

Fairy tale in modern times

Lola Gonzales

<http://booklolagonzales.wordpress.com/>

<https://twitter.com/booklolagonzale>

Editor: Morissa Schwartz

Copyright 2013 by Lola Gonzales

Once upon a time, in a far away land, called *Russia*, in a time gone by, there lived a lonely snow queen in an icy castle. No foreigners had ever ventured this far before, but one exceptional day, when the sun had broken through the grey and freezing clouds, a man came knocking at her door. He was dressed in clothing of a future time, and although the snow queen found him very strange, she was fascinated by his handsome face and drawn to listening to his tales.

They stayed awake all night. He claimed it was possible to move both forwards and backwards in time and he showed her two small bottles he kept in his bag. He told her of a time where carriages did not need horses, instead they were powered by a magic-oil and huge metal birds could fly through the sky to far off lands, where the sun always shone and they had never seen snow.

"I want to go there" the snow queen said.

"Oh no that's not possible" the strange man said, "You wouldn't understand their ways.

"Why not?" she asked.

"Because while your heart is innocent and tender, those people from another time, only look for pleasure and their hearts are frozen," he said, shaking his head.

"But you are not like this," the snow queen said.'

"No, I am from another era and place, over other horizons, where it is possible to travel through time." The snow queen did not understand

"Does it have a name?" she asked.

"Well, it will have a name one day, but you can call it the *Land of Hope*. It's a place where wishes can be granted.... a mysterious science indeed."

As light dawned, the snow queen fell asleep and when she woke she thought the visitor had only been a dream, but there was a small bottle by her bed and a note.

"It is your destiny to stay and wait for me. Never drink from this bottle, as I have done. It is my present to our daughter so that she will learn."

And so it was that when the sun broke through the icy clouds once more, a baby girl was born. The snow queen called her Princess Anastazia Hope, and she vowed not to speak of the bottle to her daughter, or of her father's visit until she was a woman, but she longed for the return of this very unusual man. As the child grew, it was clear that she had a wondering spirit and a wildness, so different from her mother. Anastazia learnt the ways of her world well. She was her mother's princess; she played with other children in their frozen and protected world. She had servants and pages to look after her and she travelled in carriages pulled by horses or in the harsh winters their visitors came in sledges pulled by husky dogs. All this time, on a shelf high out of reach, stood the bottle of 'magic water', left, frozen in time, as the child grew.

One day, while Anna was brushing her long golden hair and examining her pale smooth skin, in the mirror, the small glass bottle on the shelf above exploded and came crashing to the floor. The bottle had shattered into a thousand pieces, but there in the middle was one small block of ice and a dusty note. Anna struggled to read

the words her father had left. "It's for me!" she said and quickly placed the icy lump into an empty perfume bottle, sitting by the mirror. She left it standing next to a candle and slowly the frozen water began to melt.

That night, when she was alone, she stared at the colorless liquid in the perfume bottle and she thought of the father she had never known. She had a longing to see him and know his face. She picked the bottle up and bent her head to smell the liquid and there in front of her eyes; a man appeared. He was middle aged but so handsome. He smiled a smile that lit the room so that she was not afraid.

"Father?" she asked, and then in a flash.... he was gone.

She thought she heard a voice say, "Go slowly my daughter, as you can not wish for the same thing twice, one sip will move you forward to another time."

"It is a 'dream potion,'" she thought, "I smelt, I wished, and what I wished, I got. I saw my father."

She was excited by the power of this liquid but frightened of what she did not understand, and sad that if the words she heard were true, she would not be able to see her father a second time.

She put the bottle down and left it sitting there, but it had a fascination for her and from time to time she returned to stare at the bottle and wonder about its powers.

One day, feeling rather bored and lonely, she picked the bottle up and as if compelled by some imaginary force she took a gulp of the liquid. Those warning words had almost faded from her memory, but really she did not care. She did not know what would happen or that drinking this magic-water would have the power to transport her to a different time in the future and that she would become a person of a different age in which her former self was like a dream she almost could not remember. The bottle had been in her hand, and so, through time they both went.

Sitting in the Internet cafe, on the latest dating agency site, the two girls were laughing about who did not look good.

"Can't see any new ones" Sue said. Then, she spotted one of Anna's exes.

"Hey, look, there's that handsome Spanish guy you dated...he was a model wasn't he?"

"Yes, but he's living in Madrid now...my little prince" came the reply.

"And hey, there's that exotic little Arab guy" Sue was giggling, "did you ever see him again?"

"Funnily enough, I did, only a couple of weeks ago...but only to dance with," Anna said.

"Come let's go for a coffee I want to tell you about that night...it was a crazy one."

"Let's go to *Villa di Cesare* for dinner; it's on the way home, we can walk along the beach, and we can talk as we walk."

"Okay, but come on...I'm dying to hear!"

"It was the night you stayed home, 'cause you'd had that lousy perm."

Remember? Everyone was out all our friends with all our different nationalities. The evening had started well. We laughed so much over dinner. The plan was to have fun so we had decided to go to both Balls that night. At the first ball we danced all together, in a circle. The boys in our group were those noble Spanish knights. Remember them? As I danced I spotted, in the crowd, a familiar face. It was that young Arab page. It's two years ago that I first met

him and I have to say he is just as handsome as I remembered him. My mind went back to when I had first arrived here and had been on this same Internet to look for a suitable partner. He looked so exotic. He was younger than me but we had a few dates and we had flirted and kissed. One night, we decided to go to his house. We kissed and he pushed me onto the bed. I did not resist; in fact, I liked it. Secretly, I thought that now he was going to show me some real Arab passion, but he was young, he could probably see that he did not intimidate me, he sensed I expected great things from him and because of this his passion began to drain. He was distracted. It must have been my poor Arab page's worst fear. Then I started to laugh and from then, it was hopeless for him. I couldn't control my laughter...I laughed and laughed, rolling on the bed, holding my stomach, amused by my own bad judgment and the predicament we were in. I think he never forgot that night and as he swore that one day he would be back to prove himself to me. So, anyway, here the exotic boy was again, looking very sure of himself: dancing, surrounded by Arab princesses. I was happy to see him. I flew over to him like a falcon to land some kisses on his cheeks, but just at that moment I noticed, out of the corner of my eye, that a handsome face was watching me. For a moment the face looked familiar. I thought I'd seen him before. I tried to focus. He did look like the

male model, the wonderful Spanish prince from Madrid. I thought it would explain why he seemed to be staring.

I kept dancing, conscious of being watched. The Arab princesses started to leave the dance floor, to smoke a cigarette, they only do this outside their own country, I remember thinking. I continued to dance, I flicked my hair, I knew I was the only blond with such long hair, I tossed my head back and laughed a lot to keep the attention of this unknown prince and to catch another glimpse of him. It was not my previous love but he was just as stunningly handsome. At one point our eyes met and for a second we both hesitated, then we both broke into a lovely smile. Now I was bored with my Arab page. The stupid boy had not even offered me a glass of champagne. I was tired of dancing with him

As I moved, I gently slid my small bottle out of my bag and behind my hand I stuck my tongue in it, just far enough to taste its sweetness. In a flash, the Arab boy was gone and I was sitting back with my friends. Belinda the German princess was sitting there.

I whispered, "Look at that handsome prince!" We looked across at his table. The handsome prince stood there, very tall and young, so proud and well dressed. On his table they were

celebrating and toasting the health of the other international playboys.

"Yes, I know," she said.

"I saw him too. I like his small bottom. I'm dying to pinch it!"

We both laughed, we chatted on, all of us together, myself, Princess Belinda and the Spanish knights with their company and the unknown prince with his friends...both he and I trying not to look at each other. After a while a friend of Princess Belinda came to join the table. He was a tall, grey haired, Italian King. I remember leaning over and asking who this important looking man was. Apparently, he was King Alessandro. He had lost his wealth, like many, in this economical climate. They told me not to lose my time with him, he's poor, but I watched the king dance and I liked the easy way he moved so I joined him on the dance floor. My plan was to keep the unknown prince's attention and what better way than to dance with a distinguished Italian King. It worked, and again those eyes were on me.

Soon, it was time to move; the people were already leaving. They were all going to the wonderful Arab palace of Queen Olivia. As we travelled in our carriage I wondered if the unknown prince would go

there too. I asked Princess B; she said she thought she'd seen his party before and she thought they were Scandinavian.

The ball was already in full swing. A nicely placed table was prepared for us. We all sat down, and we were joined by more cosmopolitan princesses. We all gossiped happily, most of us unaware of how the place was filling up, except me. From where I sat I could secretly watch the crowds entering, in the hopes of seeing my prince. Suddenly, the ladies looked up when a well-known Jewish King Ferdinand came to our table. He was an important guest of Queen Olivia. He was known in this kingdom for his business skills. Even in these economic times he had not lost his position and he was known to have his grip on this part of Spain, in particular.

He said, "Champagne for you princesses!" and having demonstrated his generosity, he left. By now I was getting impatient, so out came my little bottle and I only wet my tongue and who came walking in but a group of Scandinavian princes, lead by the unknown prince.

They proudly did a 'circle of honor'. They were looking around and making themselves noticed. At this point some servants came rushing over to show them to the best table, which was clearly

reserved for them. As if by fate the table was immediately in front of our table. It was a special night, everyone seemed happy. The tall black guy, with his dyed blond hair was singing into his mike. All the glamour and glitter of society were there, all talking and laughing; it was becoming so crowded. I did not notice that the object of my interest had stood up from his seat and had strolled with his lithe body in a circle around my table, like a tiger stalking his prey. Then suddenly, he pounced...and from behind he threw his arms around me, and lifted me so my feet did not touch the ground.

For a second, it shocked me. I looked over my shoulder and we both started to laugh uncontrollably. We were still laughing as he pulled me onto the dance floor. Some girls came to say hello to him while we danced. The floor was crowded. There was some pushing. Two Arabs were arguing. It seemed they had a problem over sharing a table. I had to jump out of the way. Some ice flew across the room. My new prince covered my eyes and pulled me away. I looked over my shoulder with morbid curiosity. This 'bull fight' deep inside the castle was growing. The black guy had stopped singing. Glasses and E1000 bottles of champagne were being smashed. It had started with two, and now there were twenty of them fighting.

Objects were flying and there was a smell of blood, and alcohol and sweat. An ugly mixture of fear and fury filled the air!

We had just escaped in time. The prince had placed me on a sofa, in a corner, far away from the problems, which were now being controlled by tall men in black. He asked me if I was alright. We chatted. He said he knew this area as he participated in Tournaments and he talked of having visited places we both knew. He told me he was half Albanian and half German, on his father's side and therefore was a German prince. Then without warning...he kissed me; it was hot yet tender. From then on, the rest of the world ceased to exist for us both. Our bodies melted we just wanted to drink each other. The kisses did not stop; on the contrary they were filled with fire and passion. We did not know how much time had passed when Princess Belinda broke the spell. She was insisting that we had to leave , she said that the Arab princes had spoilt the Ball, there were guards everywhere.

She asked if I wanted to go in their carriage or in the carriage of my new friend. I did not want to leave all those kisses, but I did not know what the beautiful stranger had in his mind. If I was to go with him, would he expect too much? Then the prince offered his carriage and said he would take me wherever I wanted to go. I still

decided it was wise to leave with my friends, so, instead we exchanged numbers, but in all the confusion and mixed emotions of the night I had given him an old number that I had recently changed and the number he had is BLOCKED.

"No!!!" said Sue. They were sitting in the cafe now, and the two ladies at the next table looked up.

Sue leaned forward, "What are you going to do?"

"Nothing. What can I do?" came the quiet answer. "I know he has guitar lessons around here...so you never know."

It was time to go. A chair scraped as they stood up. Anna had told her story with enthusiasm but now she felt a little sad and she really wanted to hurry home and be alone. There were questions that Sue wanted to ask. Why did Anna call everybody princesses and princes, and what was this magic-water? Tequila?

She decided that now was not the time to ask, she'd save it till she knew her better. When Anna got home she sat in her English-style kingdom taking the sun. She looked at the sea, and she knew she had to wait, wait for the next Ball and hope that she will see him again...this Albanian German prince...to meet him by accident again.

Surely, this cannot be the end; a magical meeting has to have a magical conclusion. She took out her little bottle again and stared at it. I can not wish to see him again, I've already had that wish, but what if I take a drink... will it move me forward to the future? Will I arrive at my destiny with this prince? But what if it took me to another time and my prince is lost forever? That risk was too great! She put the bottle away again to save it for another time.

Now, she dreams of him. She goes to bed thinking of his hugs and kisses and how the world stopped to exist, and even the Arab fight was something far away in the distance on another planet. He had made her feel like a girl again, safe and protected. He was her ideal man, strong, handsome and kind. Somehow she knew he would keep her safe from all troubles. She knows she will see him again....

She must.