

Helena Haraštová & Štěpánka Sekaninová  
& Jakub Cenkl



CAN ANYONE CONTROL THIS JUNK?!



WHERE HAVE I LEFT MY APPLE?



# HEROES & VILLAINS OF FAIRY TALES



WHAT A BRAGGART.



B4U Publishing

H. Haraštová, Š. Sekaninová & J. Cenkl

HEROES & VILLAINS OF FAIRY TALES





**HEROES  
& VILLAINS  
OF FAIRY  
TALES**

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# INTRODUCTION

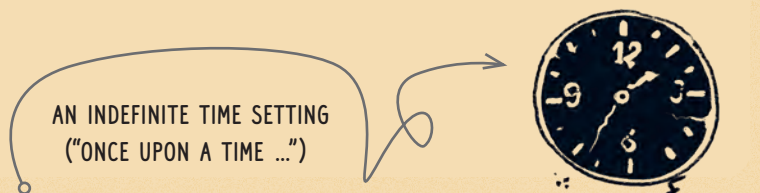
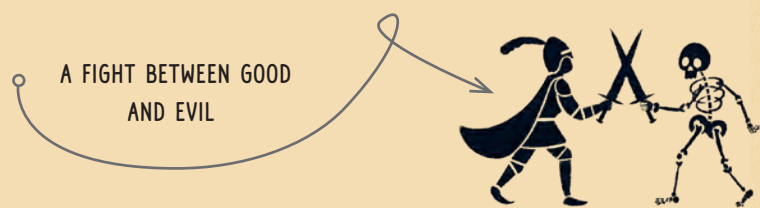
## CHARACTERS IN FAIRY TALES

Everyone likes fairy tales, don't they? You may be past the age for anxiously following Red Riding Hood's progress through the woods and hiding under the duvet in terror as Snow White bites into the poisoned apple. But the magic of the fairy tale will never let you go entirely, of that you can be sure. Not even many years from now, when you are all grown up!



## WHAT ARE FAIRY TALES?

Everyone is familiar with fairy tales, and how could they not be, when they are the very first stories many of us encounter? But what are characteristics of the fairy tale? Although fairy tales aren't exactly 'true to life', at their core is a truth that applies in all realms and at all times ...



## SCHOOL FOR GROWN-UPS

Did you know that in the past fairy tales were not intended for the ears of children? Experienced storytellers would use them to pass on ancient wisdom and knowledge of the world to their friends and neighbours, so teaching people to distinguish good from evil in many various forms. Although most people could neither read nor write, fairy tales gave them access to the wisdom of their ancestors. This explains the many recurring motifs in fairy tales – they are true references to the real world.



## MYTHS

In the dim and distant past, fairy tales were like religious myths: stories of divine beings and the creation of the world and humankind which explained the workings of life on Earth. People once had absolute faith in them.

I teach people about laziness and selfishness.



## LEGENDS

What about legends? Unlike fairy tales, legends are built around truth. A legend is an invented story with its basis in real historical events. Legends are set in a definite place at a definite time, and some of them feature people we know really existed.



## FABLES

Some fairy tales are inspired by fables. Unlike fairy tales, fables have nothing to do with magic and the supernatural. They teach us about rules that apply among people.

## WHO THOUGHT THEM UP?

Classic tales (known as 'folk tales') have been passed from generation to generation for hundreds, maybe thousands of years. We have no idea who thought them up. We do know, however, many authors of more recent and modern fairy tales (many writers create beautiful fairy tales even today!).

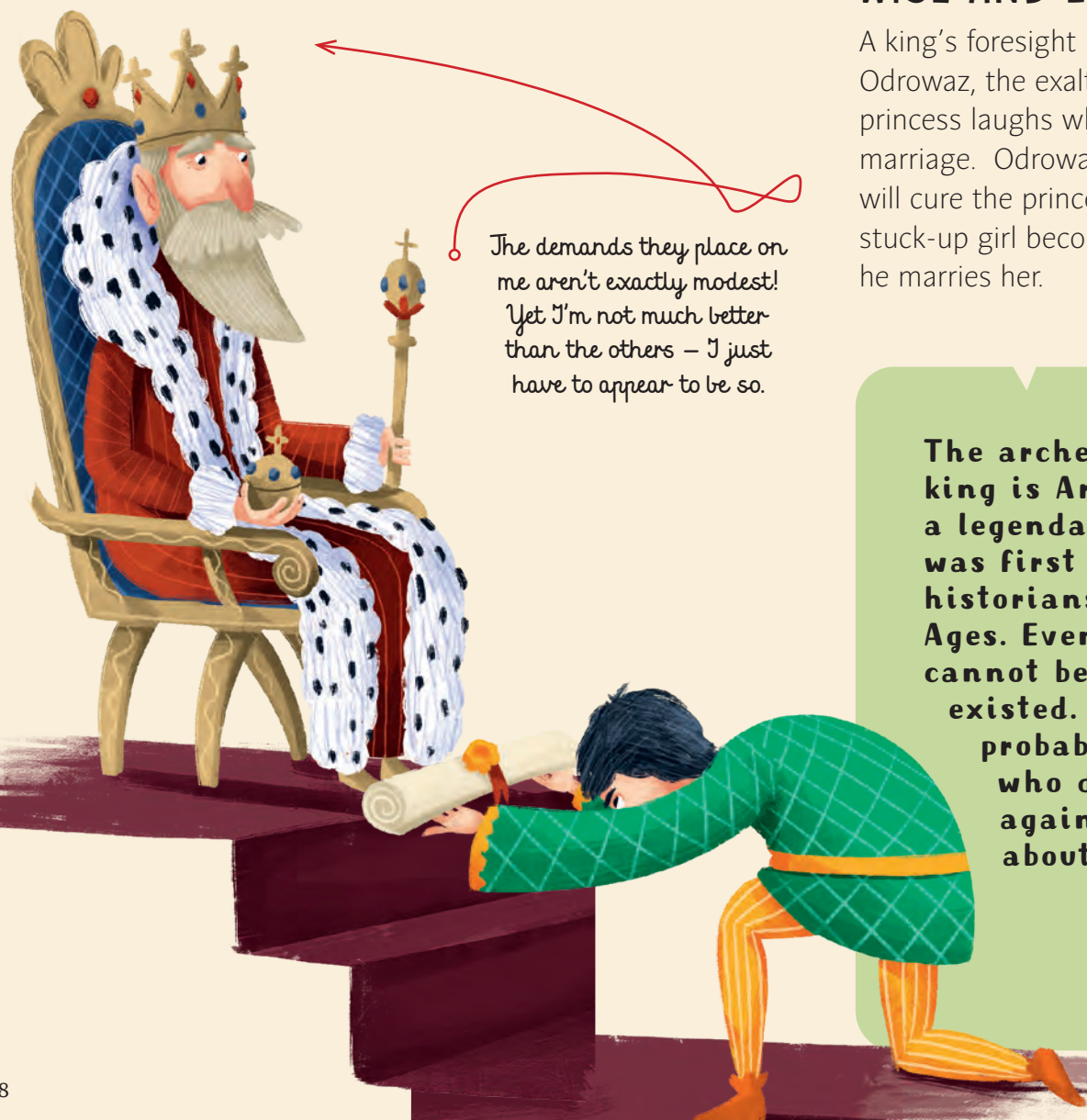
## FAIRY-TALE HEROES AND VILLAINS

In this book, you will find a detailed, albeit surely incomplete, survey of the most interesting fairy-tale characters from stories from all over the world. These heroes and antagonists are good through and through or evil to the core. So have no fear, there's no danger of boredom ...

# KINGS

## A MODEL OF PERFECT JUSTICE

When you are a king, your subjects demand perfection and wisdom from you, whether you like it or not. In many fairy tales, a king represents supreme justice and the ideal ruler (perhaps because king's subjects in the real world longed for such a ruler in vain). Sometimes, an enlightened king will walk among the common people in disguise, after which he will help the impoverished and punish the evil-doers he has met.



*The demands they place on me aren't exactly modest! Yet I'm not much better than the others – I just have to appear to be so.*

*What a hellish test of patience that was!*



## WISE AND LOVING HUSBAND

A king's foresight is truly remarkable. Think of Odrowaz, the exalted ruler at whom the proud princess laughs when he asks for her hand in marriage. Odrowaz comes up with a trick that will cure the princess of her conceit. After the stuck-up girl becomes a modest, kind woman, he marries her.

**The archetype of the gallant king is Arthur of Camelot, a legendary ruler who was first mentioned by historians in the Middle Ages. Even today, academics cannot be sure that he truly existed. If he did, he was probably a Celtic king who defended England against Saxon invaders about 1,500 years ago.**



## WORRIED FATHER

Almost without exception, men in crowns have crafty and/or trying offspring. Many kings are widowers besides, so they must raise their children alone. That this is no easy matter is clear from any fairy tale you care to mention: here the king's daughter has taken the fancy of a nine-headed dragon, there the king is father to twelve teenage girls who mysteriously dance away twelve pairs of shoes every night, elsewhere the king's rascal son is of an age to marry and assume the burdens of government but prefers to spend his time playing in the woods!



*Those with crowns on their heads and those with straw in their shoes are equally clueless as parents.*

## COUNSELLORS

Where there is a king, there must be king's counsellors – men chosen to advise the ruler in all matters of importance, for they are considered experts on everything. Much of the advice they give is bad, as they tend to be treacherous and sly, with their own interests at heart.



*Such vilification over a few mistakes! Do you take us for walking encyclopaedias?*

## A ONCE-BLIND KING IS MADE TO SEE

Some fairy tales show that even the most powerful ruler has failings in relation to his family (such as the king who realizes the depth of his daughter's feelings for him after she admits that she loves him as she loves salt). In fairy tales, such fathers come to see where they are going wrong with their families and to correct their mistakes.

# NON-EUROPEAN RULERS

*Beautiful, disarming  
Scheherazade! Only she could heal  
my broken heart!*



## SULTAN

We encounter the sultan, a ruler with a splendid turban on his head, in fairy tales from Arabia and Persia. He sits on a magnificent throne surrounded by the dancers of his harem. As with a European king, the lives of a sultan's subjects are his to command. Some sultans are good, others wicked. The most famous of them, Shahryar, undergoes a gradual transformation – a ruthless ruler becomes an enlightened, kind one thanks to stories told to him over a thousand and one nights by his wise and loving Scheherazade.



## EMPEROR

Many Asian fairy-tale realms are ruled by an all-powerful emperor. He often covets things to which he has no right, not least objects and animals endowed with magic powers.

## TSAR

A tsar is an absolute monarch in fairy tales from Russia, Bulgaria and Serbia. Indeed, 'Tsar' was once the title of the rulers of these countries. Adventurous by nature, young tsars often travel to unknown lands. A case in point is Tsar Saltan, who finds his lost love and their son on a magical island ruled by swans.



## VIZIER

What counsellors are to a European king, viziers are to a ruler in an Arabian, Persian or Greek fairy tale. Among them, we find self-seeking opportunists on one hand and men dedicated to their ruler and their land on the other. In the story of the king Sabur, the vizier journeys with the sovereign to whom he is devoted to a faraway valley of wonders, where a plant grows that will enable Sabur's wife to bear their longed-for heir.

*You already know royal  
councillors are said to be  
masters of the house, the wisest  
and most cunning ... Well, we  
are cut from the same cloth.*



**A far more famous Russian fairy-tale hero is Ivan Tsarevich, the youngest son of a tsar. With great help from magical animals, Ivan saves abducted or enchanted princesses and catches the Firebird.**



# QUEENS

## LOVE AND A FIGHT FOR THE KING'S FAVOUR

Most fairy-tale queens feel true motherly love for their children. But what if a queen-to-be marries a widower king who has a daughter already? When this happens, most new queens make their stepdaughter's life a misery, for they see the innocent child as competition. Just remember the story of Snow White!

## VENGEFUL WITCH?

What happens when a king unwittingly marries a witch? Well, she uses her magic to avenge herself on a world that fails to laud her as she wishes to be lauded. Whether this queen is ruthless by nature or just unspeakably unhappy depends on the story.



*It's her fault: she should have been more careful.*



*My great-grandmother used to tell me that the greatest misfortune in life is an ungranted wish. O, how I suffer ...*



## LONGING FOR A CHILD

You're probably thinking it would be cool to be a queen and have everything you wish for at your fingertips! But some fairy-tale queens long for a child who refuses to be born. Sometimes a magic potion or a special dish will grant their wish, but (shush—!) the new mother's joy will not last long if the child is cursed (as in the fairy tale *The White Rope* or the famous *Briar Rose*).

# PRINCES

## MARRY? ME? NEVER!

A fairy-tale prince is young, handsome, mostly good and usually fearless. For his many virtues, he is often a listeners' favourite, not least after he has overcome his fundamental resistance to marriage. Luckily, this resistance is broken when he meets the most beautiful girl in the world. Before the wedding can take place, however, he must earn his bride by performing an act of heroism. As he battles with dragons, witches, evil sorcerers and the wilderness on his way to save the princess, he grows from unruly youth to sensible young man.



*A romantic prince on a white horse – nice to meet you!*

**A ROMANTIC PRINCE ON A WHITE HORSE**  
Fairy tales are filled with heroic rescuers appearing suddenly to free beautiful princesses from their suffering. But would anyone wait for the arrival of a prince on a white horse in real life? We are far more likely to free ourselves from a tricky situation by our own actions than by waiting for a miracle.




*I'm going late, hopefully my princess waits for me!*

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So is this really the end? Well, then let's play cards again!







WHAT?! STRAWBERRIES IN WINTER?!



**Mighty kings, valiant knights, beautiful princesses, hungry ogres, crafty elves, lazy Jacks and wicked witches are anything but old hat. Although fairy-tale heroes and villains have lived in a fantasy realm since time immemorial, they retain their attraction for generation after generation and still have something to tell us. Stories in which good triumphs over evil, love conquers hate, and truth and wisdom win out over lies and cunning, will live forever. This book will show you similarities and differences among fairy-tale characters from different parts of the world. How did fairy tales originate and how do they work? You will learn everything about heroes and villains of fairy tales and much more in this beautifully illustrated encyclopaedia.**



I HAUNT PERFECTLY. I MYSELF AM SCARED!



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