

The Enchanted Horse



Part one

It was New Year in the city of Schiraz in Persia. The city square was full of people. The king and his family were there too. There was music and dancing. There were fire-eaters and snake-charmers. And of course there was a lot of delicious food and drink.

Suddenly, an Indian man appeared in front of the king. He had a beautiful horse with him. It was made of black wood. The Indian spoke to the king.

'Your Majesty! This is a very special horse.'

'Really?' said the king. 'Why is it special? What can it do?'

'It can fly, Your Majesty. When I press this little button on its neck, it flies up into the air and takes me where I want to go.'

'Your horse is certainly a very special horse,' said the king. 'I'd like to have it for myself.'

'I'll sell it to you, Your Majesty.'

'And what's the price?' asked the king.

'Your daughter. I want to marry your daughter,' replied the Indian.

'That's a very high price for a horse.'

'It isn't a high price for a horse that can fly, Your Majesty. Try it and you'll see for yourself!'

'Let my son, Prince Firouz, try the horse,' said the king.

Prince Firouz immediately jumped on the horse's back and pressed the button on its neck. The horse flew up into the air, into the clouds and disappeared. The king was very angry. 'Where is my son?' he shouted. 'Bring him back!'

'I can't,' replied the Indian.

The king ordered his guards to put the Indian in prison. 'My guards will kill you if Prince Firouz isn't back in three months,' he said.

Meanwhile, the horse and the prince flew higher and higher. The prince was happy. He enjoyed flying on the horse. Then it began to get dark. 'It's late,' he thought. 'I must land.' He looked carefully at the horse's neck and saw another little button. He pressed it and the horse landed on the terrace of a beautiful white palace.

He got off and looked around him. There was a small door in the corner of the terrace. He opened it and saw some stairs. He went down them and into a long hall with many doors. There was a

light under one of them so he opened it. Six guards were asleep on the floor. The light was coming from a lamp in another room behind a curtain. Prince Firouz moved the curtain and looked in. He saw a big sofa and some women asleep around it. On the sofa there was a very beautiful girl. Prince Firouz touched her arm gently and she opened her eyes.

'Don't be afraid!' he said. 'I'm the son of the king of Persia. I don't want to hurt you. I'm lost and in danger.'

'I'm the daughter of the Sultan of Bengal,' said the princess. 'Don't worry! You're safe in my palace.'

Then she called one of her maids and said to her, 'Give the prince some food and a bed. We'll talk in the morning.'

The princess thought about the handsome young prince all night. The next morning she put on her most beautiful dress and finest jewels and went out into the garden. Prince Firouz was there.

He told her his story. 'Dear princess, I must return home to my father,' he said. 'He doesn't know that I'm here.' The princess was sad when she heard this. 'Can't you stay for just two more days?' she asked. 'I'm lonely here. My maids and the palace guards are my only companions.'

The prince looked at the sad face of the beautiful princess of Bengal and decided to stay.

Part two

The days became weeks and the weeks became months. The prince and the princess fell in love. They wanted to get married. One day Prince Firouz said, 'I must go back to Persia. My father's waiting for me. Come with me! We can get married and live there!'

The princess agreed. So that night after dark they both got on the horse's back and flew across the skies to Persia. They landed in the garden of a small house outside the city. 'Stay here tonight,' he told her. 'I'll come for you tomorrow.' Then Prince Firouz went to his father's palace.

The king was very happy to see his son again. He told the guards to bring the Indian to him.

'Take your horse and never enter my kingdom again!' he said to him.

The Indian was angry with the king because he put him in prison. And he was angry with Prince Firouz because he took his horse. He wanted his revenge.

The palace guards told the Indian that his horse was in a house outside the city, so he went there the next day. A servant answered the door. The Indian said, 'The prince is waiting for the princess. She must come with me to the palace.'

A few moments later the princess was on the horse behind the Indian. They flew up into the air and in the direction of the palace. The prince and the king looked up and saw them. But the horse didn't land there. It flew over the palace and disappeared.

The prince was afraid. 'The princess is in danger. I must go and look for her immediately,' he said to his father.

The horse took the Indian and the princess to India. It landed in a forest near the Sultan of Cashmere's palace. The princess started shouting for help. The Sultan was hunting in the forest that day and he heard her. 'Perhaps that girl is in danger,' he thought. 'I must go and save her.'

When he saw the Indian, he pulled out his sword and killed him. Then he put the princess on his horse and they rode back to his palace.

Early the next morning the princess heard a lot of noise outside her room.

'What's that noise?' she asked a maid.

'The servants are preparing for your wedding. Tomorrow you will marry the Sultan,' she said.

The princess was horrified. 'I must do something,' she thought. 'I can't marry the Sultan. I don't love him.'

She started shouting and crying and pulling her hair.

The maid was afraid. She went to the Sultan and said, 'The princess is ill. She can't marry you tomorrow.'

'Look after her,' he said. 'And we'll get married when she's better.'

But weeks and months passed. Many doctors came to see the princess but she didn't get better. Then one day a young doctor from Persia arrived at the palace gate. It was Prince Firouz. The princess was very happy to see him. 'We must escape,' the prince told her. 'And I have a plan. But first, you must stop crying and smile at the Sultan.' So the princess stopped crying and smiled at the Sultan. He was very happy. 'You are a very good doctor!' he said to Prince Firouz. 'The princess is well now. You can go home.'

'She isn't completely well,' the prince said. 'The enchanted horse put a magic spell on her. Bring the horse and the princess to the square this afternoon and I'll take away the spell. Tell all the people in the town to come and watch.'

At four o'clock that afternoon the city square was full of people. The Sultan and the princess were there too. When the guards brought the horse, Prince Firouz made four fires around it. He said some strange words and threw some powder into the fires. Suddenly, there was a lot of smoke. It was impossible to see anything. At that moment Prince Firouz and the princess jumped on the horse's back and the horse flew up into the air.

Soon they arrived at the king's palace in Schiraz. The king and his people were very happy to see them.

The next day the prince and the princess got married and they lived happily for the rest of their lives.

- THE END -

Hope you have enjoyed the reading!

Come back to <http://english-e-reader.net/> to find more fascinating and exciting stories!