



How strange!" whispered the Princess, staring at him somewhat **apprehensively**. "Are you a fish or a boy?"

Chameleon sat up and rubbed his throat. He could hardly talk. "I—I don't know," he gasped, after a little while. "You see, I'm still searching for my soul."

"Searching for your soul?" said Princess Iris. "What does that mean?"

"Well," said Chameleon, tossing **droplets** from his wet cloak. "Since I don't quite know who I am, I could be many things."

"What things?"

"Anything! Anything I choose to be in the whole world."

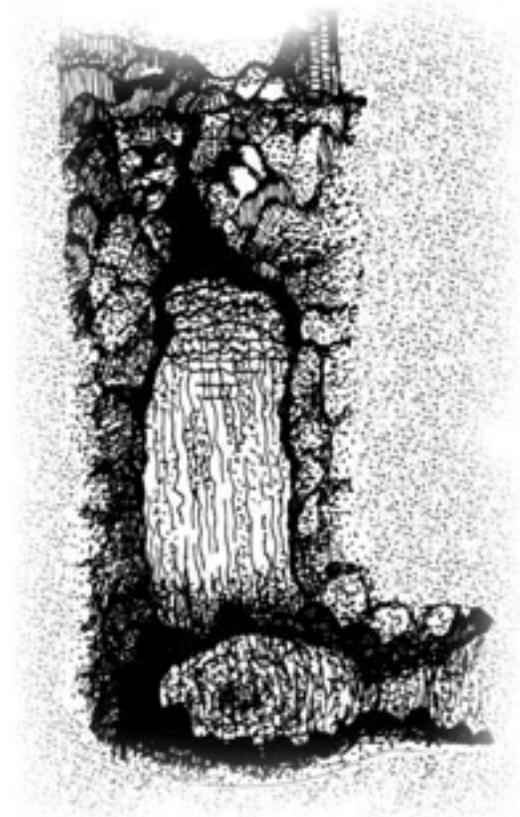
"And nothing," laughed the river.

"What?"

"Nothing," laughed the Princess. "I didn't say anything." She climbed down to the riverbank, dipped her fingers into the water and tossed a **palmful** of silvery bubbles at Chameleon. "How did you get that strange **scar** on your forehead, Chameleon?" she said.

"What did you call me?" demanded the Prince.

"It's too late. I've guessed your secret—you're the young Prince who can change into beautiful shapes and colours. Everyone in the kingdom has heard about you. Your name must be Chameleon."





Can you write down the word that is missing on each line? If you don't remember, look back at the Prince Chameleon story. **Example number one is done for you.**

1. (scar) a mark left on the skin, after a wound has healed
2. _____
nervously, fearfully
3. _____
a handful
4. _____
tiny drops



Prince Chameleon



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS Page 16

- a. What is Prince Chameleon still searching for?
- b. What does that mean?
Can you explain?



Can you draw a picture of Princess Iris catching the rainbow trout on her fishhook?



Listen to the CD again and imagine what you might see.



Chameleon, indeed! It sounded so foolish. Was the Princess laughing at him too? “No one dares call me by that name,” he said **haughtily**.

“Chameleon, tell the truth now—am I ugly?”

The Prince stared at Princess Iris in surprise. Her eyes were very large—sometimes blue, sometimes green—depending on the light. Her hair was combed into a silver hair net, studded with precious **opals**. Her dress seemed **spun** from silken rainbows.

“Ugly! Whoever called you ugly?” said Chameleon indignantly.

“Some **dolt** of a prince who lives beyond the forest. The Crown Prince Destiny they call him. But that’s too grand a name for such a blockhead, don’t you think?”

Chameleon flushed. He felt **guilty**. He stared at the gold wedding ring on his finger. He knew, now, who the Princess was. She was Princess Iris. Soon she was going to marry Prince Destiny, and this was the ring his brother had wished to give her.

“Since Prince Destiny thinks I’m ugly,” said Princess Iris, “I shall not marry him.”

“Oh, no!” groaned Chameleon. “Look, that was all my fault. Let me explain. I was that blockhead—I mean, I pretended to be that blockhead. Prince Destiny is my elder brother. Cross my heart, Princess Iris, he doesn’t really think you’re ugly.”

Princess Iris stared at Chameleon for a moment. Then she laughed. She laughed so much as he told her the story that Chameleon felt **relieved**. Suddenly he was happy. And then a **daring** thought struck him.

“Princess Iris, marry me instead,” he said. “You’ll never be happy with Prince Destiny; he’s—well, I’ll tell you who he is. He is the Ruler of the Kingdom-of-Straight-Lines.”

“The Kingdom-of-Straight-Lines!” shuddered Princess Iris. “How horrible that sounds. It makes me think of wooden rulers.”

“And royal rules!”

“And rule books!” giggled the Princess.

“And heavy crowns!”

“And tight shoes!” cried Princess Iris, skipping barefoot in the grass.

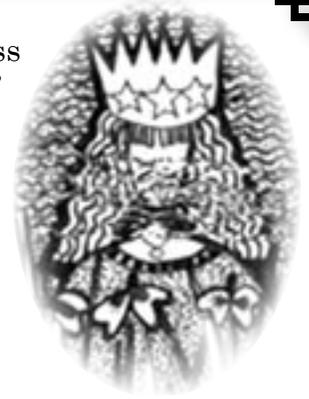
“And I must tell you something else,” whispered Chameleon. “No one in our kingdom remembers hearing Prince Destiny laugh since he was seven years old!”

When Princess Iris heard this, she picked up her skirts as though she would follow Chameleon anywhere. “But then, where is your kingdom?” she said.

“Alas, I have no kingdom,” said Chameleon **mournfully**. “I’m still searching for the Rainbow Fairy who lives in the Land-of-Mists-and-Mazes. They say she might help me.”

Sure enough, just as he spoke, a veil of mist crept over his eyes. Princess Iris’s face began to fade. “Wait for me!” cried Chameleon, as she disappeared among the trees.

“Follow me, follow the river,” called Princess Iris. Now, even her voice was fainter than the mists. “But please hurry, Chameleon. I cannot wait foreverrrrrr.....”





Can you write down the word that is missing on each line? If you don't remember, look back at the Prince Chameleon story. **Example number one is done for you.**

1. (dolt) a stupid person; a blockhead
2. _____
bold
3. _____
sadly
4. _____
sewing thread manufactured on a spinning wheel
5. _____
freed from cares and worries
6. _____
responsible for a wrong-doing
7. _____
proudly
8. _____
milky-coloured precious stones that flash with many colours



Prince Chameleon



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS Page 17

- a. Do you believe that Princess Iris is plain? Beautiful? Very ugly?
- b. Is this misunderstanding Prince Destiny's fault or Prince Chameleon's fault?
- c. How do you know Princess Iris has a sense of humour?
- d. Would Princess Iris be happy, married to Prince Destiny? Can you explain?
- e. Why is Prince Chameleon afraid to change his shape again?
- f. Is it possible to be lost in the woods?
- g. Is it possible not to know who you are?



Can you draw a picture of Princess Iris waving goodbye to Prince Chameleon?



Listen to the CD again and imagine what you might see.



The Prince looked for her footprints beside the river rushes, but Princess Iris had vanished without a trace. Gradually the river narrowed into a stream; then it vanished underground. Chameleon followed the narrow footpath which led into the forest. It **forked** this way and that, making the forest like a maze.

“Which way should I go?” mumbled the Prince, tripping over a fallen log. “I think I’m lost. Where am I? Who am I?”

“Nothing,” sang the stream, reappearing suddenly from a hidden **grotto**. She rushed past him over the slippery stones.

“What?” cried Chameleon, in alarm.

“Nothing, nothing, nothing,” babbled the stream, growing deeper and louder. “I am everything, yet nothing.”

“But who am I?” shouted the Prince, over the noise of the **torrent**, as now the stream cascaded into a waterfall.

“This sandy bed has muddied my **complexion**,” grumbled the widening river at the very bottom. “I am dull and ugly and brown.”

“I beg your pardon,” called Chameleon, running alongside the **riverbank**. “Could you tell me—”

“But soon I shall be blue again; I’ll borrow just a **tint** of lilac from the sky.”

“Who am I?” cried Chameleon.

“Nothing,” laughed the river, “I am everything, yet nothing, nothing, nothing, nothing—*nothing*.”

The river flowed into the mist and was silent. A fog settled on the bank, and Chameleon could hardly see the traces of his own footsteps as he walked. A **brass** gate, coated in mould, rose up in front of him. He pushed it open. Inside was a courtyard of **flagstones**, with clumps of weeds growing, here and there, between the cracks. Everything was hazy and luminous and soft as he imagined it must be in the Land-of-Mists-and-Mazes. He rubbed his eyes. Little by little, he saw the ruins of a castle crumbling out of the mist.

Then a stone tumbled from the tower. Chameleon looked up. He listened. What was that ghostly tapping? A slow, glassy tap-tap-tapping, like wind on crystal. All at once, the portal in the round tower creaked open in a gust of wind. Chameleon pushed his way past a thorny **rose briar** and stepped inside. Up the spiral staircase. Higher and higher he climbed. To the top of the **lantern tower**. But it was empty. The walls were a hollow circle of quiet stone. Through its high narrow window shone a brilliant ray of sunlight which almost blinded him for a moment. Chameleon stumbled clumsily through the arch.

“You are late, young Prince!” **shrieked** a voice.





Can you write down the word that is missing on each line? If you don't remember, look back at the Prince Chameleon story. **Example number one is done for you.**

1. (**flagstones**) square paving stones
2. _____
the loud rushing of water
3. _____
the skin, or the surface of something
4. _____
a hidden underground passage
5. _____
branched into many paths, like a fork
6. _____
a colour
7. _____
land sloping upward on each side of a river
8. _____
a yellowish metal
9. _____
a thorny bush of the rose family
10. _____
screamed sharply
11. _____
a tower that has openings at the top for light and air

Prince Chameleon



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS Page 18

- a. Where does the river lead Prince Chameleon?



Can you draw a picture of Prince Chameleon entering the round tower of the castle?



Listen to the CD again and imagine what you might see.





What was that? Chameleon shrank against the wall. His heart beat very loud. A grey shape **stirred** beneath the window. A falcon! No, it was an old, old woman. No wonder he had not seen her, half-hidden in the shadow. The pointed sleeves of her robe hung like moth-eaten wings. In one bony hand she clutched a thin glass spoon for stirring her **potions**.

“Don’t you know me, young Prince?” whispered the old hag fiercely. “I have been waiting and watching for you for so many years.”

“Well, I’ve never seen you before,” said Chameleon.

“You *have* seen me before, on your christening day. I am the Rainbow Fairy, the Keeper of Souls,” croaked the old hag, waving her glass spoon over her potions. On the table were hundreds of tiny glass bottles. Some were dusty, some shiny. Each contained its own **radiant** colour. “Now that you’ve arrived at last, choose yours.”

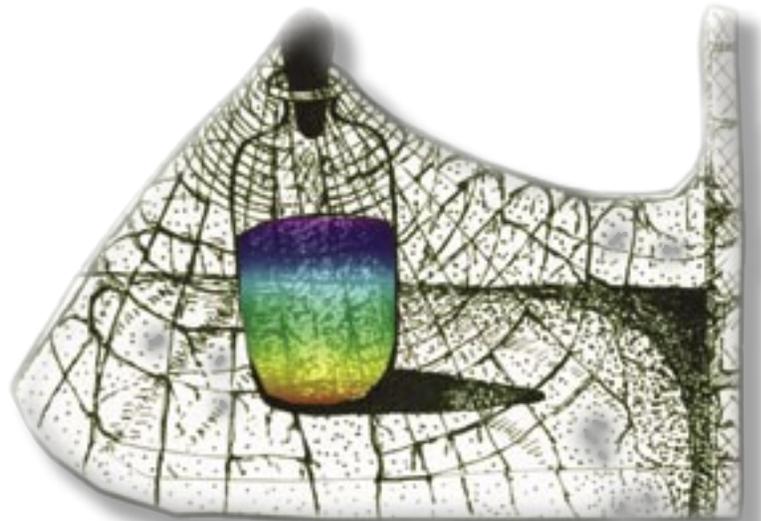
“But they are all so beautiful!” said Chameleon.

“I said only one of them is yours,” muttered the old woman impatiently.

Only one? thought Chameleon. How could he choose? These souls were every colour of the rainbow. Only one—only one of them was misty; yet it glittered, now and then, like a precious opal with gold and blue and crimson flashes of fire. Chameleon’s fingers trembled over the waxy seal. Carefully he brushed away the cobwebs.

“I—I think—I think this one’s mine,” he said; but he wasn’t sure, and the effort to choose his own soul cost him tremendous pain.

The old **crone** smiled—or seemed to smile—yet to Chameleon she looked uglier than ever. “You have chosen well,” she said. “Now give it to me.”





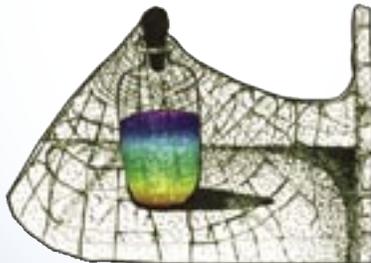
Can you write down the word that is missing on each line? If you don't remember, look back at the Prince Chameleon story. **Example number one is done for you.**

1. (**radiant**) brilliant

2. _____
an ugly old woman

3. _____
a liquid mixture, a recipe

4. _____
moved slowly



Prince Chameleon



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS Page 19

- a. Who is the old crone at the top of the lantern tower?
- b. How does she know Prince Chameleon? Why has she waited for him?
- c. How can a soul be locked in a tiny bottle?
- d. What colour is Prince Chameleon's soul?
- e. Why do you think there are cobwebs draped over Prince Chameleon's soul?
- f. Have you ever seen a real opal? What do its colours remind you of?



Can you draw a picture of Prince Chameleon choosing his own soul?



Listen to the CD again and imagine what you might see.



May I have it now?" cried the Prince, flinging open his arms.
"Not yet, not yet," she muttered. "This soul of yours is a great gift. It cannot be given away so easily. It must first be **earned**."

"But it's mine," said Chameleon. "Why have you stolen it?"

The old woman didn't answer. Instead, she pushed back her ragged black hood. "Tell the truth now," she said. "Am I beautiful?"

"Beautiful? Why, you're, you're—"

"**Hideous!**" she screamed.

"No, no, not really," lied Chameleon.

"I am hideous," insisted the old crone, and something very much like a tear **glittered** at her eye. "You have sent the sun racing after me, young Prince. I was once beautiful, the beautiful Rainbow Fairy of royal christenings, but you have made me old before my time."

"Me? What have I done?" **protested** Chameleon. "I haven't done anything."

"Nothing, nothing, nothing," chanted the old hag. "Since the day you were born, Chameleon, you have done nothing." Her bony finger pointed toward the **hourglass** on her window sill. "Time is running out, young Prince."

"But what do I have to do?"

"Look around you! Your castle is overgrown with weeds and roots and tree stumps. The stone turrets are crumbling. All the villagers have fled. Green **wilderness** is growing between the walls."

"But that's not my fault!"

"You must rebuild your castle from the ruins, Prince, while there's still time."

"How can I?" wept the Prince. "It's—it's too hard."

But then he remembered what had happened to the pretty mushroom in the woods, to the rainbow trout and the lame falcon. There was no escape for Chameleon now; yet he was afraid to be trapped forever in the Land-of-Mists-and-Mazes.

"**Perform this task**, young Prince," said the old woman grimly, "or you will lose your soul forever."





Can you write down the word that is missing on each line? If you don't remember, look back at the Prince Chameleon story. **Example number one is done for you.**

1. (**hourglass**) a twin-cupped glass container, half filled with sand
2. _____
twinkled like a jewel, a tear or a dewdrop
3. _____
worked for, deserved
4. _____
dense forests and undergrowth
5. _____
very ugly
6. _____
complained, made a fuss
7. _____
do this job

Prince Chameleon



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS Page 20

- a. How can Prince Chameleon be responsible for turning the beautiful Rainbow Fairy into a withered old crone?
- b. Is it his fault that the castle is crumbling? Why or why not?
- c. What one thing can Chameleon no longer do, if he wants to earn his soul?



Can you draw a picture of the Falcon Fairy sending Prince Chameleon away to rebuild his castle?



Listen to the CD again and imagine what you might see.

