



## **The merchant's daughter**

Faruka was a child of the desert. She was the daughter of nomadic merchants who spent their lives traveling from village to village and trading in all sorts of goods.

But Faruka was tired of never sleeping two nights in a row in the same spot and of rushing here and there like a chicken without a head. Pack up in the morning and unpack at night; it didn't matter whether the sun was scorching or a sandstorm was raging, leaving everything covered with sand.

So one day at the crack of dawn, Faruka decided it was time to leave. She donned her best clothes and draped a veil over her head to protect herself from the sun.

And without making a sound so as not to wake her family, Faruka crept out of the camp.

She would never again sleep in those uncomfortable tents.

Faruka wanted to find a place to call home. The house of: The merchant's daughter.

Faruka walked for four days and nights. It wasn't until the fifth day that she finally left the desert behind and reached a place where the land was green and the trees shaded her from the sun.

Faruka was awestruck. It was the first time she had ever seen so much greenery.

And as she walked on, enraptured by the verdant landscape, the day soon turned to night.

"I'll spend the night inside that mill and be on my way tomorrow," thought Faruka, as she yawned in the moonlight.

Since the girl was so exhausted she could barely stand up, she went into the mill hoping to enjoy a sound sleep.

But little did she know that the mill was a meeting place for three lions who had been friends since before their manes had grown.

The three lions would meet there once a week to have a chat.

"You know what I found?" said one of the lions, "I found a magic fountain."

The other two lions, who didn't believe a word of what their friend had said, looked at him skeptically.

"Don't look at me like that! I'm not lying!" insisted the lion, "I mean it, the water is miraculous and anyone who drinks from it will be cured of all illnesses."

Faruka, who was trying to fall asleep by counting sheep, couldn't help overhearing the three lions'

conversation.

Before falling asleep, Faruka had memorized every word she'd heard.

That's why, the next morning, she was able to find the magic fountain. Then she continued on her way.

That same afternoon, Faruka reached the gates of a magnificent palace.

It was the palace of a very wealthy nobleman who was prepared to give his entire fortune to the person who could help him find happiness again.

"What's wrong, sir?" asked Faruka when she saw the worried expression on his face. "My son is very ill," answered the nobleman as he burst into desperate tears. "I don't know if he has the mumps or the measles. I don't know what he has, but he's running a very high fever and he won't eat, talk or even move. Please help me!"

Faruka, who was a good girl, promised she would do everything she could to help.

Touched by the nobleman's tears, Faruka asked to be taken to the sick boy's bedside.

Once she was by his side, Faruka helped the boy sit up and put her jug to his lips. She very carefully helped him sip some of the miraculous water.

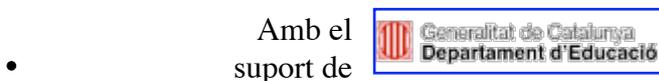
The boy responded immediately. He began to move his fingers, then his hands and arms, then his feet, legs and trunk. Right after that his eyes opened and he finally broke into a big smile from ear to ear. The boy had been cured!

"Ask me for whatever you like," said the nobleman to Faruka, overcome with joy. "I will make all your dreams come true."

But Faruka had only one dream: to have her own house where she could live forever.

The nobleman not only opened the palace doors to Faruka in welcome, but treated her as if she were his very own daughter. He showered her with elegant dresses and piles of other gifts. Faruka never needed anything again. And all of that, thanks to the wondrous effects of the miraculous water.

*Script: J.M Hernandez Ripoll*



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