

# The Curse of the Parrots

Long, long ago, there was a kingdom where giants lived. The giants never spoke because they believed that words were wicked. To speak, for them, was to lie, to quarrel, and to create confusion. Therefore, no one spoke.

But the son of the king, Galdor, was different. He could speak! He loved words, but his father always told him to be quiet. The giants believed that speaking would bring a curse. Since Galdor had no one to talk to, he found a little parrot in the forest and started telling it things. Every day, he would tell the parrot stories and the little bird learned every word.

One day, the kingdom was invaded by foes. The giants could not speak and hence did not know how to fight back and attack. Galdor could not remain silent anymore and shouted:

"We are under attack! To arms!"

But the king was furious. "Talking is not allowed!" he shouted, and turned his son to stone. Galdor's last words remained in the parrot's mind:

"I was here. And I spoke."

From that day, parrots have known how to speak. They imitate the words they hear, but they can never tell their own stories. For they carry the voice of a prince who was cursed for speaking.