

## Rapunzel read aloud story

Many years ago, there lived a young couple, called Alfred and Liesel. The couple longed for a child, but sadly, they were unable to have one. They lived in a small cottage that overlooked the most beautiful garden. In the garden, there were many different types of colourful flowers and sweet-smelling herbs. Unfortunately, the couple were not able to enter the garden as it was surrounded by a high wall and belonged to a witch who had magical powers.

One bright sunny morning, Liesel looked out of her window and spotted a patch of luscious green leaves in the witch's garden. The leaves belonged to a plant known as rapunzel. Liesel had heard that the plant was delicious in a salad and she longed to taste some. Each day she would gaze at the witch's garden. She so wished to eat some rapunzel.

Seeing his wife looking sad, Alfred asked, 'What's wrong my love?'

'Every day I look out onto that beautiful garden, knowing that we cannot go inside,' Liesel replied. 'The worst part is, there is some rapunzel growing there and I long to try it. I think I may die if I don't!'

Alfred looked lovingly at his wife. He hated to see her like this, so he decided that he would bring her some rapunzel, no matter what.

That evening, Alfred snuck out of the cottage and climbed the high wall of the garden. He grabbed a handful of rapunzel and quickly returned to his wife. Liesel was so happy! She made herself a salad and ate it with joy. The only problem was, the next day she wanted more. Alfred knew that he would have to return to the garden to get some more rapunzel for his wife.

As evening fell, Alfred crept out of the cottage and climbed the high wall of the garden. As his feet touched the ground, Alfred froze in fear. There before him stood the witch.

'What are you doing in my garden?' demanded the witch. Alfred was terrified. 'You were stealing my plants, weren't you? You are a thief! You shall be punished for this.'

'I... I... I was picking some of your delicious rapunzel leaves for my wife,' he stammered nervously. 'Please understand, she had to have some or she would have died!'

'Really?' the witch asked. She considered Alfred's plea and relaxed a little. 'Well, if what you say is true, then you may have all the rapunzel that you want from my garden. However, I have one condition.'

‘Anything,’ Alfred said with relief.

‘Your wife will have a daughter and you must give her to me. I will look after her like a mother.’

Alfred agreed quickly and ran back home to his wife, soon forgetting his promise to the witch.

Sure enough, Liesel gave birth to a gorgeous baby girl and the witch appeared to take the baby away, just as she said she would. ‘I have named her Rapunzel’, exclaimed the witch as she scooped the baby into her arms and disappeared. The young couple was devastated, but there was nothing they could do.

Many years passed and Rapunzel grew up to be the most beautiful child in the land. She had incredibly long hair that was as shiny as spun gold and as soft as silk. When she turned 12 years old, the witch locked Rapunzel in a tower that was hidden in the woods so that no one could see her beauty. The tower was very tall and had no stairs, no front door and only one small window at the top. When the witch wanted to visit Rapunzel, she would call out, ‘Rapunzel, Rapunzel. Let down your hair.’

Rapunzel would then tie her long hair around some hooks on the window and let it fall to the ground outside the tower. The witch used the hair to climb up the tower to the window. Each time the witch visited, she reminded Rapunzel she must never leave the tower. Rapunzel was bored, but she found that singing beautiful songs helped to pass the time.

One day, a handsome prince came riding through the woods and heard Rapunzel’s beautiful song. He had never heard anything like it before and knew at once that he had to find out to whom the beautiful voice belonged. He followed the sound and found the tower. He walked around the base of the tower, but was unable to find a door. He tried to climb up the tower, but it was impossible because of the thorny bushes that surrounded it. Eventually, he gave up and returned home, vowing that he would return each day to listen to the wonderful song.

A few days later, the prince was standing by a tree, listening to Rapunzel sing. All of a sudden, he saw the witch appear. The prince hid himself as she approached the tower and called out, ‘Rapunzel, Rapunzel. Let down your hair.’

At once, Rapunzel’s golden hair fell from the tower and the witch climbed up. The prince thought carefully about what to do. He decided that the next day, as it grew dark, he would try calling her in the same way.

The following day, the prince returned to the tower, just as it was getting dark. He looked around to make sure that the witch wasn’t there and then called out, ‘Rapunzel,

Rapunzel. Let down your hair.'

At once, Rapunzel's long golden mane fell from the tower window, down to the ground. The prince began to climb up and entered the tower.

Rapunzel screamed out in fear. 'Who are you and what are you doing in my tower?'

The prince told Rapunzel that he was not to be feared and that he had been listening to her singing for some time. 'Please, my dear Rapunzel,' he explained. 'Your singing is so wonderful that it has touched my heart. I have fallen in love with you, and I wish you to be my wife.'

Rapunzel looked at the prince in amazement. Seeing the love in his eyes, and hearing the kindness in his voice, she lost her fear and agreed to marry him. 'There is just one problem,' she told him. 'I don't know how to get down from this tower.' They both thought for a while and then Rapunzel exclaimed, 'I've got it! Bring a piece of silk with you each time you visit, and I will weave a ladder with it. When it is long enough, I will climb down, and we can run away together.' Delighted with the plan, the prince left to get the first piece of silk.

Rapunzel managed to keep the plan a secret from the witch for some time. The prince would visit each evening, bringing silk with him for her to weave. Finally, the ladder was almost ready.

One night, as the witch climbed up her long golden hair, Rapunzel made a mistake. 'Oh goodness,' she said, 'you are much heavier than the prince when you climb up my hair.'

'What did you say?' the witch cried out. 'The prince? What prince? Oh, you naughty child! I thought I was protecting you from the world, but you have betrayed me. You will be punished for this!' With a snip and a snap, the witch cut off Rapunzel's long, golden hair and then whisked her away to a far-off desert to live alone.

When the witch returned to the tower, she tied Rapunzel's hair to the hooks on the window and waited. As he had done every evening since meeting Rapunzel, the prince came to the tower, unaware of what the witch had done. He called out, 'Rapunzel, Rapunzel. Let down your hair.'

The witch threw down Rapunzel's hair, and the prince climbed up. As he stepped through the window and into the tower, he gasped at the sight in front of him.

'Aha!' the witch cackled. 'Were you expecting Rapunzel? Well, you'll see her no more. She is gone from this tower forever!' The witch laughed at the prince who sobbed at the loss of his dearest Rapunzel. He turned to leave the tower and tripped, falling from the window. Luckily, he survived the fall but the thorns in the bushes that surrounded the

tower pricked his eyes. He was unable to see and had to feel his way as he wandered into the woods, deeply saddened by what had happened.

A long time passed. The prince continued to wander the woods, living off berries and roots. One day, he stumbled out of the woods and into a desert. Wondering where he was, the prince stopped and listened to the noises around him. He could hear a familiar sound and so turned to walk towards it. As he got closer, he recognised the song of his lost love, Rapunzel. Seeing her prince, Rapunzel ran to him and fell into his arms.

'My prince,' Rapunzel wept, 'I thought that I had lost you forever!' She hugged him tight, and as she cried, her tears fell into his injured eyes. As if by magic, her tears restored the prince's sight and he could see again! Happy to be reunited, the couple quickly returned to the prince's kingdom. His subjects were overjoyed to have him back, and the couple were married at once. They ruled over the kingdom together, and the witch was never seen again.