

Amor



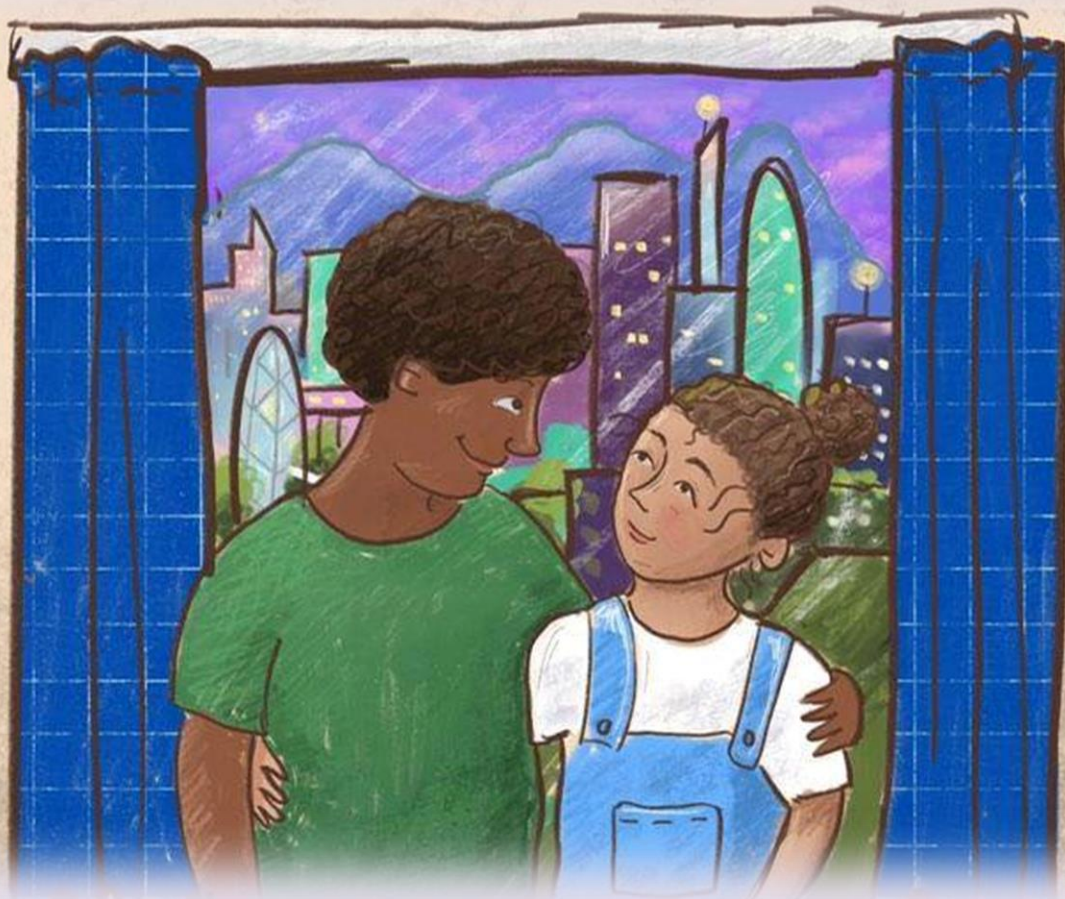
The Princess of True Love

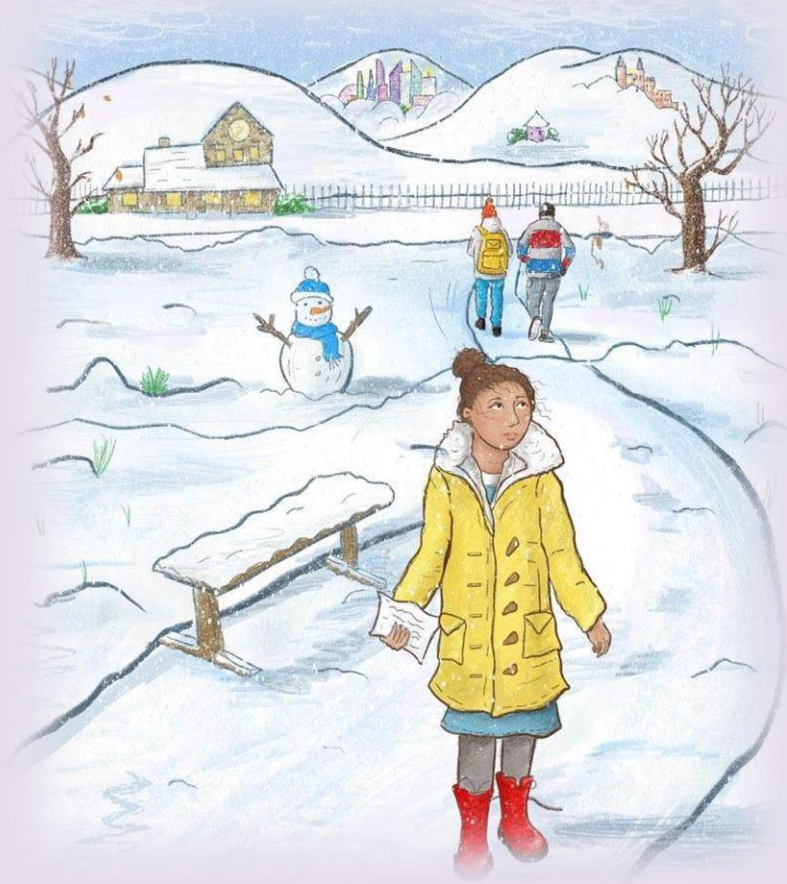
There was once a princess called Amor. But not the usual kind of princess. Amor wasn't born into a royal family; she didn't have much money; and she lived in a tiny flat on the outskirts of a large city. Nevertheless, she was a princess in the eyes of Antonio, the young man she loved. Every day Antonio told Amor she was beautiful and that he loved her. He promised that in the future he would be able to give her the life of a princess.

One freezing, snow-filled day, in the middle of a very harsh winter, Antonio came home and said he had some good news. He'd heard in the city that if he went to work abroad for a year, he could earn enough money to make them rich. Amor didn't want to be apart from Antonio but she truly loved him. So she gave him her blessing to go away, because true love is generous, and not selfish.

The next day, Antonio and a group of other young men left to start their long journey. Amor didn't let Antonio see, but tears dripped from her long, silken eyelashes as she knew she would miss Antonio very much. A year is an extremely long time.

For the first few months, Amor kept very busy. She counted the days and soon winter turned into spring, which then became summer, which fell into autumn and winter once more.





A year to the day after Antonio had left, Amor put on her snow boots and her thick winter coat and brushed her long, dark hair. Then she took the bus to the train station ready to welcome Antonio home. Soft flakes of snow began to fall as Amor waited outside the station. She soon saw the outline of a group of young men on the horizon. The group of young men drew nearer, and other young women ran to meet them. There were tears, and smiles, and cries of joy. But... there was no Antonio. Amor ran to ask one of the young men if he had seen Antonio. He replied that Antonio had stayed abroad because he had not yet made enough money to give Amor the life of a princess. However, he handed her a letter in a small envelope and told her that Antonio had asked him to give it to her. Feeling anxious, Amor slowly opened it and started to read...

Dear Princess,

I'm so sorry I'm not there to see you read this. I think of you and love you more every day. With the money I've earned, I can't give you the life you deserve. Please wait for me until I can. We'll soon be together again.

I love you,

Antonio X

Amor loved Antonio and true love is trusting. So Amor began to wait. And she waited. And waited. Each year, on the same day, Amor received the same letter from Antonio.

After several years, another young man who lived near her asked Amor to marry him. Amor explained she could not be his wife. She loved Antonio and true love is patient. The young man laughed and asked her who would wait years for someone who wasn't coming back. Amor told the man that he didn't understand what true love was.

More years passed by. One day, Amor heard a knock at her door. She opened it to find DJ Charming, the richest, most famous man in the whole city, standing on the doorstep. DJ Charming declared that he had heard of Amor's beauty. He told her that he was wealthy, lived in a mansion and wanted to marry her. DJ Charming began to look Amor up and down.

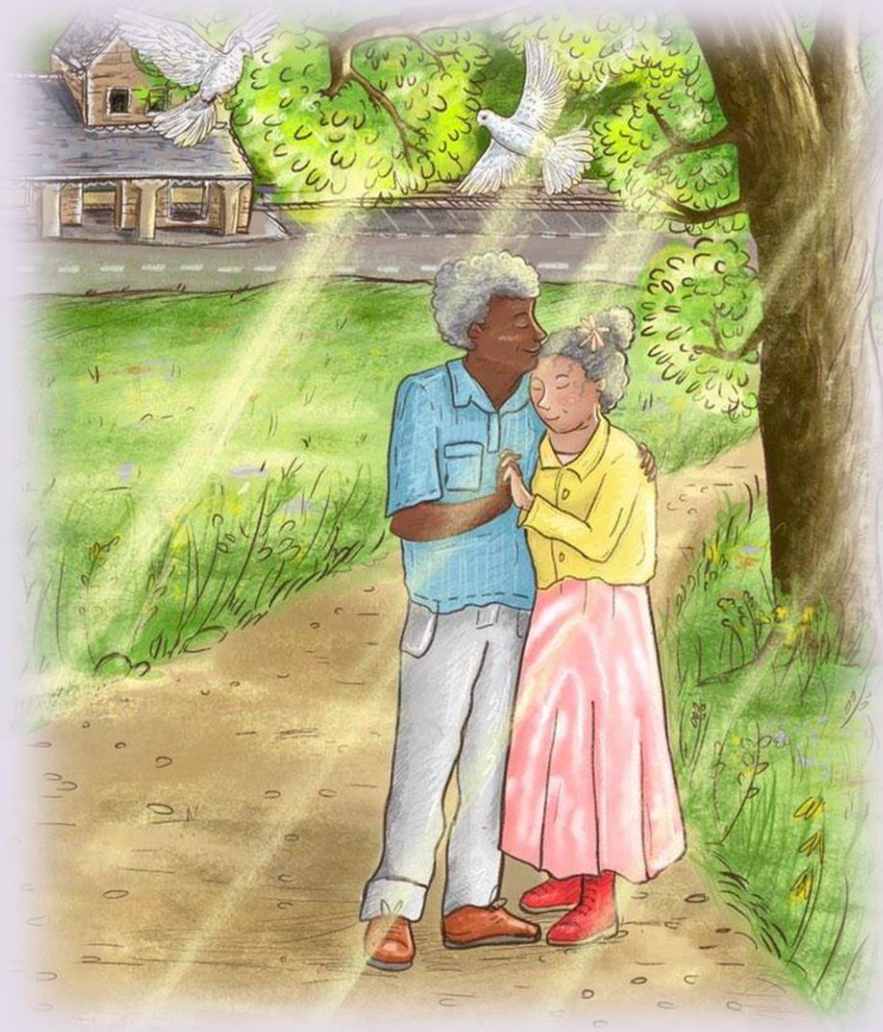
"You're gorgeous, but we'll need to get you some clothes more suited to a DJ's wife," he said. "You can't dress like that."

Amor felt uncomfortable. She liked her clothes and realised she didn't feel happy in DJ Charming's presence. As she was wondering what to do, DJ Charming shouted, "Come on! I'm not going to hurt you."

On saying this, he reached through the doorway and grabbed Amor's arm to try and pull her out into the street. Amor screamed with shock and started to cry. Amor knew that true love was truthful and DJ Charming had already caused her pain, in spite of his words. So she told him that she wouldn't marry him because she didn't love him. She wouldn't marry for money or become the wife of someone who spoke hurtful words to her. She was waiting for Antonio, because he was kind and gentle.

Fortunately, Amor's neighbours appeared to help her. DJ Charming was very angry, because he was used to getting his own way. However, Amor's neighbours kept her safe and made sure that DJ Charming left her alone.





Relieved, Amor continued to wait, and further years passed. Although no longer young, Amor still believed that Antonio would come back, because true love stands the test of time.

One balmy summer's day, many years after Antonio had left, Amor was on her way into the city to go shopping. As she walked past the train station, she heard cries of surprise and laughter. Amor's heart felt heavy. More young men had returned from the far away land and couples were reuniting.

Suddenly, a voice shouted out Amor's name. She turned around to see a man running out of the station entrance. His face was familiar but it had aged and held a few wrinkles, particularly around the eyes. Nevertheless, there was no mistaking him. It was Antonio. He'd come back to her!

Amor and Antonio ran towards each other. Their hearts filled with happiness as they became entwined in each other's arms.

"You came back," whispered Amor.

"I came back," whispered Antonio. And he kissed Amor tenderly.

Antonio was carrying a beautiful bag. He lifted it up and handed it to Amor. When Amor looked inside, she saw the bag contained more money than she had ever seen before.

“For you,” whispered Antonio, leaning in close to Amor’s ear. “And for the palace I am going to build you. You loved me when I was poor and had nothing. You trusted I would come back. For the rest of my life I’ll show you how precious you are to me. I’ll be here forever.”

At this, Amor knew that Antonio truly loved her. Because true love makes you happy, even when you are apart from the one you love. True love doesn’t care about distance. True love doesn’t care about money. True love is selfless and it grows stronger with time. True love is a very special thing. And when you are fortunate enough to find it, you should cherish it, because it is the most important thing in the world.



Questions for discussion

Can you remember some of the things that true love *is*, according to the story?

What does the story say true love *is not*?

Do you think that DJ Charming really loves Amor? Can you explain why?

Which people in your life show you love?

Can you think of words to describe how love makes you feel?

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