

# ROMANIAN FOLK TALES

## THE SALT IN the FOOD

There was once a king who had three daughters that he loved very much. Especially since his wife died, he took great care of the girls' education and he fulfilled any desire that they had.

He bought the most beautiful girls dresses, the most expensive jewelry and the finest books. Girls in turn loved their father deeply.

One day the king asked his eldest girl how much she loves him.

- I love you as much as the honey, replied the girl.

His father was happy and asked the second daughter the same question.

- I love you as much as the sugar. - she answered.

The King was so moved by so much love.

Then he asked the little girl:

- And you, my little girl, how much do you love me?

- "I love you like the salt in the food", the youngest daughter answered.

Her sisters began to laugh at her and the king was furious.

- What kind of answer is this!!? Leave my house at once!

The girl was not allowed to give any explanation and she was thrown away. Her sisters mocked her stupidity and they enjoyed her chasing away, because they don't really love her so much. The youngest dressed in simple clothes and left home with grief in her soul and tears in her eyes.

She wondered a long time and after a long way she came to the palace of a king. There she took a job as a maid. She was so diligent and skilled, that everyone got to cherish her. She knew to prepare delicious food and when she was cleaning up everything was shining. The Empress heard of the clever maid and she wanted to see her. After they talked a little, they became inseparable. The girl no longer had to work in the kitchen, she was sitting all the time with the Empress, embroidering or painting and everything she made was of an exquisite beauty.

The King had to go to a war, taking with him his son too. The Prince was wounded and the king and queen were very upset. The Empress did not move away from her son's bedside day and night and the girl stood there with her. She took good care of the boy, because the delicate touch of her hand was a relief for any pain.

When the Prince recovered, he went to the queen and said he wanted to marry. The Empress enjoyed the news and asked who his chosen one is.

The Prince said he wanted to marry the beautiful girl who cared for him when he was ill, because she the most beautiful and wisest girl he knows. The Empress at first did not agree, wanting for his son a bride of a noble blood, but eventually the Prince persuaded her. Together it was not hard to convince the King himself and so, they set the wedding date.

The young bride asked her in-laws to invite to the wedding a particular emperor, who was neighbour with their Empire, but she didn't confess them that he is her father. The long awaited day the wedding came. The young girl cooked separately the food for his father and she gave orders to a servant to carry the dishes personally in front of her father and not by mistake to end up in front of another guest.

The Emperor, as soon as he came, looked at the beautiful bride and he couldn't stop his heart to ache thinking how much the bride resembled his little daughter, whom he hasn't seen for a very long time.

When the food was served everyone seemed to tuck in, but the emperor, father of the girl, hardly swallowed something which seemed to have no taste at all. He asked the others guests on the right and on the left if their food was good and they all said they are the most delicious dishes they have ever tasted. He took a bit from his neighbors' plates and he convinced himself that indeed the food was very good.

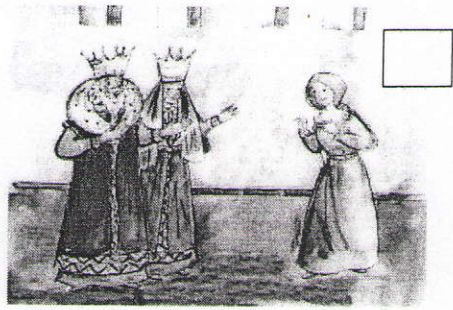
Eventually he could not endure anymore and he stood up, accusing the king that they were mocking him. The King called the chef, to punish the one who did this thing. Then the bride admitted that she especially cooked for her father only with honey and sugar and she even put powder sugar in the salt keeper, saying the king prefers honey and sugar in his food instead of salt.

The father recognized his mistake and he gladly embraced the girl that he thought lost. And the other king enjoyed seeing how worthy and clever his daughter-in-law was, especially she was an Emperor's daughter..

So they lived happily ever after.







Each of these pictures represents a moment of the story...  
Put them in order so to make the story right.

1. What did the Emperor asked his girls?

- a) Which one is the most beautiful
- b) if they get along with each other
- c) how much they love him

2. What did the Emperor felt when he heard the little daughter's answer?

- a) envy
- b) joy
- c) anger

3. Why did the youngest daughter leave home?

- a) because she argued with her sisters
- b) because she was thrown away
- c) because she had to meet somebody

4. Why did the Queen endeard the girl?

- a) because she cooked so well
- b) because she was so nice and skillful
- c) because she was honest and joyful

5. What did the King's son decide when he recovered?

- a) to marry the beautiful and devoted girl
- b) to go to another war
- c) to build another palace

6. What did the girl put in the Emperor's food?

- a) only salt
- b) only honey and sugar
- c) honey, sugar and salt

7. Which of these statements is true?

- a) all the guests were sad and didn't eat the food
- b) several guests have tasteless food
- c) only one guest was upset

8. What did the father conclude from this event?

- a) he isn't loved by his daughters
- b) he was fair to all the daughters
- c) the youngest was the wisest of his daughters