

A FAIRY MERRY CHRISTMAS TALE

A TALE WHERE THE ELVES,
THEMSELVES,
ARE LEFT ON THE SHELVES

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Note: *What follows is an hiftorical adventure told without interference by, or reference to, a certain three Christmas elves. These elves shall remain unnamed here and shall not be spoken of again in the narrative which follows.*

ONCE UPON A TIME there was a tiny kingdom by the sea called Gillihad. There lived, in an ivory white castle that overlooked the soapy shores of the Forgotten Sea, good King Galen and his daughter, the good Princess Elizabeth-Lee.

Princess Elizabeth-Lee was 15 years old, an age in those days when a good princess should be getting married. The good princess had no shortage of suitors, for she was, without question, the fairest and most lovely girl in all of the Five Kingdoms. She was courted by princes and nobles from throughout the land, but none struck her fancy as a Princess' fancy should be struck. She longed for adventure, but adventure was always scarce in Gillihad.



Good Princess Elizabeth-Lee

Gillihad was a bountiful and peaceful land, filled with golden fields of corn, ruby red cherry orchards and the cleanest, bluest streams that flowed in any land. The people of Gillihad were simple and peaceful folk who danced gaily and laughed heartily throughout the day.

Gillihad was bounded on the west and south by the Forgotten Sea, beyond which lay the Pirate Kingdom and other unknown perils. To the north and east lay the evil kingdom of Mortis, the largest of the Five Kingdoms and a foul land ravaged by fierce storms and brutal winds. The sun rarely shone there; even its warmth feared the cold and rocky slopes of Mortis.

It is, of course, technically incorrect to speak of the Five Kingdoms. The barbarian hordes of Mortis, led by the malodorous King Maddog had invaded and conquered three of the other kingdoms. Each in turn fell to the armies of Maddog, and where once the sun had shone and children played, lay only the cold and rocky pastures of Mortis.¹

Gillihad was the only remaining kingdom of the original five that had not been subjugated to the will of Maddog. But for the peaceful people of Gillihad, their cold and hostile neighbour from the north seemed to be closing in on them with each passing day.

Evil King Maddog lived in a crooked black fortress. He had no wife, having executed her some years before, but he had a son and his name was Evil prince Rabeez. As much as Good Princess Elizabeth-Lee was the joy of Gillihad, so Evil prince Rabeez was the scourge of all of the Five Kingdoms. He had a hump upon his back and his skin was a sickly greenish colour. His



¹ It is such a grim place, that the people of Mortis are called 'Morticians'. It is actually correct to say "after we killed him, we took Old Jeb's body to the Mortician mortician." Of course, it is not correct to do such a thing, but it would be correct to say something like that.

eyes were a watery yellow and never seemed to look in the same direction at once. He walked with a strange sort of a hopping motion and most frightening of all, a thin green tail dragged behind him.

Do not be mistaken or feel pity for Evil Prince Rabeez and his misshapen form. It was his black heart that had twisted his body into its hideous shape. Evil Prince Rabeez had been born on a black, moonless night during the coldest winter Mortis had known in a generation. He was a cruel boy and had grown to be a cruel man. He presided over all of the executions in Mortis - and there were a great many of them - because he considered it to be such great sport. He could never keep a pet; whenever his father brought him a cat or a dog, Rabeez would eat it. His body was that of a monster, but much worse than that, so was his soul.

It was the wish of Evil King Maddog that his son would marry and carry on his evil line. But there was no maiden in all of Mortis that was not terrified of Evil prince Rabeez and in truth, no maiden whom Evil King Maddog felt was suitable for his son. There was however one fair maiden who would do and at the same time satisfy certain political imperatives of the Evil King. "My son," Evil King Maddog declared as he strode through the gloomy halls of his castle, "shall marry Elizabeth-Lee of Gillihad."

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From her bedroom window in the east tower, Good Princess Elizabeth-Lee watched with dread as the entourage from Mortis worked its way up the winding trail towards the palace. It was supposed to be a royal visit, with Evil King Maddog and his diplomats meeting to discuss affairs of state with Good King Galen, but it looked more like a small invading army to Good Princess Elizabeth-Lee. The royal carriage was made of black iron and hauled by eight enormous black stallions. Sparks flew from their

hooves as they pulled the great coach. Behind the carriage marched a legion of Mortis' feared Imperial Guard. There were no diplomats in sight.

Evil King Maddog's coach stopped before the palace and the drawbridge slowly lowered to allow it inside. Good King Galen had received word that morning that the king of Mortis was to arrive on a state visit. Much as it repulsed him to welcome the evil monarch into his home, Good King Galen really had no choice. As a king and neighbour, it was his duty to extend hospitality to visiting royalty. Of course, if he refused entry to Evil King Maddog, the Imperial Guard would soon break down the castle walls.

Good Princess Elizabeth-Lee turned and saw her father walk past her door. His shoulders were bent over as though he carried a heavy load. She followed him down the hall and watched as Good King Galen walked down the wide spiral staircase. He stepped forward as the doorman stood up and announced "His most royal highness, son of Vermann, son of Plagg, King Maddog of the Free Republic² of Mortis!"

The Evil King stepped through the door and into the great hall of Gillihad. Behind him stood the Commander of his Imperial Guard and at his side hip-hopped the Evil Prince Rabeez.

Good King Galen stepped forward and greeted Evil King Maddog in the traditional Gillihad fashion. They clasped arms together and crossed the hall into the vast banquet room.

Atop a great oak table was spread a tremendous feast. The bounty of Gillihad was laid out before them. Joints of antelope, fruit, pies and cake. Evil Prince Rabeez studied the spread, licked his thick brown lips and drooled.

"Welcome to my home, Maddog," said Good King Galen. "Let us break bread together."

² You will find if you care to look it up that places that use adjectives like "Free Republic" or "People's Democratic" or "Peaceloving and Prosperous" in the names of their countries are usually anything but free, democratic, peaceful or prosperous. A more fitting name here would be the "Corrupt and Tyrannical Warmongering Dictatorship of Mortis."

Evil King Maddog grinned and clapped his hands. Evil Prince Pabeez and the men of the Imperial Guard rushed to the table and began gorging themselves. In minutes, the vast feast was consumed. Evil Prince Rabeez belched and smiled stupidly.

Good King Galen cleared his throat nervously. "Come, drink with me," he offered. He led the Royal Family of Mortis to a large decanter of golden Gillihad claret. He poured each guest a tall goblet of the wine. In seconds they had each gulped down wine that had aged for a century.

At last, Evil King Maddog strode over to Good King Galen. He wiped his chin with his sleeve and placed his arm around Good King Galen's shoulder. "Galen," he growled, "this is a wonderful little kingdom you have here. Green pastures, blue skies, clean water. It would be a shame to see it all come to an end."

"Whatever do you mean," stammered Good King Galen.

"The pirates Galen, the pirates," murmured Evil King Maddog. "They live out across the Forgotten Sea. You have no army, you could never resist an invasion."

"But we have no quarrel with the pirates," said Good King Galen.

"Think of it Galen," Evil King Maddog continued. He stepped away from Good King Galen and spread his arms. He was not listening to Good King Galen and truthfully did not care what he had to say. "My armies could protect you. The pirates would not dare to come near you."

"I don't know," said Good King Galen. "Why would you want to send your armies here?"

"I want more than that," Evil King Maddog said with a sneer. "I want our kingdoms to unite. One land with no borders. And to seal the deal, a marriage. Elizabeth-Lee shall marry Rabeez and together they shall rule an united kingdom."

Good King Galen could see that this negotiation was deteriorating, but he did not know how to stop it. "Now Maddog," he began. "Elizabeth-Lee can't marry Rabeez. She doesn't even know him." He looked over at Rabeez, who was grinning smugly in the corner.

Evil King Maddog's face turned red. "What difference does that make!" he demanded. "She doesn't have to know him to marry him. Now listen Galen, I have an army of ten thousand men lined across your border. I'll have Gillihad. I'll take it from you by force if I have to. I'm offering you a compromise. A way out. A union between our nations for our mutual benefit. For the good of our people.

"You have a beautiful kingdom here. Don't make me destroy it. Don't make me kill your people, burn their farms and steal their crops. Nobody wants to see that ... "

Evil Prince Rabeez giggled in the corner. Evil King Maddog glared at him. "Nobody wants to see that," he repeated wistfully. "Don't bring devastation to your people. It's only your daughter."

Good King Galen hung his head. He had no choice. Gillihad had no army to speak, none that could resist the hordes of Mortis. His kingdom would be overrun in days. The only way to save Gillihad and her countrymen was to agree. "Very well, Maddog. Elizabeth-Lee will marry Rabeez."

Evil King Maddog embraced Galen and shouted, "tremendous! We shall have a wedding in the morning!"

Good King Galen gulped. He excused himself and walked back to the great hall. Good Princess Elizabeth-Lee was there. Tears ran down her cheeks. She had heard everything. Good King Galen looked at her and smiled gently. He opened his mouth to explain, but she turned away and ran up the spiral staircase.

She threw herself on her pink bed and cried. She understood that her father had no choice in the matter, and that her position required her to make sacrifices for the good of Gillihad, but she could not face the horror of marrying Evil Prince Rabeez. She sat up and looked out her window. The

sun was setting. When it rose again she was to marry Evil Prince Rabeez. If she refused, Evil King Maddog would surely march across the border of Gillihad, his lunatic army before him, burning and looting their way to the palace. Even so, to marry Evil prince Rabeez was a disaster beyond her imagination.

She just could not do it.

She would run away. It was her only choice. She would ride her horse to the Cliffs of Desolation and throw herself into the Forgotten Sea. Such was the fate of all good princesses who fled unbearable arranged marriages. Protocol demanded no less.

She tied her royal bedsheets together and lowered them from the window. Her sheets were woven of the most delicate silk, but could bear her weight with ease, for her build was slight in the manner of all good princesses.

She reached the end of her improvised rope and dropped into the royal rosegarden. Lifting her skirt delicately, she made her way across the royal courtyard to the royal stables. There she found Blue, her pet pony. Blue was a handsome horse. He stood 14 hands high and had a pure white coat. Good Princess Elizabeth-Lee rubbed his neck and whispered in his ear. She led him from the royal stables and expertly mounted him, sidesaddle of course.

Good Princess Elizabeth-Lee was an excellent rider, but would still have to ride hard all night to reach the Cliffs of Desolation by morning.

The moon was high in the sky when Good Princess Elizabeth-Lee and Blue reached the edge of the Forbidden Forest. Blue whinnied nervously, but Good Princess Elizabeth-Lee urged him on. According to legend, the Forbidden Forest was haunted. Although Good Princess Elizabeth-Lee did not believe this, Blue surely did. He slowed down when he heard a howling in the woods. He stopped completely when he saw a white spectral face behind a gnarled tree stump. When he felt a cold dead hand on his flank, he bolted. Good Princess Elizabeth-Lee slipped from his back and fell onto the trail. When she looked up, Blue was gone and she was alone in the Forbidden Forest.

Good Princess Elizabeth-Lee had fallen into some mud at the side of the pathway, but of course none stuck to the royal gown. She stood up and straightened her tiara. It was not that much farther to the Cliffs of Desolation, but without Blue, she would never make it by morning. "Oh well," she sighed. "I will just have to walk."

She made her way along the winding trail, through bent and twisted trees and thick prickly bushes. Soon she reached a thin trickling river spanned by a stone bridge.

Now, you know just as well as Good Princess Elizabeth-Lee did that beneath every stone bridge lives a troll and that when one crosses such a bridge under the light of a full moon, one should expect to be eaten before one reaches the other side. Unfortunately, though the moon was full that night, there was no other way to cross the river.

Without hesitation, Good Princess Elizabeth-Lee stepped onto the bridge. She had hoped to throw herself from the Cliffs of Desolation into the foaming waters of the Forgotten Sea, but if she was to be mauled and eaten by a troll instead, so be it.

When she was halfway across, a thick hairy arm reached out from underneath the bridge. It gripped the edge of the bridge and a terrible form raised itself onto the bridge. It was a troll all right, there could be no mistake about that. Six hundred pounds of muscle, hair and teeth. There is really no other way to describe it.

"Are you the troll whose bridge this is?" inquired Good Princess Elizabeth-Lee politely. Of course, she was terrified, but it would not be seemly to let the troll know that.

"Yes," the troll growled. He extended a calloused, clawed paw. "My name is Jim. I am very pleased to meet you."



The good princess curtsied. "Aren't you going to eat me?" she asked.

"Eat you?" Jim the Troll gasped. "Of course not. I'm a vegetarian."

This was encouraging news. Jim the Troll extended his elbow and escorted Good Princess Elizabeth-Lee across the bridge. "You really should not be out so late at night," he said.

Good Princess Elizabeth-Lee explained to him about her pending marriage to Evil Prince Rabeez and her decision to throw herself from the Cliffs of Desolation into the Forgotten Sea.

Jim the Troll nodded. "Of course, you really have no choice," he agreed. "But you cannot walk through the Forbidden Forest alone at night. I will accompany you."

"Why thank you!" gushed Good Princess Elizabeth-Lee. And together they walked across the bridge and deep into the Forbidden Forest.

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The sun was high in the sky when they finally reached the base of the Cliffs of Desolation. The cliffs rose nearly a mile straight up from the Forgotten Sea. The topmost edge was obscured from view by passing clouds. At the bottom of the precipice were a number of jagged rocks and the waves swirled and lapped menacingly between them.

"Yo Ho!" shouted a gruff voice. Good Princess Elizabeth-Lee turned and looked at Jim the Troll, but he just shook his head. Suddenly, a group of men dressed in ragged sailor's clothes leapt out from behind some trees and set upon them.

"Pirates!" shouted Good Princess Elizabeth-Lee. She was right, of course. It was a gang of pirates. Jim the Troll rushed to protect her. He threw one pirate through a tree trunk and kicked another clear up the cliff face to the top. But he was only one troll and there were many pirates. In a few

minutes he was subdued and bound. The pirates dragged both of them to a small boat, shoved them inside and then floated out to sea.

Soon they reached an old wooden galleon, draped in black flags. The pirate gang led them on board the big ship. They were brought before the ship's captain, the dreaded Terrible Pirate Flynn.

Terrible Pirate Flynn was known throughout the Five Kingdoms as the Scourge of the Sea, the Terror of the Deep and the King of the Pirates. He walked across the deck, grinned at his prisoners, all the while twirling his thin black moustache.



"Well me hearties, what have we here. Looks like a princess." Terrible Pirate Flynn paused and smiled again. "We often stake out the Cliffs of Desolation, looking for high bred young ladies fleeing unfavourable marriages to kidnap and ransom. Today we have found ourselves a pot of gold!" The other pirates gathered together and sang a pirate song as the ship wheeled about and sailed off into the Forgotten Sea:

*"It's the life of a pirate for me,
Drinking rum by the gallon are we,
Raping and looting
Stealing and hooting
And singing songs while we sail on the sea!*

Yo Ho!"

INTERMISSION

BY NOW IT MAY HAVE OCCURRED TO YOU THAT THIS STORY DOES NOT HAVE MUCH TO DO WITH CHRISTMAS. BEAR WITH ME. I WILL TIE IT ALL TOGETHER BY THE END.

THERE WAS GREAT SADNESS IN GILLIHAD when her ladies-in-waiting reported that Good Princess Elizabeth-Lee had disappeared in the night. When a search party returned with her pony, everyone assumed the worst; that her body lay dashed on the jagged rocks at the base of the Cliffs of Desolation or in the belly of a troll. Good King Galen declared a year of mourning that morning. He retired to his chambers and wept.

The great oak doors smashed open and Evil King Maddog burst into the room, unannounced and uninvited. "What is the meaning of this?" he bellowed, waving a copy of the decree.

Good King Galen rose and addressed Evil King Maddog. "My daughter is dead, Maddog. I would rather be left alone."

"So there is to be no wedding then," glowered Evil King Maddog. He paced across the room. "Well, I won't have it!" he shouted, spit flying from his lips. "The house of Maddog will have satisfaction!" He wiped his chin with the back of his hand and strode out of Good King Galen's chambers.

Evil King Maddog marched down the hall and pounded on the guest room door with his gauntleted fist. "Rabeez!" he growled. "Come! There is much to do!"

In an hour the army of Mortis, together with its Evil King and Prince were marching back towards Mortis. In his black carriage Evil King Maddog sat with Pinnsir, the commander of the Imperial Guard. "I will have Gillihad, Pinnsir. Marriage or no marriage. If Galen won't give it to me, I'll take it by force." He looked at his general. "When can you raise me an army?"

"Within the week, my liege," replied Pinnsir.

"Well done, well done," muttered Evil King Maddog and leaned back in his chair chuckling.

* * *

Five days later, Commander Pinnsir had gathered his horde at the Gillihad border. Evil King Maddog was there, seated astride an enormous black charger. He bellowed a command and the army charged across the undefended border, shrieking as they ran. They waved their swords, crushed crops, burned houses and generally behaved like barbarians.

The good people of Gillihad had gathered at the border to resist the attack, but they were not warriors and their farmers' tools were no match for the swords and crossbows of the Mortician army.³ Within minutes the farmers and villagers were routed and in retreat, fleeing before the barbarian mob that ravaged across their peaceful land.

They fled to the ivory palace of Good King Galen. All were welcome there and the drawbridge was raised just as the advance troops of Mortis reached the castle.

Evil King Maddog arrived that afternoon. "Ha, Ha, Ha!" he laughed. "All of Gillihad has fled to Galen's courtyard. When this castle falls, Gillihad falls, too. He turned to his eager generals. "Bring on your engines of war! Commence the siege! The house of Galen will fall before the week is out and all of Gillihad shall be mine!"

* * *

Good Princess Elizabeth-Lee sat on her deck chair on board the ship of Terrible Pirate Flynn and watched the waves of the Forgotten Sea lap against the gunwales. She had been at sea for three days. In that time, she had spent her days with the pirate crew telling stories and singing songs of Gillihad, its green fields and its happy people. Though they had only been at sea a short time, the pirate crew had, to a man, fallen hopelessly in love with Good Princess Elizabeth-Lee and Terrible Pirate Flynn the most of all.

Good Princess Elizabeth-Lee came to learn that Terrible Pirate Flynn was not really terrible at all. Though he was a rogue and a scoundrel, like all pirates his heart was good. It was necessary, in keeping with his profession, that he maintain appearances by sacking the odd coastal town and sinking the occasional merchant ship. It was a living.

³ This is an army from the country of Mortis, not an army of undertakers.

That afternoon, Good Princess Elizabeth-Lee offered to tell Terrible Pirate Flynn and his crew a story. She had told them many stories of romance and adventure, but this day she told them the story of the day Evil King Maddog came to Gillihad and she was betrothed to the hunchback Evil Prince Rabeez. Of course the pirate crew was horrified.

"By now I fear that the armies of Mortis will have overrun Gillihad ... " her voice drifting away as she finished her story.

Large tears formed in Pirate Flynn's eyes. "I don't like that story!" he yelled. "I don't like it at all!" He had listened to all of the other stories and songs of Gillihad and come to think of it as his own home. He barked orders to his crew. "Bring her around. Jibben the mizzenmasts. Limber the yards. We sail to Gillihad!"

The pirate crew had little chance to fight in recent months and relished the chance to wage war. The big ship turned about and sailed toward Gillihad.

* * *

They reached Gillihad two days later, at about the same time that Evil King Maddog began his siege of the ivory palace. The pirates unloaded their ship and marched to the palace, with Good Princess Elizabeth-Lee and Jim the Troll leading the way. When they arrived, they found the castle surrounded by barbarians. Ladders were raised against the walls. Great rocks flew from catapults and smashed into the palace.

The castle defenders tipped big black kettles over the parapets. Unfortunately, Good King Galen had nothing as nasty as oil in his castle, so they poured hot chicken soup over the walls instead. It barely hindered the army.

Terrible Pirate Flynn surveyed the carnage before him. Raising his sword over his head, he urged his crew to attack. Fifty pirates and one troll threw themselves into the task, engaging the Mortician army with the first real resistance they had seen since the invasion began. Sparks flew as pirate steel struck that of Evil King Maddog's men. Terrible Pirate Flynn dispatched three barbarians before they could even draw their swords. A

fourth fell when Terrible Pirate Flynn's dagger pierced his heart while he raised a cross bow.

Jim the Troll was quite at home in the melée. He smashed one great ham hand into a barbarian's face, leaving an imprint of his fist where the barbarian's nose had been. He pulled the kneecaps from another and threw them at the soldiers on the ladders. One barbarian tried to stab him with a sword. Jim pulled his arm off and then used it as a club, thrashing his way through the enemy line.

But Evil King Maddog had been right way back on page 5. The pirate crew, even with a troll, was no match for his army once it reorganized and reacted to the attack. Their numbers were too great and Jim the Troll, Terrible Pirate Flynn and all the others were forced to retreat into the woods.

"Come with me," said Good Princess Elizabeth-Lee. "There is a secret tunnel in these woods that leads into the castle. Mayhap we can help stop the invasion from the inside." They crawled through the tunnel and into the castle courtyard. All of Gillihad was huddled inside. Those that were able threw rocks and sticks over the walls at the attackers, but it was of little use.

Good Princess Elizabeth-Lee found her father and embraced him. They stood in each others' arms for a long moment, then she introduced him to Terrible Pirate Flynn, Jim the Troll and all the men of the pirate crew.

Good King Galen was, of course, delighted to meet them and apologized for the unkempt appearance of his castle. He assured them that all would be put back in order once the awful barbarians were finished overrunning the place.

It certainly seemed as though the barbarians would be upon them in a matter of moments. The rocks continued to smash into the walls and large cracks started to appear. Barbarians had reached the top of the castle walls and were preparing to climb inside.

Good Princess Elizabeth-Lee walked out into the centre of the courtyard. It was all her fault. What could she do? Parts of the castle walls themselves

were breaking loose and falling into the courtyard. Soon the barbarians would burst through. They would be overcome. All was lost.

Suddenly there was a great flash of bright white light. Good Princess Elizabeth-Lee stared in shock as a red iron carriage appeared from nowhere and skidded for several feet across the leaf covered courtyard. Steam rose from the object. It was like nothing she had ever seen before - an item from another realm. It was a strange looking sort of a cart, completely enclosed, with three sets of large rubber wheels. It was painted red, with two thin white stripes running parallel along either side. It had windows made of glass and inside she could discern three imp-like creatures.

A door in the side of the cart swung open and one of the imps stepped out. He was about four feet tall and was dressed entirely in red and green velvet. He had curly brown hair and pointed ears. He appeared to be in a frenzy and was yelling at his companions.

"Where are we?" he shouted. "This doesn't look at all right. Where have you taken us this time, Yugo?"

A voice spoke from inside the carriage. "Look Sam, settle down. I just made a typing error when I entered our time destination code. Instead of '1964', I typed in '1064'. I'll just re-enter it now. Don't worry, we'll get you to your Pat Boone concert on time. We have a time machine after all."

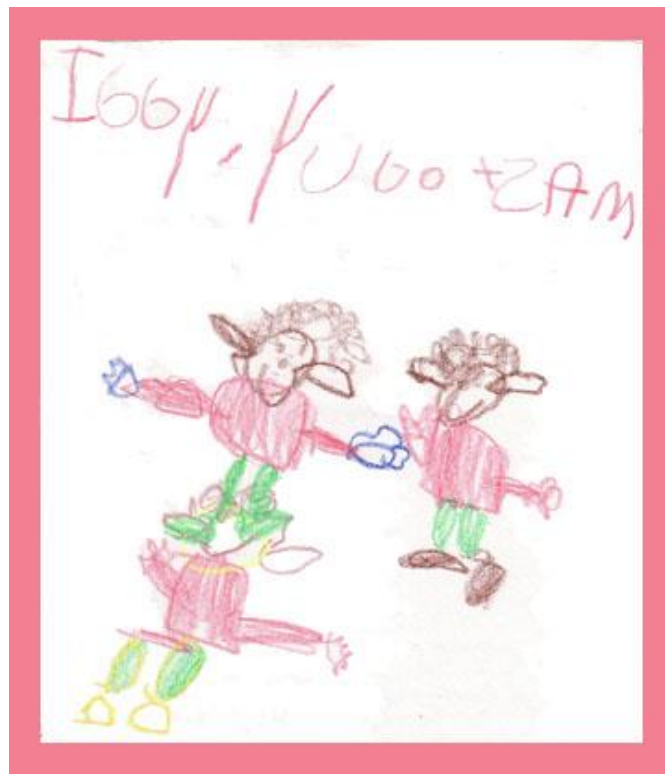
Sam crossed his arms and turned so his back faced the cart. Of course, Good Princess Elizabeth-Lee did not understand any of this exchange, but watched it all with fascination.

A third imp stepped out of the carriage. "Yugo says it is going to take a few minutes to recharge the time reverberator. He suggested you stretch your legs and try to relax."

Sam just grunted. The third imp looked about and his expression changed. It was clear that what he saw disturbed him. After all, they had arrived in a castle during a barbarian siege. He walked quickly over to Good Princess Elizabeth-Lee.

"Uh, hi," he said, bowing nervously. "My name is Iggy." He gestured to his magic cart. "My friends and I are, uh, Christmas elves. That's our snowmobile. Well, actually, it is Yugo's snowmobile. He's the fellow inside. It has a time machine in it. We were on our way to a Pat Boone concert in 1964. he's one of Sam's favourites. That's Sam over there, standing beside the time machine. We just got lost and ended up in the wrong time." He smiled. "Actually, that's not all that unusual."

Good Princess Elizabeth-Lee nodded slowly. She still did not understand much, but at least Iggy and his companions seemed friendly.



Iggy went on, "so what have you got here? Looks like a barbarian invasion. Do you need any help?"

Good Princess Elizabeth-Lee finally managed to speak. "Well, um, sure," she said. "The barbarians really are a nuisance and anything you could do would be appreciated ..."

"Say no more," said Iggy and he jogged back to the red carriage. He leaned his head inside. "Yugo, we have a good princess in some distress here. Seems there's a barbarian horde breaking down the castle walls."

"Climb inside," said Yugo. The carriage made a low rumbling noise. Iggy's arm reached out and pulled Sam inside. The door slid silently closed. A large propeller rose from the top of the carriage. It began to spin until its blades became invisible. The carriage rose into the air and flew over the castle walls.

Evil King Maddog stared in horror as the snowmobile rose over the embattlements. Streaks of red light shot out from portals in the front of the snowmobile, striking his siege engines and setting them ablaze. "Black magic!" he screamed.

The snowmobile dove at the Mortician army, cutting down their armaments. The army fled in terror. The snowmobile chased them all the way back to the black blasted plains of Mortis. The pirate crew followed and seized Evil King Maddog's black tower. Soon, a white flag of surrender was raised above it.

Good King Galen and Evil King Maddog signed a truce that very afternoon. The good king declared, "from now on there will be no arranged marriages in Gillihad. Whoever wishes my daughter's hand must come and court her like a gentleman. So let it be written, so let it be done."

Good King Galen's decree was really unnecessary because his daughter's heart had already been won by Flynn, the Pirate King. He promised her a life of romance and adventure, and she said "yes".

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Good Princess Elizabeth-Lee and Good Pirate Flynn were married on Christmas Day aboard his ship on the Forgotten Sea. The kingdom of pirates and Gillihad were united. Gillihad would never fear a barbarian invasion again.

Among the guests that day were Good King Galen, the Duke of Earl, the Lady Wannabe and Evil King Maddog and his son, Evil Prince Rabeez. Both had promised to behave, and bathe, for the occasion. Also in attendance were three Christmas elves named Iggy, Yugo and Sam. After all, what would a fairy tale be without elves.

AND THEY LIVED HAPPILY EVER AFTER.