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The Tale Of Zabia Lalka

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The Tale Of Zabia Lalka

The Tale Of Zabia Lalka

by Lala Heine-Koehn

Time ago, a frog used to play with his favourite doll. Perhaps it was rather strange for a frog to pass time with a frivolous plaything like that, but he didn't care.

Since the frog lived in the mountains, he took the doll everywhere he went: up every peak, into every precipice and passage; exploring each cave and crevice with her. One time, they met the devil sitting across a pass, his legs spread wide, resting on the very tips of two huge mountains. Nearby, an angel was currying, collecting juniperberries for his mid-day snack. The devil barely acknowledged the frog, ignoring the doll. He was busy keeping an eye on what was going on down below. Pointing to a thin streak of water rivuleting down the cracks, he cupped his hooves, and stretched them out toward the frog. It was a nice day, the sun was shining, the frog hopped toward the water stream to oblige the devil. He carried the water in his mouth, tried to squirt it into the devil's mouth. But the devil pinched his lips, keeping an eye on what was going on below.

Three times the frog went back and forth, trying to squirt the water into the devil's mouth but it was no use. The angel was sitting now at the devil's feet, picking the biggest and juiciest berries, feeding them to the devil. Suddenly the devil reached over the angel's wings, grabbed the doll from between the frog's legs and tore her head off. Shaking the sawdust from her belly, he raised the doll to his mouth like a jug. Pointing a dusty hoof toward the stream, he threw her limp body back at the frog.

The devil is still up there. Sitting across the pass, his legs spread wide, resting on the very tips of two huge mountains. Munching on juniperberries, he is keeping an eye on what is going on down below. The angel is gone. I think it has starved to death. But if you happen to be in the heart of the Tatra Mountains, face east, look to your right. You will see a mountain peak shaped like a frog with his mouth open. It is called Zabia Lalka, the Frog's Doll.