

# Hello Princess Alexandra

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There is a little princess called Princess Alexandra and Princess Alexandra lives in a small castle with her Mum and Dad.

Every morning Princess Alexandra takes the castle dog for a walk in the woods.

"Why?" says a four year old.

Well, because dogs have certain things to do in the morning, just like everyone else. The dog is a German Shepherd and mostly black with golden coloured paws and his name is Morgan.

The drawbridge comes down with a very loud thud, making a big cloud of yellowy-brown dust. Next there is a rattle of chains as the portcullis is raised – a portcullis is a kind of wooden gate that goes up and down and all castles have them to keep everyone safe.

Morgan pulls at his lead making Princess Alexandra walk very quickly over the moat, which is a lake that runs around the castle. All castles have them to keep everyone safe. The little girl and the dog then walk through the cloud of dust which makes the Princess cough and then continue along a track across a field of golden barley which takes them into the woods. It is August and Princess Alexandra is on her holidays.

When in the woods, Princess Alexandra lets Morgan off the lead. She is not supposed to do this but he is a very good dog and he never goes far.

The woods are very old and very beautiful and there are lots and lots of big old trees: beech trees, oak trees and silver birch trees to be precise. There is long grass and lots of wild flowers along the sides of the forest path. Bees, butterflies and billions of busy bugs are having a great day and they are all being very very noisy. A really really green grasshopper sees Princess Alexandra and jumps. Morgan sees a rabbit and runs.

Princess Alexandra is now alone but keeps walking. She knows the big dog will come back soon. She hums a little song to herself. "Da da dee; da da daa".

It's her version of "Let it Go" which is sung by Princess Elsa in Frozen. Princess Elsa is the little girl's favourite princess and the song makes her feel brave.

The forest has soft light. It is very different from the bright yellow light of the barley field. But now she notices that the light is getting less. The forest is getting darker and the forest smells suddenly get stronger. The sounds change too. The insects have shut up and so it is much much quieter now.

"Oh no! I think it's going to rain," says Princess Alexandra. "And I've left my ladybird raincoat and Minnie Mouse umbrella at home."

There is a rumble of thunder and the first drips land, pinging on the leaves of the big old trees. The Princess hurries along.

"Where is that dog?" she tuts.

It's pouring now. Princess Alexandra runs along the path and crosses a wooden bridge over the little river and climbs up a bank on the other side to a cave. She is so fast she hardly gets wet at all, only a little bit damp. She sits on a bit rock inside the cave, watching the rain and waiting for Morgan, the castle dog. Every minute or so she hears a big cave drip coming from somewhere behind her.

Suddenly Morgan appears on the path, runs over the bridge and up the bank and into Princess Alexandra's arms.

"Oh there you are, you naughty dog," says Princess Alexandra. She stands back a bit while the dog does his special shake when he's wet.

So, the little girl and the big dog sit down in the cave and wait for the rain to stop. It is very relaxing watching the rain, especially seeing the rain drops land in the river and watching the wind push the branches of the big old trees which makes showers of water fall to the earth.

Suddenly the dog sits up and stares down to the little river's edge. Princess Alexandra can hear it now too: a squeaky squeally little crying sound.

"Go Morgan. Go!" commands the Princess.

Really really quickly, the big black dog is down by the river, the rain falling on his fur. He disappears under some plants with very big leaves. And just as suddenly he is back. Morgan has something black in his mouth. Something small and black with two gold coloured eyes and pointy ears.

"A kitten!" exclaims the little girl. "You poor little thing!"

Soon the kitten is cuddled up to the Princess and purring. She purrs and purrs and purrs. The Princess and the noble black dog Morgan look out from inside the cave. They are quite dry really although the little girl gets goose pimples and a few long shivers. The dog protects the girl and the girl protects the kitten.

Five minutes pass and then they hear a hunting horn and Morgan barks in reply. The three of them hear the sound of many horses' hooves and men shouting.

Very soon the King is patting the dog and the Princess and her black kitten are all cozy in a carriage.

Back at the castle the Queen exclaims, "Alexandra! You have a kitten!"

"Yes, Mum. Her name is Minnie."

"Isn't she beautiful?"

The baby cat was purring extremely loudly.

After a hot bath, the Princess has zucchini soup and slices of home-baked brown bread and the cat gets a saucer of warm milk and a sardine. A strange mix you might think but it isn't for a kitten. Minnie is very very happy and so is Alexandra.

Morgan is sleeping by the fire. He has also eaten a splendid supper as the King and Queen are very happy with him for looking after their little girl in the rain. The Princess, who is clever, doesn't mention that Morgan had run off after a rabbit. She doesn't want to get her noble friend Morgan into trouble.

The rain storm lasts all morning and all afternoon and continues into the night. Now it is sleepy time. "Can Minnie sleep on my bed?" asks the little girl.

"Yes, dear," says the Queen.

Minnie's full name is Minnivere. Queen Minnivere actually. And she will become a great queen among cats and humans when she grows up and that will be another story.

Princess Alexandra is so happy she forgets to ask for her bedtime story. As the Princess is falling asleep, she is thinking again of the cave, the rain and the running river and with being with her friends Morgan and Minnie. Now she is sleeping with a smile on her face and so is the little cat at the end of her bed on one of the Queen's old gardening jumpers in a creaky wicker basket.

Good night and enjoy being cozy because tomorrow there will be lots more things to do.