



The twelve dancing princesses

In a faraway kingdom, in a valley surrounded by wooded mountains, stood a castle where King Henry lived with his twelve daughters. Each princess had a personality of her own, but they all shared a passion for dancing. From Elisenda, the eldest, to little Eulàlia, they could spend hours dancing through the palace halls.

The people of the kingdom admired them, but soon a mystery began to spread. Every morning, their dancing shoes were completely worn out, as though they had danced all night. How could that be, when they stayed in their rooms under the watch of the king's guards?

Worried and puzzled, the king announced that whoever discovered the secret would receive a great reward and might one day inherit the throne. As kings often did in old fairy tales, he also offered the possibility of marrying a princess. Anyone who accepted the challenge had three nights to solve it. If they failed, they would have to leave.

Many princes and knights tried. They slept in a room beside the sisters' chamber, but by morning they knew nothing. Each night they fell into such a deep sleep that they could not keep watch.



One day, Arnau, a young soldier who had been wounded and could no longer fight, decided to try his luck. On the way to the castle he met an old woman. She gave him a cloak that could make him invisible and offered some advice.

“Do not drink the wine the princesses offer you tonight. When they begin to move, put on the cloak and follow them.”

Arnau thanked her and continued on his way. At the castle, the king explained the rules and showed him the room where he would spend the night.

The secret passage

That evening, Arnau pretended to drink the wine but swallowed none of it. Then he lay down and acted as though he were asleep. When the princesses believed he was sleeping soundly, they got up quietly. He put on the cloak and followed unseen.

The sisters touched a wall, which opened to reveal a passage. One after another they stepped inside, with Arnau close behind. The path led to an enchanted forest lit by the full moon.

Twelve princes were waiting there. Music began, and the princesses danced joyfully, without worries or fear. At last Arnau understood why their shoes wore out: the dancing continued until dawn.

As the sky grew light, the sisters returned to the castle, tired but happy. None of them suspected that the soldier now knew their secret.

The next morning, Arnau told the king everything he had seen. Henry was surprised, but relieved to understand the mystery. He kept his



promise and thanked the young man for his honesty.

Arnau had been especially drawn to Agnès, the third sister, who was known for her intelligence and kindness. In this retelling, they took time to get to know each other and chose to marry because they both wanted to.

A great celebration followed. The princesses could carry on dancing, but now they no longer needed to hide. From then on, the castle's dancing nights were open to the people of the kingdom.

So ends this tale of magic and mystery. The sisters discovered the value of trust and honest conversation, while Arnau found a new path after hardship. Beneath the starry sky, the kingdom continued to remember its twelve dancing princesses.