



The woodsman then began that long climb up the rock staircase to the Enchanted Forest. A **hollow wind** rattled through its branches.

“Beware, foolish woodsman,” it whispered. Shuddering, he passed through. “Halt!” called the sentinel at the gate. “Strangers may not enter.”

“I bring a wedding gift for Princess Sharma,” said the woodsman, carelessly dropping a gold coin into the man’s open palm.

“Enter!” said the sentinel, with a bow. The iron gate **clanged** shut. The trumpets sounded at the **casement**. The ceremony was about to begin.

In Princess Sharma’s **boudoir**, Dame Grisholm held up a looking glass. She pinned the bride’s veil into place with a handful of **pearly bodkins**. Then she brought back her tray of powder puffs and creamy potions.

“Stop weeping, Princess Sharma. You have ruined the powder I just patted on your cheek.”

“I don’t care if the Duke finds me **blotched** and coarse and ugly,” sobbed the Princess. “I hope I frighten him away.”

“Foolish child!” said her governess. “Remember the **tragic fate** of all the other young men who couldn’t keep their promises? You may be sure they’ll come a-courting no more.”

“But I can’t marry the Duke. He’s an old, old man!”

“Now whose fault is that?” said Dame Grisholm. “Why did you wait so long to accept his hand in marriage, you **wilful** child? Why, just a year ago, the Duke was barely fifty-seven.”

“No, no, Madam, you must be mistaken!” said Princess Sharma. “This morning I watched him being carried up the rock staircase in his **chaise**. I am sure he is at least sixty-seven.”

“Well, then you shall just make a fine pair,” said Dame Grisholm, losing all patience with the Princess. “Our limping Princess and her bow-legged Duke will have to lead the Wedding Ball.”

“Oh, how can you be so cruel!” wept Princess Sharma.

“Listen, I hear the trumpets!” said Dame Grisholm. “Hide your tears, foolish child. The Wedding March begins!”





Can you write down the word that is missing on each line? If you don't remember, look back at the Midsummer Moon story. **Example number one is done for you.**

1. ( **wilful** ) stubborn, headstrong

2. \_\_\_\_\_  
castle window

3. \_\_\_\_\_  
sad story or event

4. \_\_\_\_\_  
loud restless wind

5. \_\_\_\_\_  
red patch on the skin

6. \_\_\_\_\_  
private dressing room

7. \_\_\_\_\_  
long hairpins with pearls

8. \_\_\_\_\_  
made a loud metallic sound

9. \_\_\_\_\_  
special transport chair on wheels



## Midsummer Moon



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS Page 21

- a. Does the woodsman pay attention to the whispered warnings of the Enchanted Forest?
- b. How does the woodsman manage to enter the Palace?
- c. Why is Princess Sharma so unhappy?
- d. Why is Dame Grisholm angry with Princess Sharma?
- e. How old is the Duke de Vieux-Boisy? How do you know?



Can you draw a picture of Dame Grisholm scolding Princess Sharma?



Listen to the CD again and imagine what you might see.



**P**ardon, Your Majesty! I bring a gift for Princess Sharma,” said the woodsman. His voice was calm and clear. It had the **brash** confidence of noble blood, or **desperate** fear.

The Palace courtiers began to murmur amongst themselves, stretching their necks to get a better view of this magnificently handsome **intruder**. **In the wake of** his flying coat-tails blew a velvet fresh forest wind. **Recklessly** he strode up the **aisle** and knelt at the foot of the throne.

The Princess raised her veil for a moment and the woodsman could see that she had been crying. Dame Grisholm whipped out her eyeglass. The Duke de Vieux-Boisy twisted his head around, like an old owl, and **glared** at the woodsman.

“Many thanks, noble Sir,” said the King. He raised his hand. “May the wedding proceed.”

“One moment, I pray, Your Majesty!” said the woodsman boldly. “What gift does the Duke de Vieux-Boisy offer Princess Sharma?”

“What is your name, Sir?” demanded the Duke indignantly of the woodsman. “How dare you intrude upon my wedding feast?”

“You are speaking to the last living son of the Transylvanian House of Kronenberg,” said the woodsman. The noble name had suddenly popped into his head—he didn’t stop to wonder where it came from. “What is your gift to Princess Sharma?”

“I gave Her Highness one-half of my finest woodland,” said the Duke.

“You lie, Sir,” said the woodsman. “At dawn, I walked across the wilderness which used to be your forest. There are hardly any trees left beside the pond.”

“Is this true?” said the King. He trembled with anger. His tangled eyebrows **quivered** dangerously.

“You have my word, Your Majesty, it is true,” said the woodsman. “But I have brought the magic slippers for Princess Sharma to dance in.”





Can you write down the word that is missing on each line? If you don't remember, look back at the Midsummer Moon story. **Example number one is done for you.**

1. (brash) bold, rude
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
a long passageway, in a church or a hall
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
boldly, without thinking of danger
4. \_\_\_\_\_  
feeling very afraid and hopeless
5. \_\_\_\_\_  
twitched (nervously or angrily)
6. \_\_\_\_\_  
someone who enters without an invitation
7. \_\_\_\_\_  
behind or around
8. \_\_\_\_\_  
stared fiercely



## Midsummer Moon



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS Page 22

- a. Which forest creature does Dame Grisholm remind you of?
- b. Which forest creature does the Duke de Vieux-Boisy remind you of?
- c. From where does the woodsman dream up his noble new name?
- d. Is it true that the Duke's forest has almost all been chopped down? How does the woodsman know this?
- e. Why does the King get so angry when he hears about the disappearing forest?



Can you draw a picture of the young woodsman interrupting the royal wedding?



Listen to the CD again and imagine what you might see.



And he reached into his silk breast pocket and drew out the gift wrapped in **dandelion wool**. But **his own brave heart sank** as he opened it. For these slippers no longer looked like the ones Marsha had given him at dawn. They had lost their **silvery lustre** and now looked like a pair of dusty rags.

“Rags!” said the Duke. “This scoundrel dares to offer Princess Sharma a pair of old rags. Throw him into the dungeons, Your Majesty!”

“Rags!” giggled the courtiers, stretching their pale mushroom necks. “Our lame-footed Princess is going to dance in dusty rags!” they whispered to one another.

“I—I don’t think I can,” said the Princess. She took one step in Marsha’s dancing slippers and stumbled.

“You can dance,” said the woodsman desperately. Somewhere, up in the minstrel gallery, a **tremulous** lute began to play. “Believe me, you shall dance.”

“Look at her! Look at her!” said all the ladies-in-waiting. “Just look at our Princess!”

“It must be a miracle,” smiled the **tonsured** monk, gazing into the sky.

“Sham! Fake! **Impostor!**” shouted the old Duke. “Lock the Palace gates. Don’t let them escape into the forest!”

“She dances,” said the King, wiping his eyes. “The spell is lifted—at last! The Princess dances.”

Just as he spoke, his **gilded throne** split apart with a deafening crack. The Forest Sorceress whistled like a violent wind through his hair, almost blowing off his crown. She escaped from the Palace at last, **howling furiously** all the way down the mountain slope into the forest.

Then the King watched his daughter disappear, hand in hand with the woodsman, through the Enchanted Wood. And all the sad young men, imprisoned in tree trunks, **stirred to life** as Princess Sharma danced by. They opened their eyes and stretched their wooden arms and legs. They began to talk, and then to laugh. Most had forgotten how long they’d been under the Sorceress’s spell. A few had even forgotten their names.





Can you write down the word that is missing on each line? If you don't remember, look back at the Midsummer Moon story. **Example number one is done for you.**

1. ( **tonsured** ) the shaven head of a monk

2. \_\_\_\_\_  
fake

3. \_\_\_\_\_  
silvery glow

4. \_\_\_\_\_  
(he) lost courage

5. \_\_\_\_\_  
trembling, fearful

6. \_\_\_\_\_  
a gold-painted throne

7. \_\_\_\_\_  
moved, came back to life

8. \_\_\_\_\_  
screaming loudly and angrily

9. \_\_\_\_\_  
fluffy white spikes of a blown dandelion



## Midsummer Moon



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS Page 23

- a. Why do you think the magic slippers look like a pair of dusty rags?
- b. What forest creatures do the royal courtiers remind you of?
- c. Does the escaping Forest Sorceress lift the spell from Princess Sharma, or does Princess Sharma set the Sorceress free when she dances? What do you think?
- d. What makes all the sad young men, imprisoned in the Enchanted Forest, come back to life again?



Can you draw what happens as the terrible spell is lifted?



Listen to the CD again and imagine what you might see.



**O**n the Eve of the Midsummer Moon, the fairy lights had twinkled so brightly through the thinning trees of the forest that they'd been seen all the way to the village. People began to gossip among themselves. Fantastic tales were told of woodland witches, talking trees and weeping stones; of toad and **newt** and eye of **salamander** stirred into magical potions. Of course, many of the curious villagers wandered into the woods. They trampled over the last dandelion stalks, tasted the wild strawberries and flattened the woodland grass.

"That foolish Marsha Mushroom!" said Count Owl. "This is all her fault! Now what shall I do? Where shall I go? Soon these peasants will chop down my oak tree to widen this road!"

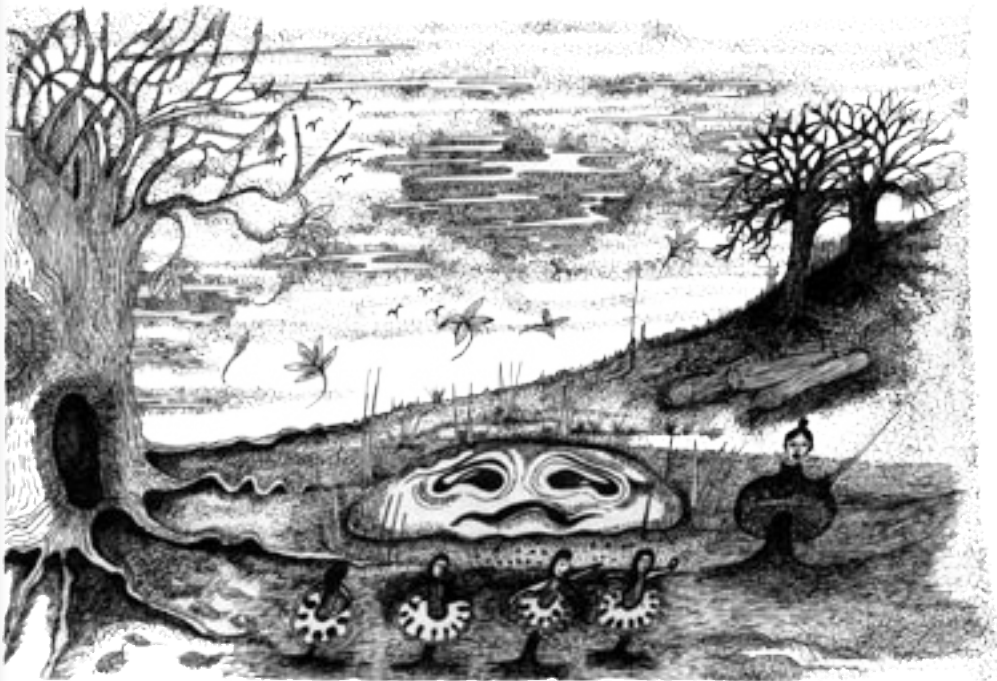
"Let this be a good lesson to you all," said Mistress Grimsly, gathering up her rulebooks and her slate and wooden pointer. "This is what happens to little mushrooms who don't do as they are told."

"Why, we knew Marsha was no better than a common toadstool!" whispered all the mushrooms indignantly to one another.

"Now we shall all have to move away," said the schoolmistress. "Tomorrow we'll set up our school again in a more **secluded grove**."

"Don't you wish you were all stones?" said the **wistful** Stone. "I promise you'd never be hungry or happy or frightened or sad. You'd have hundreds of Yesterdays, thousands of Todays, and millions of Tomorrows—just like me."

"How wonderful!" said Mistress Grimsly. "You're very **fortunate**, Master Stone."

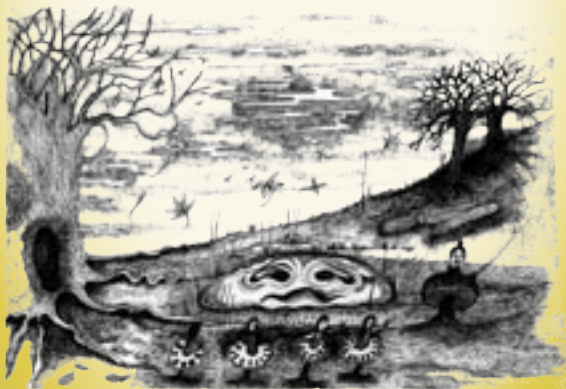


"Still, I shall miss you when you're gone. I do get stone-tired of sitting under this oak tree. It gets so dull here, and I'm so bored. If I could, somehow, just roll up to the crest of that faraway hill—they say there's a most **spectacular** view!"



Can you write down the word that is missing on each line? If you don't remember, look back at the Midsummer Moon story. **Example number one is done for you.**

1. **(spectacular)** marvelous, fantastic
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
a quiet, faraway spot in the woods
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
two kinds of lizards
4. \_\_\_\_\_  
a little sad
5. \_\_\_\_\_  
lucky



## Midsummer Moon



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS Page 24

- a. Do you believe the villagers' fantastic stories? Why or why not?
- b. Whose fault is it that Count Owl's forest is all cut down? Is it Marsha Mushroom's fault? The woodcutter's fault? The Duke de Vieux-Boisy's fault? The King's fault? Who else can you think of?
- c. What do you think Count Owl will do now?
- d. Where will Mistress Grimsly set up her new school?
- e. What happens to little mushrooms who don't do as they are told?
- f. Where will Mistress Grimsly set up her new school?
- g. Do you believe Master Stone is lucky to have millions of Tomorrows? Why or why not?



Can you draw a picture of Mistress Grimsly leading all the little mushrooms away?



Listen to the CD again and imagine what you might see.



# Midsummer Moon



*Up at the crest of that faraway hill – they say  
there’s a most **spectacular** view!”*