



# A Crown for a Day

Esther Ogbemudia



Princess Eleanor stood by the grand window of Rosewood Castle, staring out through the cold iron gates. She wore a beautiful gown of spun gold, but her heart felt heavy and lonely. Her red hair was tucked into a perfect, tight braid, and she wished more than anything that she could choose her own dress and her own adventures.



Outside the gate, eight-year-old Molly Hart laughed as she chased a butterfly through the cobblestone street. Her brown hair flew wildly from a messy ponytail, and her single dress was covered in colorful patches. She sold bright daisies from a wicker basket, looking up at the high stone walls and wondering what it felt like to be a real princess.



One sunny afternoon, Mrs. Finch the baker called both girls over to her wooden cart just outside the castle wall. Smiling warmly, the kind baker handed them a cracked silver locket that shimmered with an unusual, soft glow. As Eleanor and Molly touched the cold metal together, a magical spark danced around their fingers, and they whispered a shared wish to see the world through each other's eyes.



With a soft flash of light, the magic worked, and Molly woke up inside a bedroom larger than her entire house. She stood in front of a giant wardrobe filled with hundreds of beautiful dresses in every color of the rainbow. Breaking into a wide smile, Molly skipped past the stiff velvet gowns and joyfully chose a bright, sky-blue dress that reminded her of the open summer sky.



Meanwhile, Eleanor opened her eyes on the cobblestone street, wearing Molly's single, patched dress. For the first time in her life, she felt the cool breeze on her face and the freedom to run wherever she pleased. She spent the morning laughing with the town children, splashing in puddles, and learning how to weave beautiful crowns out of wild dandelions.



Later that afternoon, Molly sat at the long, polished council table wearing the heavy golden crown. When the royal advisors complained about the townspeople, Molly stood up tall and bravely asked why the hard-working bakers and flower girls were never invited to speak. Her kind words surprised the lords, making them think about the people outside the gates for the very first time.



Suddenly, dark clouds rolled in and a fierce storm battered the village with howling winds and heavy rain. Eleanor used her calm, regal voice to gather the frightened townspeople and lead them away from the flooding streets. Remembering the layout of the kingdom, she safely guided everyone into the sturdy, warm bakery where Mrs. Finch was waiting with hot tea.



As the clock began to strike midnight, Eleanor and Molly rushed back to the castle gates just as the storm cleared. Holding hands through the iron bars, they watched the silver locket glow one last time, gently swirling their spirits back into their own bodies. They were exhausted but filled with a deep, new understanding of each other's lives.



The next morning, the King announced three new rules for the kingdom, promising that the royal council would always listen to the needs of the townspeople. Princess Eleanor stood proudly by her father's side, wearing a dress she had chosen all by herself. Down in the courtyard, Molly smiled up at her, knowing their magical day had changed the whole kingdom for the better.



From that day on, Eleanor kept her hundreds of dresses but frequently visited the bustling town square to play. Molly happily kept her one patched dress and her beautiful flowers, but she was always a welcomed guest at the grand castle. The two girls became inseparable best friends, proving that the best magic in the world is turning 'you and me' into 'us'. Happily ever after. The End.