



## DIARY OF A PRINCESS IN DISCOVERY

Our heroine, Princess Joana, lives in a water kingdom. Her authoritative father intends for her to become queen one day, but she would rather devote herself to her faith and God. So she decides to run away and join a convent. She doesn't get far though before water nymphs lure her to dry land, where she discovers a new culture and exotic customs.

The king invites her to his palace; in the garden, she comes upon a well that is being used as a prison for the king's three sons, one of whom had betrayed him. A spell has been cast on them, and they may never leave unless it is broken. One of the sons, Gonzalo, pleads with Princess Joana to intercede with the king; she is only too happy to do so, as she has fallen in love with the young man.

She assures the king that his sons will remain loyal to him, and promises that if they don't, she will join them in the well. She manages to persuade the king, who tells her that the spell will be lifted if she throws three loaves of bread into the well and calls out the names of his sons. This works as promised for the first two sons, but when it was Gonzalo's turn, she ties a cord around the loaf because she doesn't want to lose him. The loaf breaks, blood runs out and screams are heard: Gonzalo tells her that she has broken his heart. She begs him not to die and jumps into the well to find him; both are carried away by the water, and she never sees Gonzalo again.

Two years go by, which is when, in fact, the tale begins: Princesse Joana is writing in her diary on the tile walls of the well. When she gets to the end, she can suddenly see that the well isn't a prison at all, that what she needs is simply to see it from a new perspective, and she will find a way out—perhaps she should follow the water rather than struggle to return to the land. So she heeds a call that she doesn't quite understand, one that leads her to new discoveries.

*"Diary of a Princess in Discovery" is drawn from three famous works in Portuguese literature: the pre-Roman legend "As três mouras encantadas"; the biography of Santa Princesa Joana, patroness of Aveiro (1452-1590); and the epic poem "Os Lusíadas" (1572) by Luís de Camões.*