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# THE LAME PRINCESS. 

## A FAIRY STORY.

## No. 1. Playing in the Garden.

One would have thought that living in the King's palace with a garden full of flowers to play in every day would be enough to make any one happy, particularly when the King was a good King and happened to be your father. But Princess Alice was not happy. There was nothing that money could buy or love could invent that was not hers for the asking, except one thing. The princess was lame, and no doctor in the kingdom could make her able to walk or run like other children. The best she could do was to run a few steps, then limp a few steps, then run on again. It is thus we find her playing in the garden one lovely summer day.

## No. 2. The Royal Review.

She had not been playing very long before the Lord High Chancellor came out to inform her that her father, His Majesty the King, commanded her attendance in the Throne Room. She went at once and washed her face and hands (for she was a clean little princess), and soon found herself in the presence of the King and Queen, and a throng of courtiers. "Daughter," said the King, "this is a most important occasion. It is for the good of the realm and the maintenance of the state that you should marry. We have therefore sought out a Prince who is worthy of the honor of being your husband. Behold!" And as the King said this the trumpets blared forth and a most noble Prince stepped forward and took the Princess by the hand. He led her proudly to the window where they beheld the troops marching past in review.

## No. 3. The Court Ball.

That night there was feasting and dancing, and it was agreed that the Prince was the most noble youth in the room. Owing to her lameness, however, poor Princess Alice was unable to take part in the dancing, and of course the Prince couldn't dance unless she did. Every now and then she saw his eyes glisten as if he too wanted to join the gay throng, and she could have wept for very shame. At last, when he wasn't looking, she slipped away from him, determined to get away and cry for a little while. As she made her way out the band struck up a merry dance.

## No. 4. On the River.

But instead of going up to her room to cry, Princess Alice wandered out to the moonlit terrace. The night was soft and cool, and the moon shone clear in the starry sky. The little girl thought she had never seen such a wonderful night. She wandered down to where the river slid by like molten silver, and there she found a boat nosing into a clump of reeds. Almost without thinking she jumped aboard and went sailing down the river in the magic shallop with never a regret for the Prince or the people at the castle she had just left.

## No. 5. The Witch's Greeting.

Very soon the boat ran aground, and the Princess found herself in front of a cottage that seemed to be made of gingerbread. On the doorstep was an old lady, nodding her head and talking very rapidly to herself. As soon as she saw the Princess, however, she called out, "Come in, come in, I've been expecting you for an hour." And the Princess felt quite frightened as she knew she must be dealing with a witch-person. But she was also very curious to go inside the gingerbread house, and since she was a king's daughter, thought it beneath her dignity to seem afraid.

## No. 6. Fairy Bells.

As the Princess entered the house of gingerbread, she found that her beautiful ball-dress had vanished, and she was dressed in rags. She had a curious feeling that she would never see all her friends again and she felt quite sad. She seemed to hear a sound of fairy bells.

## No. 7. The Magic Stream.

The Princess soon forgot her troubles, however, in her interest in her new surroundings. The old witch was busy stirring a huge kettle full of something that smelt like camomile and thyme boiling in sap. The room was full of suffocating steam that set the Princess coughing, and the witch suddenly commenced to howl in the most terrifying way. Then, all of a sudden, she seized the Princess and held her high over the kettle in the steam, and then dropped her-splash-in the midst of everything. But to Alice's surprise, she found that it was not hot a bit. She went down, and down, and down, until suddenly she felt that she had arrived in a stream of cold water. She opened her eyes, and found herself sitting in a brook that welled and bubbled around her. It was broad daylight.

## No. 8. The Happy Princess.

As soon as she had scrambled out of the water, she was conscious of an entirely new sensation. "Why," she said to herself, "I feel as light as a feather." And straightway she began to dance as she had never danced in her life before. All her lameness had vanished.

## No. 9. The Horns of Elfland.

Very soon, however, the Princess grew tired, and lay down to sleep amid the flowers that sprinkled the green grass at her feet. The murmur of the stream mingled with her dreams, and it seemed to her also that she heard the faint echo of the horns of Elfland.

## No. 10. Disappointment.

When she woke up, there was another surprise in store for her. She found herself back in the boat exactly where she had started from. The moon was still shining on the placid river. As she came to herself, Princess Alice realized that her adventures were nothing but a dream. She had been sleeping in the moonlight. As soon as she realized this, she guessed right away that the magic stream was part of the dream also, so that she was not cured of her lameness after all. Poor Princess Alice began to cry now in real earnest.

## No. 11. A Scamper by Moonlight.

After a little while, Princess Alice remembered that it is not at all behaving like a royal lady to cry over things one cannot help, so she dried her eyes, and got out of the boat to go back to the palace. As soon as her foot touched the shore, however, she realized that it was not a dream after all. Oh joy! She was able to run and to dance like any other girl! That part of her dream had really come true. Almost wild with joy she ran back to the castle as fast as she could go.

## No. 12. Happy Ever After.

They had missed her at the castle, and search parties were about to go into the woods to look for her, fearing that she had been kidnapped. The King, her father, was distracted, and what with trying to revive the Cueen with smelling-salts and to give the necessary orders, he was quite beside himself. The Lord High Chancellor was in hysterics. The only person who seemed to be able to take command of things was the Prince. He was very pale, but very determined looking, and seemed to know just what to do. Suddenly, however, there was a great shout, and the Princess came running into the courtyard which was all lit up with torches. Explanations soon followed, and when it was found that the Princess was cured of her lameness the general happiness knew no bounds. The dance was resumed with ten times its former jollity, and there was no happier couple in the world than the Prince and Princess.

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