

Princess September

King's Daughters

The King and Queen of Siam had nine daughters. For the Queen it was confusing to remember so many names. So the king decided to call them by the names of the months. The youngest was named September.

The King's Gifts

The king had a peculiar habit. Instead of receiving gifts on his birthday he gave them. One year he gifted his daughters each with a green parrot in a golden cage. The princesses were glad. They spent an hour every day with them. The parrots could say "God save the king and 'Pretty Polly' in seven languages.

The Sad September

But Princess September found one morning her parrot dead. She wept and wept. She could not be comforted. The Queen told the maidservants to put her to sleep without supper. The maids wanted to go to a party. So they put Princess September to bed as soon as possible. Thus the Princess was left alone crying in her bed. The princess saw a little bird come into her room. It began to sing. It sang about king's garden, the gold fish, the willow tree etc. The princess forgot about her supper.

The Smart Little Bird

The little bird gave the princess a bow. The bird asked her if she would have it in place of her parrot. The bird agreed that it was not pretty. The princess clapped her hands with delight. The bird sang and the princess went to sleep.

The Bird Delights Everyone

The next morning, the bird wished the princess good morning. The princess offered it food with her own hands. She bathed it in her saucer. The Maids of Honour were surprised. They had not heard earlier the sweet song of such a bird. The princess took the bird to her eight sisters. The bird sang different songs to the princesses. The king and the queen were surprised and delighted to see the bird.

The King's Praise

The king said that the bird sang much better than the parrots. He also said that he did not mind to hear the bird sing. He had got tired of parrot's saying 'Pretty Polly' again and again. The princesses said that the parrots said in seven different languages. The king said that they reminded him of his councillors.

Jealous Princesses

The princesses were vexed at this. The parrots also looked sad. But the bird flew round. It sang like a lark and a nightingale.

The other princesses got jealous of princess September. So they went to September. They said that they were sorry for the death of her parrot. She must have a parrot. They had put their pocket-money together to buy her the parrot. Hearing it, September thanked them. She said that she had a pet bird. It sang the most charming songs to her. She didn't know what she would do with the parrot.

Confused September

The princesses said that she was wrong in calling the bird as hers. They remarked that the bird flew in and out just as it liked. They asked her where the bird was at that time. September told them that the bird had gone to its father-in-law. The princesses said that it was not likely to come back. If it came back, she should put it into the cage. But September replied that she liked to see it fly. They told her that 'safety first should be the objective. They went away. Princess September felt uneasy.

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Worried September

Princess September started worrying about her little bird. It may have been caught in snares. Or the hawks could have caught it. Or it would have forgotten her. But she suddenly saw it sitting on her shoulder. The little bird told September that its father-in-law was giving a party. All wanted it to stay. So it stayed there.

The Bird in the Cage

But Princess September took no chances. She put the bird into the cage. The bird couldn't believe it. It asked what that joke was. The princess told the bird that it was not a joke. Cats were roaming in the night. The bird would be safe in the cage. The bird sang. But it stopped in between.

The Troubled Bird

The next morning the bird asked the Princess to let it out of the cage. But the Princess told it that it was much better where it was. The bird tried to slip through the bars of the cage. But it couldn't come out. Other princesses came. They told princess September that the bird would soon get used to the cage. But the bird asked to open the cage.

The Bird Doesn't Sing

The princess asked the bird to sing. But the bird said that it could not sing. It wanted to see the trees, the lake and the green ricegrowing fields. The bird did not sing. It also did not eat the food. The other princesses told September to be firm with the bird.

The Free Bird

The next day, Princess September went to the cage. She cried to see the bird as it looked dead. But it was not dead. The Princess started weeping. The bird said that it could not sing unless it was free. And if it could not sing, it would die. The Princess set the bird free. She promised it that she would not put it in a cage again.

The Bird's Word

The bird replied that it loved the Princess. It would come to her. It would sing the loveliest songs for her. It would also never forget her. The bird flew away. But the Princess was sad. She burst into tears.

The Victory of Love

The other Princesses came to know of it. They made fun of princess September saying the bird would never return. But the bird returned. It sat on September's shoulder. It ate out of her hand. It sang her the beautiful songs. The princess kept her window open day and night. The bird could come and go any time it liked.

The Lucky September

The Princess grew very beautiful. The king married her to the king of Cambodia. She was carried all the way to the city on a white elephant. But her sisters never slept with their windows open. They grew very ugly. The king married them to his councillors. They were given a pound of tea and a Siamese cat each.