

## Chapter 6

# To the Rescue

. . . Finally, he heard a faint rustling. “Sedgey!” he thought, but when he turned around he saw, instead, two enormous eyes peering out at him from the tall reeds. Fleck was stricken with fear. Then suddenly, from *within* the murky water, he was seized by the ankles and completely submerged. Defenseless against the unseen attacker, the Young Rana was pulled face down along the bottom of the pond, clouds of mud swirling around him. Thrashing frantically, he tried to escape the unrelenting clutches but the strong grip tightened all the more. Without air in his lungs, the small frog soon lost strength and yielded to something much stronger than himself.

When his limp body was dragged onto shore, the Young Rana made a last desperate struggle to get free. Glancing over his shoulder he saw a grotesque face with fiendish-looking eyes and mandible jaws. Fleck heard himself scream, and as terror engulfed him like a black fog, he fainted. . . .

## Chapter 10

# Ceremony of Recognition

From the top of a hill overlooking the Majestic, two shadowy figures, one tall and one short, also watched.

“How they *disgust* me!” hissed the smaller of the two, a young frog. “With all their—their *frolic*! It *sickens* me!”

Standing beside the young frog, very near the edge of the hilltop, stood the second figure, a tall frog clad in black.

“But we could still take this day away from them,” continued the young frog, “if we could take away that *tadpole*—their—their *Y o u n g R a n a*!”

The tall figure remained fixed, still staring below, his face showing faintly in the glimmer of the many lights burning that night in Ranidae.

“Let *me*, Uncle!” whispered the young frog, aloud. “Let *me* destroy him! And then—and then take my proper place—by your side!”

The older frog turned and glared fiercely at the young one.

“Or *behind* you, if you wish,” said the young frog, shrinking. “Whatever you *want* of me, Uncle. I will do as you say. But *please*—please tell me that I may at *least* put an end to that tadpole! *The Young Rana of Ranidae!*” The young frog glanced up slyly and watched a queer smile spread over the older frog’s face. . . .

## Contents

Foreword . . . . .	xiii
ONE	
Monsters from the North? . . . . .	1
TWO	
The Towering Castle . . . . .	6
THREE	
Nightmare Awakened . . . . .	12
FOUR	
A Few Things Learned . . . . .	19
FIVE	
A Call in the Night . . . . .	22
SIX	
To the Rescue . . . . .	29
SEVEN	
Bad News or Good? . . . . .	35

EIGHT		
The Northern Border .....		42
NINE		
The False One .....		48
TEN		
Ceremony of Recognition .....		56
ELEVEN		
The Demon .....		63
TWELVE		
Sent Away .....		68
THIRTEEN		
Mysterious Young Frog .....		77
FOURTEEN		
Bufo's Forest .....		87
FIFTEEN		
In Search of Nectar .....		92
SIXTEEN		
The Test .....		100
SEVENTEEN		
Treasures .....		109
EIGHTEEN		
The Cave .....		116
NINETEEN		
The Stranger .....		123
TWENTY		
An Adventurous Frog .....		128

TWENTY-ONE		
<b>A Legend</b> .....		135
TWENTY-TWO		
<b>The Secret</b> .....		141
TWENTY-THREE		
<b>Of Discoveries and Failure</b> .....		148
TWENTY-FOUR		
<b>Primula's Warning</b> .....		156
TWENTY-FIVE		
<b>An Encounter</b> .....		161
TWENTY-SIX		
<b>Rhaco!</b> .....		167
TWENTY-SEVEN		
<b>The Map</b> .....		174
TWENTY-EIGHT		
<b>Betrayed</b> .....		182
TWENTY-NINE		
<b>A Spy!</b> .....		187
THIRTY		
<b>Rhaco's Army</b> .....		191
THIRTY-ONE		
<b>An Eyewitness</b> .....		196
THIRTY-TWO		
<b>Hidden Message</b> .....		204
THIRTY-THREE		
<b>Out of the Dark!</b> .....		210

THIRTY-FOUR		
<b>Traitor Exposed</b> .....		218
THIRTY-FIVE		
<b>Sentenced</b> .....		226
THIRTY-SIX		
<b>More News, New Fears</b> .....		231
THIRTY-SEVEN		
<b>Revenge!</b> .....		237
THIRTY-EIGHT		
<b>Under Attack!</b> .....		242
THIRTY-NINE		
<b>A Plan Too Late</b> .....		249
FORTY		
<b>A Battle Fierce</b> .....		257
FORTY-ONE		
<b>A Friend, An Enemy</b> .....		267
FORTY-TWO		
<b>The Young Horned Brow</b> .....		274
FORTY-THREE		
<b>Saved!</b> .....		285
FORTY-FOUR		
<b>Mission Accomplished</b> .....		293
FORTY-FIVE		
<b>The Alarm</b> .....		299
FORTY-SIX		
<b>Flight to Safety</b> .....		305

FORTY-SEVEN		
<b>Narrow Escape</b> .....		312
FORTY-EIGHT		
<b>Enemy Assembled</b> .....		320
FORTY-NINE		
<b>A New Direction</b> .....		326
FIFTY		
<b>Death from All Sides</b> .....		336
FIFTY-ONE		
<b>Hope Dashed</b> .....		343
FIFTY-TWO		
<b>Out of Desperation</b> .....		353
<b>Pronunciation Glossary</b> .....		367