

The Tale of the Magic Pot



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Сказка – ложь, да в ней намёк... Ложь эта сказка или чистая правда – решать Вам, дорогой читатель. Одно можно сказать наверняка: эта сказка совсем не похожа на те, что вы читали прежде! И правда, что такое в обычном понимании чудеса? Чудо – это что-то, без сомнения, хорошее, волшебное, радостное. А что, если оно может привести к беде? Насколько страшными и губительными могут быть последствия, если не знать меры в своих желаниях? И можно ли тогда называть чудо – чудом?

Vladimir Afanasiev

The Tale of the Magic Pot

Good evening my dear boys and girls, as well as their parents and grandparents.

There are many different and interesting stories out there in the world, and I am about to tell you yet another one. Whether this really happened, I am not sure, nor am I sure, where I heard it. It could have all been a dream. However this happened, I will begin my story.

A long time ago, in a kingdom far, far away, lived an old King. He wasn't young; he wasn't tall or very bright. Nor was he nice or mean. But he ruled his kingdom with love. The people in his country were hardworking, good people that mind their own business and kept to themselves. Every morning the rings of their axes and hammers raised the family roasters in the villages. Before the rise of the sun, the flute of the shepherd evoked the cows, sheep and goats to meet in a joyful herd. All of the people in the kingdom are busy with their daily routine. Word spread of the craftsmanship and quality of the goods that these people produced.

Like in many other countries, when the last of the seeds were picked from the fields, and all the barns were stocked with fruits and vegetables by the order of the king, the harvest festivals begin.

The people of the kingdom and their guests would gather in the center square. They set up tents/ markets for the people to set their fresh produce and goods. They sold their products, shared and exchanged their produce to one another. Games and events were held for prizes and laughs.



Even the king would receive gifts. Each person would present the king with a gift in order to impress him. Every evening, when the sun sets, the festival begins. The people of the kingdom would sing loud beautiful songs, dance and be merry. The day after the festival, all of the men were invited to join the king for the royal hunt. The women saw their men off for the hunt, giggling amongst themselves while the little boys with their wooden swords and guns, chase after the men with their dogs by dogs by their sides to the kingdom gates.

The hunters rode to the nearest forest and through the forest a few more miles, to the open meadows where the to the overgrown swamp sits. This was the hunter's favorite spot; they called it the Meaty Swamp. Waters springs created the overgrown swamp and many forest animals came through for a drink of water. Legends formed due to its bad reputation, it was ugly and frightening. Tales of mythical creatures were told to roam its dark waters. No later than a month ago, men and women that plow the fields nearby claim, they have heard these creatures pull in, innocent souls in the depths of the swamp. Maybe it was animal or a traveler that got lost in the thick fog, to which the creatures of the pond the musically celebrated their catch. (Sounds of frogs and loud animals). Even the fog danced above the dark waters of the swamp. Everyone that's heard and saw this event says that the hair on the back of their necks stood up. What a fright! Every year, in this area people and livestock went missing (disappeared). The king declared a law, "it is forbidden to walk this area alone. If this path is necessary, then only shall a group of people go together and all must keep on an eye on one another."

The meadow was open and flat, there was room for everyone. The hunters set up tents and their campsite; they broke into teams, checked their weapons and prepared for the night ahead of them. The first day was the preparation of the hunt. This was to be taken very serious. The horns sounded to gather the hunters into their groups. The general presented each team with a task. By royal rules, the first shot of the gun goes to the King. His riffle was old, it has been passed down from generation to generation, and this deserved respect. The king was getting older and the riffle was getting heavier and heavier by the year. This time, the riffle was brought to him, already loaded. He positioned himself in a hunters pose and shoot. Everyone covered their ears to prepare for the extremely loud and smoky blow of the riffle.

The new hunters are assigned to walk around the swamp and disturb the nesting ducks to raise to the sky for the king target. When the ducks flew up, the King pulled the trigger. Whether his riffle is too old, or his vision is unclear, the king was unable to hit many ducks at the same time like he once could. The smoke settled, everyone saw how one of the wounded ducks separated from the rest of the herd and fell straight into the overgrown swamp.

All of the hunters froze, afraid to meet eye contact with the king. Typically, the first person that returns to the king his catch, he receives an award. The hunters hesitated, for the catch has fallen into the frightening, overgrown mythical swamp. Each of them decided their own lives were far more important than risking themselves for an award from the king and each feared the kings would call on themselves. Even the hunter dogs hid.

Understanding the unfortunate event, the king was first to speak. And he asks,

King: —"So who of you men, would like to receive an award?"

There was a silence, no one volunteered. Therefore, the king turned over to his right hand man, general.

King: —"Alright, General, how would you like a new sword?"

The general's heart skipped a beat. He stuttered to give the king a response.

Gen: —"I would go into battle for you, regardless of any sword or awards. I would have gone for the duck myself if it wasn't for my sprained ankle. I've already sent for a doctor."

The king smiled and waved his hand. He understood he was useless. The general shamefully hid between the rests of the hunters. The king then looked over to his main advisor. The advisor nearly fainted; it was a good thing there was someone behind him to hold him up.

King-“Well, my devoted servant, what kind of an award do you desire?”

Servant: “Oh my goodness, my dear king, this is the third day my muscles and bones ache. I almost declined the offer to go on the royal hunt but out of respect to you, I went anyway.”

The king took a deep breath and said.

King-“I understand, you are useless as well.”

“Well, my loyal people, looks like I am the one that will go get the duck.”

And all of a sudden, a voice came from behind.

Stranger: “I will get the duck.”

The hunters divided to reveal an older man, with his traveling bag and staff over his shoulder.

King-“Who are you sir? Where do you come from? You do not look familiar to me.”

Stranger: “Me? I am a traveler my good king. I walk the world and gather knowledge.”

King: —“Ha! So, do you know everything now?”

Stranger: “It’s not possible to know everything. Little by little, I learn about

the things around me.”

He took the staff and bag off his shoulder, looked at the frightened hunters and asked.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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