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Opening extract from

The Legend of Frog

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Once Upon
the End of the World...

The Incredibul Legend of Prince Frog

Chapter One

One upon a tyme there was the KING AND QUEEN OF EVERYTHING. They rooled over all of Kingdomland and lived in a palase and had thrones and crowns and all the polished sandwitches they could eat.

Their palase looked really speshul and was chock-filled with loyal subjects. Their favourit loyal subject was called Buttercup who was good and clever and wize.

But the King and Queen of Everything were sad. They longed for a chilled child more than anything in the wurld. Then one day a golden egg appeered out of the lake in their garden. It was all shined-up and speshul looking and the King and Queen of Everything said great! A goldun egg! Soon it will hatch and owt will come a prince because that is where princes come from.

Then the wurld ended.

Buttercup said HEY LOOK EVRYONE THE WURLD IS ENDING LET'S GET OUT OF HERE AND LEAVE! But no one would lissen, not eaven the King and Queen. So Buttercup took the speshul goldun egg and she ran to the island at the edge of the end of the wurld to get away.

After the End of the Wurld happuned, Buttercup was all on her own and sad for ages. But then her goldun egg hatched and owt came a royal green prince.

Buttercup raized the prince like he was her own son. The prince was the best and mightiest prince. He grew up in no time flat. In one yeer he was strong and fast and he could jump highly on his mighty legs and had the cleverrest brain by a milliun and could make himself ~~camoflarged cammoflarjed~~ invisible like a magic ninja.

Except there was no Kingdomland or palase or servants bringing him crowns and polished sandwitches because the wurld was ended. The prince spent his hole life on a farty little island on the Edge of the End of the Wurld. His howse was not even a bit like a palase. It was small and had no thrones and all the prince had to eat was vegetabuls that tasted of bump. And he didn't get to see anything for real, only in the stories Buttercup toled him.

Then the prince thort what is the End of the Wurld like? So then he said to Buttercup please can I go and see what the End of the Wurld is like but Buttercup said NO! DON'T EVER EVER go to the End of the Wurld! It is all SCORTCHED EARTH and BLACKUNED SKYS and CATASTROFEE! She said it in that voice she only uses when she talks about the End of the Wurld. So the prince couldn't go and see what the End of the Wurld was like.

Which means he definitly can't tell Buttercup when he does.

I don't know what happens next.

But I'll tell you when I get there.



The Island on the Edge of the End of the World

Frog replaced his quill pen in the inkpot. "Now for Chapter Two."

"What are you writing, Frog?"

Frog slammed his book shut. He turned to see Buttercup's head poking round the door. She looked nothing like Frog. She did not share his bright, mottled green skin or his bulbous yellow eyes. She had ears and a nose – which Frog lacked – and long, brown hair, while Frog had not a single hair on his head. In fact, Buttercup looked decidedly human – there wasn't a hint of anything amphibian about her. But then Buttercup had not hatched from a golden egg.

"I'm – uh – I'm just writing down our

story," replied Frog. "About the golden egg and the mighty prince."

"It's most royal of you to practise your quill-craft," she said, "but it's past both our bedtimes and we have a big day tomorrow: the flower needs watering, the potato needs picking, the clouds need counting…"

"We did all that yesterday – and the day before," huffed Frog.

"We could always practise your camouflage," Buttercup suggested.

"What do I have to hide from? There's no one here but us," said Frog, unleashing a loud and deliberate sigh. He hopped down from his chair and into bed.

"So, what story would you like?" said Buttercup, as she tucked him in. "I could tell you about the time I rode the Queen's newnicorns? Or the time the King

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out-bragged the Baron of Bragons? Or when the sunbirds gave the Queen a ray of light for her birthday?" She glanced at Frog's story. "Or about the golden egg that hatched a mighty prince…"

"You could tell me about the End of the World," Frog said.

"Again? There's nothing more to tell," Buttercup sighed, rubbing her eyes. "Scorched earth … blackened skies … catastrophe."

"Catastrophe," repeated Frog, in a reverie. "Does anyone live there?"

"Of course not," sighed Buttercup. "How could anyone live at the End of the World?"

"I don't know, it's just – I'm a prince," said Frog. "Do I really have to stay on this island forever? It feels like I'm meant for something more … princely."

Buttercup stiffened. She took a deep breath and looked at her feet. By the time she looked up she had put on a smile. "What did you dream last night? Do you remember?" she asked.

Frog remembered his not uncommon dream immediately. "I was in the sky, higher than everything, higher than the stars, looking down on the world," he replied.

"Did it feel real?" she asked. Frog nodded. "So, can you fly higher than the stars?"

"No, but—"

"No. Just because you feel something doesn't make it real," said Buttercup quickly. "You were destined to be a great ruler, Frog – I'm sure you would have been. But that world is gone. The World has Ended. We and this island are all that is left. I brought you here and built you a home and kept you

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safe. It's just you and me, forever and ever."

"I know, but … forever is ages," huffed Frog.

Buttercup let out a chuckle. "You're a good boy, Frog," she said, kissing him on the head.

Frog knew what she would say as she put out the lamp – she had said the same thing every night since he'd hatched from his golden egg.

"Sleep well, Royal Majesty, Lord of all Kingdoms, Rightful Ruler of the World … Prince Frog."