

Alyssa: Of course it was!

Gretchen: So that's when he wrote our national anthem?

Alyssa: Yes, but it didn't become our national anthem until much later.

Gretchen: It's pretty hard to sing.

Alyssa: Yes, it is but we should all try to learn the words and sing it in a respectful way.

Gretchen: Will you teach me the words?

Alyssa: I thought you didn't want me to bother you?

Gretchen: I changed my mind!

Word Count: 247 words



27. “Beauty and the Beast”

Once upon a time, there was a merchant who lived with his three daughters. He loved all three of his daughters. But there was a special place in his heart for the youngest, Beauty.

One day a letter came. The letter said that one of the merchant’s ships had landed and was full of fine things. The man packed to make the trip to claim his goods. Before he left, he asked his girls what he might bring them as a gift.

The two older girls asked for fancy clothing.

But Beauty said, “Dear father, just bring me a rose.”

On his way home, a snow storm blew in. He came upon a large house. The front door was unlocked, so he went into the house. There was a warm fire in the fireplace. Next to the fireplace was a table with a tasty meal perfect for one person. He sat down and ate the food.

After eating, the merchant explored the house. He found a lush garden with a lovely rosebush. He plucked a single rose. Just as the stem broke, he heard a loud roar behind him. The startled merchant turned and saw a terrible monster.

“How dare you!” snarled the Beast, grabbing the rose.

The merchant was scared. “I only wanted a rose for one of my daughters.”

“I will have mercy on you,” said the Beast, “on one condition. One of your daughters must come live with me.” The sad father returned home and told his daughters what had happened.

Beauty did not hesitate. “I will go,” she said quietly.

Beauty and her father returned to the palace. The Beast filled a trunk with gold and sent Beauty's father away. As Beauty watched her father ride away, she tried to be brave.

"Beauty," said the Beast, "do not be afraid. Take this advice: Trust your heart, not your eyes."

At first the Beast's looks scared Beauty, but soon his kindness caused her to lose her fear. She became fond of him. The Beast would talk to her during dinner and make her laugh. After each meal, the Beast always asked, "Beauty, will you marry me?" Every time, Beauty answered "no."

One night, the Beast saw a sad look on Beauty's face. She told him that she missed her family, and she longed to see her father.

"Dear Beast," said Beauty, "I long to see my father. Please let me go for four weeks. Then I will come back and stay with you forever."

"Very well," sighed the Beast. "Take this magic ring. When you want to come back, turn the ring round upon your finger and say, 'I wish to go back to my Beast.'"

When Beauty awoke early the next morning, she found herself in her father's home. Day after day, Beauty enjoyed being with her father.

When the time came for her to return to the Beast, every day she told herself, "Today I will go back." But every night she put it off again.

One night, she had a dream. She dreamed she was wandering in the garden; she saw the Beast lying on the ground. “Oh, he is dead!” she cried. “He is dead, and it is my fault!” She took him in her arms. The Beast slowly opened his eyes.

Beauty cried, “Oh, Beast, I never knew how much I loved you until now.”

In a faint voice, the Beast said, “Beauty, I was dying because you had forgotten your promise. Can you really love such an ugly monster as me?” Then, once again, the Beast asked, “Beauty, will you marry me?”

She replied, “Yes, dear Beast! I will!”

As she spoke, a blaze of light flashed around her. Beauty covered her eyes. When she opened them again, she saw a handsome prince.

“I was the Beast,” said the prince. “I was cursed to live as a monster until someone could see past my looks to the real me.”

The next day, with Beauty’s father looking on, they got married. And they lived happily ever after.

Word Count: 675 words

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