

# Frogs

by Tantra Bensko

The frog was splayed after its operation in the science lab, but not forsaken. He knew that his wife still loved him, even though he was in an advanced state of dissection. "Oooooo, Mdntf, let's hide under the table and touch tongues," she said one day during a family gathering to discuss the answers to the dilemmas facing frogdom. It was a difficult time for family unity, because frogs were being rounded up left and right to be taken to the labs. And it had been several months since any frogs had fallen from the sky to replace them. Special agent frogs, they were, the Forte Team.

"Yes, NOLtcap, let's!" They ducked under the table, and she held him tightly around the waist, making it easier to get to his face, as his remaining organs were falling outwards more than ever. She liked having the chance to show him how devoted she was, to overlook the lack of a skin covering over so much of his body. She loved him even more because such intense devotion was required, and it even had become somewhat of a fetish for her.

She felt his froggy fat clumps against her skin. She had read the results of some of the science lab's results of various tests, when she visited him while he was locked up. When we are touching something soft, we feel that the person we are talking with is feeling softer feelings towards us. Just as when we are holding a hot coffee, we feel the person we are talking with feels warm towards us. And we feel warmer towards him.

So, feeling the soft fat against her made her feel more of the matronly long term cuddly wifely feelings. She felt herself merging with his soul more soundly. Something about looking inside him also made her feel she was closer to his inner secrets than before. That she had penetrated the outer skin of his persona.

Whap!

She went down before she knew what hit her. The 4 firings of the neurons required for the conscious mind to register something in the 500 milliseconds necessary for that hadn't happened. The blow had anesthetized her by cutting off the last 2 firing pulses, so she was simply stunned, and looked around, blinking.

She held her hand up to her husband in a graceful, fragile manner. Whap!

Apparently, some of the dissection affects, with the pins stuck in every which way, was putting changes of directional torque onto the pressure on the frog's brain, as his organs were moving outwards day by day, sagging without the protective skin. It seemed to have changed his personality considerably.

Whap Whap Whap WHAP WHAP **WHAP!!!!**

She tried to escape his blows, but the only way out was into the drain and down the hole, pulling the strainer over her. It hadn't been cleaned, and the nasty food in it deterred him, and he threw his hand around at the end of his rigid arms while making sounds. He didn't care that much. Good riddance.

It was time for a rampage.

He hadn't felt like that since he was a teenager. With his arms open wide and tacked to his version of his cross to bear, he felt invincible, and out for revenge. He picked up a bottle of vodka with his mouth, broke the end of it off, and turned his face up, letting it slide down his throat. "NOW I'll show them what's what! All of them!"

He ran out into the street, in front of traffic, and was run over by a houseboat. It was being carried on a flatbed truck. The houseboat was shaped like a little red shack with a slanted, pointed roof, and a little chimney that was bent.

His wife happened to be under the street at the time, in the sewer, and pushed put the round lid and ran over to him. She screamed, as only a female frog who has been attacked and then seen her attacker, her deepest love, lying before her, can.

Zoooosh! She was nearly run over herself. Or, “runned over,” as her family said, being from the rural south. She grinned about that with a twist of her big frog lips. They said “runned,” yet they'd never seen her educated husband as good enough for her.

She pressed her apron with her hands. She would have to make do. She would have to begin again. She would have to kiss PlllO.

She dodged traffic and ran to the house down the street, where, PllO lived. When he answered the door, she stuck out her tongue.

He stepped back, as she had nasty food on her from the drain. And she smelled of sewer. “What are you doing?! You're married! To my best friend! How dare you!?” Whap! Whap Whap!

She fell on the ground, on top of some broken crockery, from his blows, and started sobbing as only a spurned frog so recently widowed can do.

She got up and ran over the hills, bleeding, to the science lab. She threw herself onto the table, and spread open her arms and legs, panting. “Take me. Do to me what you will.”

The scientist grabbed her, and sliced her open, sticking pins into her, taking out organs here and there, and logging her movements. She swooned.

He was studying the difference in time between when a stimulus occurs and our conscious perception of it. The time before we are conscious of it, we react with out brain stem, and our subconscious. If the stimulus goes away before the 500 ms, it stays in the subconscious. He was theorizing away.

She was swooning dramatically, and that told him something. She had a highly developed sense of—something.

He had already learned the theory that our impulses go towards the future and bounce back. That we react right away to the stimulus, before we have an actual chance to experience it. So, our signals go towards the future, bounce back to us, and make us know to react, because the future knows the stimulus occurs. Because, by then, we have registered it.

He petted the frog in her little apron, who was panting as if she had had too much emotion to handle already. What was in her future, the little thing?

Whap! Whap Whap Whap!!!

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The scientist said “OW!” and picked up his foot, which was being pummeled by this froglette's flattened husband's best friend. “OW OW!”

“I knew you had her in here!” He cried. He punched the scientist so roughly, that the man decided it was time for some coffee, and then, maybe a bathroom break. He let the irate frog be.

Something is changing, he thought. Something indeed.

The frog hopped over to the lady frog and put his head on her splayed lap, dejectedly. "I'm so very sorry. I saw your husband in the street. Of course I had no idea. You must have been beside yourself when you came to me. I forgive you, dear. What have you gotten yourself into now?"

"Honey, I figured, if he's dead, I may as well....."

"Dead? Heavens, no, dear. He's not dead! Just very, very flat. He was running amok. Quite a bit, really, like a card. He's been through a lot, I tell you what."

He pulled her off the table, and she hopped, splayed, organs dripping, to the window, and looked towards the street. There was her husband, whom she had assumed was dead, who had recovered consciousness. He had a crazed look in his eye, and a tire track down his pulsing spleen.

She looked at her husband's best friend. Her eyes were wide, the whites at the top showing maniacally. Her big mouth was open, the tongue off to one side.

"I can't help it!" She bawled. "I love you! I always have! Hold me!"

He reached out tentatively to her skinless organs, the pins here and there at odd angles, the mucus and tear swollen face, the crazed eyes, and pulled his hand back again, as it was getting too close to the nasty food still stuck on her from the drain, and the nameless brown from the sewer.

"My husband can go wild for all I care, and I think he will. I can see him chasing women now, frog women everywhere. Everywhere."

“But he's flat as a *card*. In fact, he could be used as a Tarot card. He could be infused with great obscure and occult meaning by a witchy woman some day, if anyone picks him up. He could be used very wisely to tell fortunes, as he is conscious as well as being flat. That's highly unusual, Miss.”

“Well, do you want me or not?”

“Want you? You're my best friend's wife? What do you take me for? A closet luster? Let me take you home, dear.”

She threw herself down on the floor, sobbing uncontrollably. “I might as well be a card too, then.” She flung herself out the window, but her pins got stuck, so she was stranded in the air outside the laboratory. Her longed-for lover carefully disentangled her, and tried to catch her before she fell three stories to the parking lot below. But he couldn't hold on, and she splatted.

She didn't really feel like moving.

A car ran over her.

She regained consciousness that evening.

When she did, she thought again about her ambition to be a card. She was a mature frog woman with ideals. She wanted to be a good card if she was going to be one. She meditated on what she would represent. She wasn't really sure. She induced the hypnogogic state of mind. She asked it the question.

As she lay there, on the asphalt, her subconscious bubbled forth. She started seeing visions, as her brain-waves slowed to the Theta level.

She saw pink frog fat clouds, in the sunset, stippled by the sounds of crickets that synthesiastically moved the shapes of the fat clouds. She heard melodies she remembered vaguely from a music box from Prague. She felt more deeply, and saw that her worth was connected to her need for affection. Her worth as a female lay in being appreciated by another. By someone male. And otherwise, she was worthless. She saw herself before her, an ugly frog lady lurching along in her vision, unloved, forever, damned, torn apart at the end of her existence as happens when entering a black hole, and thrown into its nothingness.

Alternatively, she saw herself as a card, picked up by a woman with a turban, a soothsayer, and she felt — worthless. She saw herself picked up by a man in a suit, used for scrying, Crowleyesque ceremonial magic, or John Dee-like spying codes, and she felt useful. She came to a conclusion.

She had problems. From her childhood with her dad.

He had never loved her.

Or so she thought.

When her father walked along at just that synchronicitous moment, and picked her up, and then walked over to the street, and picked up her husband, and put them in his car, and drove off, she felt useful. Her father was a magician. He would use them well. He wouldn't just look at the cards randomly picked in some damn spread. No.

If he picked them from his stack of unusual cards, he would let his fingers linger over them, as his subconscious, knowing which one was which on some level, would feel which card was the true one to answer his question. Maybe he would pick her. Maybe he wouldn't.

And more likely, he would place the cards with intention, magical intention, around him in a circle, her, and her husband, and whatever other animals flattened into cards that he had picked up off the roads, the cards' meaning divine and vivid to his genius brain, and do his rituals in the center of them. He would invoke the watchtowers. He would chant. He would go into the depths of cosmic love. He would fly. Fly into the higher levels of himself. Using her. Using her husband. Using every tool at his disposal.

Because he was a real ceremonial magician. And he would finally accept her, and her husband as something of measurable value.

