





## **The King of the Fishes**

**By Jo Pearce**

Once upon a time there was a poor fisherman called Li. Every day, he went down to the sea to fish. There he stood on the rocks and threw the nets into the icy waters and waited. When he pulled the nets in, he would take any fish back to the market and sell them.

One day, he caught a huge fish. It had silver scales that glittered in the sunlight, blood-red fins and a golden crown. It was so beautiful that Li stood, amazed, staring at the fish as it thrashed about in the net. Suddenly Li felt guilty. It was so beautiful, and surely it must have a family...

So, he scooped it up out of the net and set it free. Li stood watching as the fish swam out to sea. Then, to his amazement, it turned and spoke to him.

"Li, you have saved the King of the Fishes. I grant you one wish. When the moon is high in the sky, come back here and tell me your heart's desire." With a flick of his fin, the King of the Fishes was gone.

Immediately, Li hurried home, wondering what on earth he should wish for. There were so many things that his family needed. First, he asked his elderly father. "Father, if you had one wish, what would it

be?" There was a silence and then his father spoke, "Why son, I would wish for new eyes, for I am blind and will never see again."

Next, he asked his mother. "Mother, if you had one wish, what would it be?" His mother thought for a minute and then said, "Why son, I would wish for money, for the roof needs mending and the winter winds whip through the house and make my bones shiver so."

Finally, he asked his beautiful wife. "Wife, if you had one wish, what would it be?" There was a silence and then his wife whispered, "Why Li, I would wish for a baby, for who will care for us when we are old? Yes, nothing would be more precious than a child."

Poor Li could not make up his mind they needed the money certainly, but his father was blind and that was a terrible thing. However, he also knew that a child would bring joy to them all. All evening, Li paced up and down trying to decide what the wish should be.

Suddenly, he stopped pacing and grinned. Yes, he had it! He rushed out of the house, through the forest and down to the sea. The moon was high in the sky and so it was time to talk to the King of the Fishes. Li ran down onto the rocks and stood there with the foam crashing about him. He could see the moon's reflection on the waves, and then came the King of the Fishes.

"What do you wish for Li?" called the King in a high, silvery voice.

"I wish for my father to see our son in a cradle made of gold," shouted Li. There was a silence and the great fish disappeared. The waves stilled and Li could see the stars like silvery freckles in the dark night sky. Then out of the darkness he heard a noise, drifting down through the forest. It was a baby crying...

**Task 3**

Answer the questions below in as much detail as you can. You can type the answers or write them down.

- 1) Who were the main characters in the story?
- 2) What did you like about the story?
- 3) What surprised you?
- 4) What did it remind you of? (e.g. The story reminded me of Aladdin because they are both wishing tales.)

Who were the main characters in the story?

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What did you like about the story?

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What surprised you?

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What did the story remind you of?

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## Task 4

### Spellings and definitions

Read through the story and find all the spellings in the grid below.

✓ precious	whip	reflection
decide	caught	thought

Put the correct word in these sentences:

1. Julia was upset that the thief had stolen her precious painting.
2. Luckily, the police \_\_\_\_\_ the thief red-handed.
3. The courts must \_\_\_\_\_ what the thief's punishment should be.
4. In Victorian times, the thief may have been hit with a \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Unfortunately for the thief, the courts \_\_\_\_\_ that he should be sentenced to time in prison.
6. In prison, the thief had time for \_\_\_\_\_ and decided to change his ways in the future.

## Task 5

### Reading Comprehension

Have a go at answering the reading comprehension questions below to demonstrate your understanding of the story.

1. What did Li usually do with the fish that he caught?

take them to market to sell

put them back

eat them

2. What was special about the king of the fishes?

it was large

it was beautiful

it had a family

3. How did Li save the King of the Fishes?

he scooped it up

he put it back in the sea

he gave it a wish

4. How long did it take Li to decide on his wish?

all evening

a few weeks

all day

5. Whose baby did Li hear at the end?

his and his wife's

a neighbour's

someone's in the forest

Extension:

Can you think of your own questions to ask about the story and give three sensible answers to choose from?

**Task 6:**

**Thinking about the creature for your version of the story 'The King of the Fishes'**

In the story 'King of the Fishes', The main character meets the King of the Fishes when he catches him when he is fishing. Next week, you will be writing your own version of the story and your main character will need to rescue a King or a Queen of something... What could it be? This is your chance to be as creative as possible. Pick an animal and draw or describe what the King or Queen of its kind would look like. You could use paper or pen, make a model or use a computer.

**Task 7:**

In this sentence from The King of the Fishes, the writer has picked **three parts of the fish** to describe in detail.

It had **silver scales** **that** **glittered in the sunlight**, **blood red fins** and a **golden crown**. It has 3 **adjectives** and a **relative clause**

Can you see this sentence below is the same, except it is about a lion and not a fish?

It had **giant paws** **that** **thundered across the earth**, **sandy fur** and a **fearsome roar**.

Now have a go at making up your own sentences using your own adjectives to describe your creature. Remember to include a comma between each different part of your creature.

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## Task 8:

### Fronted adverbials

In the story 'The King of the Fishes', the writer uses '**fronted adverbials**' to tell the reader where, when or how something is happening.

Two examples:

**Immediately**, Li hurried home, wondering what on earth he should wish for.

**Suddenly**, he stopped pacing and grinned.

These fronted adverbials – **immediately and suddenly** – have a similar meaning: 'to do something very fast, without waiting.' '**Suddenly**' also makes the reader feel as though it has been a surprise; something unexpected.

1. Sort the words below. Are they similar to the meaning of 'immediately' or are they more like 'slowly'? Write them under the word they are most similar to, or in the middle if you're not sure!

<i>Leisurely,</i>	<i>Steadily,</i>	<i>Straight away,</i>	<i>All at once,</i>
<i>Suddenly,</i>	<i>Bit by bit,</i>	<i>As quick as flash,</i>	<i>Gradually,</i>

  

	
<i>Suddenly,</i>	

**2. Now practise them in sentences of your own.**

Can you think of any other words which have a similar meaning to 'immediately' or 'slowly'?