

Helping you choose books for children



opening extract from

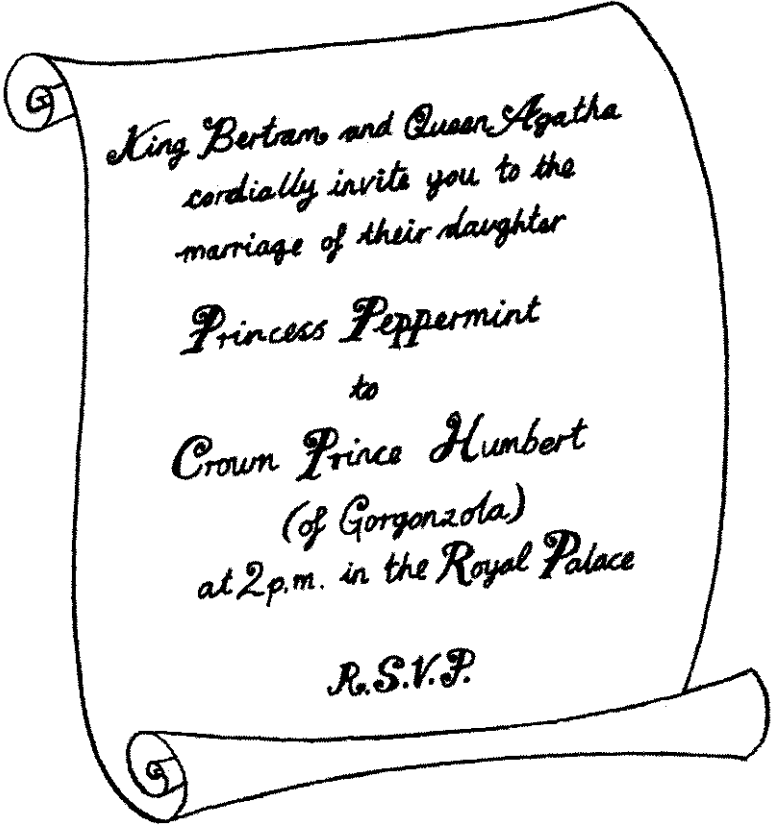
Pirate Princess Portia

written by
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published by
Simon and Schuster

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please print off and read at your leisure.



King Bertram and Queen Agatha
cordially invite you to the
marriage of their daughter

Princess Peppermint

to

Crown Prince Humbert

(of Gorgonzola)

at 2 p.m. in the Royal Palace

R.S.V.P.



Chapter One



Portia the Pirate Princess looked out of the window of the Captain's cabin on her pirate ship, the *Flying Pig*. As she watched, Squawk, her parrot, flew through the window and landed on the desk in front of her.

'Parrot post! Parrot post!' squawked Squawk.

'Thanks, Squawk,' said Portia, as she took the rolled-up piece of paper from Squawk's leg, but her face filled with dread as she read the note.



It was from Portia's cousin, Princess Peppermint. She and Portia were very close and they had been sending messages to each other ever since Portia had gone to sea.

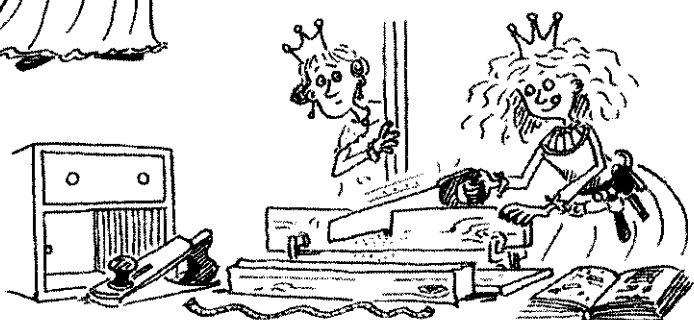
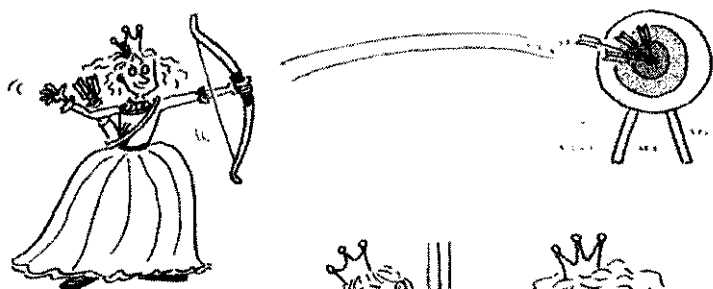
'Jim!' she called out. 'Peppermint needs our help!'

Now, you may be wondering how a princess ends up captain of her own pirate ship. Once upon a time, Portia had been a normal, average type of princess, just like all the others. Well, not *exactly* like all the others. You may be surprised to hear that not *everybody* enjoys being a princess. After all, there's rather a lot of curtseying,



learning to sew, basket-weaving, flower-arranging, poetry reading, walking around with books balanced on your head and generally not speaking unless you're spoken to.

Portia, on the other hand liked rock-climbing, archery, woodworking, abseiling, scuba-diving and arguing with anyone who tried to make her do anything she didn't want to.





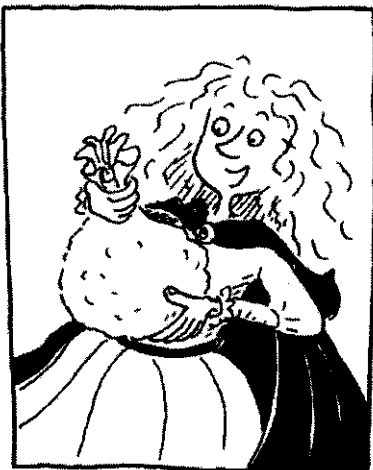
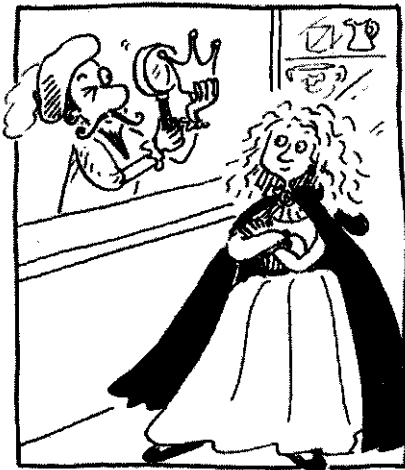
Then, one day, much to Portia's horror, her father, King Bernard, presented her with a picture of Prince Rupert. He was the drippiest prince you could ever have the misfortune to meet - but he was the prince that King Bernard had chosen for Portia to marry. It was the final straw.



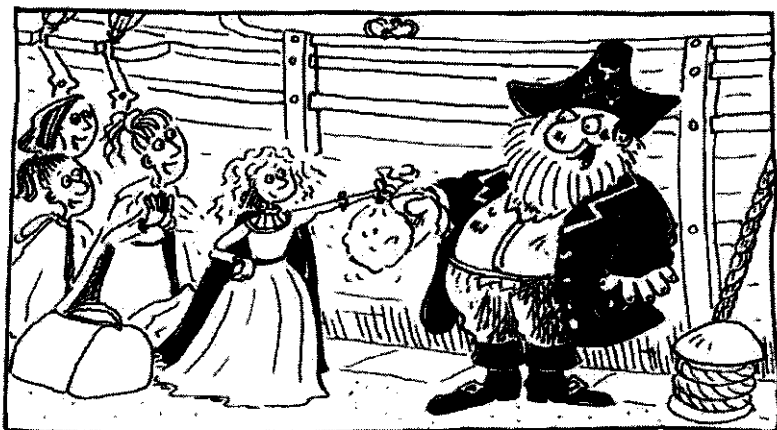
Portia ran away the very next day with a bunch of her ladies-in-waiting (who were tired of just waiting around),



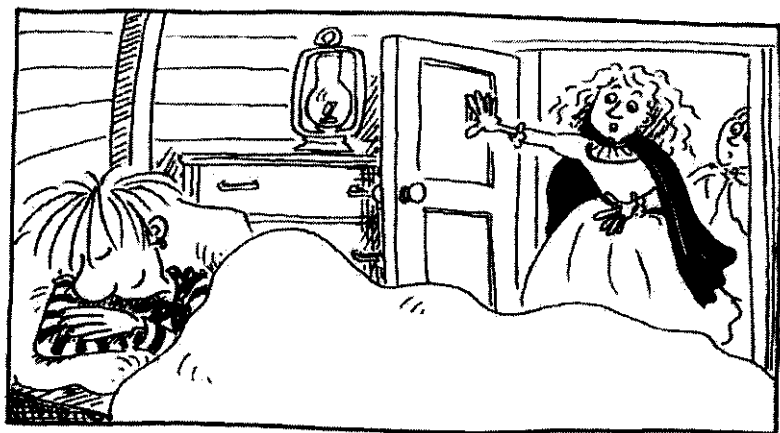
sold her crown,



bought a ship and set out to sea.



They sailed away in such a hurry that Jim, the *Flying Pig's* cabin boy was still asleep in his bunk, totally unaware that the ship had changed hands.





Luckily, Portia asked him to stay and help them learn how to sail the ship and, since his old captain had been a lot uglier, smellier and nastier than Portia, Jim had agreed.

That was all a while ago, but now Princess Peppermint was in the same sort of trouble.

‘What is it, Captain P?’ asked Jim, rushing into the cabin.

‘Here, Jim, read this. We have to do something!’