**THE HAPPY PRINCE**

Once upon a time, a beautiful statue stood in the middle of a town square.

It was the statue of a prince.

His body was covered in shiny gold leaf, and his eyes and the dagger on his belt were ornamented with precious gemstones.

From his place on the square he could see everything going on around him.

People called him the Happy Prince.

One cold and windy night, a swallow wandered into the square.

The other swallows had all gone south for the winter, but this one had gotten lost and was left behind.

Circling the square, the swallow saw the statue of the Happy Prince.

It's too cold to fly tonight.

I will stay here for the night.

It's so cold.

As the swallow settled down, a drop of water fell on his head.

Oo, that's cold!

Can it be raining?

The swallow glanced up, and saw that the sky was clear.

It wasn't raining at all.

How odd.

Where did that drop of water come from, then?

Curious, the swallow flew to the top of the statue.

When he reached the top, he saw that the Prince's eyes were filled with tears.

Why are you crying, Prince?

I am crying because I am sad.

Why?

How could you be sad?

I was once a happy Prince, and all my days were filled with joy.

Now, when I am a statue, I can look over the whole town.

I see so much misery and poverty.

Swallow, just take a look at that little house there.

Where?

The swallow looked at where the prince pointed.

He saw an old, run-down house.

A sick child lay on the bed inside.

That child is very ill, but the family is too poor to buy the medicine she needs.

Oh, how sad.

Swallow, would you do something for me?

Pluck out the ruby from my dagger and bring it to that house.

If they sell it they will have enough money to buy the medicine.

Of course, I will do as you ask.

The swallow plucked out the ruby and carried it to the child's house.

The following day, the Swallow stayed in the square.

He wanted to stay with the prince a little longer.

In the afternoon, he flew up to the prince's shoulder to say farewell.

Good-bye, Prince. I must fly south now.

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