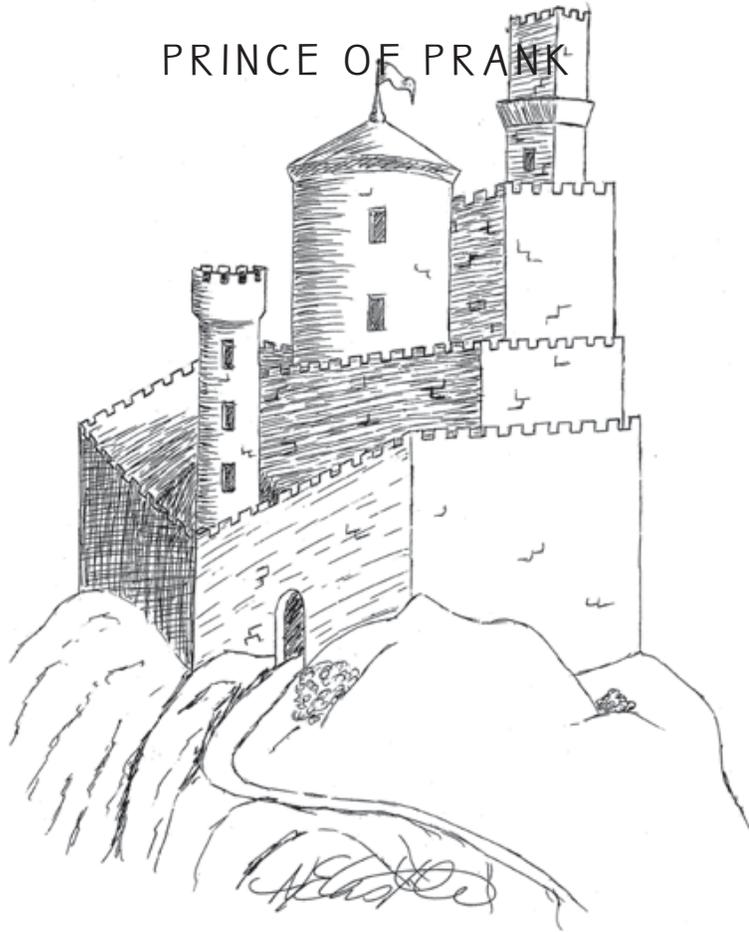


Loogie

The Booger Genie

PRINCE OF PRANK



By N.E. Castle

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For my good friends.
May we always share laughter

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1.

Snotty Little Prince

A long time ago (805 years, to be exact), Garoth Castle stood atop a tall hill in England. Hundreds of torches lit its hallways. Dozens of statues danced in the flicker of flames. Their shadows moved like ghosts. Visitors were certain Garoth was haunted. Prince Loogar and his pranks had started that rumor.

Loogar was the Prince of Prank. (As the king's son, he was also known as the Prince of Garoth). He was eight years old and loved to



play all sorts of pranks. He especially loved to frighten visitors. His pranks were the ghosts of Garoth. Yes, Garoth was haunted by Loogar.

Loogar's nanny, Miss Bellediddy, called him Loogie. The nickname fit him well because he was such a little snot. Eventually, Miss Bellediddy had suffered enough of Loogar's pranks. So one day she quit. Now the snotty little prince was free to do as he pleased. Without a nanny to stop him, Loogar was more prankful than ever.



Visitors ran screaming from ghostly wails. Grooms found holes in all of their pails. He put rocks in his mother's socks and pins in his father's pockets. Loogar's pranks spared no one.

Angered at the many pranks, servants mobbed the king. "We've been pranked enough!" they cried. The king did not know what to do.

He was a good man and a strong leader. He could fight any man and win any battle, but he could not make his prankish son behave.

Finally, the king turned to the wizard, Hendrick. He fell to his knees and begged for his help. "Please use your magic. You can cast spells to make Loogar behave. You can do this for me. Do this for all of us!"



"I will do what I can, my king," said the wizard. But he really did not know what to do. Hendrick spun around and disappeared down the hall, his long robes billowing behind him.

He found the prince in the kitchen. Loogar was pouring salt into a sugar bowl. Cooks were already sweeping up flour that he had

scattered. Hendrick frowned, then raised the prince high in the air at the point of his wand.

“Put me down!” Loogar ordered. He waved his arms and legs frantically in the air.

“Sorry, my prince, but your father has asked that I keep you out of trouble. I see that I am already too late,” said the wizard. Hendrick scowled. His face wrinkled up so tight that his snowy white eyebrows nearly hid his gray eyes. It was a very nasty scowl indeed.

Loogar squirmed and wriggled. He kicked at the wizard. “I can look after myself,” he growled.

“Very well, but I have my orders from the king,” said Hendrick. He then waved his wand. Loogar dropped to the floor with a thump. He quickly jumped up and brushed himself off. He glared at Hendrick, but the wizard just chuckled. Prince Loogar was a small, thin boy with sandy hair and freckles. An angry look from him was certainly not menacing.

“Off to your room then,” said Hendrick. He pushed and pulled Loogar down a long corridor. The prince grumbled and fought all the way. Finally, they reached Loogar’s very untidy room. “In you go to clean your room,” said the wizard as he pushed the prince inside. “It is quite a mess and should be neat.”



“I DO NOT CLEAN MY ROOM!” shouted Loogar. “That is for the MAID to do!”

“Not today. The maid is away,” said the wizard. “That means that the cleaning is up to you.” Hendrick folded his arms across his chest. He blocked the doorway with his short, round body so the prince could not escape.

“Wave your wand to clean my room,” Loogar ordered. “I am a prince. I do not do the work of servants!” He pushed against the wizard. But Hendrick did not budge.

“I could wave my wand,” said the wizard. “But then you would have nothing to do but to cause more trouble. I will give you one hour to tidy up. In one hour, I will be back to see what progress you have made.” He pushed Loogar back and closed the door. A quick tap of his wand locked the prince inside.



2.

Prince of Prank

Loogar did not do any cleaning. Instead he thought of a prank. He picked up a length of rope and a box of mice (he kept mice around for pranks). He punched a hole in the box and looped the rope through it. Then he hung the box over his door. When he had finished, Loogar jumped up onto his bed to wait.



Hendrick returned in an hour as promised. As he opened the door, however, a dozen frightened mice tumbled onto his head.

They clawed at his eyes and his nose. One swung from his bottom lip. Another dropped right down the collar of his robes. He wriggled and jiggled a crazy dance. His wand sparked and zapped as he swatted the mice. It zapped chips and chunks out of the walls. One spark hit Loogar's pillow. Feathers flew everywhere.

Loogar laughed so hard that tears rolled down his cheeks. He held his belly as he laughed. He rolled on his bed and kicked his feet in the air.



“What is all that noise?” the queen called from down the hall. She was snobbish and proper. She hated loud noises in her very proper castle.

Hendrick quickly brushed away the last mouse. He

slipped his wand into his pocket and then faced the queen. “I am sorry, your highness. I am afraid the prince has played another of his pranks.”

“Wizard! My husband has asked that you tend to my son. Do not turn him into a toad.” The queen thrust her pointy nose in the air and looked down at the wizard. She really wasn't a very nice queen. (In fact, she could be quite mean).

The prince grinned. He jumped off his bed and hurried to his mother's side. The queen put her arm around him. She kissed the top of his head as Loogar snuggled up to her. He sneered at the wizard.

Suddenly, the queen yawned a big yawn. “I need one of your sleeping potions, wizard. Please bring it to my room. And do hurry.” She walked away with Loogar under her arm.

“Yes, my queen,” Hendrick sighed. He shook his head and grumbled. When they were out of

sight, the prince slipped away from his mother. He ran straight to the wizard's laboratory.

Magical ingredients filled the laboratory. Lizard eyes and unicorn snot—really gross stuff—filled jars, bowls, and cups on a dozen shelves. Cauldrons of different sizes were stacked in the corner. Strange plants grew in pots on the floor.



Loogar grinned and pulled a bottle of pepper from his pocket. He dumped some into a jar marked "toad warts." He emptied the rest into a bowl of newt brains. As

the wizard approached, the prince hid in the closet.

"I will show that spoiled little brat a thing or two," Hendrick muttered to himself. "But

first, the queen must sleep." He tossed a few herbs and a pinch of spider hair into his cauldron. Then he added a large shake of newt brains to help the queen sleep.

Loogar giggled as he watched through a crack in the closet door. "You are no match for the Prince of Prank, wizard," he whispered. "I know what pepper does to your potions." He stayed hidden until Hendrick left the laboratory. Loogar then snuck down the hall toward his mother's room. He wanted to see his prank in action.

The queen was in her bed, propped up by a stack of pillows. She yawned and patted her mouth. She rolled her eyes as the wizard handed her



the potion. “Whatever took you so long?” she asked. Hendrick did not respond.

The queen took the cup and raised it to drink. But as the potion touched her lips, it exploded. It covered the queen in thick, black ooze—not a pretty sight. The ooze dripped from her nose and into her mouth as she screamed. She wiped it away with her hand. More ooze appeared.

“WIZARD! What have you done!” she yelled. Hendrick just stood there, frozen in horror. And then the sneezing started. She sneezed again and again. Each sneeze was louder than the last. Black ooze flew everywhere. “Make it... atchu!...STOP!” she screamed. Finally Hendrick waved his wand and her sneezing stopped. He waved it again and the black ooze disappeared.

By now the queen was frazzled. She glared at the wizard from under a mop of messy red curls.

“My queen, I am sorry,” Hendrick apologized. “I cannot imagine what happened.”

“You are an imbecile!” the queen shouted. “You had better find a new recipe.”

“But I have given you this same potion a hundred times,” he said. He took the cup and smelled it. “Pepper? There should not be pepper in this potion.”

“A careless mistake!” the queen scolded.

“My queen, I do not keep pepper in my laboratory. It is dangerous to use in potions. This is Prince Loogar’s doing. He has played one of his pranks,” said Hendrick.

The queen stuck her nose in his face and glared at him. “Do not blame my son for your mistake! You are a terrible wizard! Maybe you will be a better cook. Go to work in the kitchen.” She waved him off and turned away.

“But your majesty—!” the wizard said.

“Another word and you will be my butler,” the queen said. She crossed her arms and thrust her nose in the air. (Very mean, indeed!)

“Yes, my queen,” Hendrick sighed and left the room.



3.

How Small You Will Be

Loogar was outside the queen's bedroom. The prince was laughing so hard that tears rolled down his cheeks. He wrapped his arms around his belly as he laughed. He nearly doubled himself over.

The wizard reached out and grabbed a handful of Loogar's shirt. He yanked him close. "You think it is funny that I punished for your pranks? I will give you something to laugh about. If the queen forbids me to use



my magic, then I will give it to you.” Hendrick smacked his wand once on Loogar’s head and cast a spell:

*My magic I give you
A genie I make you
A slave in a pea
Is how small you will be
Made to serve a child like thee
Until good deeds done
Can set you free*

Suddenly, Loogar began to shrink. He became so small that the wizard held him in the air with only two fingers. Loogar kicked and flailed. He cursed and swore in a high-pitched tone. He sounded like an angry mouse. Now Hendrick was



laughing. He held Loogar just out of reach of his nose.

“Perhaps this will teach you some manners,” said the wizard. He grabbed a small, teardrop-shaped vase from a table and dropped the prince into it. Then he tapped the vase with his wand and it shrank to the size of a small pea.

“Goodbye, your snotty little highness,” the wizard said to the pea. He flicked the pea across the room and it disappeared into a crack by the wall.



4.

A Tiny Bead

Charlie was seven when he took his first trip to see England's ancient castles. He loved castles, kings, and knights. He pictured himself as a king on a throne, laughing at court jesters. He imagined knights swinging swords as they rode through the courtyard.

The castle he now toured with his parents was in ruins. Much of the roof was gone and many of the walls had fallen to the ground. But Charlie found one room that was not ruined at all. The floors and walls were barely worn. The fireplace was lavishly carved. Over the door was a stone family crest. Outside, a steep, grassy slope rose to just a few feet

below the windows. Charlie could see the whole valley.



His parents were looking at the wood carvings. Neither of them paid any attention to him. Charlie climbed up into the window. It had no glass. "Hey, Mom! Look at me!" he said as he teetered on the windowsill.

"Charlie! Get down from there!" they both shouted. His parents were scared, not knowing that the ground was only a few feet below the window.

"OK," Charlie said. But instead he pretended to lose his balance. He fell backward out of the window and screamed, "AHHHHH!" Then he was silent.

His mother yelled, "Charlie!" as both parents rushed toward the window. They found him sitting on the ground with a grin on his face.

"Charlie! You scared us half to death!" His father was angry. "Get back in here, right now."

Charlie laughed. He loved to prank his parents.

His father reached out and lifted him back through the window. "Please, don't EVER do that again."

"OK, Dad," Charlie said. He looked down at his shoes and fought a smile. He had gotten them that time! He knew his father liked his pranks. He said he had played pranks himself when he was a kid. Charlie could see Dad smiling even as he scolded him.



Charlie saw that one of his shoes was untied and bent down to tie it. It was then that he noticed a tiny brown bead stuck in a crack under the window. "Cool!" he whispered to himself. He would find a place for it in his model castle. Charlie found a stick and poked the bead up out of the crack.

It was not quite a round bead. It was shaped more like a teardrop. He dropped it into his pocket and continued exploring the castle.

His father had shown him how to use concrete and pebbles to build miniature walls and buildings. Charlie had built a model castle with walls eight inches high around six buildings. The castle's keep was the tallest. The keep was where the king and queen lived. When he got home, Charlie would add pebbles from the real castles to his miniature one.



5.

The Prince and the Peasant

After a week of exploring castles, it was time to return to school. Charlie was eager to tell his friends about the castles he had seen. He dumped the sock full of pebbles he

had collected onto his bed. The little brown bead rolled toward him. Charlie picked it up.



It was a strange bead. It had no place to tie a string. Beads always had a loop or a hole through them. This one had only a

hole in one end. Charlie held it up close to get a better look. He sniffed at it. It smelled funny (probably 805 years of unwashed prince). Suddenly, the bead popped out of his fingers, right into his nose.

“Hey!” Charlie cried. “Get out of my nose!” He picked at the bead, but couldn’t pull it out. Each time he tried to grab it, he pushed it further in. He pushed it so far up his nose that he could not see it when he looked at himself in the mirror. His nose started to

itch, so he scratched. Once, then twice he scratched. He squeezed and mashed his nose. He tried hard to pop the bead out. No luck—his nose still itched. Charlie rubbed his nose over and over.

Suddenly, his nose didn’t itch anymore. It



burned—it swelled! He watched his nose swell before his eyes. Then he sneezed really hard. A flash of light blinded him and knocked him off his feet. When he opened his eyes, he was nose to nose with a freckle-faced boy his own age.

“Well, it is about time someone let me out of there! Where is that stupid wizard? He thinks he can cast a spell on me and lock me in a bottle? I will teach him a thing or two!” The strange boy turned to walk away but didn’t go anywhere. A wisp of smoke seemed to tie him to Charlie’s nose.

Charlie wiped his nose, but the smoke was still there. “Who are you?” Charlie asked.

“What do you mean, who am I?” the boy asked as he rolled his eyes. “I am PRINCE Loogar. Who are you, PEASANT?”

“I’m Charlie and...I think...” Charlie walked over to the mirror. “Oh, my gosh, you are!”

“What?” said Loogar as he turned to look in the mirror. He saw that a part of himself

seemed stuck in Charlie's nose. "Ugh! You dreadful peasant! What did you do?"

"I didn't do anything," Charlie cried, as he mashed his nose. "That bead jumped into my nose. That bead was you! Get out of my nose!" He pulled at the wisp of smoke.

"Do not blame ME for this. YOU did this!" Loogar pushed against Charlie's cheeks. He tried to pull himself free. Finally he collapsed and hung upside down from Charlie's nose, a great, big, dangling booger.

Charlie shook his head. The prince flopped back and forth.

"You MUST pull me out," Loogar groaned. "I cannot stay in the nose of a peasant." He lifted his head, then flopped back down again.

"Maybe I can help," Charlie said. He grabbed Loogar by the shoulders and tugged. He pulled the prince away from his nose as far as he could. But it wasn't very far.

Charlie had another idea. "We'll use the door," he said.

He pushed Loogar out of the room, then closed the door and latched it shut. Charlie was now inside the room while the prince was outside. Charlie backed away. He felt the tug at his nose like a great big booger. He backed away from the door ten feet. The bead stayed lodged in his nose. It did not move. Suddenly, the wisp of smoke yanked at his nose. It yanked so hard that Charlie flew forward. He smashed his face against the door.

"Ow! That's not funny!" Charlie yelled. Loogar yanked again. Again, Charlie smashed his face. Loogar roared with laughter. Charlie rubbed his nose and pulled the door open. Loogar was rolling around in the air, gripping himself where his belly should have been. But Loogar had no belly. His body ended below his chest. That was where the wisp of smoke began, snaking its way to Charlie's nose.