



The Sleeping Beauty and Other Tales (Illustrated)

Charles Perrault

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This book of fairy tales contains illustrated version of the following stories: The Sleeping Beauty, Blue Beard, Cinderella, and Beauty and the Beast.

The Sleeping Beauty in the Woods (French: La Belle au bois dormant, "The Beauty sleeping in the wood") by Charles Perrault is a classic fairytale involving a beautiful princess, enchantment of sleep, and a handsome prince. Written as an original literary tale, it was first published by Charles Perrault in *Histoires ou contes du temps passé* in 1697.

Perrault transformed the tone of Basile's "Sole, Luna, e Talia". Beside differences in tone, the most notable differences in the plot is that, in Basile's version, the sleep did not stem from a curse, but was prophesied; that the king did not wake Talia from the sleep with a kiss, but raped her, and when she gave birth to two children, one sucked on her finger, drawing out the piece of flax that had put her to sleep, which woke her; and that the woman who resented her and tried to eat her and her children was not the king's mother but his jealous wife. The mother-in-law's jealousy is less motivated, although common in fairy tales.

There are earlier elements that contributed to the tale, in the medieval courtly romance *Perceforest* (published in 1528), in which a princess named Zellandine falls in love with a man named Troylus. Her father sends him to perform tasks to prove himself worthy of her, and while he is gone, Zellandine falls into an enchanted sleep. Troylus finds her and impregnates her in her sleep; when their child is born, he draws from her finger the flax that caused her sleep. She realizes from the ring he left her that the father was Troylus; he returns after his adventures to marry her.

Some folklorists have analyzed Sleeping Beauty as indicating the replacement of the lunar year (with its thirteen months, symbolically depicted by the full thirteen fairies) by the solar year (which has twelve, symbolically the invited fairies). This, however, founders on the issue that only in the Grimms' tale is the wicked fairy the thirteenth fairy; in Perrault's, she is the eighth. The basic elements of the story can also be interpreted as a nature allegory: the Princess represents Nature, the Wicked Fairy is Winter, who puts the Court to sleep with pricks of frost until the Prince (Spring) cuts away the brambles with his sword (a sunbeam) to allow the sun to awaken sleeping Nature.

Charles Perrault (12 January 1628 – 16 May 1703) was a French author and member of the Académie française. He laid the foundations for a new literary genre, the fairy tale, with his works derived from pre-existing folk tales. The best known of his tales include *Le Petit Chaperon rouge* (Little Red Riding Hood), *Cendrillon* (Cinderella), *Le Chat Botté* (Puss in Boots) and *La Barbe bleue* (Bluebeard). Many of Perrault's stories were rewritten by the Brothers Grimm, continue to be printed and have been adapted to opera, ballet (such as Tchaikovsky's *The Sleeping Beauty*), theatre, and film (Disney). Perrault was an influential figure in the 17th century French literary scene, and was the leader of the Modern faction during the Quarrel of the Ancients and the Moderns.

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