who married a frog"

Beginning and end in fairy tale

The fairy tale begins with
"There was once a king who had
three sons of marriageable age"

The fairy tale ends with a happy
ending: „So the youngest boy and his
bride became king and queen"

Places and time in fairy tale

A specific place is not
specified → typical for
fairy tales

Also an exact time is not
specified → typical for fairy
tales

Characters in fairy tale

No names are mentioned

→ Characters are often identified due to their profession or relationship

There is a king and his 3 sons

There is a frog.

THE LANGUAGE

The simple language, generally paratactic allows an easy understanding of the plot.

PROPP'S FUNCTIONS IN «THE PRINCE WHO MARRIED A FROG»

Propp Function 12: *The Hero tested by the donor.*

The King imposes a series of tests on the three sons for their marriage and for the succession of the Kingdom. "Aim as far as you can with the sling. There where the stone falls you will get your wife."

Propp Function 16: *Fight between hero and antagonist.*

"The brothers laughed laughing" at the youngest of the brothers

Propp Function 29: *The Transfiguration*.

The courage and tenacity of the little brother is rewarded with the transformation of the frog into a girl. → “When he awakened, a gold carriage had pulled up beside him. It was drawn by two white horses, and inside on velvet upholstery, sat a maiden as dazzling as the sun and dressed in an emerald-green gown.”

Propp Function 31: The hero's wedding.

The fantastic, magical element

The talking frog, which is destined to change the fate of the protagonist.

Works on the work: Creative writing

If you could follow up on the fairy tale, how would you continue the story?

A creative rewriting workshop on the fairy tale could foresee the choice of a series of ingredients including: the protagonist; the antagonist; the helper; the places and times; the tests to be overcome; the mission to be accomplished; the final prize.

With a little imagination the teacher could assign a series of these ingredients to make students build a simple and brief fairy tale, perhaps set in our times and with references to real life.

The prince who married a frog is a variant , it derives from **The frog princess** is a fairy tale that has multiple versions with various origins.

Russian variants include the Frog Princess or Tsarevna Frog (Царевна лягушка, Tsarevna Lyagushka) and also Vasilisa the Wise (Василиса Премудрая, Vasilisa Premudraya); Alexander Afanasyev collected variants in his *Narodnye russkie skazki*. Andrew Lang included an Italian variant titled *The Frog in The Violet Fairy Book*.

Italo Calvino included another Italian variant from Piedmont, *The Prince Who Married a Frog*, in *Italian Folktales*, where he noted that the tale was common throughout Europe. Georgios A. Megas included a Greek variant, *The Enchanted Lake*, in *Folktales of Greece*.

In Calvino's version, the princes use slings rather than bows and arrows. In the Greek version, the princes set out to find their brides one by one; the older two are already married by the time the youngest prince starts his quest. Another variation involves the sons chopping down trees and heading in the direction pointed by them in order to find their brides.

In the Russian versions of the story, Prince Ivan and his two older brothers shoot arrows in different directions to find brides. The other brothers' arrows land in the houses of the daughters of an aristocratic and wealthy merchant.

PowerPoint

Sources

Sources

The fairy tale text was found at:

http://www.ruanyifeng.com/calvino/2006/10/the_prince_who_married_a_frog_en.html

The comic was created with the Canva app