

## FERN FLOWER

The shortest night of the year was approaching. The village and the surrounding area had been preparing for this long-awaited holiday since early morning. The boys had been trying to jump over the fire since dawn. They collected branches, sticks and hay to make a fire. The girls wove wreaths of flowers, grasses and fragrant herbs. The hosts baked bread and smoked meat. Everyone was happy about this festival. It is known that whoever celebrates St. John's night is lucky all year round.

Many daredevils were also preparing for a trip to the nearby forest. They stocked up on herbs for courage and boldness. After all, they were to make their way through the forest; perhaps fight a fight with an animal or - worse - with undines or simply - the evil one. And everyone dreamed of getting the desired fern flower.

Janek also dreamed about the Peruvian flower. He'd been listening to the elders' stories for months... He knew everything he needed to know. He also collected the necessary herbs for courage and cleverness. He was ready to find the flower and... put it to good use. He looked around the poor room, at those good-natured faces of loved ones, always worried about something. Yes! find this flower and influence the fate of the world.



He walked briskly past the first grove, and approaching the swamp. He clutched the scarecrow herb in his pocket, expecting to see drowned women or something else... Instead, he saw a wonderful view of a lily of the valley glade. It smelled amazing. "Wait a minute, lilies of the valley at the end of June?" - he thought - "Aaaa ... it's probably hallucinations, witchcraft." Suddenly, a huge white deer appeared in front of his eyes. Janek jumped in fear, but after a while he saw that the deer bowed to him.

- Hey - said Janek - what's going on? The deer blinked its eyes and waved its antlers. "What are you talking about?" The boy calmly approached and stroked the deer. After all, such a thing didn't happen to him often. Janek followed the dignified king of the forest. After a few steps, the animal seemed to blur in the air, and the boy stood stunned in the middle of the clearing. It thundered and flashed. In the blue light he saw him!

- It's him! - shouted Janek - it's the flower, the elders told the truth. The flower lit up the whole meadow, it was so bright that the boy was almost blind.

The object shimmered purple-red-blue. It was an out of this world phenomenon! And Janek thought that the fern flower was calling to him:

Break me up and you'll be the richest man. You will never lack anything, just remember: I can fulfill only your wishes, no one else's.



Janek was already reaching for the flower, but he remembered a story from a hundred years ago. Grandpa told about a daredevil who plucked a fern flower. He became rich but lost everything he loved. Jan thought for a moment. - Will you really only grant my wish? And just for me? The rustle of leaves and the suffocating smell answered him. -All right. So I'm probably the last person in the world who can wish for it - sighed Janek - Around only egoists and materialists. I wish that there would be no hunger, wars, sadness and hatred in the world. Moments later, thunder cracked and the sky turned white with lightning. Janek stood motionless, only his lips moved silently and his hands trembled. He walked slowly back to the village. He watched from afar the games around the campfire. These people were really happy. They were laughing, joking. Grandchildren helped their grandparents, dogs wagged their tails cheerfully, in the background there were excited conversations about the end of the war in the east and the discovery of a cure for this terrible disease. Jack ran to his parents. He saw the concern in their eyes again, but I guess that's how all parents feel when they look at their children.

"This is my world. It's good here and I believe it will get even better." And he pinned a fern flower to the wreath of Kasia, the nice girl next door.



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