

# The Frog who Longed for the Moon to Smile

Margot Sunderland

Illustrated by

Nicky Armstrong

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**O**NCE UPON A TIME, there was a frog who was in love with the moon.



He sat night after night looking at the moon, because once, a long time ago, the moon had smiled at him. It had filled Frog with such a beautiful feeling inside that he longed to feel like that again, for the moon to smile at him once more.



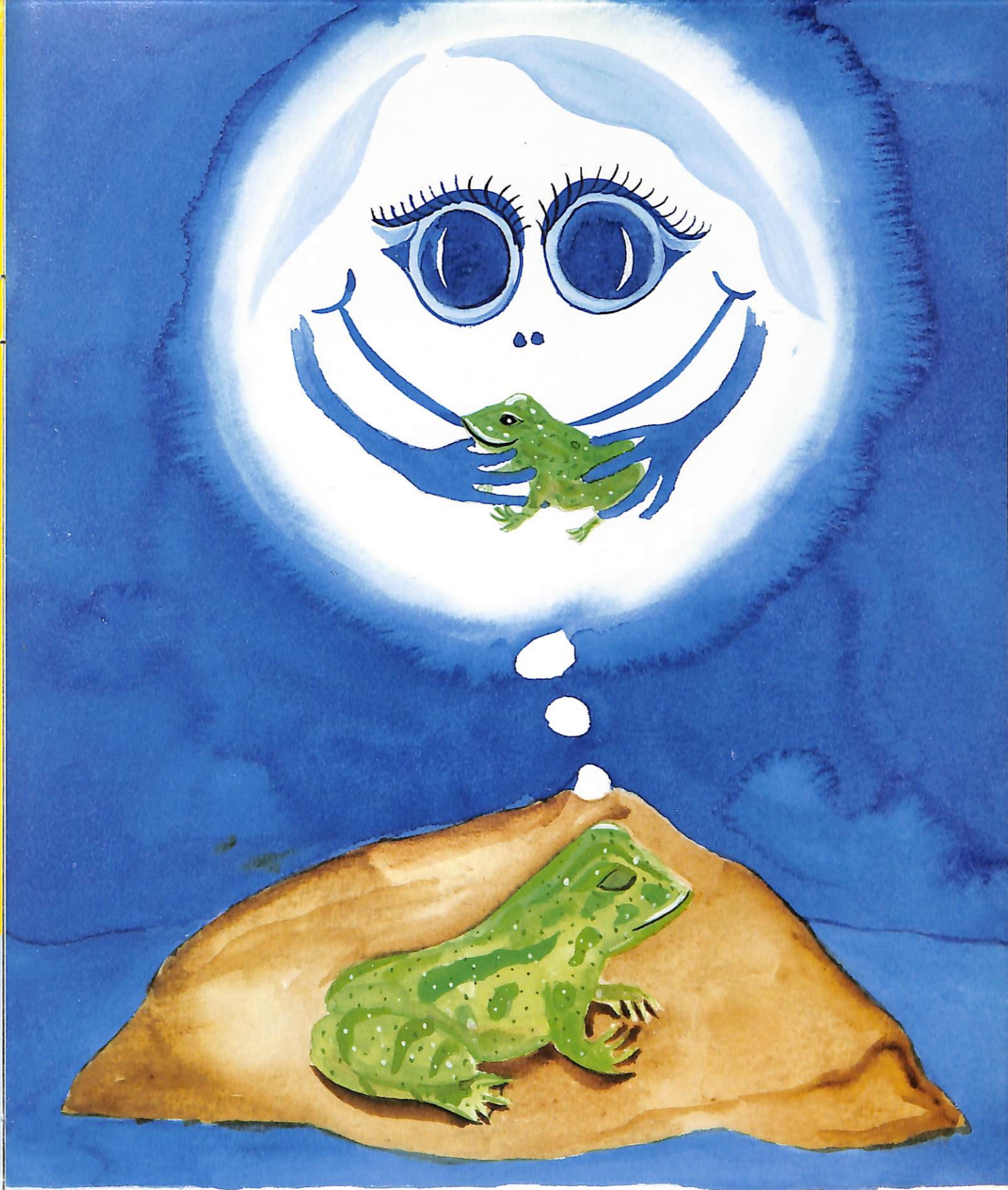
Frog could never forget that moment, that beautiful moment of the moon's smile. It was like music. It was like the loveliest fireworks going off inside him. It was like all his favourite food, all yummy together, marshmallows and chocolate cake and strawberry trifle, all at the same time.



So Frog sat – night after night – just in case the moon smiled at him again. Just in case.



He waited and waited, and then he waited some more. In the daytime, when the moon disappeared from sight, he would wait until it was dark again, until the moon came out once more.



At night when he couldn't keep his eyes open to look at the moon any longer, he fell into a deep sleep. He dreamt of his beautiful moon. And he dreamt of her beautiful smile.



Now, after a time, Frog's friends started to get very worried about Frog because they saw him each day, just sitting and sitting and then sitting some more. They'd tried all sorts of ways to get him to turn away from the moon and look at something else.



"Come and play with us!" they said, "we're going to ride on the water lilies, and play stick-boats, and go splashing together." But Frog told them that he couldn't. He was waiting for something very important. He was waiting for the moon to smile.



Henry Toad said, "Come and play with us! Come and swim in the delicious water! Come and sit with us under the sparkling springs!" And little Billy Frog even made a big chocolate cake with lots of little smiling moons on the top and floated it on the delicious water.

But this didn't work either. Frog couldn't see the delicious water. He couldn't even see little Billy Frog's lovely cake. He only had eyes for the moon.



One night, when Frog was gazing up at the moon, which that night was particularly bright and full, an old crow came strolling by. The crow asked Frog what he was looking at. Frog told him about the beautiful moon and her beautiful smile. The crow looked up at the moon, and then back at the frog. He thought to himself, "Well, that's just the moon." He really couldn't see what all the fuss was about. He was a very down-to-earth sort of crow.



"Can't you see?" he said to Frog, "While you only have eyes for the moon, you don't see the beautiful things all around you. While you're gazing at something so far off, and waiting for a smile that may never come, you've got your back to the delicious waters and the sparkling springs, and all your friends." But Frog was not impressed. "Nothing could ever be as beautiful as my moon's smile," he thought.



But after a while, Frog started to feel lonelier and lonelier. His love for the moon didn't fade, but somehow she seemed to be getting further and further away from him.



Then one night Frog had a dream about the old crow. In the dream, the crow was standing in front of him, blocking his view of the moon and saying, "Turn around, Frog! Turn around! As long as you face the Place of Giving-Very-Little, you've got your back to the Place of Plenty".



Frog woke with a ringing in his ears. It was as if a hundred voices were whispering, "Turn around, Frog, turn around!" And he suddenly heard a lovely sound, a kind of gurgling sound. He liked it very, very much. It was as if he was hearing the sounds of the delicious water and the sparkling springs for the very first time.



But Frog dared not look around. If he did that, the moon might be gone forever, and that would be too terrible even to think about.


Then the crow appeared, as if from nowhere. Frog told him how confused and unhappy he felt. He told the crow that now he knew how delicious the water was, but that he didn't dare turn around, even for a second.



Now the crow was actually a very kind crow, and so he said to Frog that if Frog ever did dare to look around, he promised to keep his eye on the moon. He promised to let Frog know if the moon should even *start* to disappear.



Though he was still frightened of losing his moon forever, by now Frog *really* wanted to look round at the water. It sounded just too delicious. Then the moment came when Frog knew that he was going to dare to turn around.

A dark, atmospheric landscape with a faint orange glow on the horizon, possibly representing a sunset or a distant light source. The scene is mostly black with some subtle textures and a thin line of light at the top.

There was a moment of terrible darkness in Frog. He had turned away from the moon, but did not yet know what was on the other side of him.

It was a very, very empty place inside him, emptier than he had ever known before.

AND THEN HE TURNED  
AROUND!



His eyes fell upon an amazing sight. There before him were a hundred smiles. All the frogs in the valley had heard how he had turned around and they had come to welcome him. The smiles were like a hundred little lights going on inside him. And he saw the delicious water, and it was truly delicious. And he saw the water lilies and the sparkling springs, and all the leaves for skating on.

Then Frog started to cry. He knew now that he had been in love for so very long with something he could never touch, and that he had been waiting and waiting for something that might never happen. He had hoped for so much from the moon, who, after all this time, had given him so little.



Then in a moment of panic, Frog turned back to look at the moon. It was still there, that big unsmiling moon.



But something made him look away and gaze upon his friends again.



Frog plunged into the delicious water with his friends . . .



. . . and began a super game of stick-boats.

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Margot Sunderland

# A Wibble Called Bipley

(and a few Honks)

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# Ruby and the Rubbish Bin

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