



THE ETERNAL WATER



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nce upon a time,

in the far - far away lands of white and snow, in a beautiful palace made from ice, lived a very good king! He was an old and a very wise king; loved from all his people like a father and he loved all his people like they were his very own kids!

The king was a proper and God-fearing man with great respect to all the living creatures! No enemies, no thieves, no criminals would come to his kingdom because everybody knew that, as soft he was with his people so hard he could be with his enemies! And every warlord, every thief, every criminal was his enemy!

Everybody knew from the old stories, what a brave warrior and sensible general he was; and only the hearing of his name, was enough to scare them away!

So everybody lived happy, blissfully and in prosper in his kingdom and around the big crystal ice palace! All the people were thanking the Gods for their luck and they were praying to Them for their king to live and rule forever!



But it came that day, when the king was not young any more! You see even in the most beautiful palaces, kings grow old! And then the king got ill! Seriously ill!

The queen got really worry, so she called the best doctors from every corner of the continent! And the doctors came carrying their herbs and nostrums, making colorful soups and smelling drinks!

And the truth is they tried a whole week, again and again, day and night; but the pain and the fever didn't want to go!

So the second week, the queen called the wizards! The wizards of the hills and the wizards of the forests. They came carrying magic filters and mysterious mushrooms, making cataplasms with bat's blood and drinks with spider legs!

They tried a whole week, day and night, but the pain and the fever didn't want to go and the queen started feeling desperate!

And in the beginning of the third week she called the witches! The witches from the lakes and the dark caves! And they brought filters and spells, making prays and litanies to ancient names and spirits!

They tried the first day, but the pain and the fever didn't want to go!

And they tried the second day and the third and the forth but nothing changed! The pain was there, making the king to scream every so often, and the fever was there, burning his body not letting him to breath!

The witches started getting disappointed and frustrated! Everything seemed to get worst than better! The king's body was getting thinner and thinner and the king was most of the time in the land of the not living than he was with them!

The queen was getting ill as well, staying next to the king day and night trying to feed him and wet his lips with fresh water she started getting weaker, thinner and sadder!

The forth night the witches decided to go early to sleep

knowing that the next day was going to be the most difficult of their time: they had to admit their defeat and ask the wizards and the doctors to work all together an answer to the king's health! And everybody knows how hard it is for the witches, the wizards and the doctors to be together; not mention to work together!

And it was when the big clock's bell hit twelve, in the middle of the night; when a very old witch, the older of them all, woke up from a very good dream! She started suddenly laugh, sing and dance in the middle of the room, and we have to say that it is always very strange to hear a very old witch to sing, laugh and dance in the middle of the night!

So, with laughs, songs and dancing the old witch woke everybody up, the witches, the wizards, the doctors, the prince, the queen, the king him self! Dancing through the alleys the old witch led them all to the king's room!

The king was trying to stand up hoping that the noise meant that they had found something to help him with the pain and the fever, so he was up when everybody stormed inside the room with the very old witch first, dancing and singing!

"My dearest king!" The old witch said to him aloud when she came next to him. "I had a very strange dream just now! A very strange but very good dream!"

Well now, the truth is that the king had a very noble soul but you have to remember that he was in real pain, so he looked at her and said angrily:

"What you say woman? That you came to your suffering king, in the middle of the night, to tell him that you had a dream? You came to your dying king all laughs and songs to tell him that you had a strange dream?"

And with these words he tried to pull himself out of the bed angrily, but the pain was stronger than his will and pushed him back! Everybody gone silent in the room!

Well, nearly everybody, not the old witch, she came closer to him, helped him put his head on the soft pillow, singing a very

happy rhythm and smiled to everybody! And when she was sure that the king was comfortable, she stood in the middle of the room and explained herself:

"My beloved king, it was not easy for me to sleep last night! It has not been easy for me to sleep all these last weeks you've been ill! And I was thinking about your fever and you pain, your highness last night, when suddenly I was asleep and I was not asleep!"

The old witch took a deep breath and continued:

"As I said I was asleep and I was not asleep because I was in the big room with the rest of my colleges and I could hear their breathing and the same time I was in the middle of a green valley near the forest I was born and I could hear the birds singing! Oh, I could hear the songs, I could smell the flowers..."

She looked up like she was lost in her dream world.

"But I'm very old and very tired and I had to close my eyes and it was like I was falling asleep in my own dream! And just when I was closing my eyes he came! He was beautiful like the spring light and neat like an angel! His voice was heaven's like, all the Gods were speaking through his mouth; and he said: 'Get up woman and go quickly to your king; tell him that only the eternal water can save him, tell him that only the most loyal of all his men can bring it to him! Get up woman, there is no time to sleep!' and I got up my beloved king and I came quickly to tell you to sent the most loyal of your men to bring you the eternal water!"

And saying these last words the old witch fell in a very deep sleep in the very same spot she was standing laughing, singing and dancing before!

The doctors, the wizards and the witches were looking each other without knowing what to say or what to do; they were looking at the king and the king was looking his queen and the queen was looking the price and the prince was looking the doc-

tors, the wizards and the witches and everybody was quiet!

And then the pain came back and the king closed his eyes and the queen stood up and said:

“My husband, my lord and my king, I do believe that this woman came here tonight with a message from the Gods and we must always listen to what the Gods say! My lord, I believe that we must find straight away the most loyal of your knights and sent him with the faster horse to find the eternal water!”

The king just nodded, because the pain was strong and he couldn't even speak! Then the doctors, the wizards, the witches and the knights who had just got in, worrying with all the voices and the laughs. After they heard what the old witch had said they started saying names and feats that brave men had done for their king and their land all these years! They were ready to go to the end of the world to find the eternal water!

The sound was getting louder and louder and the names more and more and some of them started even arguing for their name to be the only one of the most loyal person to the king!

When suddenly somebody hit his fist hard on the wooden table and everybody turned to see the prince in real anger, red on the face ready to speak!

“Who is the most loyal to the king? Who is the most worrying for the king of all his men? Who in here loves the king more than his own blood? His own son?”

Everybody in the room gone quiet because that was the truth! The prince was the most royal man on earth to the king! The prince was there, day and night, eyes full of tears, worrying for his ill father!

No other words needed! The decision was made and was final for the prince to go and bring the eternal water!

But nobody knew where the eternal water was! And the noise started again because the doctors, the wizards, the witches and the knights started arguing, trying to guess where the eternal water would be!

This time it was the king's voice to make them all go silent:

“My one and only son and my heir! With a lot of pain in my father's heart I know that you are the most royal of all my of my men! And I know the pain, my suffer brought to you. And I know well that you are the only one who can go and bring the eternal water to me! So my son, you have to go to the seven kingdoms and meet my brother the Emperor! The Emperor has traveled everywhere and he knows everything and he is the only one who can lead you to the eternal water!”

And with these words the king fell back on his pillows screaming in pain!

The night was difficult for the prince because he had to pack his things, he didn't know how long this travel would be, choose the best sword, get instructions from the wizards, spells from the witches and medicines from the doctors! He had to get the blessing of his mother and father and get some sleep so he could start early in the morning, only a few hours away!

While the king and father was giving him his blessing, he told to get his precious silver horse he loved so much. This horse was the colt of his beautiful battle horse that had served and saved him a lot of times in their glorious past!

The prince kissed the hand of his mother while the queen was trying to tell him not to waste his time in adventures because the king was very near to death!

So very early in the morning, riding the beautiful silver horse and carrying the spelled sword and his parents bless the prince started his travel to find the eternal water!



he weather was good

and the land easy, so the prince found no difficulties in reaching the capital of the seven kingdoms where the Emperor, the king's brother lived!

The Emperor's city name was Lertha and it was a city built to be the capitol of an Imperious. Build on seven hills, each one representing each one of the seven kingdoms!

The prince had never been to Lertha before but he knew all the stories about the city. He knew about the clans and the symbols that followed them! So the seven cities were:

The hill from the Farsouth kingdom, the farmers' land, with small houses made from clay and thatch. Small temples and big alleys for kids to play!



The hill from the Farnorth kingdom, the fishermen's land, with wooden houses and small lakes with gold fish inside. Strange decorations from nets and small fountains!

The hill from the Farlittle kingdom, the miners' land, with houses in caves, sculpted in the sides of the hill with small doors and no windows! Shovels were everywhere and even little kids could shovel through the dark mines.

The hill from the Fareast kingdom, the poets and sculpture's land, with big marble building full of scholars and artist! Beautiful sculptures everywhere, painting on the walls and day-dreamers walking in the wind streets!

The hill from the Farwest kingdom, the warriors land, with houses look like small castles! Men on horses were training all day long and even the kids were carrying swords and small shields!

The hill of the Farbig kingdom, the Imperial's center, the bureaucracy! Luxury houses hosted all the civil servants and their families, baths and big halls decorated with gold and silver.

The hill of the Farcenter kingdom, the merchants land, with houses of all styles and rhythms from every kingdom and every corner of the planet! Merchants were the travelers and the explorers.

And the surprise for the prince got bigger when walking through the streets he heard all kinds of deferent languages and accents!

All these smells, all these color! He didn't know what to admire first. Men with long swords and brown capes, fishermen

carrying big fishes and women coming from the farms with baskets full of every kind of fruit you could think of!

Water was running in the side of every road and kids were playing loudly everywhere around. Elder men calling for everybody to try there freshly made bread and cookies and others calling for clothes and shoes!

He would definitely be lost in the mass if a knight who was coming back from his mission hadn't recognized him and offered to lead him to the Emperor's palace!

The knight was a tall older man who had served in the past in his father's castle. But the king didn't want to continue with more wars and the ambitious knight joined the emperor's forces for more fights and glories!

The Emperor's palace stood in the middle of the hills, surrounded from them as a wall! The prince had heard that the palace was the most glorious in the continent and the most beautiful anybody had ever seen!

He had heard about that bright pink marble was everywhere, small lakes with goldfish and silver sculptures in all the alleys! Colorful gardens with wild farm flowers!

He had heard that it was like every member of the seven kingdoms had put a piece in this palace. But standing in front the wall the prince could see nothing of all these miracles!

You see, to the prince's fascination a high stonewall was surrounding the castle from every side. A hard brown wall with gigantic wooden and metal doors!

It was a little strange one so dark and powerful building in the middle of these cities! But it was the Emperor's castle, the prince thought, and it should look strong and powerful to symbolize the Emperor's authority on everybody and everything in this land!

The knight led the prince through the wall into the dark

alleys, guarded everywhere from men with the symbol of the wolf on their chest. The truth is that the prince tried to look behind the tall doors and the corners but he could see nothing from the things he had heard about the emperor's palace.

The knight led him straight to the Emperor who was already warned for the arrival!

The emperor was sitting on his gold throne in the middle of the room surrounded of his advisors and guarded from his personal legions.

His legions were famous to the entire kingdom for their bravery and brutality! They all wear black capes and they had the face of a wolf on their chest!

When the prince stepped in, the Emperor stood up and said:

"Welcome my child! Tell me, how is my beloved brother?"

The Emperor was younger than the king, the prince's father He was a tall man with long gray hair and black beard! He was wearing the Emperor's cape with all the symbols of the seven kingdoms shining!

He had a gold wand with magic spells written in a long forgotten language and a gold crown on his head!

"My father, your holiness Emperor and beloved uncle is very ill! All the doctors, all the wizards and the witches believe that he will die if I don't bring quickly the eternal water to him!"

"The eternal water?"

The emperor looked surprised his nephew! He asked again, to be sure what he heard!

"Yes my lord! The eternal water! That's why your brother, my king, sent me to you! He said if anybody knows where to find the eternal water that will be you!"

But the Emperor didn't answer! He just stood there think-

ing seriously!

After a while he ordered everybody to go out of the room because he wanted to speak with his nephew alone!

“My son, the spring you looking for, is on the Dark Mountains in the far end of the Farnorth kingdom! And there is where I stopped my expedition because there is a dragon guarding the passage to the mountains.

“And that’s where everybody stops. You see, the dragon is huge with eleven heads and hundred arms! Every arm has twenty fingers with iron nails!”

The Emperor took a breath and continued:

“A hundred legs with steel hoofs and flames coming out of every of his eleven mouths! A very old wizard told me that only a rain of diamonds can kill him and even me the emperor haven’t got so many diamonds!

“And then, even if you be so lucky to have all these diamonds and you can beat the dragon, you have to face the two mountains! The two mountains leave a very small gap between them, which closes and opens very quickly all the time! No man has the speed of a wink to go through them!

“When you see them open you think that you have enough time to go through, but enough is never enough, the mountains close straight away and that’s where I lost most of my knights!”

The Emperor looked sad!

“I thought that I will put some of them to disturb the dragon while the rest will cross the mountains. But... Don’t you think my child that I haven’t tried to get the eternal water for my self? You don’t know how many brave men I lost till I decided that there was no way to get through!”

“I must try uncle! My father dies!”

“Of course nephew, you have to try and I will be really sorry not only to lose a brother but to lose a nephew the same time!”

And the Emperor hang the prince the way an uncle hangs

his beloved nephew! But still a funny shine came into his dark eyes!

The prince had to eat and then go to sleep, been tired after one so long trip with so much excitement these last days, leaving his uncle, the emperor alone in the room!

Now, as we remember, the king was a very good and noble man, and he raised his son with the most precious virtues and that’s why the prince’s innocent soul could not see the shine on his uncle’s eyes! Because for him there where only kind and noble feeling for his fellow men and more for his family; and the emperor was his father’s brother!

These were the ways of the young prince, but the ways of the Emperor were totally different! The Emperor had lost all these noble feelings long time ago while fighting in the battlefields trying to make his kingdom bigger and bigger!

And even now, the Lord of the seven kingdoms, Emperor of the biggest power, he wanted more! More to live, more kingdoms to concur!

He started thinking and decided to show his nephew the way to the Dark Mountains with the promise of bringing some of the eternal water for him as well!

The Emperor thought that would sound like as good deal to his nephew’s ears. You see, greedy people, even emperors think everything as a deal of give and take!

But still, his greedy mind had a different plan. If the prince would be lucky enough to pass the dragon and cross the mountains he would wait for him and kill him! Then he would take the eternal water and go to his dying brother’s kingdom to claim the crown, as no other heir was alive!

From the other side he would wait for the dragon to kill the prince, thing that he found to have more changes; and then he would go to his brother with the bad news asking the king to

give him the kingdom!

You see the Emperor hated his own brother all the time for his popularity between the people and his enemies. The Emperor had concurred all the kingdoms in the continent but he had done it with cruelty and blood while his very own brother without even moving from his room had concurred the entire continent with his kindness.

The Emperor knew that his brother was seriously ill, because everybody in the seven kingdoms was talking about it. He was so popular that even his own men admired him and fell sorry for his illness!

Well, not everybody, here we have to exclude his own quads, his legion, the ones with the wolf on their chest. They were loyal only to him and nobody else!

Then he remembered how many of them he had lost in the battle with the dragon.

Even them, his wolf legion, looked defenseless in front of the gigantic monster; even them hadn't managed to bit him. Even them!

But now he could take everything back, his brother would die soon and he would make sure that the heir would never return! One way or another!

These are the thoughts that made the shine in his eyes before, and now a bright smile to rise behind his dark beard that darken straight away when suddenly and without a warning he remembered the oracle of the old wizard.

He had told him that his boat would sink in the loyal man's water! His boat!

The Emperor never understood these words! Only the fishermen used boats, he had never even stepped on one, and who was this 'loyal man'? One of his knights?

That was the reason he was changing his officers so often.

He could not trust anybody, even the closest to him and when somebody was becoming more loyal, the Emperor was becoming more suspicious!

Well it didn't matter at the moment, he thought! These were wizard's words and sometimes wizards don't know what they are talking about.

Now he had to show to the prince the road to the Dark Mountains, he had followed once and then after letting him for a couple of days to lead he would follow him to be sure that he accomplished his mission one way or another!

The Emperor fell asleep with a real evil smile on his face!

The prince the same time he was dreaming dragons with iron nails and his father voice giving him his blessing!



So the prince traveled day and night till he reached the very end of the Farnorth kingdom! He followed his uncle's instructions and he avoided all the

local aristocrats.

His uncle had told him that for on thing some of the local aristocrats might be jealous with his mission and make spells at him. The prince was not very sure for the emperor's words because his father knew really well some of them but from the other side he didn't like to disobey the Emperor's order!

And from the other side it was his mother voice all the time inside him telling him to hurry with the eternal water to save his beloved father!

So he did all this travel without stopping even for a minute, he even sometimes forgot to eat! But he reached the end and here just before the Dark Mountains a beautiful castle stood in front of him!



The prince could not believe his very own eyes! Beautiful gardens with colorful flowers and small animals squirrels and ducks were surrounding a big vivid building!

No guards around, no solders, no knights, only the beautiful cong coming out of one of the windows!

Even the clouds in the sky were like a beautiful white wreath around the building.

The prince was very tired and his eyes were half asleep when he stood in front the open gate but all this beauty had given him some power to knock the wooden door.

With the first knock a beautiful girl stepped out and came in front of him! The prince found that he could not even say a word in front of all this beauty. Her voice was soft when she spoke and it was like thousands of small birds were singing beside his ears!

"Welcome lord, come inside and have something to eat something to drink and a place to have a rest!"

The prince was stud by the beauty of the girl! From the kingdoms he had cross till now he had never seen a beauty like this one! And the same time he was ready to say something an elder man with snowy white hair and a big smile on his face came out from the very same door!

"Good morning, good morning young man! From your clothes and your horse, I can see that you coming from a royal family, young knight! Do please, come inside, have a rest and tell us all your stories from your travels and your adventures!"

The man with the snowy white hair and the big smile, without waiting an answer took the prince's arm and led him into the palace with the beautiful girl following them!

Dozens of servants, gardeners, musicians and artists were everywhere! Smiling faces full of joy and laughs!

The prince was amazed with all the beauty! Soon the lady

of the house, the queen as the elder man called her, joined them; for now the prince knew that he was in the house of a very small king in the Farnorth kingdom in the land between the seven kingdoms and the Dark Mountains!

The queen was the same beautiful as the daughter and soon he heard from the king himself that she was an elf, one of the elves king daughters!

The daughter had the same golden eyes and the thin face, the tall fragile build and the same golden hair!

Then the king asked him to tell them his story so the prince started telling them everything about his sick father and his mission to find the eternal water!

The prince told them how good and beloved his father was to everyone and how everybody wanted him to be well and alive for very long time!

The king was upset with the prince's story but very thoughtful with the emperor's reactions, still he didn't say anything more than that he would give him any possible help!

Still he did explain to him that this was a peaceful small kingdom with not many resources, not warriors and knights and that the only treasure they had was their daughter!

The prince had noticed that while he was telling them his story the princess was in tears but he noticed that the servants were putting towels and sheets straight away under her sit and they were doing something like collecting her tars!

From one side the wine he had drunk while the dinner and from the other side the warmth and friendliness he felt in this house made him to feel enough comfortable to ask what was going on and the king had to explain to him:

“As I told you, my wife is an elf and a very royal one, one of the elf's king daughters! So when she gave birth to our beautiful daughter three queen elves came to give their respect and

their presents!

“The first elves' queen gave her the wise and it was that her tears would become diamonds, just to be sure that she would never be poor; and that's what our servants were collecting before!

“The second elves' queen gave her a ring that when she is wearing it, she can be quick as the wind, so nobody can catch her when she's in danger!

“And the third elves' queen gave her a cape and when she's shaking it, water comes out, a whole river so she will never be thirsty!”

The prince didn't think much about the elves' queens presents because his eyes were all the time on the beautiful face and the precious eyes! For first time in his life he was sure that he had found love!

After the dinner the princess took her harp and sang a very old song about the elf's kingdom and their fights with the dwarfs and the dragons and then seeing how tired the prince was, she sand a lullaby, and the prince fell asleep!

The servants carried him to his room and let him have a rest! The prince had a very deep sleep full of dreams with the beautiful princess and her songs.

The same time the evil Emperor and his knights were only a day away and in real rush because the Emperor suddenly was afraid that the young prince would try to cross the mountains as quickly as possible and he wanted to be there!

He had his personal legion with the wolf on their chest following him all of them on black horses. He was sure that the prince had obeyed him and didn't stop in any of the local kings but the same time he had a funny feeling that something was not going as he had planed it!

Early the next morning the prince woke up fresh with the sound of one of the princess' songs! He thought that he should start straight for the Dark Mountains and the spring with the eternal water but the princess started singing a second song and the prince could not move!

He started putting on his armor very slowly when the princess started a third song and he was in the garden next to his horse when he heard the princess coming to him!

“Stay on more night prince! Stay on more night to have a real rest and you can start tomorrow for your mission! The dragon is there wild and ready, you've better be rested and fresh for the fight”

Now as we said before, the prince was already in love with this beautiful princess and he could not say no to her precious eyes, so he decided to stay for one more day and night!

And the day moved quickly with the princess singing elf's songs and the king to tell him stories from his adventures in the elf's kingdom. Sometimes the king was asking him some questions about his uncle the emperor, how much he trusted him, or if his father loved him; but every time the prince tried to find out why all these questions the king was changing the subject of the conversation.

And they had again a big dinner with dancers and clowns all around with poets and the princess' songs in the end!

And when they decided that it was late enough and time to go to sleep the prince looked at the stars and heard his mother voice in pain asking him why he hadn't started to go for the eternal water.

But the same thing happened the second day! The princess woke up with the princess' singing to the flowers and the birds flying around her!

Near the night and when it was near the time for every-

body to go to bed the prince could not help himself anymore, so when him and the princess went out in the roses garden for a short walk, he asked to marry him!

As I am sure you have already understood the princess was in love with the beautiful prince so she said yes and it was like a big celebration for everybody, because straight after they decided that they were made for each other they went inside to announce it to everybody. And they were all very happy and excited because everybody in the house had come to like the young, handsome and kind prince!

But the prince had still to finish his mission! And this time it was not only his mother's voice to remind him but the girl herself and her father.

Still his father was a bit worry about his uncle the Emperor but he could say anything, he just told him that he had to be ready very early in the morning and start straight away.

So the prince went to bed thinking that the next morning was the morning to head for the Dark Mountains! He promised to the princess that he would take the eternal water and then get her and head back to his father's kingdom! Where they would marry!

Before the morning comes the prince woke up from the king's voice. The king himself had come to his room waking him up and telling him that he had to rush because a big group of horsemen was reaching the house.

The prince put on the armor and got his horse ready to go when the king came out to the gardens with his daughter.

“Young prince and my future son, as I told you from the beginning I would give you anything that could help you for your mission and your wealth! Well, the only thing I can give you is my very own daughter and I'm sure that her love to you will

be your best assistance; but do always remember that she is the most precious for me and my queen!"

And with these words he kissed his daughter and helped her to climb in the back of the silver horse!

The prince was speechless with this but he himself could see the wild horsemen reaching the castle and trusting his new father he decided to hurry to the mountains.

The Emperor, the same time could see that the prince was on his horse but he could not be very sure if there was anybody else with him though the distance was still very big.

He knew this small kingdom and he didn't trust his king but he never had been bothered to do something about him and now he knew that he had no time to waste.

After all he could deal with him on his way back. Now the prince was his priority and he knew that the Dark Mountains and their dragon was only a few hours away. So he whipped his horse to go faster and bypassing the flourish castle he headed towards the mountains.

The king with biggest worry saw that the Emperor had no plan to stop to his house so he could somehow delay him and he started praying to all the Old Gods for his daughter's and the prince's safety!

You see the king knew very well the Emperor. He knew how greedy and soulless he was and he knew that he would have somehow a plan in sending the prince against the dragon.

The prince could not see the Emperor's face, neither the old king's feelings but he could sense the danger coming from both sides. He had a group of wild horsemen in his back and a ruthless dragon in front of him. Still his beloved princess arms around his waist made him feel strong and ready to face any

danger.

The princess turned back and she saw her father's worrying face but she didn't say anything to the prince because she loved him so much and she didn't want to make him worry more.

And it was that exact moment when both of them felt than heard the howl of the dragon. They felt the burning air and the shake of the trees around them. The same time both saw the flames coming out from the side of the Dark Mountains.

It was the sound of the horsemen that had awoken the dragon and it was his roar that blow the hot air that shacked the trees.

Small rocks in dark brown color of the burned breath were storming all around them and the few birds dared to fly in the darken sky were flying away.

The prince was scared for his horse but the silver colt had the sound of the battle in his blood so nothing could scared him. He neighed and continued gallop towards the mountains and the flames.

The same time the Emperor's horsemen felt the same hot air but them and their horses had still inside them the fear of the defeat and they got scared and they started thinking if that Emperor was doing the right thing or he was driving them to certain death.

The Emperor could not think of anything the only thing he could see was his nephew riding straight to his death and he acquire one more kingdom.



eeeling the breath

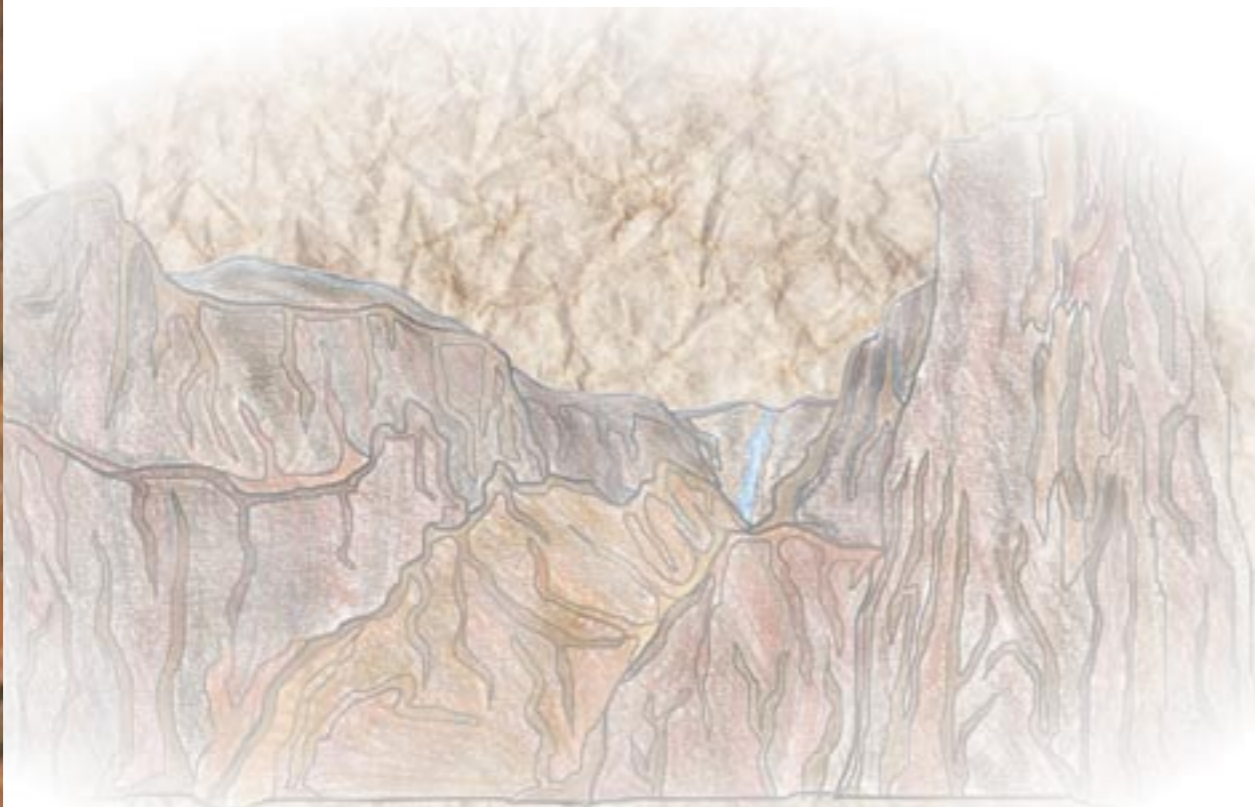
of the dragon and the smell of the horsemen every minute closer to them, the prince and the princess were reaching very quickly the Dark Mountains!

To their astonishment they could see the Dark Mountains move, opening and closing all the time! But before them inside a dark brown mist, they could see the gigantic tail raise to the black sky.

They just noticed. They had left only a couple of hours ago a castle under the blue sky surrounded with white like powder clouds and they were standing now under a dark sky with black clouds and no sign of the sun anywhere.

The tail was spinning around the clouds making the air heavy and difficult to breath. And the same time flames were coming out of invisible mouths burning rocks and trees.

The prince turned behind and saw the knights behind them



with their swords ready and they were closing all the time!

The prince and the princess reached the point were it was too difficult for the horse to continue. The ground was rocky and hot and after all the prince felt sorry for the proud animal; if somebody had to die it should never be the horse!

So, after leaving the horse the two of them started the climbing. In the beginning they could short of walk but after a bit they had to use their hands and even their nails!

For a bit of time there was quiet and they could sense tens of eyes watching them. Till they heard a very strong, loud and deep voice coming from in front of them and they saw flames on every rock! Eleven gigantic heads and tens of eyes stared at them for a moment, that it was the dragon his uncle had told him about!

When they got closer the sound became unbearable and the flames started reaching their flesh and hair! The air was hot and smelled of burned! Iron nails were trying to reach them and it was getting more and more difficult to avoid the killing hands and fingers!

It was like a game for the dragon. He was letting them reach till one point and then with flames, howls and showing them his nails he was pushing them back to the rocks.

Here, I have to remind you that of course as it happens with the humans, there are good and bad dragons. Even in this kingdom in different places there were good dragons ready to assist and help any human had their need. Unfortunately, the certain dragon was the worst kind of bad dragon. It was the kind you meet very rare and only in the darkest tales.

So the prince tried to fight the hands with his sword but every time he was hitting one it seemed that a new one was com-

ing in it's place! In the beginning the prince looked like he would be able to kill the dragon but soon more and more hands with iron nails were coming from everywhere around him.

Blood start dropping from the wounds the iron nails had done to his body and he looked very, very tired!

The same time the Emperor and his men, didn't even dare to come near. They were standing far away in a safe distance watching the fight between the prince and the dragon.

The dust, the flames and the fog were hinting nearly everything from them so they could never been sure for what was going on but most of them looked sure that soon they would see the prince's body flying burned over them.

The princess was behind a rock and trying to think how she could help her beloved in his fight. Suddenly she saw all this blood coming out of the prince's body she started crying!

And then the magical happened. Her tears were turning to diamonds and been scared from the blood she was crying more and more! And it was like the diamonds became rain, a hard stone rain hitting the dragon!

The dragon in the beginning was puzzled with the strange rain, but soon got scared and wounded of these strange shining rocks!

He tried to retreat but he could not escape from the falling diamonds! Soon his body was full of wounds with green blood coming out of them.

And that's really bad. When dragons lose green blood it means that they are seriously wounded and they are going to die!

The princess was crying more and more and the diamonds rain was becoming stronger and stronger! So in the end the dragon with a last howl and a huge explode of fires and smoke died under a mountain of precious stones!

They princess relived from her's and the prince's savored, run to him and checked his wounds. They were both happy in the sense that they had passed their first balk but another one was waiting for them till the spring of the eternal water.

They both looked the mountains and tried to think how they could cross them in a blink of the eye.

But then they remembered the princess's ring! The elves' queens present! She gave it to him and he put it in his small finger. He tried to move and every drift became like the wind, silent and quick! He could run every distance in the blink of the eye!

Next time the mountains opened, he moved and with a brose he was in! In the valley in front of the spring of the eternal water! He took out his flask and filled it with the water and stopped for a minute to take a breath before trying again to cross the mountains!

The same time out of the valley, the evil Emperor and his knights not listening anymore the sounds of the dragon and the fight they realized that the prince had won.

So they reached the princes. When they saw the dragon dead and the prince crossing the mountains they were ready to attack the princess so they could take from the prince the water in exchange of her life!

The princess from her side saw the wild faces reaching her and she got really terrified in the site of the evil Emperor, for whom so many stories she had heard from her father in the in the past!

The truth is that the king, her father had said some stories, which had made her to cry, stories full of the Emperor's cruelty and hardness!

Now the Emperor was just one step away from her when she took off her cape, trying to protect her self from the monster and then it happened!

A river, a river with wild deep water came out of the cape draining underneath everybody! The Emperor, the knights, the servants, the horses and the dogs!

Nothing could stoop the power of the water and soon all of them had fled away dead! And it was that very moment that the prince came out of the mountains!

And if you remember that was the prophecy the wizard had made, the river that would draw him and his men, and everything was coming from the loyal man. The prince, the most loyal man in the whole kingdom!

The last minute, before he died, perhaps all his crimes came in front of him but as evil he was, he never asked for forgiveness!

The prince never really understood what happened but he was very glad his princess was safe and well and a flask full of the eternal water was in his cape ready to take it back to his father!

The two of them gone back to her father's castle and told them everything, the death of the dragon and the end of the evil Emperor!

The king was very proud for his daughter and he ordered for his best horses to be ready for the next morning to take them to the prince's kingdom and to his father!

It took them seven days and seven nights to cross the land between the Farnorth and the prince's land!

And when they arrived big celebrations started everywhere, though the old king had drunk the eternal water and now he was back to his own good old self!

The wedding was magnificent and there were kings, queens, princes, lords, princesses and knights from everywhere! Especially from the seven kingdoms! You see, now the emperor was dead the seven kingdoms needed a new king and a new queen and they found them in the face of the prince and the

princess's!

So after the wending they moved to the castle of the seven kingdoms, which was not anymore dark and sad, the first thing the new king did was to destroy the dark walls; but it became a castle full of colorful flowers and birds!

The young queen and king became the same beloved and even more than their parents; they had many kids and ruled their countries with love and compassion for very, very long time!

Even now, if you pass the seven kingdoms you can hear the harp playing late at night and the beautiful voice to sing a very old song:

**“Roses, my beautiful roses
and diamond tears,
my precious ring
and rivers of water
Thank for making my love eternal...”**



