

## Chapter Fifteen: Magna Carta

Readers' Theater script adapted from Chapter 15 of *The Crystal Palace ii: Rebellion in Fairyland* by the author, published by Outskirts Press, Denver CO, 2009

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**PREVIEW:** Karina and Nicole are with King Sebastian, Ollie, and Tyrone in Ollie's and Gertrude's home. They are meeting to mediate between the fairies and the ogres and trolls. ,

**GENRE:** Children's fantasy

**READERS:** 9

**THEME:** Solving problems

**LENGTH:** 12 minutes

**ROLES:** Narrators 1–4, Karina, Nicole, King Sebastian, Ollie, Tyrone

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### MAGNA CARTA

**NARRATOR 1:** Gertrude had already been returned by the time King Sebastian and the leader of the Palace Guard, Ollie and Tyrone, and Karina and Nicole had reached the door of Ollie's and her home in the ogre village. She had been told what was happening, and she had set right to work arranging her home for the meeting.

**GERTRUDE:** Oh, Ollie dear!

**NARRATOR 2:** Gertrude she cried out when Ollie walked into the room. She ran into his arms, and Ollie hugged her and gave her a big kiss.

**OLLIE:** There, there, dear Gertrude. I am well; it is good to see you.

**NARRATOR 3:** Ollie held her in his arms. He looked over her shoulder and his eye lit upon the face of little Ollie standing by a chair with a big grin on his face. Ollie smiled with satisfaction.

**OLLIE:** And this, my dear, is King Sebastian.

**NARRATOR 4:** Ollie proudly introduced Gertrude to the king.

**GERTRUDE:** Yes, we've met, (quietly)

**NARRATOR 1:** Ollie was surprised. King Sebastian cleared his throat.

**KING SEBASTIAN:** Yes, Gertrude is a fine woman, Ollie. You can be proud to have her for your wife.

**OLLIE:** I am proud indeed, sir. (beaming at Gertrude)

**NARRATOR 2:** Then Ollie motioned for all to sit at the table. The few rough chairs along the wall were added to the four at the table so all could sit.

**NARRATOR 3:** Gertrude brought mugs with ale for each and a bowl of bread. She knew how to be a hostess, and she would do her best for the king.

**KING SEBASTIAN:** it seems, Karina, that you and Nicole are in charge here. How shall we start?

**KARINA:** Your Honor, in the human world, when people have to iron out their differences, there is usually a mediator to make sure each side listens while the other explains its viewpoint. So, I suggest we start with the ogres and trolls. What is your concern, Ollie? What is the trolls' concern, Tyrone?

**NARRATOR 4:** A quiet peace settled over the room as Ollie, and then Tyrone, explained to the king the difficulties living as ogres and trolls in a land ruled by fairies. King Sebastian listened quietly. Any time either Ollie or Tyrone began to get emotional and raise his voice, Karina would speak up and remind them to be respectful.

**NARRATOR 1:** Once Ollie and Tyrone had spoken their piece, Karina summarized what they had said, to make sure everyone was clear.

**KARINA:** So, Ollie, it sounds to me like your biggest problem is in not having a say in policies that affect the ogres. For example, farming rules and the amount of taxes you pay to rent your land from the king. Is that correct?

**NARRATOR 2:** Yes, that is the main problem.

**KARINA:** And Tyrone, it sounds like your central concern is that you have no choice in what work you do in life. You would want trolls, and ogres too, to be educated, so they can choose jobs that would be more satisfying and more suited to their talents.

**TYRONE:** Yes. To spend our lives just doing the unpleasant tasks for the fairies doesn't feel fair to us. We want to make our own choices.

**NARRATOR 3:** With that, Karina turned to the king.

**KARINA:** So, Your Majesty, what is your concern?

**NARRATOR 4:** King Sebastian looked first at Karina, and then at Ollie and Tyrone.

**KING SEBASTIAN:** I have never heard any of this before. Our way of life has been as it is for generations. Because the ogres are so much bigger and stronger, it makes sense for them to do the heavy work, like farming. Since the trolls are smaller, they can live amongst us fairies more easily, so it has always been that they would work for us.

**NARRATOR 1:** At this point, King Sebastian paused. He looked down at his hands for a few moments.

**KING SEBASTIAN:** I guess I never thought about how it felt to the ogres and trolls. The system seemed to work well for us. (with a sigh)

**OLLIE:** Your Majesty, we ogres and trolls have great respect for you and Queen Serena. Except for what we mentioned, you have always been a kind and wise king. Now that you know how hard life has been for us, could you find a way to help us (quietly)

**KING SEBASTIAN:** I would like to, but honestly, I don't know any other way for our kingdom to work. Who would do the work if the ogres and trolls are not required to?

**NICOLE:** Your Majesty, perhaps if all were allowed to be educated, they would choose work for which they were best suited. That may mean that some fairies would do the work that trolls and ogres do now, and some ogres and trolls would do work that fairies have done.

**KING SEBASTIAN:** That may make the ogres and trolls happy, but I cannot imagine my fairies going along with that. I have to be king for all my subjects, you know.

**NICOLE:** You wouldn't have to tell the fairies to do the trolls' work. Just let everyone decide for him or herself.

**KING SEBASTIAN:** But who would choose the hard work then?  
(shaking his head)

**TYRONE:** For example, Your Majesty, I have a special interest in designing and building, and I would love to have been an architect. Because of my interest, I would work hard to learn the skills, and I think I would do a good job.

**KARINA:** If everyone has choices, each would choose what most interested him or her. In the human world where we live, no one tells us who does what job, but somehow, it works out that jobs do get done. Maybe that would happen here.

**NICOLE:** Besides, otherwise, many talents that would help the kingdom are lost, not given a chance.

**KING SEBASTIAN:** The fairies would not like having ogres and trolls amongst them.

**NICOLE:** That is because they have associated the ogres and trolls with the menial tasks and so have developed a lower opinion of their abilities. In the human world, we call this prejudice.

**NARRATOR 2:** King Sebastian agreed. Ogres and trolls were looked down upon. They were not considered equal to the fairies.

**KARINA:** I know that the fairies are so graceful and beautiful, with all their sparkles and fairy dust, but that doesn't mean that the ogres and trolls aren't as smart. They just have never been given the chance to be educated.

**KING SEBASTIAN:** Education seems to be the key, I guess. Perhaps once all are educated, the fairies would get used to the idea of ogres and trolls as of equal ability, and it won't seem so scary to them.

**NARRATOR 3:** With that, King Sebastian agreed that education was the place to start. He would announce that all ogre and troll children would go to school. He would set up special schools for them. Nicole couldn't help speaking up about that.

**NICOLE:** Your Grace, that was tried in our human world, but it created even more problems. When the races were educated separately, the education turned out not to be as good, and the races still distrusted each other. We learned that separate does not make equal.

**KARINA:** And besides, how will the fairies learn to respect the ogres and trolls if they never get to know them in school?

**NARRATOR 4:** King Sebastian threw up his hands.

**KING SEBASTIAN:** Okay, okay. We will include all together in the same schools. I guess I had better hire more teachers!

**NARRATOR 1:** Karina, then, repeated the plan, to make sure everyone understood.

**KARINA:** The troll and ogre children will be included in the fairy schools from now on. Agreed?

**NARRATOR 2:** King Sebastian nodded seriously, and Tyrone smiled. *Ah, this was more like it.* Now his son and daughter would have a chance in life.

**OLLIE:** What about our need to have a say in policies that affect us?

**KARINA:** How about adding an ogre and a troll representative to the King's Council? That way when policies are discussed, the ogres and trolls could at least express their opinions and help the others to understand.

**NICOLE:** Besides, that way there would not be 'taxation without representation'. That was a big issue when our country was getting started.

**KING SEBASTIAN:** So, if we allow the ogres and trolls to be educated, and have a representative of each on my council, would that satisfy you?

**OLLIE:** Yes, yes, your Majesty. (smiling and nodding)

**TYRONE:** (grinning broadly) That would assure us that you had our interest in mind too.

**KING SEBASTIAN:** What would the fairies get out of this? I have to be able to tell how this will help them.

**NARRATOR 3:** Karina explained that the fairies would find that the kingdom would be more peaceful, and the ogres and trolls more cooperative, when they were treated fairly. Also, with more people educated, more skills and talents would be developed to help the kingdom.

**KARINA:** Besides, Your Majesty, you are the king. A leader sometimes has to make tough decisions and then help others to understand the importance of doing what is right.

**NARRATOR 4:** King Sebastian could see the wisdom and fairness of these plans. He knew it would be difficult getting the fairies to go along, but he would assure them that, in the long run, Fairyland would be better for it.

**NICOLE:** Here, let's get this in writing.

**NARRATOR 1:** Nicole wrote out a document, listing the right to education and the right to representation on the council for the ogres and trolls. The ogres and trolls, in turn, would honor and obey the king.

**KARINA:** Let's call it the Declaration of Independence.

**NICOLE:** No, the Declaration of Independence was when Americans wanted to be a separate country from England. Here, the ogres and trolls want to stay loyal to King Sebastian, they just need equal rights. Let's call it the Magna Carta.

**NARRATOR 2:** Everyone looked at her, not quite understanding what she was talking about.

**NICOLE:** The Magna Carta was a document long ago in which the King of England gave certain rights to the nobles. Here, King Sebastian is giving certain rights to the ogres and trolls.

**NARRATOR 3:** Everyone smiled, and Ollie raised his mug of ale.

**OLLIE:** To the Magna Carta...and to our wise and thoughtful King Sebastian of all Fairyland.