

The Yawning Willow
By Molly Bell

Once upon a time there were two close friends. One was named Prince Oakley and the other was named Princess Adriana.

Snow White and her husband were Prince Oakley's parents. Cinderella and her husband were Princess Adriana's parents. Both sets of their parents loved to travel far from their home, Land of meadows, to the Forrest of Fauna.

This left Prince Oakley and Princess Adriana with a lot of time to explore their mystical world. Each time their parents would travel, Snow White and Cinderella would always warn to their children, "While we are away you may roam the land around us, except do not talk to the Yawning Willow, even if you wanna."



One morning, Snow White and Cinderella woke up their peaceful children before they left with their husbands on their trips and said, "While we are away you may roam the land around us, except do not talk to the Yawning Willow, even if you wanna." Then they kissed them on their foreheads and traveled away.

When their parents left, Prince Oakley and Princess Adriana leapt out of bed and put on their clothes. They were ready to explore the land around them called Fantasy Bay.

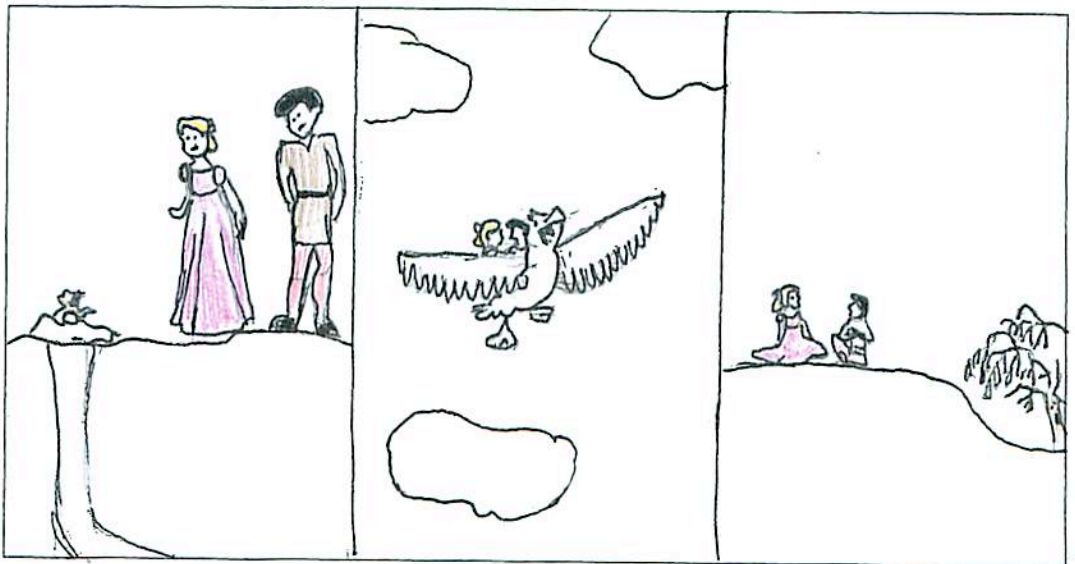
Once they saw that the sun was out and the dew nearly gone, they ran outside to think what to do first. They knew that they were going to have a lot of fun exploring the land around them. They skipped and hopped. They ran and played. They explored tunnels and beaches and fields all day.



One another occasion, Snow White and Cinderella appeared in their children's room and said to them, "While we are away you may roam the land around us, except do not talk to the Yawning Willow, even if you wanna." They kissed them on their foreheads and traveled to a far away town in a grove.

When Prince Oakley and Princess Adriana were sure that their parents had gone, they leapt out of bed and put their clothes on. They had decided earlier that they were going to explore the Yawning Willow, even though their parents did not approve.

They searched high and low, and side to side for the Yawning Willow. They went through tunnels and over hills. They got a gopher to help them look underground and a bird to help them search the sky. The bird became tired and dropped them harshly on a hill. They sat on this hill until POOF they saw the Yawning Willow in the distance. They started to move.



When they arrived at the Yawning Willow, they were amazed that the Yawning Willow's leaves changed colors and had magical powers. The children laughed at the color-changing tree and walked up to touch it when the Yawning Willow boomed, "Who stands at my side?"

Prince Oakley and Princess Adriana were shocked, jumped away, and held each other. "Sorry!" exclaimed Prince Oakley. The two children looked at each other and decided to tell the Yawning Willow a story so as not to get caught exploring a place they shouldn't. "Our parents, the rulers of Fantasy Bay, order you to tell us all your spells," they lied.

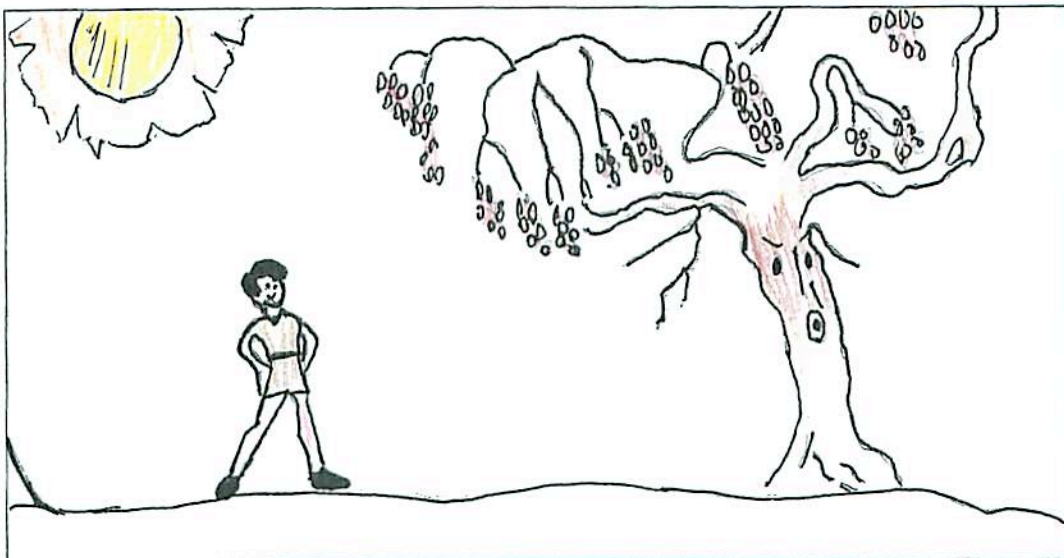
The Yawning Willow looked at them with questioning eyes then said, "If the rulers of Fantasy Bay wish me to tell you my spells, then I shall do so." The Yawning Willow told Prince Oakley and Princess Adriana a spell to become invisible, a spell to run fast, and a spell to fly. After telling the Prince and Princess this, the Yawning Willow sighed.



Prince Oakley and Princess Adriana giggled, knowing their plan had worked and said
“Our parents did not tell us to come here. They told us we could not come near you. But
we did, we did. We fooled you, we fooled you.”

The Yawning Willow’s leaves became a bright red and roared “You will pay!” Princess
Adriana became invisible using the spell the Yawning Willow told them. Following her
lead Prince Oakley became invisible too.

The Yawning Willow was confused, which caused his leaves to turn a pale purple. When
the Yawning Willow heard four skipping feet slowly moving away, he knew he would
not see the two children any time soon. The Yawning Willow knew the only way to pay
them back would be to make a spell that was new.

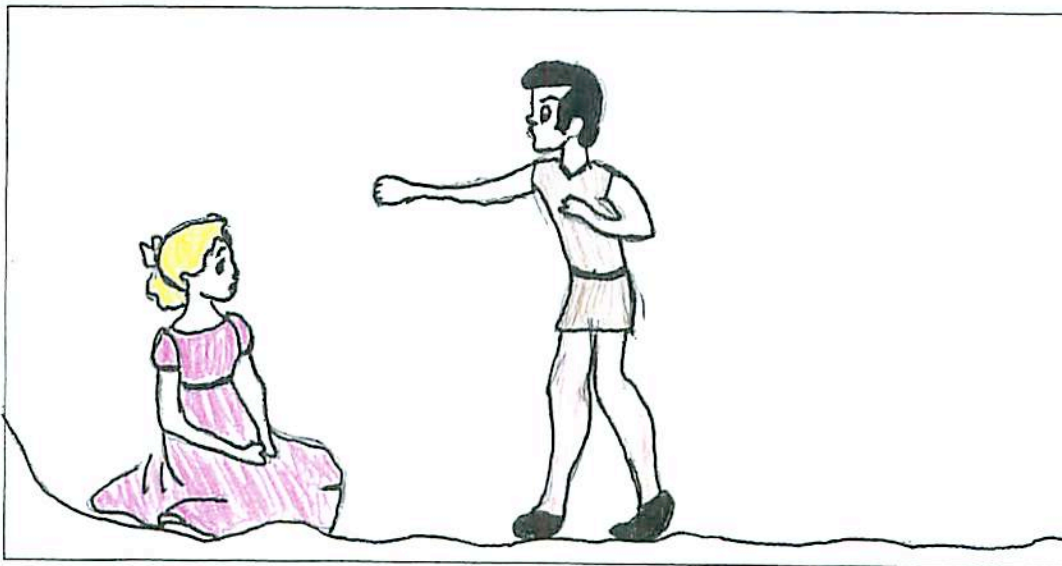


Once the Prince and Princess were far enough away from the Yawning Willow, they canceled the invisibility spell. They giggled again and sat in the grass. The princess said,

“What should we do with these magical spells? We cannot let them go to waste.”

Princess Adriana thought and thought, sitting in the grass. “Let’s go on another adventure. We can get away with those tricks we have wanted to try because we have these spells. But first, we need some materials,” the prince said while he paced.

“Who will we play tricks on? I don’t want to hurt anyone for no reason,” said the princess. Prince Oakley told the princess, “Okay, but if someone does harm us, we have tricks up our sleeves.” They got their materials: rope and gum with a cotton candy taste.



After lying down on the grass and watching the clouds change form, they felt something scratching their back. Princess Adriana heard her dress rip. It was the gofer. “He ripped my dress!” Prince Oakley and Princess Adriana glanced at each other.

Princess Adriana said to the gopher, “Can I ask you a question over here?” While the Princess distracted the gopher, Prince Oakley took the gum out of his pocket and began to chew. Once the gum was nice and sticky, he placed the gum into the gopher’s hole. Then, Princess Adriana walked over to Prince Oakley. They said “We fooled you, we fooled you, we fooled you!” They then gleefully held the hand of one another.

The gopher returned to his hole and then realized he was stuck. “I know you did this, Prince and Princess. You will pay!” Just then, many gopher heads popped out of their many holes. They looked angry. The Prince and Princess giggled and used the super running spell and ran away. The gopher yelled, “You will pay. I will tell your mother.”



When Prince Oakley and Princess Adriana stopped running, they saw the bird they flew on earlier that day. They glanced at each other. The prince said to the princess, “My back still hurts from when he dropped us earlier today.” Princess Adriana ran to the bird and began to sob.

The bird wanted to comfort the little princess and did not notice the small prince tying the bird to the ground with the rope. When done, the prince pulled the princess away from the bird and apologized. The bird replied, “Do not worry. I take care of many, it’s almost like a job.”

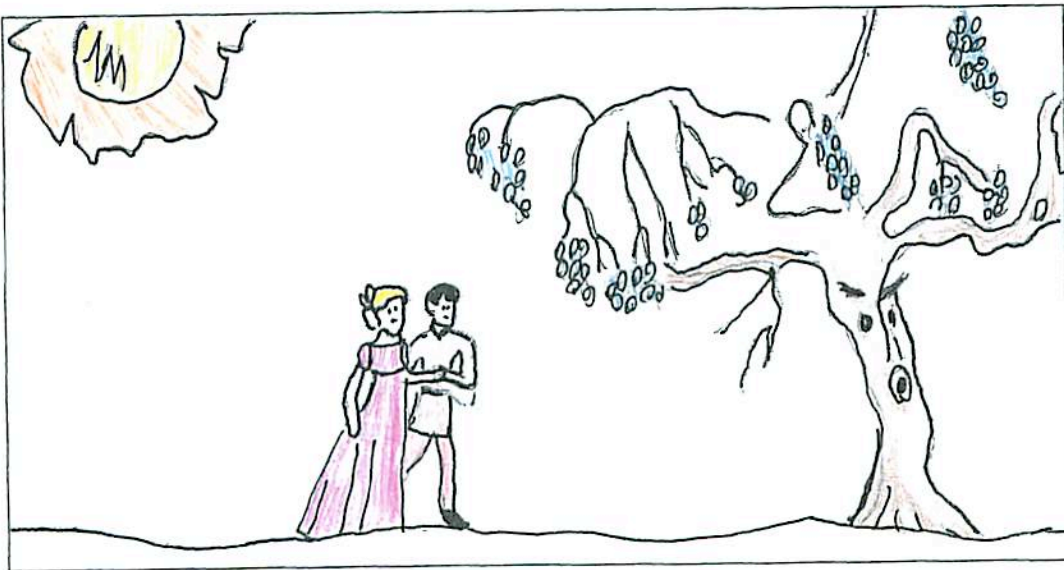
The bird then noticed he was tied to the ground. “Did you do this? You will pay.” The children flew up into the sky and yelled down to the bird, “We fooled you, we fooled you!” The bird tried to fly after them, but could not since he was tied to the ground. He yelled out for help from his brother named Bob.



After the children flew far away, they began to play on the hill where the bird had dropped them earlier that day. They began to wrestle and tripped on a rock. They tumbled down the hill and ran into something hard.

The Yawning Willow's leaves were blue. "Hello Prince and Princess, if that really is who you are, is there anything you want to say to me?" The children shook their heads. "Are you sure you don't want to apologize?" The children did not reply. "Apologize, you thieves!" the Yawning Willow jarred.

The children just stood there. "I tell you my secret spells and treat you kindly. Instead of respecting me, you stole my secrets and then ran out of my yard.



The Yawning Willow's leaves turned red again and his brow was scrunched. "I said you would pay." The children's feet rose off the floor. They rose higher and higher into the sky.

They Yawning Willow laughed. "To punish you, I will put you high in the sky and let you fall to the ground." Prince Oakley and Princess Adriana became worried and began to cry.

As the children were raised higher and higher, the Yawning Willow's leaves changed to many bright happy colors. He watched them cry and scream as he kept on laughing.

"This punishment should teach you a lesson. Now, bye, bye."

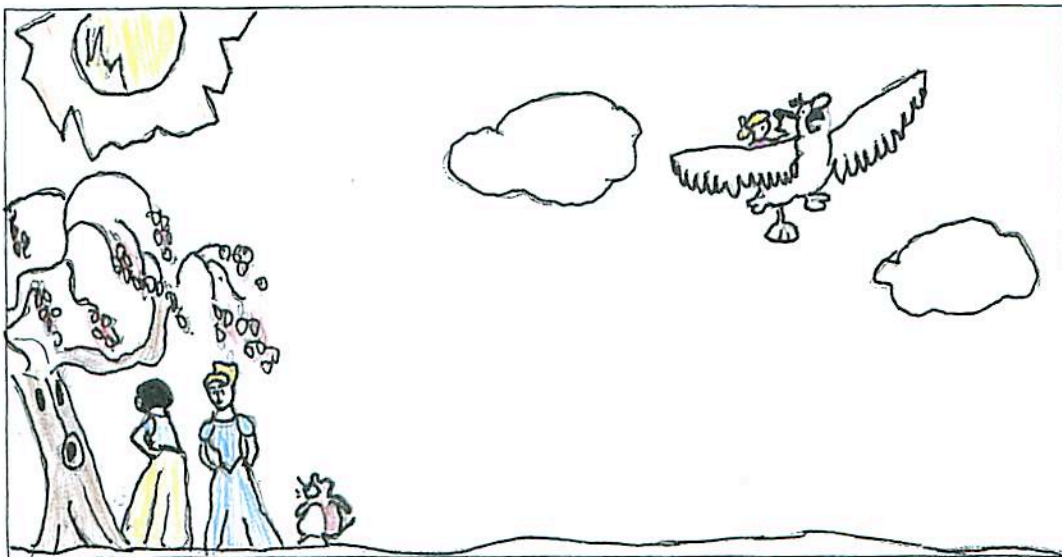


The rising spell was broken and Prince Oakley and Princess Adriana began to fall. The children shut their eyes. They screamed and screeched, and screeched and screamed. Suddenly, they were not falling anymore. They felt feathers on their hands. The children opened their eyes and saw that the bird had broken their fall.

The Yawning Willow's leaves turned red yet again and roared, "How dare you!" The children looked down at the Yawning Willow and saw the gopher standing next to him.

Next to the Yawning Willow, the gopher looked so small.

The Yawning Willow exclaimed, "Let the children fall! They need to learn a lesson." Then two booming voices bellowed, "We order you to let our children go." The prince and princess beamed as they saw their mothers standing bellow them. The Yawning Willow's leaves turned pink, "Yes, my queens." The bird set the children down and they ran to their mothers. The mothers said, "Let us go home once and for all."



As the children lay in their beds they asked their mothers why the bird and gopher helped them. The mothers explained that the gopher and bird knew that all children make mistakes and they knew others may not understand that. After the gopher got freed from the gum, he ran to the mothers and told them what happened. “You may still roam the land around us, except do not talk to the Yawning Willow, even if you wanna.” They kissed them on their foreheads and the children lay their heads on their own pillow.

The children still skipped and hopped. They still ran and played. They still explored tunnels and beaches and fields all day. They even explored the dirty underground with the gopher. With the bird, they explored the sky where clouds billow.

One thing was for sure, Prince Oakley and Princess Adriana did not ever again visit the Yawning Willow.

