



THE GOLDEN CRAB

PART 1

A fisherman lived with his wife in a little cottage by the beach. Every day, come rain or shine, he set out to sea in a little boat.

He worked hard to catch as many fish as he could...and when he returned to shore he would take them to the castle for the King, Queen and their twelve beautiful daughters to eat for supper.

One day, when he pulled in his net, he found a crab among the fish. It wasn't any old crab - it looked like it was made of gold and shone brightly in the sunlight.

'You will look very nice indeed on my shelf at home!' said the fisherman.

That evening, as the fisherman and his wife ate their supper, they heard a little voice.

'Can I have some too, please?' it asked.

They looked round in surprise. Who could have spoken?

'It's me - the Golden Crab - and I'm really hungry,' said the voice again.

'Goodness, a crab that can talk!' cried the fisherman's wife. 'It must be magic - quick, husband, do as it asks!'

The fisherman put some fish on a plate and took it to the Golden Crab.

'Thank you, kindly,' it said as it tucked in. 'You won't be sorry.'

The next morning the empty plate the crab had eaten from was full of gold coins. The same thing happened the next day, and the next.

'Aren't we lucky to have such a special, magic friend,' laughed the fisherman's wife.

Then one day the crab asked the fisherman a question.

'Will you tell the King I wish to marry his youngest daughter, the Princess Rose?' it asked.

'I don't think the King will be very pleased, but I'll try,' laughed the fisherman in reply.

That evening the fisherman went to the palace and did as the crab had asked.

'My lovely Rose marry a crab!' cried the Queen in disgust. 'Never in a hundred years! Anyway, I want her to marry that nice Prince Rupert from the castle down the road.'



‘Perhaps it’s not such a bad idea,’ said the King. ‘This talking golden crab might be a prince in disguise. Why, it might be even grander than Prince Rupert. Let’s put it to the test.’

He turned to the fisherman.

‘Tell the crab it must build a wall that’s even taller than my castle. It must be blooming with lovely flowers and it must be done by tomorrow morning.’

When the crab heard the news it didn’t seem worried at all.

‘Outside, in the shed, you’ll find a golden rod,’ it told the fisherman. ‘Go to the castle and hit the ground three times and see what happens...’

That night, the fisherman crept over to the castle and struck the ground three times as the crab had asked him to.

The next morning, the King looked out of the window...

‘Golly, look at that!’ he cried in surprise.

For there was a great wall, as tall as the castle, and covered in the most beautiful flowers.

‘Only a very grand prince in disguise could do such a thing,’ said the King. ‘The crab will make a wonderful husband for Rose.’

‘Noooooo!’ cried the Queen. ‘I insist you make it pass another test. An even harder one. Only then can they marry.’

‘Oh, very well,’ sighed the King. ‘I’m afraid the crab can’t marry Princess Rose just yet,’ the King told the fisherman. ‘First, it must create a beautiful garden with three fountains: one spouting silver, the second gold and the third, diamonds.’

That night the fisherman again tapped on the ground three times with the golden rod.

Next morning there was the garden and fountains, just as the King had asked. And in the middle stood a tall apple tree, with the most delicious apples anyone had ever tasted.

The crab had done all that was asked of him...and so he and Princess Rose were engaged to be married. The King was delighted but the Queen didn’t care to have a crab as a son-in-law.

And Princess Rose didn’t look very happy either - until the crab took her to one side.

‘Don’t worry,’ it whispered kindly. ‘You see, I’m not really a crab...and you will soon find out.’