

Mike and the Magic Mirror

by Elizabeth Trach

One day while playing in the garden, Mike found a very tiny toad. The toad was brown with a small green stripe on its side. Mike watched it hop along the ground and waited patiently. On its next jump, he held out his hands.

Plop! The tiny toad landed on Mike's palm, and he quickly covered it with his other hand to make a cup around the animal. Mike opened his thumb like a door and peered into the small cave of his hands.

"Please let me out!" cried the toad.

"You can talk?" asked Mike. "That's amazing!"

"Yes, and I will give you a gift if you set me free," said the toad.

"What kind of gift?"

"I have a magic mirror. Carry me to the broken flower pot in the corner of the garden and I will show you."

So Mike did. He gently placed the toad on the ground near the pot. The toad hopped into the pot through a large crack that formed his front door. After a minute, the toad pushed a small piece of shiny glass through the hole. Mike picked it up.

The toad hid in the pot, and Mike could only see its eyes. "This mirror will let you see anything you want. You just have to ask." And with that, the toad disappeared into its home.

Mike held up the glass. All he saw was his own eye when he held it up close. "Mirror," said Mike, "May I please see my dog?"

The glass became cloudy and white. When the clouds cleared, Mike could see his dog, Shep, taking a nap on his bed.

Mike was very excited. It really was magic! He knew exactly who he wanted to see next. "Mirror, show me my dad."

The mirror became cloudy again, and this time Mike saw a large ship in the middle of the ocean. Mike's dad was standing on its deck in his Navy uniform. He was smiling.

"Now I can see Dad whenever I want!" shouted Mike. "It will be so good to say goodnight at bedtime, even if he can't hear me. Oh, thank you, Toad!"

Mike took his magic mirror inside to keep it safe. He was very glad that he found the friendly toad and the magic mirror. He planned to use it every night until Dad came home again.

Questions

1. What does *palm* mean here: “The tiny toad landed on Mike's palm, and he quickly covered it with his other hand to make a cup around the animal”?
2. What is Mike’s dad's job?
3. How do you think Mike feels about his dad?
4. What would you ask to see if you had a magic mirror?