

THE GOLDEN CRAB

PART 2

The day after Princess Rose and the Golden Crab were engaged to be married they were walking in the magic garden the crab had created, with fountains spouting silver, gold and diamonds. It was evening and the last rays of the setting sun were just about to disappear.

‘Now I can show you who I really am,’ said the Golden Crab...except the crab was no longer a crab...

Rose rubbed her eyes in disbelief. The crab had turned into a handsome young man in a velvet cape and gold crown!

‘My name is Hans and I am the son of a great King,’ he said. ‘But one day, a wicked witch cast a spell on me. At sunrise, I turn into a crab - only at sunset do I become my real self again. The wicked witch did the same to my eleven brothers, who live in our palace, hidden in the forest.’

‘So you are a prince in disguise,’ cried Rose.

‘Yes - but you must promise not to tell anyone my secret,’ replied Hans. ‘The witch said that if anyone reveals who we truly are she will turn us into something even worse!’

‘I promise!’ said Rose.

From then on every evening after sunset Princess Rose and Prince Hans would spend an hour walking in the garden in secret and they’d share an apple from the tree.

The most beautiful looking of all the apples was right at the top. ‘It’s such a shame we can’t reach it,’ sighed Rose.

Inside his castle the King was starting to worry. ‘That Crab should have turned into a prince by now,’ he complained.

‘Well I did warn you,’ replied the Queen. ‘The worst thing is - I think she’s fallen in love with it!’

‘I have an idea,’ said the King. ‘Let’s hold a tournament tomorrow night - a horse race, to which we shall invite the most handsome princes in the land.’

‘And whoever wins can marry Rose in place of the crab!’ said the Queen. ‘Oh, I do hope it’s Prince Rupert!’

‘What shall we do?’ cried Rose later that day when she heard the news.

‘I’ll have to take part in the tournament and win it!’ replied the Golden Crab. ‘But I need your help. Take this golden rod and tap on the garden gate with it three times.’



Rose did as she was asked...and when she opened the gate, there stood the finest horse she had ever seen. Its mane was pure white and it was wearing a golden saddle.

As the sun set the following day the crowds were cheering as the princes rode their horses to the start line. But who was the mysterious young man on the white horse with the golden saddle, everyone wondered?

'I am the Prince with No Name', was all Hans would say.

'I'm pleased the Golden Crab hasn't turned up,' whispered the Queen to the King.

And then they were off! Hans's horse was much faster than the all the others.

'I declare the Prince with No Name, the winner!' cried the King, as he raced past the finishing line.

'How can a Prince have no name?' asked the Queen. 'We don't know anything about this stranger! I insist we have another competition tomorrow night. The Prince that gives Rose the most valuable gift will have her hand in marriage.'

'Oh alright,' sighed the King.

'Shall I tap the gate three times again?' Rose asked Hans when she told him of this new plan.

'No,' he replied. 'I want tomorrow to be a surprise...'

The next evening, just after sunset, the princes came to the palace one by one to present Rose with their precious gifts.

There was a ruby ring, a silver necklace and - most impressive of all - a treasure chest full of gold from Prince Rupert.

Finally it was Hans's turn. He presented Rose with a perfect, red apple.

'It's from the very top of the tree,' he said with a smile.

'Prince Rupert wins!' announced the Queen.

'No!' cried Rose. 'Prince Hans, my beautiful Golden Crab, wins! This apple is the most precious gift I could ever receive!'

'The Prince with No Name is the Crab!?' shouted the Queen.

'Oh, no!' cried Rose.

In her excitement she had forgotten that she must never reveal the truth about Hans. She looked around for him...but he'd completely disappeared.

That night Rose cried her heart out. How could she have been so forgetful? What would the wicked witch do now? And most important of all - where had Prince Hans gone?