

## **Rhoslyn: Earth's Last Fairy Godmother**

Roslyn – Earth's last fairy godmother - looked into the mirror and saw, reflected back, an image that was as tired and tattered as the armchair in which her body slumped. She took another long drink, straight from the bottle, and turned away.

A fairy godmother's life wasn't supposed to be like this. Fairy Godmothers lived in the rose-tinted champagne-bubbles of 'happy ever afters,' where the landscape was littered with handsome princes.

Rhoslyn was the very last of an ancient and noble race that could trace its lineage back and back, through time's millennium to the Days of Magic, when dragons roared. And amongst this world of dragons, sorcerers and men, Rhoslyn's had been the noblest and the greatest power.

But that was before.

It had been an earthly decade since Rhoslyn had last brought her guardianship to the human world. She had grown tired of their conceit and selfishness, and Cinderella - her most beloved and favoured protégé - was the very worst. What an empty-headed bimbo that girl turned out to be. Every Friday night at five minutes to midnight Rhoslyn's phone would ring and - surprise, surprise - it would be Cinderella.

'Oh! Fairy godmother,' she'd say in a pathetic voice trembling with phony remorse. 'I'm soooo sorry, truly I am.' Pause for a little sob and snivel. 'I just forgot about the time ... I met this handsome prince you see and-'

'Yea, yea Cinders I know all about the handsome princes. Please, just for once, tell me it's the same one that you met last week.'

'Oh! I don't know. I didn't ask and there's been so many of them-'

'You can say that again!'

'But he's got a really big castle-'

'Is that a euphemism?'

'Oh! No ... I don't think so. It's a big building with turrets.'

'Duh! Cinders ... he's a prince ... he's supposed to have a really big castle.'

It took a few seconds of brain-rattling before the penny dropped and turned into a grating girly-giggle.

'Oh yea. Course ... prince / castle. Silly me.'

'So, I take it from your call that you're not going to be home by midnight ... again?'

'Well no ... and I'll be needing another glass slipper.'

She was about to repeat her Friday night bleat of 'Please Rhoslyn - bestest Fairy godmother ever - don't get grumpy and do that carriage changing thing,' when the phone went dead and she was staring down at a pumpkin and six white mice.

'Bugger.'

Fortunately, at that moment, she spied a man wearing tights and a crown. He was getting into a horse drawn carriage. She ran over and smiled sweetly. You never know, she thought, he just might be a handsome prince.

Fairy Godmothers were renowned, through multiplex galaxies and dimensions, for the power of their magic and the depth of their wisdom; a race as unique and as fragile as a snowflake. Now, in earth-land myth and legend they were nothing more than a pantomime side-show and Rhoslyn had just had enough.

Cinderella wasn't the only reason why, an earth decade ago, Rhoslyn had grabbed her magic wand, the goldfish and her Blue Peter badge and done a runner, but she was, very definitely, the last straw. Besides, when Earth's last Fairy Godmother had disappeared it wasn't Cinders who got all the bad press - it was her sisters.

Now, we all know that Fairy Godmothers aren't supposed to have egos, but Rhoslyn hadn't been able to resist a quick peek at the 'Fairytale Times.' She'd turned to her fanzine page and the headlines screamed out at her.

### *CINDERS IN TATTERS*

*Sisters accused of being ugly*

*'It's just not fair,' sobbed Cinderella, beautiful princess wannabe. 'They made me wash-up on the very day that my Fairy Godmother disappeared. It just ruined my manicure.'*

So that was it then. Hardly a mention after all she'd done for them. She scanned the rest of the newspaper. Nope, nothing on that page, just Snow White up to her old tricks again.

*Moral outrage as Snow White moves into woodland holiday cottage with seven dwarfs.*

*'I'm heartbroken' said her evil step-mother. 'I just want her to come home.'*

Nope, nothing on that page, just Princess Prickly grabbing some zzzzz's for yet another century ... lazy trollope.

*Princess pricks her finger (again) and falls asleep for  
another 100 years.*

*'Well, she can stay asleep this time.'* Says Prince  
*Charming.*

*'I'm off clubbing.'*

Now we all know that Fairy Godmothers aren't supposed to have desires or needs and Rhoslyn knew that too. But, frankly, the last century had just been pants and she was sick and tired of pandering to other people. What about her own life?

She looked over at the Fairy Godmother dress hanging in the corner and then into the mirror. A tear slid down her face, followed by another and another.

Her reflection reached out and put a comforting hand on her shoulder.

'You still love him don't you?'

'I've never stopped. I'd hoped that time would heal and take away the memory of the sweet caress of his hands upon my skin. I was wrong, of course.'

'Then go to him. You know that he still waits for you.'

'It's not possible. You know this. I'm a Fairy Godmother and he is a Sorcerer. It is forbidden. The force of such a union is too strong and volatile. It could crack the walls of our world.'

'Then give up your power. You know that he is willing to give up his.'

'And break my vow?'

'As he would break his.'

'No, I cannot.'

'You can, you just lack the courage to do so.'

'No, I cannot. You ask too much of me. I must get back to work. I've wallowed far too long in melancholy. I'll return to the Earth-land and find a prince for Cinderella.'

'Perhaps she's already found a prince.'

Rhoslyn laughed.

'Sometimes, you really are a few fries short of a Happy Meal; Cinderella couldn't find her own prince if he was standing in front of her with 'PRINCE - VERY BIG CASTLE,' emblazoned in neon on his forehead. Now I'll just tune in my crystal ball.'

Ten minutes later.

'I just don't understand. I can't find her. She's not where I left her.'

'Are you sure you're on the right frequency?'

'Dunno. You have a go.'

One minute later.

'Found her. She's in Yorkshire.'

'Good. If you programme in the co-ordinates I'll be on my way.'

. . . . .

Cinderella was hanging out the washing when Rhoslyn appeared from behind a long line of, whiter-than-white, towelling nappies. She was so surprised that she nearly dropped her pegs. Then she laughed out loud, put her arms around Roslyn and enclosed her in a bear-hugging twirl.

'A-ye-up Fairy Godmother lass. Hows tha sen? Ave neigh seen tha in a while'

'What?'

'How are you Fairy Godmother?'

'I'm very well, thank you. How are you?'

'Eee, reet good. A'hm proper champion.'

'What?'

'I'm fine and very happy. Thank you.'

'Good. I thought I'd just drop by and see if you needed any help with the handsome prince thing.'

'Neigh lass, do I 'eckers like. Appen I found me sen a prince of men, works his shift in't mill and comes home with t'gravy. Two bonny bairnes and counting to show for it.'

'What?'

'No thank you Fairy Godmother. I've found a wonderful man that I love very much. He's a prince amongst men (...except he doesn't have a very big castle...) and he works extremely hard to make sure that me and our two beautiful children are cared for.

'So you don't really need my help then?'

'Neigh lass. And thee sen?'

'What?'

'No thank you Fairy Godmother. How are you?'

Rhoslyn saw the happiness glowing in Cinderella's face and the chains that she'd cast round her life started to unravel. A choice lay before her; love or power?

Well, love felt like bliss (obviously), but she wasn't totally sure that she was altogether ready to give up queue jumping or airport VIP lounges. Then she thought of 'him' and the power thing just melted away.

It is written (somewhere) that you can travel in any universe, in any dimension, throughout the realms of infinity and you will find that there is

a need for power and that there is a need for love. However, it is a proven fact that the need for love is always the stronger. Do not battle with it, for it will defeat you.

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Artor was waiting for her. He smiled and looked deep into her eyes.

'Eee lass thowt thou'd nivva gerr 'ere.'

'What?'

'I've been waiting a very long time, my love.'

Then he took her gently in his arms and kissed her.

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And the moral of the story is:

Every path has its puddles. So don't forget your wellies.

Or

Not every prince has a very big castle.