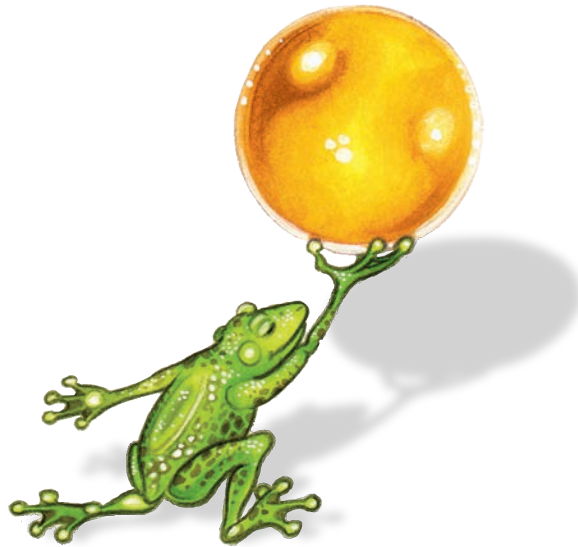


A fairy tale adapted for the youngest ears



As told by Brandi Chase, Illustrated by Erin Vaganos



**A lonely princess learns to keep her word
and makes a surprising discovery!**



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The FROG PRINCE

As told by Brandi Chase

Illustrated by Erin Vaganos



Starfall Education Foundation

P.O. Box 359, Boulder, CO 80306

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A young princess played in a protected garden near her castle. She never left the castle grounds because her parents, the king and queen, feared for her safety. Years before she was born, her older brother had vanished and was never found.

She lived a lonely life because she had no playmate. Her favorite plaything was a golden ball. She would toss it into the air and catch it again as it fell.





One morning while walking by the cool, mossy fountain in the center of the garden, the princess tossed her golden ball so high that she missed catching it.





The ball bounced once or twice, and then disappeared into the deep water. The princess followed the ball with her eyes as it fell into the fountain, but the water was dark and murky; she could not see where it landed.

“Oh dear! I’ll never find it!” said she, and then began to cry.



“Why do you cry so?” asked a little voice from the water.

The princess looked around. The voice came from a frog bobbing in the fountain. She replied, “My golden ball has fallen into the fountain and I cannot retrieve it.”

“I am an excellent swimmer and can see underwater,” answered the frog. “If you will take me home and be my friend, I will retrieve your ball.”

The little girl thought the frog was talking nonsense. After all, could a frog be a friend to a human?

Even so, she promised to give him what he asked.

The frog leapt into the water. In no time he came up with the ball and placed it on the fountain’s edge.





The princess was overjoyed! Forgetting her promise, she snatched up her golden ball and ran back to the castle, leaving the frog behind her.

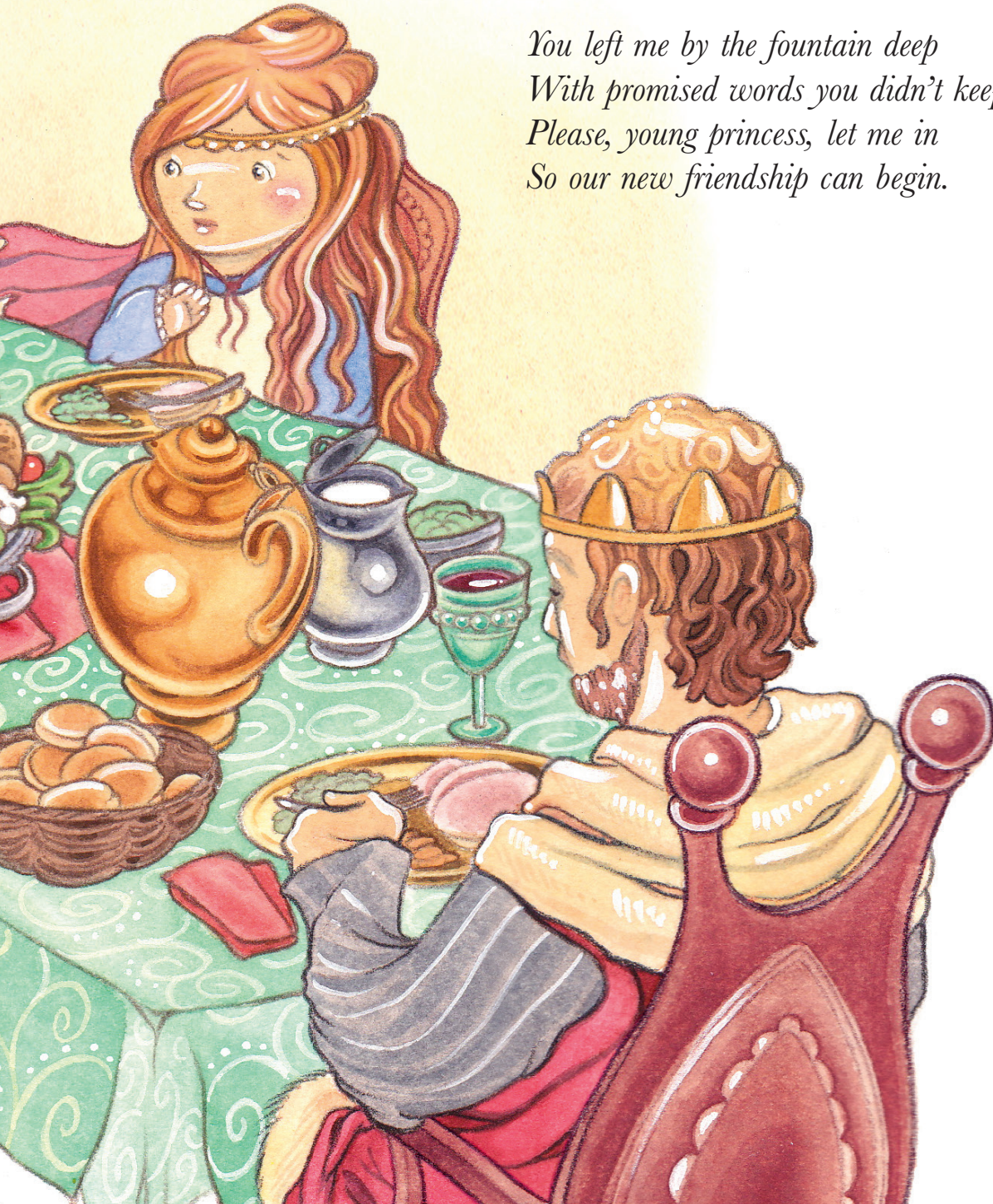
She did not even remember to say thank you.





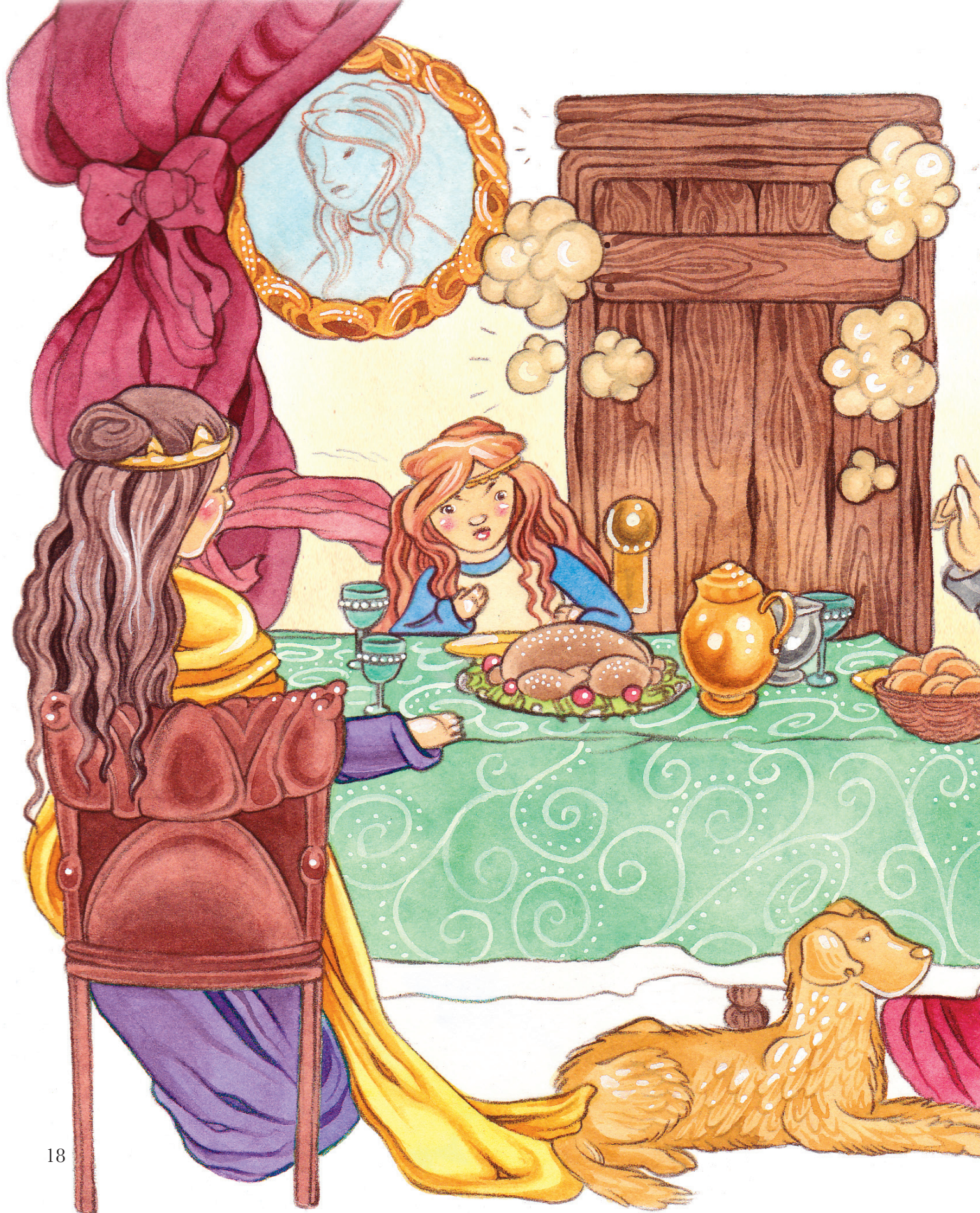
That night at dinner she heard a “splish-splash,
plop!” outside the dining hall door and then a
gentle knock. A little voice cried out:

*You left me by the fountain deep
With promised words you didn't keep.
Please, young princess, let me in
So our new friendship can begin.*



The princess went to the door and opened it. What do you think she saw? That's right, the frog!







The princess slammed the door shut and ran back to her seat. She was really frightened! The king, her father, noticed her distress.

“Who is at the door, my love?” asked he.

The princess confessed, “There is a frog at the door. This morning I promised I would take him home and be his friend if he retrieved my golden ball from the fountain.”

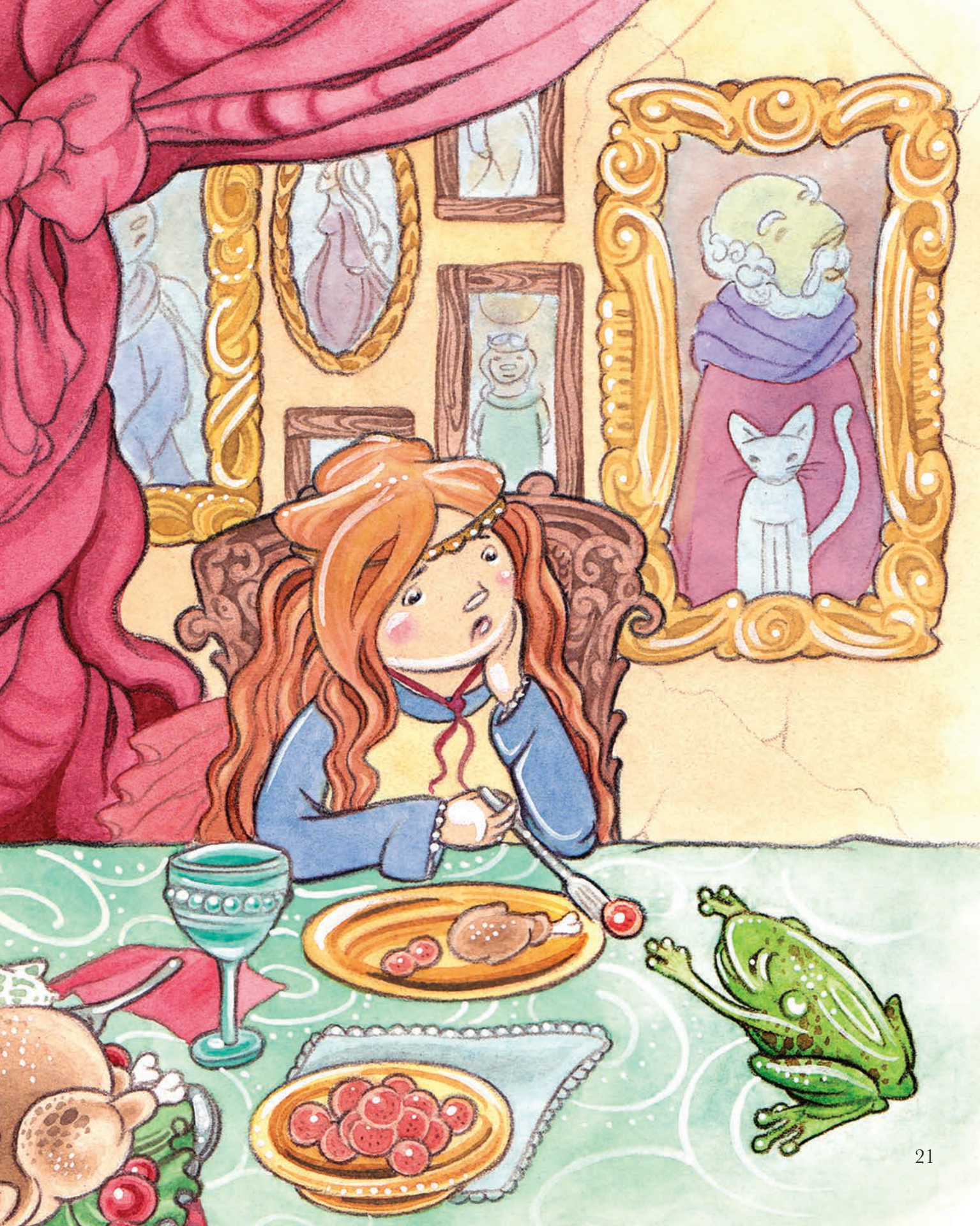
Her parents were disappointed that their daughter had not kept her word.

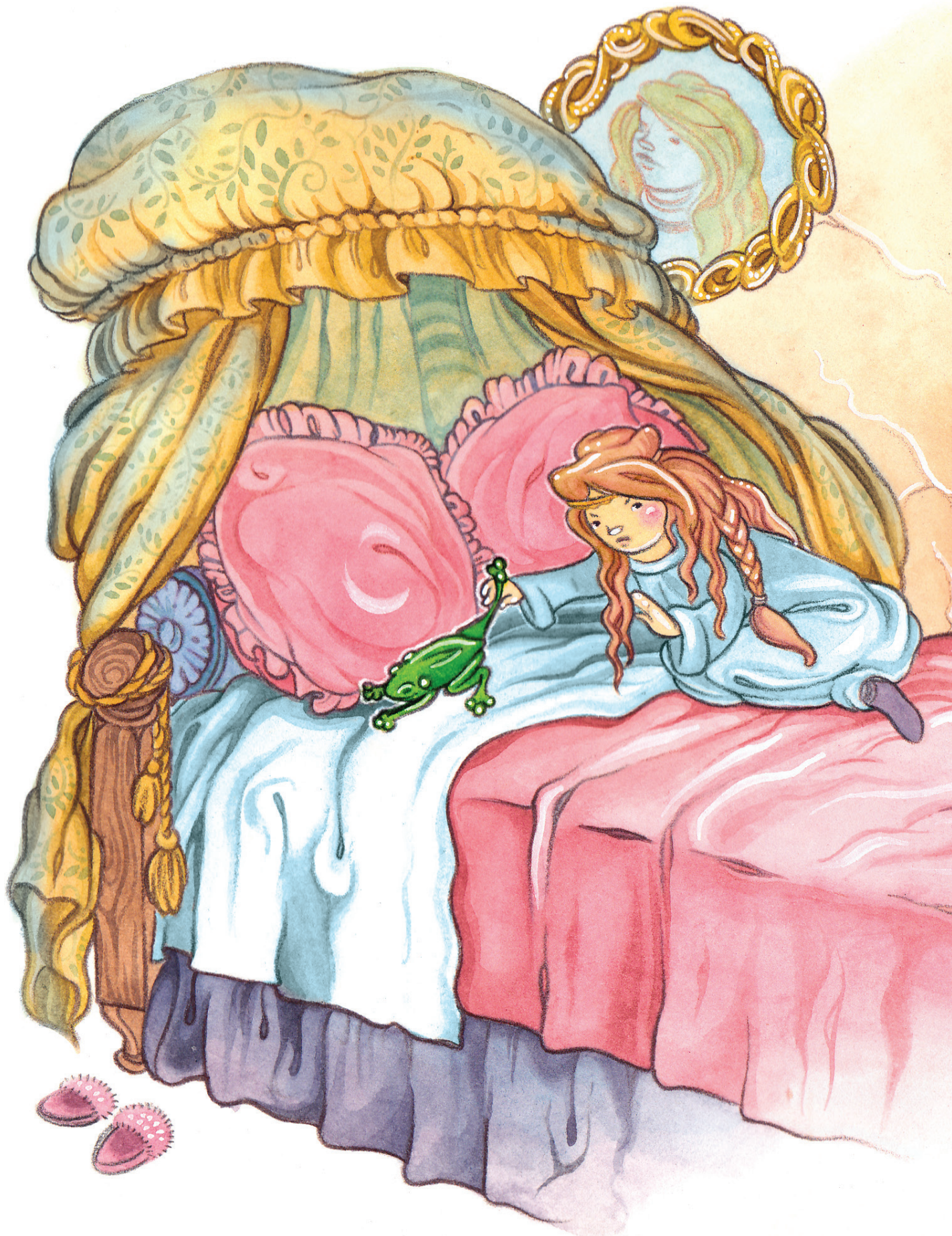
“Go and let him in,” said the queen.

The young princess reluctantly did as she was told. The frog hopped into the dining room and up on the table.

The young princess shared her dinner with the frog, but it was easy to see she didn't do it willingly.









At bedtime the princess tried to leave the frog behind but her mother, the queen, gave her a stern look. The princess wrinkled her nose, carefully picked up the frog with two fingers, and carried him to her room where she set him on a fluffy pillow on her own bed.

When she woke the next morning the frog was gone. "Oh! I'm so glad that is over," she smiled.

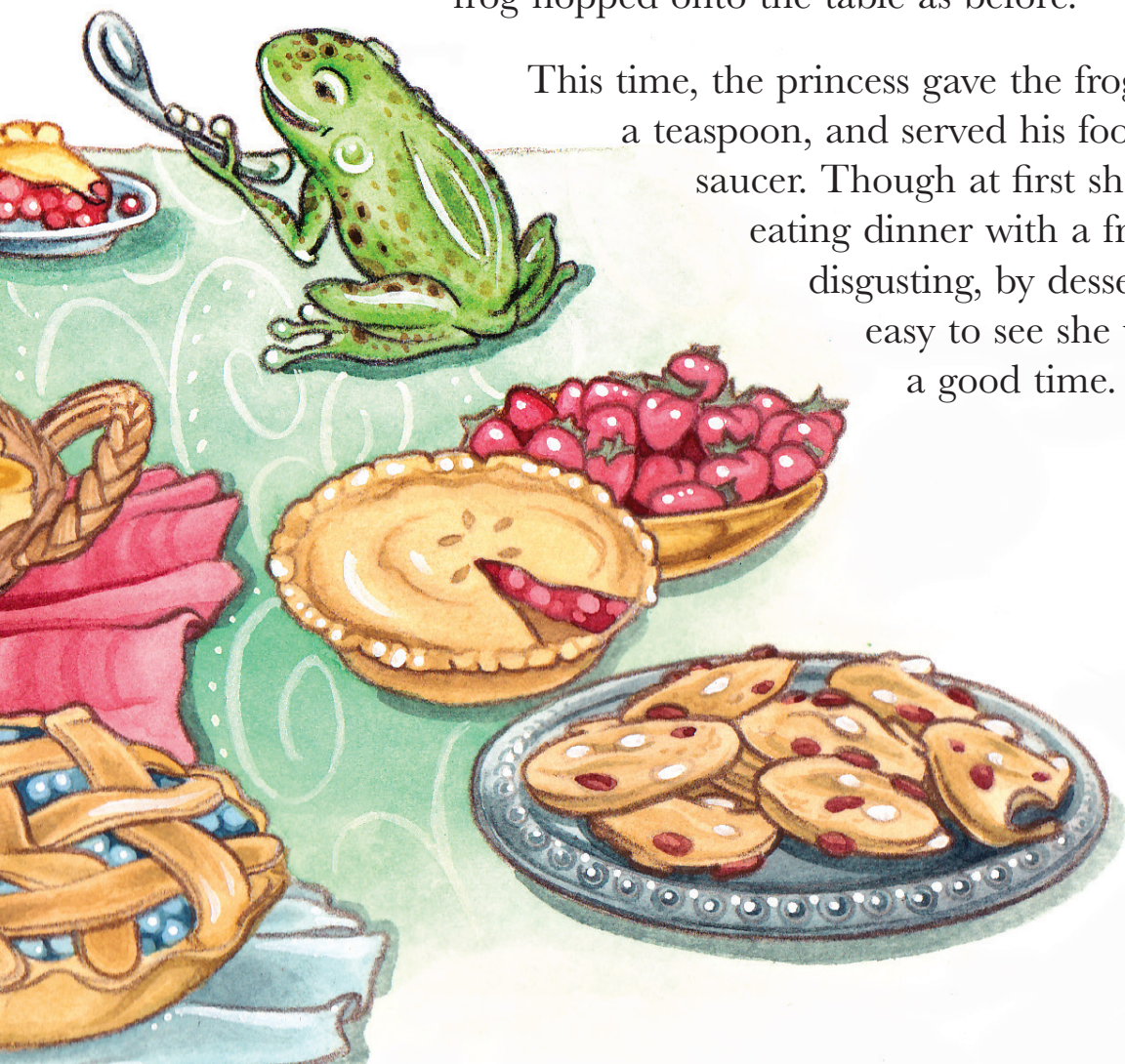


The second night at dinner the royal family heard the same “splish-splash, plop!” outside the dining hall door. They heard the same little voice cry out:

*When I came before you let me stay
But I know you wished I'd go away.
I'm back tonight to try again
To see, perhaps, if we can be friends.*

The young princess opened the door, and the little frog hopped onto the table as before.

This time, the princess gave the frog a teaspoon, and served his food on a saucer. Though at first she thought eating dinner with a frog was disgusting, by dessert it was easy to see she was having a good time.



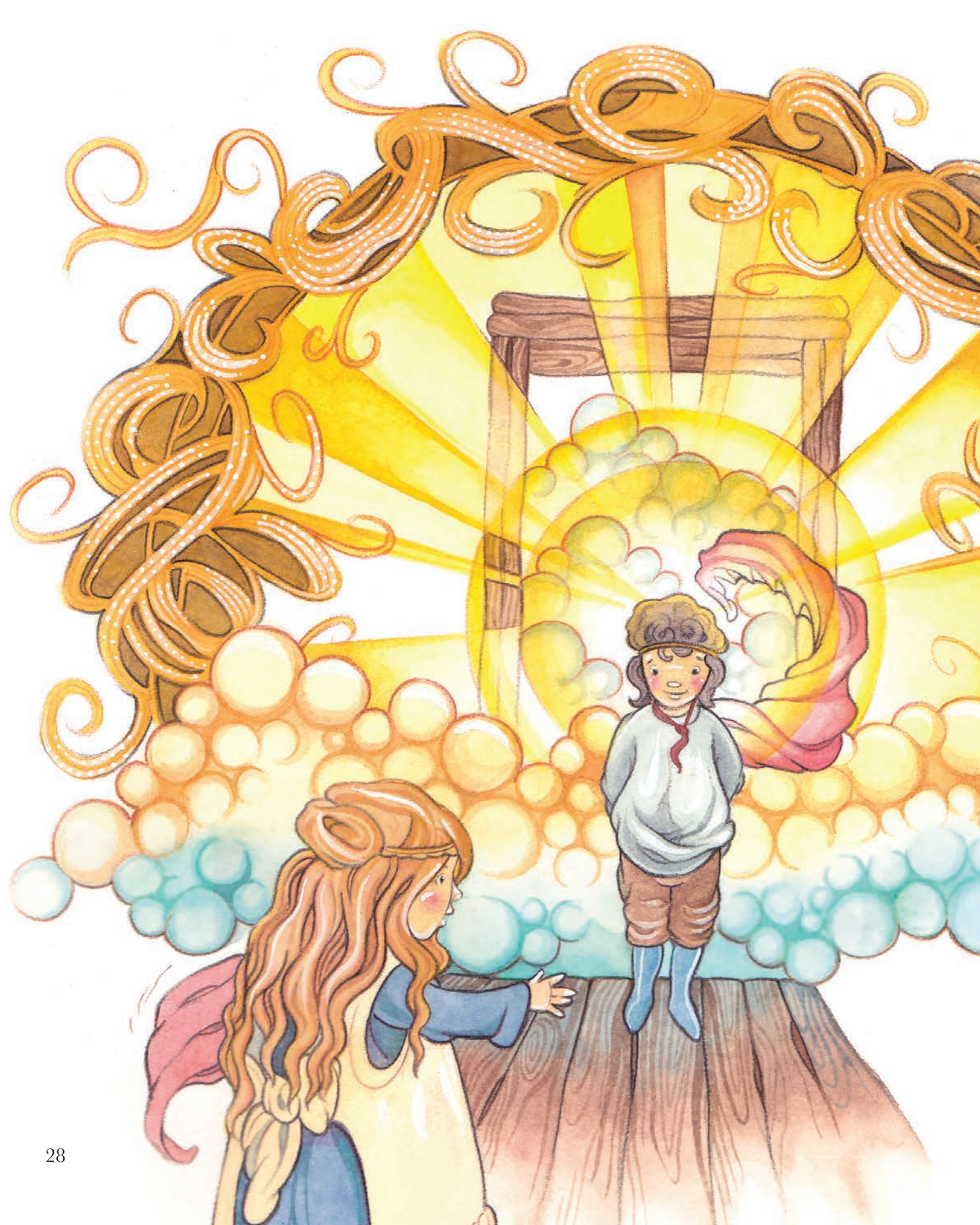
At bedtime she gently carried the frog to her room and set him on a fluffy pillow on her own bed.

The little frog told the princess a funny story about life in the fountain. The princess told the frog a spooky story about the castle.

When the princess woke the next morning the frog was gone. “Oh! Where can the little frog be?” she sighed.









That night at dinner the royal family heard the same “splish-splash, plop!” outside the dining hall door.

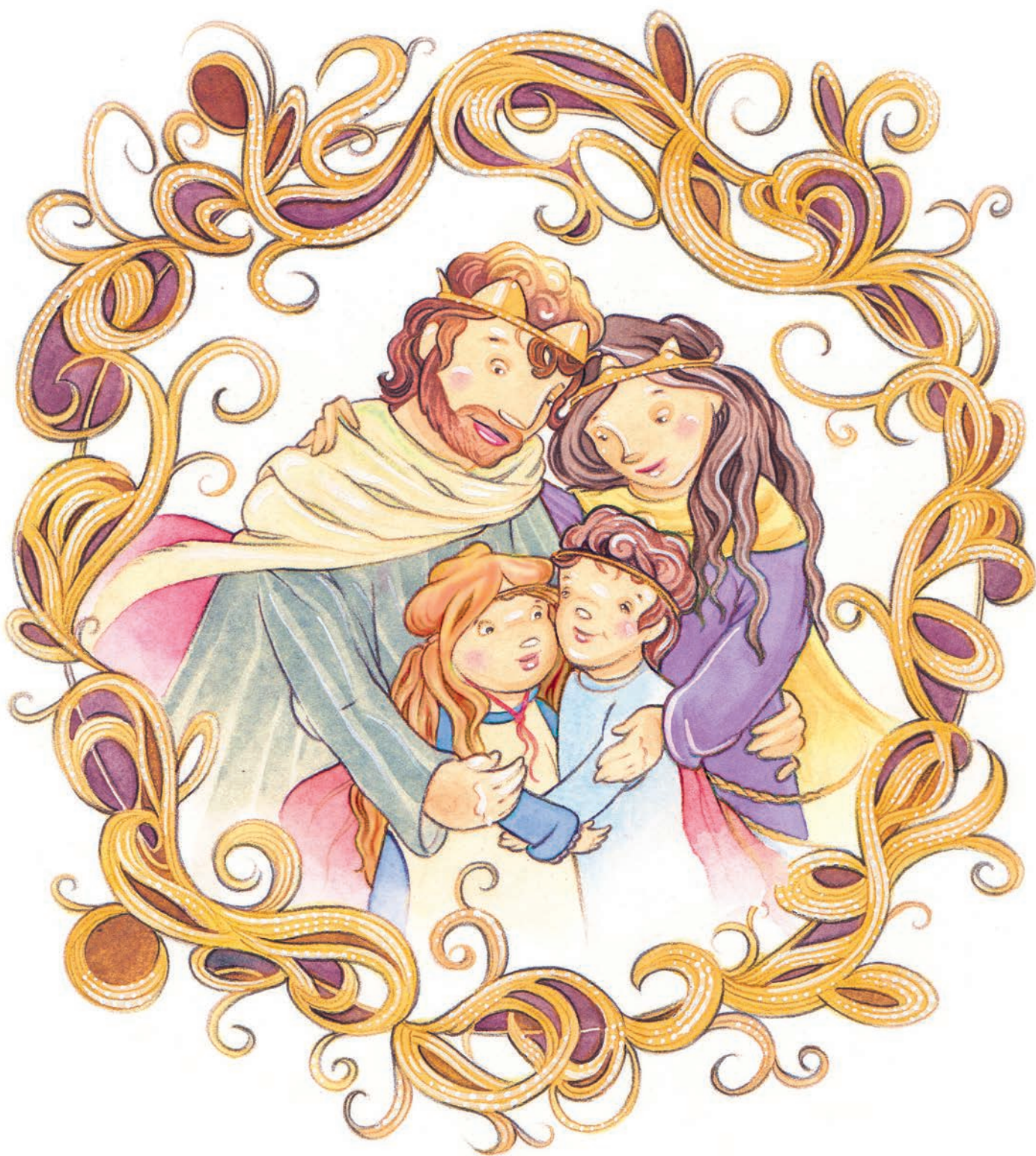
They heard the same little voice cry out:

*Yesterday, it went so well
Do you like me? I can't tell.
And so tonight I have returned
To see if friendship I have earned.*

The young princess ran to the door, for she was very anxious to see the frog again. “My friend! You’ve come back!” said she.

But this time when she opened the door, instead of seeing the little frog, she saw a flash of light!

The young princess blinked her eyes once or twice, and was astonished to see a young prince standing in the doorway. “Who are you?” asked she.

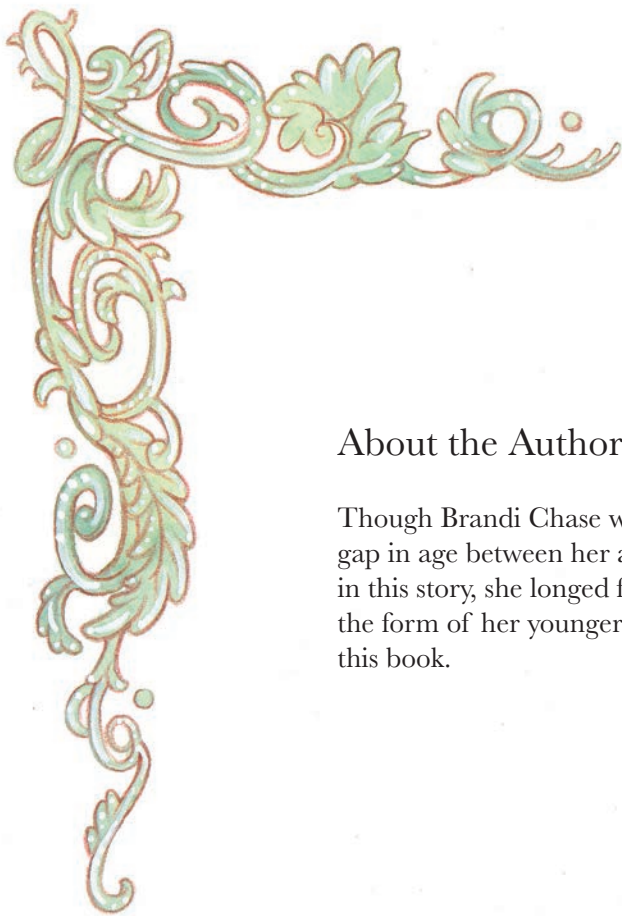


The king and queen rushed to the door, for they recognized that the prince was their own son who had vanished so many years ago. “Son, is it really you?” the queen cried.

The frog prince explained, “I turned into a frog while playing in the fountain, and could not return until a human called me friend.”

The king said, “Dear one, your friend is also your sister!”

And so they remained brother, sister, and friends forever after.



About the Author

Though Brandi Chase was not an only child, there was a large gap in age between her and her older sisters. Like the heroine in this story, she longed for a true friend. That friend came in the form of her younger brother Marc, to whom she dedicates this book.

About the Illustrator

Erin Vaganos grew up in an underground house her parents built. She grew up among various critters — and a sister! Erin likes to collect fossils, read adventure stories with plucky heroes and fearsome beasts, hike the wide wilderness, and fly planes. Today she lives with her husband Anthony and spunky dog Juno in Philadelphia where they love to dine on local fare such as cheese steaks and Italian ice.

