

Kate Forsyth's Long-Lost Fairy Tales: 21 Forgotten Tales Retold

AUTHOR

KATE FORSYTH

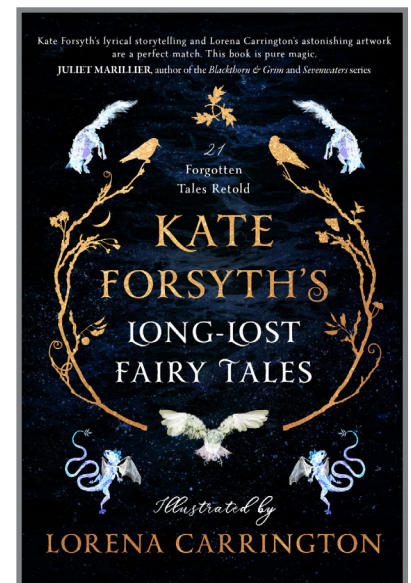
ILLUSTRATOR

LORENA CARRINGTON

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RECOMMENDED FOR: Lower Secondary



SYNOPSIS

Long, long ago, storytellers all around the world told tales of wonder both to enchant and entertain us, and also to teach us that—if we are good and kind and courageous enough—we can change the world for the better.

For this is what fairy tales do. They give us hope.

As we travel through the dark and dangerous world of the fairy tale, as we fight dragons and outwit ogres and save our sisters and brothers, we learn that we are capable of anything. And then we return to our own world with all that we have learned along the way, stronger and braver than before.

The stories in this book come from all the corners of the world. Some were told in deep time before history was recorded, and some were written not so long ago. All of them have been unjustly forgotten.

In this collection of long-lost fairy tales, author Kate Forsyth and illustrator Lorena Carrington work together to bring tales of wisdom, compassion and courage to life for the modern-day reader.

This enchantingly beautiful book will transform the way you think about fairy tales.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr Kate Forsyth is an award-winning author, poet, and storyteller. Her most recent novel is *Psykhe*, a reimagining of the ancient Greek myth of 'Eros and Psykhe'.

Other historical novels include *The Wild Girl*, the story of the forbidden romance behind the Grimm brothers' fairy tales which was named Most Memorable Love Story of 2013 and *Bitter Greens*, a retelling of 'Rapunzel' which won the 2015 American Library Association award for Best Historical Fiction.

Books for children include The Impossible Quest fantasy series, shortlisted for a KOALA Award and a YABBA Award; the Aurealis award-winning historical adventure series The Chain of Charms, and *The Puzzle Ring* which was short-listed for the 2009 Aurealis Award for Best Young Adult Novel. Kate's nonfiction books include *Searching for Charlotte: The Fascinating Story of Australia's First Children's Author*, co-written by her sister Belinda Murrell, which was longlisted for the 2021 Readings Non-Fiction Prize. Her collection of essays, *The Rebirth of Rapunzel: A Mythic Biography of the*

Maiden in the Tower, won the William Atheling Jr Award for Criticism.

Kate has a Doctorate of Creative Arts in fairy tale studies, and is also an accredited master storyteller with the Australian Guild of Storytellers. She was honoured with the 2018 Australian Fairy Tale Society Award for her significant contribution to the field of fairy tale studies.

You can discover more about her or book her in for an online workshop or performance at www.kateforsyth.com.au.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Lorena Carrington is an artist, illustrator and writer whose books have been published in Australia, USA, and Poland. She is well known in Australia for her illustration work in the field of fairy tales and picture books, in particular *Long-Lost Fairy Tales* with Kate Forsyth and *French Fairy Tales* and *Satin* with Sophie Masson.

Lorena designed and jointly coordinated the anthology *South of the Sun: Australian Fairy Tales for the 21st Century*, and has provided cover illustrations for many Australian and international publishers and independent authors. She also writes for older children. As a visual artist, Lorena exhibits her work regularly, and has held shows at many leading art galleries in Australia. She recently won the 2024 Biblio Art Prize People's Choice Award for her artwork *Deep Water*. Lorena also presents at literary and arts festivals, and visits schools and libraries to give talks and hold workshops on illustration, books and story.

She was the recipient of the 2020 Australian Fairy Tale Society award, for her 'outstanding contribution to the field of Australian Fairy Tales', and the 2023 May Gibbs Creative Time Fellowship. Her picture book *Satin* is a Children's Book Council of Australia Notable Book for 2024.

Lorena's illustrations are different from most. They were made from many separate photographs, montaged together to create each final image. The people you see in the illustrations are Kate's and Lorena's children, and a few friends; and the twigs, bones and leaves are all gathered from backyard and bushland. They were photographed against a backlight to create a silhouette, then digitally assembled and placed within multilayered photographic backgrounds. The human figures are made from themselves, while the wild creatures are built up from tiny fragments of the landscape.

You can find her work or book her for an online workshop at www.lorenacarrington.com.

STUDY NOTES

LANGUAGE

- Choose your favourite story in the book then answer the following questions:
 - Who is the hero of the story?
 - Who is the villain?
 - Where does the story take place?
 - In each tale, what is the primary challenge or obstacle the hero must overcome?
 - What is the magical element in the story? For example: the little wooden doll in 'Vasilisa the Wise'
- Many old tales have echoes or similarities to other old tales. What do the stories in this collection remind you of? How do they differ to the better-known fairy-tale plots?
- What lesson does each story teach? For example: loyalty, bravery, kindness, integrity, hard work, steadfastness of purpose, looking below the surface.
- The number three is often employed in fairy-tales—identify some stories where there is a pattern of three ie. the riders in 'Vasilisa the Wise'
- Fairy tales often contain binary oppositions such as good & evil, rich & poor, beautiful & ugly, strong & weak. How many can you identify?
 - Are there any stories that subvert the expected binary opposition?
- What traditional catchphrases are used?

- Fairy tales deal with personal transformation, and so people change in dramatic and often miraculous ways. A prince that is turned into a lion, for example, or a girl who is cursed with the head of a sheep. Is there any dramatic metamorphosis in the tale?
 - How about a subtler transformation, perhaps in the protagonist of the tale?
- Think about the language techniques used throughout the stories and then answer the following questions:
 - Are there any rhymes?
 - What motifs or phrases are repeated?
 - What figurative language has been used and why?
 - Has 'the Rule of Three' (a set of three trials or tribulations) been used?
 - Rhythm, rhyme and repetition are often used in fairy-tales. Why? Can you identify the use of these devices in the fairy tale that you chose?
- Many fairy tales have happy endings. Why is this important?
- Ancient oral storytelling techniques used techniques such as rhythm, rhyme & repetition. Which stories in this collection come from an oral tradition?
- Which are literary tales, invented and written down by an author?

THEMES

Bravery

- Many of the stories in *Kate Forsyth's Long-Lost Fairy Tales* explore the central theme of bravery—the courage to think for yourself, the strength of spirit to face up to cruelty and injustice, and the boldness to dream, invent and explore, and discover what the world has in store for you. Answer the below questions to help students explore the theme of bravery:
 - Do you know someone who has been very brave? What did they have to face?
 - What are some things that many people are afraid of?
 - What could they do to overcome that fear?
 - Remember a time when you were brave.
 - Who do you think was the bravest hero in this book? Why?
 - If you had to choose another fairy tale about courage to add to this book, which story would you choose? Why?

Kindness

- Who is the kindest person you know?
- Have you ever been hurt by someone's unkindness? How did it feel?
- Share one time when you were helped by someone else's kindness.
- What is one kind thing that you could do today?
- Who do you think was the most compassionate character in this book? Why?
- If you had to choose another fairy tale about the importance of kindness to add to this book, which story would you choose? Why?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

- Ask your students to rewrite a tale they know well. Give your students examples to choose from. These can be classic well-known tales like *Cinderella* or *Little Red Riding Hood*, or a story chosen from *Kate Forsyth's Long-Lost Fairy Tales*, or a tale from their own cultural background. Ask your students to choose a way to give an old tale a new twist. Here are some examples:
 - Tell the story from the villain's point of view ie. the witch in Hansel and Gretel.
 - Choose another character to be the protagonist ie. the boy who ended up with one swan's wing at the end of 'Six Swans'.
 - Change a character's gender.
 - Set the tale in an unexpected place or time.
 - Mash two tales together ie. a frog princess who has to dance in a glass slipper.
 - Tell it in first person instead of third.

- The Lion from 'The Singing Springing Lark' is made from all the objects below. Create something completely new. Will you make it scary? Or can you make something beautiful out of bits of dead leaves and toadstools?

