

PRINCESS BELLA AND THE DRAGON'S CHARM



BY **PETE PLANISEK**

ILLUSTRATIONS BY ELIZABETH NORDQUEST

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Book by Pete Planisek

Illustrations by Elizabeth Nordquest

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CHAPTER 4

Princess Bella worked late into the night. The next day they flew higher up into the mountains to a place full of ice and snow.

“Close your eyes,” she told the dragon after they’d landed safely.

He did. She reached into the bag she’d brought, withdrew the golden snout scarf she’d sewn, and put it on Spurlock. She also put on the winter clothing she’d made for herself.

“Surprise,” she said as he opened his eyes. “I used that gold yarn you gave me so it shouldn’t melt any time soon. It takes a lot to melt gold.”

“The nose holes help,” he muttered.

“Come on,” she said.

For the next several hours the two skated across a lake of ice, built a snow fort and had a snowball fight, raced down a snowy slope on skis, and even made a snow dragon. They ended the day by roasting marshmallows with Spurlock’s fire breath, which he used after removing the snout scarf. And best of all, they laughed together.

By the time the day was over the dragon had come to love the princess’s unique laugh. They played outside again the next several days. One evening when they came home, they decided to make soup to warm themselves. It was then that a lone knight secretly crept into the dragon’s cave.

The knight was actually a young prince named Himmasnob from a far away kingdom. He was very rich. He’d been traveling to Princess Bella’s castle to ask for her hand in

marriage when she'd been dragonapped. It had taken him some time to locate her, but now he would fight the dragon and win the Ice Princess's heart by rescuing her from the cruel beast.

He hid behind a pile of gold and watched. He was struck by how beautiful she was. Oh no. Was the dragon going to make her into a soup? The prince took out his sword and began to rise. It was then that he heard the most terrible sound ever. The ugly laugh rang in his ears as the sound echoed under his metal helmet forcing him to take it off. When he did, his thick, wild hair puffed out in all kinds of crazy directions. He sat back down. Had that hideous noise come from the dragon or the princess? He peeked over the pile of gold and waited. The horrible sound was soon repeated by Princess Bella. When it faded, Prince Himmasnob put his helmet back on and ran away from the cave. Neither Spurlock nor Bella ever noticed him.