

There once lived a King and Queen in a great kingdom far away. After being childless for years, they were finally blessed with a lovely baby daughter whom they named Aurora. The King and Queen were extremely happy and held a grand feast to celebrate her birth.

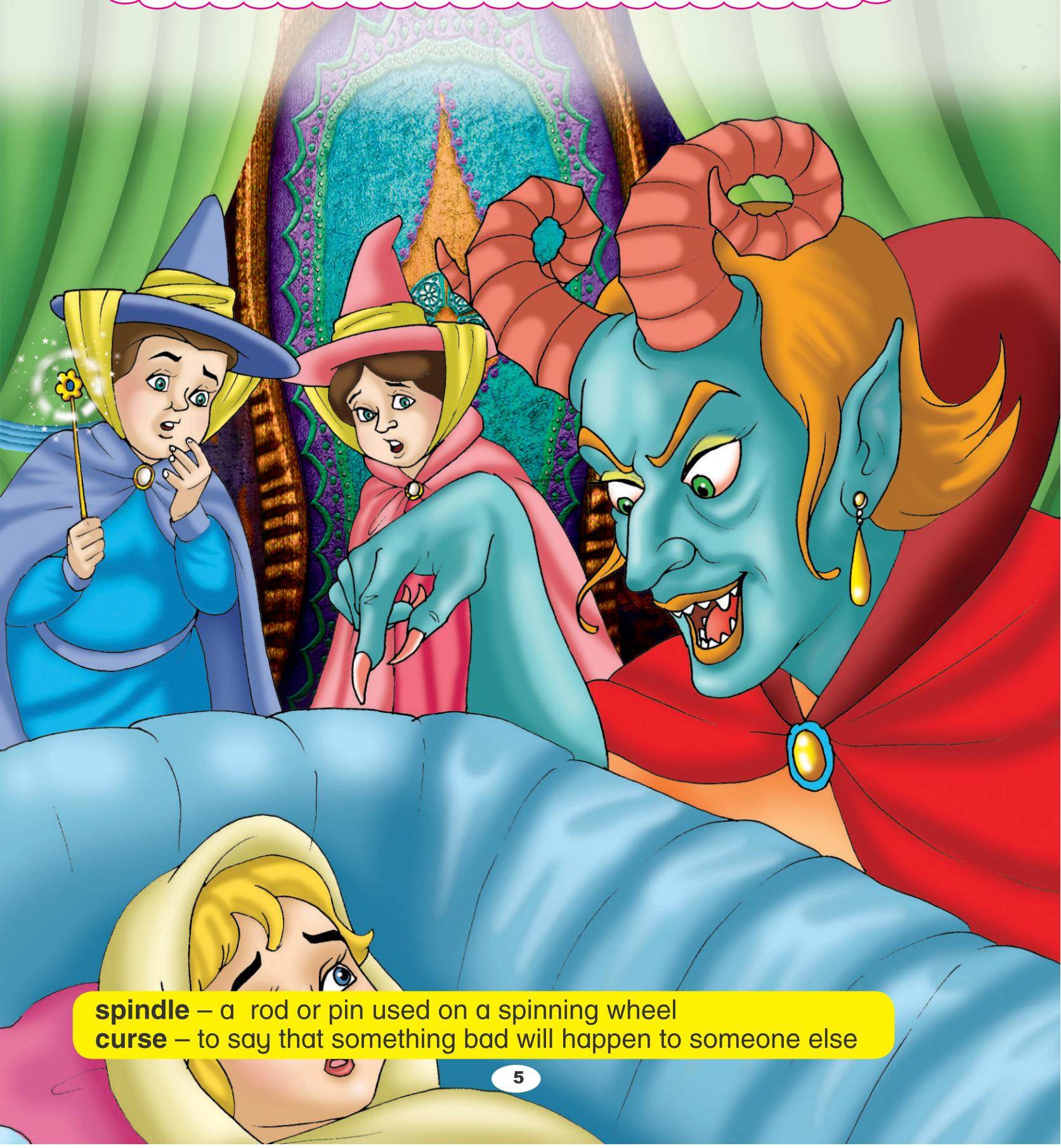


They invited twelve fairies to a special dinner to bless the child. The twelve fairies were served food on gold plates. Some of the fairies blessed Aurora with intelligence, some with great beauty and others blessed her with other good qualities.

Just as the twelfth fairy was about to bless the child, an ugly, wicked witch arrived at the palace, fuming with anger. The witch was so angry because the King had not invited her to the feast.



The witch cursed Aurora and said, “The princess will become very beautiful but when she turns sixteen, she will prick her finger on a **spindle** and die.” The **curse** shocked everyone at the palace and made them very sad.



**spindle** – a rod or pin used on a spinning wheel

**curse** – to say that something bad will happen to someone else

The Queen cried in **agony** and the King was **furious**. No one knew what to do to remove the curse. Fortunately, the twelfth fairy had not given her blessing yet. The fairy said, "I shall bless Aurora that though she may prick her finger, she will not die. She will fall into deep sleep lasting a hundred years."



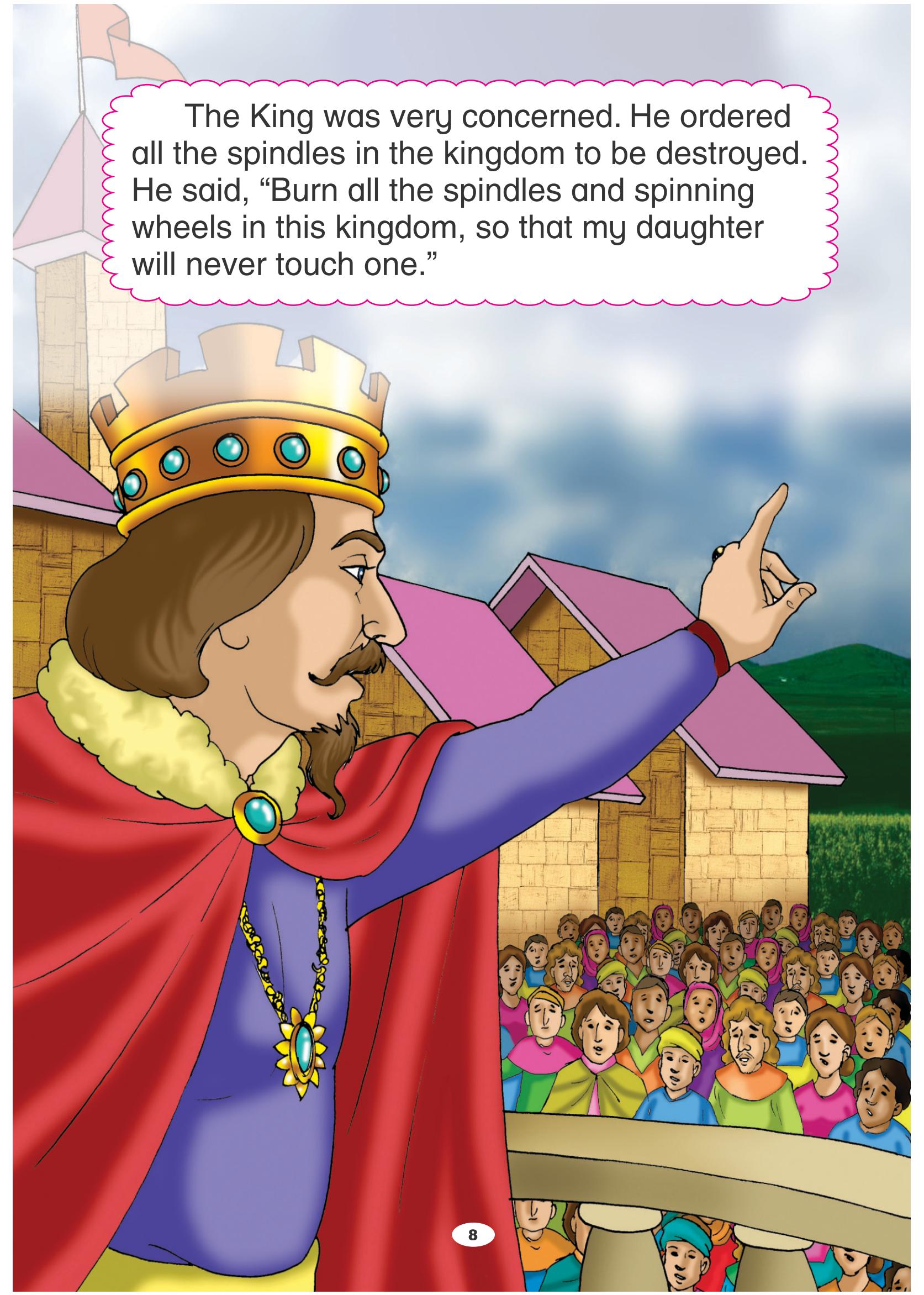
**agony** – suffering  
**furious** – very angry

The fairy continued, "When Aurora goes to sleep, so will everyone else in the kingdom. The kingdom shall arise again only when Aurora awakens. This way, nobody will feel sad."

"But how will she awaken?" asked the King. The fairy replied, "A brave, handsome prince will come to **slay** a dragon. He will then see Aurora and give her a kiss of love. That will awaken the princess."



**slay** – kill



The King was very concerned. He ordered all the spindles in the kingdom to be destroyed. He said, "Burn all the spindles and spinning wheels in this kingdom, so that my daughter will never touch one."