

Marie and the Orange Fish

Based on the [African](#) and Louisiana Creole Folktales.

There once was a beautiful girl, Marie, who lived in a house with her dear mother and father near a bubbling brook.

This girl's loveliness was revered across the land. Her beauty eventually caught the attraction and attention of the kind prince.

One day, as Marie was soaking her clothes in the creek, the prince came by to see if what he had heard of the girl's beauty was true. Stunned by her curly black hair and her sparkling eyes, the prince became interested in the girl.

They began to spend an abundance of time together: sitting by the stream, talking about their dreams, and laughing under the beaming sun's rays.

Unfortunately for the prince, the girl's father was extremely protective over his daughter. One morning when the prince had gone back to his palace – after the two had spent the entire evening gazing up at the stars, in love – the girl's father approached her and said: "You are much too young to be frolicking around all day with a man. You shall stop seeing him this instant."

Upset, Marie shook her head. "I am in love, dear father. I cannot, and will not, stop seeing him," she replied.

Marie's father was not pleased with her response and decided to take action. He remembered that there was a witch that lived in the woods just beyond the creek; and so, he decided to lend her a visit.

He approached the witch and told her about his terrible situation. "I do not want my daughter to be friends with the prince. She is too young for love. Make the prince leave her alone, witch. This instant!" he exclaimed.

"Are you sure this is what you desire?" the witch prodded, spitting as she spoke.

"Yes. I do not want them to marry," he replied.

He left the witch's hut satisfied. He returned back home to see Marie and the prince, once again, sitting by the brook talking.

Later that evening, as the girl's mother and father were inside their home, the witch approached the house and found the girl and prince sitting by the stream. The witch dipped her wand in the special brew she had boiled for the father and pointed it directly at the prince.

As the old man does desire
You in the stream to splash and flop.
Oh, change thee into orange fire,
And I will make you swim non-stop!

As she chanted this spell, a magical mist shrouded the two friends. The young girl fell into a temporary sleep and the prince was changed into a bright orange fish.

In fish form, the prince flopped into the air and came down in the brook with a large splash. The current of the water took the poor prince away from the girl's house.

When Marie awoke, she was confused to find herself alone by the stream with no prince in sight.

She walked back into her house sadly and was greeted by her unusually cheery father.

Her father was filled with happiness at the news that the witch had successfully gotten rid of the prince and he hoped that his daughter would assume that the prince had run away. In his newfound happiness, he also knew that he would not have to watch his beautiful daughter so carefully.

Unfortunately, Marie became very sad over her lost love. She sat by the brook each day filled with sorrow. One fine day, Marie began to sing:

Caliwa wa, caliwa co.
Waco, Mother says yes.
Waco, Father says no.
Caliwa wa, caliwa co.

Suddenly, as if the entire brook was split in two, a stunning bright orange fish swam up to the beautiful girl. Sunlight reflecting off the brook, it was as if this fish was wearing a gleaming golden crown.

For the next few days the father watched Marie excitedly go to the brook. He saw the orange fish bring Marie gifts from the stream: brilliant coloured stones, musical reeds, and berries that had fallen into the water.

Filled with anger at this sight, Marie's father followed her to the brook one day, with a spear in his hand. He watched as his daughter approached the stream, greeted by the brilliantly orange fish.

As Marie began to sing her song once more, her father ran towards the fish and speared it.

SPLASH!!

With fish in hand, the father took it home for dinner.

Once home, Marie's father ordered her to cook the Orange Fish. Marie dreadfully cooked the Orange Fish. Then he ordered her to serve the Orange Fish. Marie mournfully served the Orange Fish. Then he ordered her to sit down at the table and watch him eat the Orange Fish. Marie sat down and regretfully watched her father eat the Orange Fish.

He ate and ate and ate some more. He ate until his belly became so full it looked like it would burst open. Abruptly a loud POP!! sound came from the father's belly. His stomach had split open and out traveled thousands of little orange fish.

Marie ran and opened the door, watching the tiny orange fish swim, flop, and splash into the river.

As she watched the thousands of little orange fish swim away downstream, Marie began to sob terribly.

The tears from her crying began to form a pond beneath her. The pond grew larger and larger and suddenly she was surrounded by water.

Unexpectedly for Marie, her prince emerged from beneath the pond's surface. In his human form he asked his love to join him for eternity under the water. She agreed immediately.

She followed him into the depths of her pond of tears and the two lived happily together for many suns and moons.

The beautiful girl's mother ran outside to see where her daughter had run off. She approached the creek and found only a small sparkling pond surrounded by the brilliant orange scales.