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**ENG 220-CAH: Mythology and Folklore (Honors)**  
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**Cinderella: Readings**

Eight Variants of “Cinderella”:

Charles Perrault, “Cinderella; or, The Little Glass Slipper” .....	<a href="#">1</a>
Catherine-Maire d'Aulnoy, “Finette Cendron” .....	<a href="#">4</a>
Jakob and Wilhelm Grimm, “Ashputtle” .....	<a href="#">10</a>
Tuan Ch'êng-shih, “Yeh-Hsien (A Chinese 'Cinderella')” .....	<a href="#">12</a>
“The Maiden, the Frog, and the Chief's Son (An African 'Cinderella')” .....	<a href="#">13</a>
“Oochigeaskw—The Rough-Faced Girl (A Native American 'Cinderella')” .....	<a href="#">14</a>
Grant, Campbell, adapter. “Walt Disney's 'Cinderella’” .....	<a href="#">15</a>
Sexton, Anne. “Cinderella” .....	<a href="#">16</a>
Bettleheim, Bruno. “Cinderella: A Story of Sibling Rivalry and Oedipal Conflicts” .....	<a href="#">17</a>
Yolen, Jane. “America's 'Cinderella.’” .....	<a href="#">21</a>
Rafferty, Terrence. “The Better to Entertain You With, My Dear.” .....	<a href="#">24</a>

## Charles Perrault: "Cinderella; or, The Little Glass Slipper"

Once there was a gentleman who married, for his second wife, the proudest and most haughty woman that was ever seen. She had, by a former husband, two daughters of her own, who were, indeed, exactly like her in all things. He had likewise, by another wife, a young daughter, but of unparalleled goodness and sweetness of temper, which she took from her mother, who was the best creature in the world.

No sooner were the ceremonies of the wedding over but the stepmother began to show herself in her true colors. She could not bear the good qualities of this pretty girl, and the less because they made her own daughters appear the more odious. She employed her in the meanest work of the house. She scoured the dishes, tables, etc., and cleaned madam's chamber, and those of misses, her daughters. She slept in a sorry garret, on a wretched straw bed, while her sisters slept in fine rooms, with floors all inlaid, on beds of the very newest fashion, and where they had looking glasses so large that they could see themselves at their full length from head to foot.

The poor girl bore it all patiently, and dared not tell her father, who would have scolded her; for his wife governed him entirely. When she had done her work, she used to go to the chimney corner, and sit down there in the cinders and ashes, which caused her to be called Cinderwench. Only the younger sister, who was not so rude and uncivil as the older one, called her Cinderella. However, Cinderella, notwithstanding her coarse apparel, was a hundred times more beautiful than her sisters, although they were always dressed very richly.

It happened that the king's son gave a ball, and invited all persons of fashion to it. Our young misses were also invited, for they cut a very grand figure among those of quality. They were mightily delighted at this invitation, and wonderfully busy in selecting the gowns, petticoats, and hair dressing that would best become them. This was a new difficulty for Cinderella; for it was she who ironed her sister's linen and pleated their ruffles. They talked all day long of nothing but how they should be dressed.

"For my part," said the eldest, "I will wear my red velvet suit with French trimming."

"And I," said the youngest, "shall have my usual petticoat; but then, to make amends for that, I will put on my gold-flowered cloak, and my diamond stomacher, which is far from being the most ordinary one in the world."

They sent for the best hairdresser they could get to make up their headpieces and adjust their hairdos, and they had their red brushes and patches from Mademoiselle de la Poche.

They also consulted Cinderella in all these matters, for she had excellent ideas, and her advice was always good. Indeed, she even offered her services to fix their hair, which they very willingly accepted. As she was doing this, they said to her, "Cinderella, would you not like to go to the ball?"

"Alas!" said she, "you only jeer me; it is not for such as I am to go to such a place."

"You are quite right," they replied. "It would make the people laugh to see a Cinderwench at a ball."

Anyone but Cinderella would have fixed their hair awry, but she was very good, and dressed them perfectly well. They were so excited that they hadn't eaten a thing for almost two days. Then they broke more than a dozen laces trying to have themselves laced up tightly enough to give them a fine slender shape. They were continually in front of their looking glass. At last the happy day came. They went to court, and Cinderella followed them with her eyes as long as she could. When she lost sight of them, she started to cry.

Her godmother, who saw her all in tears, asked her what was the matter.

"I wish I could. I wish I could." She was not able to speak the rest, being interrupted by her tears and sobbing.

This godmother of hers, who was a fairy, said to her, "You wish that you could go to the ball; is it not so?"

"Yes," cried Cinderella, with a great sigh.

"Well," said her godmother, "be but a good girl, and I will contrive that you shall go." Then she took her into her chamber, and said to her, "Run into the garden, and bring me a pumpkin."

Cinderella went immediately to gather the finest she could get, and brought it to her godmother, not being able to imagine how this pumpkin could help her go to the ball. Her godmother scooped out all the inside of it, leaving nothing but the rind. Having done this, she struck the pumpkin with her wand, and it was instantly turned into a fine coach, gilded all over with gold.

She then went to look into her mousetrap, where she found six mice, all alive, and ordered Cinderella to lift up a little the trapdoor. She gave each mouse, as it went out, a little tap with her wand, and the mouse was that moment turned into a fine horse, which altogether made a very fine set of six horses of a beautiful mouse colored dapple gray.

Being at a loss for a coachman, Cinderella said, "I will go and see if there is not a rat in the rat trap that we can turn into a coachman."

"You are right," replied her godmother, "Go and look."

Cinderella brought the trap to her, and in it there were three huge rats. The fairy chose the one which had the largest beard, touched him with her wand, and turned him into a fat, jolly coachman, who had the smartest whiskers that eyes ever beheld.

After that, she said to her, "Go again into the garden, and you will find six lizards behind the watering pot. Bring them to me."

She had no sooner done so but her godmother turned them into six footmen, who skipped up immediately behind the coach,

with their liveries all bedaubed with gold and silver, and clung as close behind each other as if they had done nothing else their whole lives. The fairy then said to Cinderella, "Well, you see here an equipage fit to go to the ball with; are you not pleased with it?"

"Oh, yes," she cried; "but must I go in these nasty rags?"

Her godmother then touched her with her wand, and, at the same instant, her clothes turned into cloth of gold and silver, all beset with jewels. This done, she gave her a pair of glass slippers, the prettiest in the whole world. Being thus decked out, she got up into her coach; but her godmother, above all things, commanded her not to stay past midnight, telling her, at the same time, that if she stayed one moment longer, the coach would be a pumpkin again, her horses mice, her coachman a rat, her footmen lizards, and that her clothes would become just as they were before.

She promised her godmother to leave the ball before midnight; and then drove away, scarcely able to contain herself for joy. The king's son, who was told that a great princess, whom nobody knew, had arrived, ran out to receive her. He gave her his hand as she alighted from the coach, and led her into the hall, among all the company. There was immediately a profound silence. Everyone stopped dancing, and the violins ceased to play, so entranced was everyone with the singular beauties of the unknown newcomer.

Nothing was then heard but a confused noise of, "How beautiful she is! How beautiful she is!"

The king himself, old as he was, could not help watching her, and telling the queen softly that it was a long time since he had seen so beautiful and lovely a creature.

All the ladies were busied in considering her clothes and headdress, hoping to have some made next day after the same pattern, provided they could find such fine materials and as able hands to make them.

The king's son led her to the most honorable seat, and afterwards took her out to dance with him. She danced so very gracefully that they all more and more admired her. A fine meal was served up, but the young prince ate not a morsel, so intently was he busied in gazing on her.

She went and sat down by her sisters, showing them a thousand civilities, giving them part of the oranges and citrons which the prince had presented her with, which very much surprised them, for they did not know her. While Cinderella was thus amusing her sisters, she heard the clock strike eleven and three-quarters, whereupon she immediately made a courtesy to the company and hurried away as fast as she could.

Arriving home, she ran to seek out her godmother, and, after having thanked her, she said she could not but heartily wish she might go to the ball the next day as well, because the king's son had invited her.

As she was eagerly telling her godmother everything that had happened at the ball, her two sisters knocked at the door, which Cinderella ran and opened.

"You stayed such a long time!" she cried, gaping, rubbing her eyes and stretching herself as if she had been sleeping; she had not, however, had any manner of inclination to sleep while they were away from home.

"If you had been at the ball," said one of her sisters, "you would not have been tired with it. The finest princess was there, the most beautiful that mortal eyes have ever seen. She showed us a thousand civilities, and gave us oranges and citrons."

Cinderella seemed very indifferent in the matter. Indeed, she asked them the name of that princess; but they told her they did not know it, and that the king's son was very uneasy on her account and would give all the world to know who she was. At this Cinderella, smiling, replied, "She must, then, be very beautiful indeed; how happy you have been! Could not I see her? Ah, dear Charlotte, do lend me your yellow dress which you wear every day."

"Yes, to be sure!" cried Charlotte; "lend my clothes to such a dirty Cinderwench as you are! I should be such a fool."

Cinderella, indeed, well expected such an answer, and was very glad of the refusal; for she would have been sadly put to it, if her sister had lent her what she asked for jestingly.

The next day the two sisters were at the ball, and so was Cinderella, but dressed even more magnificently than before. The king's son was always by her, and never ceased his compliments and kind speeches to her. All this was so far from being tiresome to her, and, indeed, she quite forgot what her godmother had told her. She thought that it was no later than eleven when she counted the clock striking twelve. She jumped up and fled, as nimble as a deer. The prince followed, but could not overtake her. She left behind one of her glass slippers, which the prince picked up most carefully. She reached home, but quite out of breath, and in her nasty old clothes, having nothing left of all her finery but one of the little slippers, the mate to the one that she had dropped.

The guards at the palace gate were asked if they had not seen a princess go out. They replied that they had seen nobody leave but a young girl, very shabbily dressed, and who had more the air of a poor country wench than a gentlewoman.

When the two sisters returned from the ball Cinderella asked them if they had been well entertained, and if the fine lady had been there.

They told her, yes, but that she hurried away immediately when it struck twelve, and with so much haste that she dropped one of her little glass slippers, the prettiest in the world, which the king's son had picked up; that he had done nothing but look at her all the time at the ball, and that most certainly he was very much in love with the beautiful person who owned the glass slipper.

What they said was very true; for a few days later, the king's son had it proclaimed, by sound of trumpet, that he would marry her whose foot this slipper would just fit. They began to try it on the princesses, then the duchesses and all the court, but in vain; it was brought to the two sisters, who did all they

possibly could to force their foot into the slipper, but they did not succeed.

Cinderella, who saw all this, and knew that it was her slipper, said to them, laughing, "Let me see if it will not fit me."

Her sisters burst out laughing, and began to banter with her. The gentleman who was sent to try the slipper looked earnestly at Cinderella, and, finding her very handsome, said that it was only just that she should try as well, and that he had orders to let everyone try.

He had Cinderella sit down, and, putting the slipper to her foot, he found that it went on very easily, fitting her as if it had been made of wax. Her two sisters were greatly astonished, but then even more so, when Cinderella pulled out of her pocket the other slipper, and put it on her other foot. Then in came her godmother and touched her wand to Cinderella's clothes, making them richer and more magnificent than any of those she had worn before.

And now her two sisters found her to be that fine, beautiful lady whom they had seen at the ball. They threw themselves at her feet to beg pardon for all the ill treatment they had made

her undergo. Cinderella took them up, and, as she embraced them, said that she forgave them with all her heart, and wanted them always to love her.

She was taken to the young prince, dressed as she was. He thought she was more charming than before, and, a few days after, married her. Cinderella, who was no less good than beautiful, gave her two sisters lodgings in the palace, and that very same day matched them with two great lords of the court.

Moral: Beauty in a woman is a rare treasure that will always be admired. Graciousness, however, is priceless and of even greater value. This is what Cinderella's godmother gave to her when she taught her to behave like a queen. Young women, in the winning of a heart, graciousness is more important than a beautiful hairdo. It is a true gift of the fairies. Without it nothing is possible; with it, one can do anything.

Another moral: Without doubt it is a great advantage to have intelligence, courage, good breeding, and common sense. These, and similar talents come only from heaven, and it is good to have them. However, even these may fail to bring you success, without the blessing of a godfather or a godmother.

### Catherine-Maire d'Aulnoy, "Finette Cendron"

**THERE** was once upon a time a king and a queen who managed their affairs very badly. They were driven out of their kingdom, and had to sell first their crowns, then their clothes, their linen, their laces, their furniture, bit by bit, in order that they might have bread to eat. The pawnbrokers were tired of buying, for every day something new was sold. When at last they were stripped of nearly everything they possessed, the king said to his wife: "Here we are exiled from our kingdom, with nothing left us to live on. We must therefore earn our own and our poor children's bread. Think, then, what we shall do, for till now I have only followed kingcraft, which is very easy." The queen, who was very clever, asked eight days to think about the matter. At the end of that time, she said: "There is no reason why we should be miserable, your majesty. All you have to do is to make nets to catch birds in the woods and fish in the sea. While the lines are wearing out I shall make others for you. As for our three daughters, they are lazy minxes, and no mistake, who think they are still great ladies, and play at being such. They must be sent away, so far away that they will never come back; for it would be impossible for us to give them the fine clothes they would desire."

The king began to weep when he saw he must part from his children, for he was a kind father; but the queen was mistress. He agreed, therefore, to all her proposals, and said: "Tomorrow morning rise early, and take your three daughters wherever you think suitable." While they were planning this princess Finette, the youngest girl, was listening through the keyhole. When she had found out the intention of her father and mother, she ran off as fast as ever she could to a large grotto, a long way from home, where the Fairy Merluche, her god-mother lived.

Finette took with her two pounds of fresh butter, some eggs, milk, and some flour to make a nice cake for her god-mother so that she might get a good welcome from her. Very merrily did she set out on her journey, but the farther she went the more tired she grew. The soles of her shoes were quite worn through, and her pretty little feet were so torn that it was pitiful to see them. At last she had to give up, and sitting down on the grassy she began to cry.

A beautiful Spanish jennet passed by, saddled and bridled, with more diamonds on its saddle-cloth than would buy three whole towns. On seeing the princess it began feeding quietly by her side, and bending its knee, it seemed to bow before her. "Pretty one," she said, taking hold of the bridle, "will you carry me to my godmother the fairy? I shall be so grateful if you will, for I am so tired that I am like to die. And if you help me now, I will give you nice oats, and hay, and fresh straw to lie on." The horse bent down almost to the ground before her, and little Finette jumped on its hack, whereupon it set off running as lightly as a bird. At the entrance of the grotto, it stopped as if it had known the way, as indeed it did; for it was Merluche, knowing that her god-daughter was coming to see her, who had sent this beautiful horse.

When she was inside, she made three low bows to her god-mother and taking the hem of her dress, she kissed it, saying: "Good-day, god-mother, how are you? Here is some butter, some milk, some flour, and some eggs, which I have brought to make a nice cake for you, just as we do at home." "Welcome. Finette," said the fairy; "come till I give you a kiss." So saying, she kissed her twice, which made Finette very happy, for Madam Merluche was not a common fairy. "Now, god said she, "I want you to be my little maid. Take down my hair and comb it." The princess undid it, and combed it, in the cleverest possible way. "I k-know quite well,"

said Merluche, "why you came here. You overheard the king and the queen, who want to lead you away and lose you, and you wish that no such evil thing may happen to you. Well, you have only to take this ball of thread. It will never break. Fasten one end to the door of your house, and keep it in your hand. When the queen has left you, it will be easy to return by following the thread."

The princess thanked her god-mother, who filled a bag for her with beautiful dresses all of gold and silver, and after kissing her, mounted her again on the beautiful horse, and in two or three minutes she was landed at the door of their majesties' hut. "My little friend," said Finette to the horse, "you are very pretty, and very good, and you run faster than the sun. Thank you for your trouble, and now go back to where you came from." She entered the house Very quietly, and hiding her bag under her pillow, went to her bed as if nothing had happened.

As soon as day dawned, the king awoke his wife, saying: "Come madam, come, get ready for the journey". She got up immediately, put on her thick shoes, a short skirt, a white camisole, and took a stick in her hand. Then she called her eldest daughter, whose name was Fleur d'Amour; her second, I and her third, Fine or Finette, as she was usually called. "I learnt in a dream last night," said the queen, "that we must go and see my sister. She will entertain us well, and we can eat and laugh as much as ever we like." Fleur d'Amour, who was miserable at living in this lonely place, said to her mother: "Very well, madam, let us go wherever you please. Provided that I get away from here, it doesn't matter to me." The two others said the same. So after bidding good to the king, all the four set off. They went such a very long way that Fine-Oreille began to be much afraid she would not have thread enough, for they had gone nearly a thousand leagues. She used always to walk behind her sisters, passing the thread deftly through the bushes. When the queen thought that her daughters would not be able to find their way back, she went into a large wood, and said: "My little lambs, go to sleep now. I shall be the shepherdess who watches round her flock, for fear the wolf should eat them." So lying down on the grass they fell asleep, and the queen left them there, thinking she should never see them again. Finette had shut her eyes, but was not asleep. "If I were a wicked girl," she said, "I should go away at once, leaving my sisters here to die, for they beat me and scratch me till the blood comes. But in spite of all their cruelty, I will not leave them." So she awoke them, and told them the whole story. They began to cry, and begged her to take them along with her, and said they would give her lovely dolls, and their little silver dolls' house, and their other toys, and their sugar-plums. "I know well enough that you will do nothing of the kind," said Finette, "but all the same, I will be a kind sister to you." And getting up, she followed her thread, and the princesses did so too, so that they got home almost as soon as the queen.

Stopping at the door, they heard the king saying; "My heart is very sore at seeing you coming back by yourself." "Well, but we didn't know what to do with our daughters," said the queen. "Yet, if you had brought my Finette back," replied the king, "I should not mind about the others, for they care for nobody." Tap, tap, came their knock. "Who is there?" said the king. Your three daughters," the answered, "Fleur d'Amour,

Belle-de-Nuit, and Fine-Oreille." The queen was all of a tremble. "Do not open the door," she said; "it must be their ghosts, for they themselves could not have come back." And the king, who was just as great a coward as his wife, said: "You are deceiving me; you are not my daughters." But Fine-Oreille, who was quick witted, said to him: "Father, I am going to bend down. Look at me through the cat's hole, and if I am not Finette, I'll let you heat me." The king looked as she had told him, and as soon as he recognised her, he opened the door to them. The queen pretended that she was very glad to see them, and told them she had forgotten something, and that she came to fetch it, but assuredly she would have found them again. And they made as if they believed her, and went up to their sleeping-place in a pretty little garret for the night.

"Well, sisters," said Finette, "you promised me a doll; give it me then." "And how can you expect it, you little monkey?" said they. "It is all on account of you that the king does not love us." Thereupon they took their distaffs and beat her without mercy. When they had chastised her well, she went to bed, but with so many scars and swellings that she could not sleep. So she heard the queen saying to the king: "I shall take them in another direction, still further off, and I am sure they will never return." When Finette heard this plan, she got up very quietly meaning to pay another visit to her god-mother. Going into the poultry-house, she took two chickens and a fine cock, and wrung their necks, then two little rabbits that the queen was feeding up with cabbage against the next time they should be having a feast; and putting them all in a basket, she set off. But she had not gone a league, groping all the way, and in terror of her life, when the Spanish jennet galloped up to her, snorting and neighing. She thought it was all up with her, and that soldiers were coming to capture her, but when she saw the pretty horse all by itself, she mounted, delighted to go on her way in this comfortable fashion; and very soon she was at her god-mother's house.

After the usual greetings, she gave her the chickens, the cock, and the rabbits. Then she begged Merluche to help her by good counsel, making known to her how the queen had sworn to take them away to the end of the world. Merluche told her god-daughter not to be miserable, and giving her a sack full of ashes, she said: "You will carry the bag in front of you, and shake it as you go. You will walk on the ashes, and when you want to return, you need only look for your footprints. But do not bring your sisters back. They are too wicked, and if you bring them, I will never see you any more." Finette took leave of her, taking with her by Merluche's orders some thirty or forty millions of diamonds in a little box which she put in her pocket. The horse was quite ready, and carried her off as before.

When day broke the queen called the princesses, and when they came she said to them: "The king is not very well. Last night I dreamt that I must go and gather flowers and herbs in a certain country where they are very good. They will make him young again, therefore let us set out at once." Fleur d'Amour and Belle-de-Nuit who could not believe their mother was anxious to get rid of them, were very sorry to hear this. However they had to set off; and they went so far that never was such a long journey made before. Finette, who did not say a word all the while, kept behind the others, shaking the ashes

very cleverly, not letting the wind or the rain spoil any of them.

The queen, fully persuaded they could never find the way again, noticed one evening that her three daughters were fast asleep, so she took advantage of this to leave them and return home. When daylight came, and Finette knew that her mother was no longer with them, she awoke her sisters. "We are alone," she said; "the queen has gone away." Fleur d'Amour and Belle-de-Nuit began to cry, to tear their hair, and to beat their faces with their fists. "Alas!" they exclaimed; "what shall we do?" Finette was the kindest girl in the whole world, and again she took pity on her sisters. "Think what risk I am running," she said; "for when my god-mot gave me the means of returning, she forbade me to tell you the way, and said if I disobeyed her she would never see me again." Belle threw herself on Finette's neck, and so did Fleur d'Amour caressing her so tenderly that before long they all three returned together to the king and the queen.

Their majesties were very much astonished at seeing the princesses again, and spoke of it all night long. And the youngest girl, who was not called Fine-Oreille for nothing, heard them making up a fresh plot for the queen on the morrow to take them again into the wilds. She ran and awoke her sisters. "Alas!" she said to them, "we are lost. The queen is determined to take us to some desert and leave us there. It is your fault that my god-mot is angry, and that I dare not go and find her as I always did before." They were very much troubled, and one said to the other: "What shall we do, my Sister, what shall we do?" At last Belle-de-Nuit said to the others: "There is no need to distress ourselves Old Merluche hasn't the whole stock of cleverness in the world, we need only take peas with us and sow them along the road, and by the traces of their growth we can come back." Fleur d'Amour thought this a capital plan, so they took a large quantity of peas, and filled their pockets. But Fine-Oreille, instead of carrying peas, took the bag with the pretty clothes, and the little box of diamonds, and as soon as the queen called them to be off, they were quite ready.

"I dreamt last night," she said to them, "that in a country which I need not name there are three handsome princes waiting to marry you. I am going to take you there to see if my dream is true." The queen walked on in front, and her daughters after her, sowing their peas, and quite easy in their minds, having no doubt but that they would return home again. This time the queen travelled farther than she had ever clone before; but one dark night she left them, and came hack to the king. Very tired was she when she reached home, but very glad not to have the cares of such a large household on her shoulders.

The three princesses, after sleeping till eleven o'clock in the morning, woke up. It was Finette that first perceived the queen's absence, and though she expected it, she could not help crying, having, so far as getting hack was concerned, more confidence in her god-mother's help than in her sisters' cleverness. In a great fright, she told them the queen had gone, and that they must follow her as soon as possible. "Hold your tongue, you little monkey," said Fleur d'Amour; "be able to find the road whenever we like. We don't want you to interfere

unless your opinion is asked." Finette did not dare to answer, but when they tried to find the way, not a mark or a footpath could be found. The pigeons, of which there are a great number in that country, had eaten up the peas, and so the princesses began to cry and howl after being two days without food, Fleur d'Amour said to Belle-de-Nuit: "Sister, have you nothing to eat?" "No," she answered. She asked Finette the same thing. "No more have I," she replied, "but I have just found an acorn." "Ah give it to me," said one. "Give it to me," said the other and each of them wanted to have it. "One acorn would hardly satisfy three of us," said Finette; "let us plant it another will grow out of it for our use," They agreed, though there seemed little likelihood that a tree would grow in a country where there were none, and where only cabbages and lettuces were to be seen. The princesses ate of these, and if they had been very delicate, they would have died a hundred times. Nearly every night they lay down under the stars, and every morning and every evening went in turns to water the acorn, saying: "Grow, grow, pretty acorn!" And it began to grow visibly. When it had grown to some height, Fleur d'Amour wished to climb up on it, hut it was not strong enough to bear her, and feeling it bend under her weight, she got down. The same thing happened to Belle-de-Nuit. Finette, lighter than the others, stopped longer, and they asked her: "Do you see nothing, sister?" "No, I see nothing," she answered. "That is because the oak is not high enough," said Fleur d'Amour; so they went on watering it, and saying: "Grow, grow, pretty acorn!" Finette never failed to climb up twice a day, and one morning when she was there, Belle-de-Nuit said to Fleur d'Amour: "I have found a bag our sister has hidden. What can be in it?" Fleur d'Amour said Finette had told her it was old lace she was mending. "Well, I think there are sugar-plums in it," said Belle-de-Nuit She was greedy, and wanted to see what was in it. She did find the laces of the king and the queen; but they served to hide Finette's beautiful clothes and the box of diamonds. "Well, was there ever such a wicked little creature?" she cried. "Let us take them all and put stones in their place." This they did without delay. When Finette came back, she did not notice what her sisters had done, for she did not think of ornaments in a desert. Her one thought was of the oak, which was growing to be the finest ever seen.

One time when she had climbed up and her sisters as usual asked her if she saw nothing, "I see," she cried, "a large house, so beautiful-so very, very beautiful, that I cannot describe it to you. The walls are of emeralds and rubies, the roof of diamonds and it is all covered with golden bells; the weathercocks turn and turn with the wind." "That is not true," they said; "it is not so beautiful as you say." "Believe me, it is," replied Finette; "I don't tell lies. Come and see for yourselves, for my eyes are quite dazzled." Fleur d'Amour climbed up into the tree, and when she saw the castle, she could speak of nothing else. Belle-de-Nuit, who was very curious, would not be behind-hand, and climbing up, she 'as just as delighted as her sisters. "Certainly," they said, "we must go to that palace; perhaps we shall find handsome princes there who will only he too happy to marry us." All the evening long they spoke of nothing but their plan. Then they lay down on the grass, and when Finette seemed to be asleep, Fleur d'Amour said to Belle-de-Nuit "Do you know what we

must do, sister? Get up and let us dress ourselves in the rich dresses Finette has brought." "You are right," said Belle-de-Nuit; so they got up, curled their hair, powdered their faces, stuck on beauty spots, and dressed themselves in gold and silver gowns, all covered with diamonds, Never was seen such a magnificent sight.

Finette, not knowing that her wicked sisters had robbed her, took her hag with the intention of dressing, and she was in great distress at only finding pebbles. At the same time she saw her sisters decked out like suns. She wept, and reproached them with their breach of faith to her, but they only laughed and mocked at her. "Would you really dare," she said, "to take me to the castle without any pretty dresses or ornaments at all?" "We have not too many for ourselves," replied Fleur d'Amour, "and we'll beat you if you talk any more about it." "But," Finette went on, "these dresses are mine. My god-mother gave me them. You have no part in them." "If you speak another word," they said, "we shall kill you, and bury you, and nobody will know anything about it." And poor Finette, afraid to anger them, followed them quietly, walking some steps behind, just as if she were their servant.

The nearer they came to the house, the more wonderful it seemed. "Hi!" said Fleur d'Amour and Belle-de-Nuit, "what a good time we are going to have what good cheer we shall partake of as we sit at the king's table. But as for Finette, she will wash the dishes in the kitchen, for she is just like a scullion, and if any one asks who she is, let us take care not to call her our sister, but rather the little village herd." Finette, who was full of intelligence, and very pretty, was in great distress at such ill-treatment. When they went up to the gate of the castle they knocked, and at once a hideous old woman came to open the door to them. She had only one eye, in the middle of her forehead, but it was bigger than five or six ordinary eyes; her nose was flat, her complexion dark, and her mouth was so horrible that it made every one afraid to look at it; she was fifteen feet high, and thirty feet in girth. "Oh, you miserable girls," she said, "what brings you here? Do you not know that this is the ogre's castle, and that all of you together would hardly be enough for his breakfast? But I am better than my husband. Come in, I shall not eat you up all at once. You may have the comfort of living two or three days more." When they heard the ogress speaking in this fashion, they ran away, thinking they could escape, but one of her strides was as good as fifty of theirs, and running after them, she caught them by their hair or by the skin of their necks. Bundling them under her arm, she threw all three of them into the cellar, which was full of toads and adders, and where you walked on the bones of those that had already been eaten.

As she wanted to crunch up Finette on the spot she ran to fetch vinegar and salt to eat her as a salad, but hearing the ogre coming, and thinking the princesses' skin white and delicate, she made up her mind to eat them all by herself. So she hastily put them into a large tub where they could only see out through a hole.

The ogre was six times as tall as his wife. When he spoke the house shook when he coughed you would have thought it was claps of thunder. He had only one eye, a large, ugly one, his hair stood all on end, and he leant on a log which he used for a

stick. In his hand he held a covered basket out of which he drew fifteen little children that he had stolen on the road, and whom he swallowed as if they had been fifteen fresh eggs. When the three princesses saw him, they shook with terror under the tub, and dared no longer cry aloud for fear he should hear them. But low to themselves they said: "He'll eat us all alive; how can we escape?" The ogre said to his wife: "I smell fresh meat, give me some." "Indeed," said the ogress, "you always think you smell fresh meat. It is four sheep that passed by." "Oh, I make no mistake," said the ogre. "I smell fresh meat for certain. I am going to look everywhere for it." "Look for it, then," she said, "but you won't find any." "If I find it," answered the ogre, "and if you are hiding it, I shall cut off your head to make me a ball" In terror at this threat she said to him: "Don't be angry, my little ogre, I am going to tell you the truth. To-day there came here three young maidens whom I kept, but it would be a pity to eat them, for they know how to do everything As I am now old I need rest; our beautiful house, as you see, is in very bad order; our bread is not baked properly; our soup no longer tastes good to you, and I don't look so beautiful in your eyes since I have been killing myself with work. They will, therefore, be my servants, so I beg of you not to eat them just now. If you wish to at some future time you can do as you like."

The ogre found it very hard to promise not to eat them up at once. "Let me have my own way," he said; "I shall only eat two of them." "No, you shall not eat any of them." "Very well; I shall only eat the little one." But she answered: "No, you shall not eat one of them." At last, after quarrelling for a long time, he promised not to eat them; while the ogress thought to herself: "When he goes to the hunt I shall eat them and tell him they have run away

The ogre came out of the cellar and ordered them to be brought before him. The poor girls were nearly dead with fright; hut the ogress reassured them. When he saw them he asked them what they could do, and they told him they could sweep and sew and spin perfectly; that their stews were so delicious that you would like to eat the plate even on which they were served; and as for their bread, cakes, and p people came for them from a thousand miles round. The ogre was greedy, and so he said "Now, then, set these fine cooks to work at once." "But," said he, turning to Finette, "when you have lit the fire, how can you tell if the oven be hot enough?" "My lord," she answered, "I throw butter in, and then I taste it with my tongue." "Very well," he said, "light the fire then." The oven was as big as a stable, for the ogre and ogress ate more bread than two armies. The princess made an enormous fire, which blazed like a furnace; and the ogre, who was standing by, ate a hundred lambs and a hundred sucking pigs while waiting for the new bread. Fleur d'Amour and Belle-de-Nuit kneaded the dough. "Well," said the great ogre, "is the oven hot?" "My lord," replied Finette, "you will see presently." And so saying she threw a thousand pounds of butter into the oven. "I should try it with my tongue," she said, "hut I am too little." "I am big enough," said the ogre, and bending clown he went so far into the oven that he could not draw back again, so that he was burned to the bones. When the ogress came to the oven she was mightily astonished to find a mountain of cinders instead of her husband.

Fleur d'Amour and Belle-de-Nuit, who saw that she was in great distress, comforted her as they could, but they feared lest her grief should be consoled only too soon, and that regaining her appetite she would put them in a salad, as she had meant to do before. So they said to her: "Take courage, madam; you will find some king or some marquis who will be happy to marry you." At that she smiled a little, showing her teeth, which were longer than your finger. When they saw she was in a good humour, Finette said: "If you would hut leave off wearing those horrible bear-skins, and dress a little more fashionably! We could arrange your hair beautifully, and you would be like a star." "Come then," she said, "let us see what you can do; but be sure that if I find any ladies more beautiful than myself I shall hack you into little bits," Thereupon the three princesses took off her cap, and began to comb and curl her hair, entertaining her all the while with their chatter. Then Finette took a hatchet, and with a great blow from behind, severed her head from her body.

Never was there such joy. They climbed up to the roof of the house to amuse themselves by ringing the golden bells; they ran through all the rooms, which were of pearls and diamonds, and furnished so richly that they nearly died of joy. They laughed, they sang. Nothing was lacking. They had wheat, and sweetmeat, fruits, and dolls, as many as they liked. Fleur d'Amour and Belle-de slept in beds hung with brocade and velvet, and they said to each other: "Here we are richer than was our father in his kingdom but we want husbands. No one will come here, for this house is certainly looked on a death-trap, and nobody knows of the death of the ogre and his wife. We must go to the nearest town to show ourselves off in our fine clothes, and it will not be long before we find honest merchants who will be glad enough to wed with princesses," As soon as they were dressed they told Finette that they were going for a walk, and that she must stop at home to look after the house and the washing, so that when they came back everything might be neat and clean; that if it were not they would beat her soundly. Poor Finette, stricken with grief, stopped alone in the house, sweeping, cleaning, washing, without a moment's rest, and always crying. "How unhappy I am," she said "to have disobeyed my god-mother! All kinds of evils happen to me. My sisters have stolen my beautiful clothes to dress themselves in. Without me the ogre and his wife would still be alive and well; and of what benefit is it to me that I killed them? It would have been as good to have been eaten by them as to live as I live now." When she had said this she was almost choked with her tears. Then her sisters came back, loaded with Portuguese oranges, preserves and sugar, saying to her: "Oh, what a fine ball we have been to! And what a crowd was there! The king's son was dancing; we had a great many attentions paid us. But come now, pull off our shoes, and wash us. That's all you are good for." Finette did as she was told, and if by any chance a word of complaint escaped her, they threw themselves on her, beating her till she was senseless.

Next day they went again, and returned to tell of all the wonders they had seen. One evening, when Finette was sitting near the fire on a little heap of cinders, for want of anything else to do, she peered into the crevices of the chimney, and as she looked she found a little key, so old, and so rusty, that it

gave her a great deal of trouble to clean it. When it was polished, she found it was gold, and she thought that a golden key must be for opening some beautiful little chest. So she began to run through the whole house, trying the key in all the locks, till at last she found it fit a casket of perfect workmanship. Opening this, she found in it dresses, diamonds, lace, linen, and very costly ribbons. She said nothing about her good fortune to her sisters, but waited impatiently till they should go out next day, and as soon as they had gone out of her sight, she dressed herself in such a way that she was more beautiful than the sun or the moon.

Thus decked out, she went to the same ball where her sisters were dancing, and though she wore no mask, she was so changed for the better that they did not recognise her. As soon as she made her appearance in the assembly a murmur of voices arose, some expressing their admiration, some their jealousy. She was asked to dance, and she excelled all the ladies in that as she did in beauty. The mistress of the house coming up to her and making her a deep bow, begged to know what she was called, so that she might ever keep in remembrance the name of so distinguished a lady. With much courtesy she answered that she was called Cendron. Not a lover was there but forgot his mistress for Cendron: not a poet but made verses to her. Never did a name make such a sensation in such a short time, and the echoes brought nothing back but Cendron's praises. No one had eyes enough to look on her, or voice enough to sing her praises.

Fleur d'Amour and Belle-de-Nuit, who at first had made a great noise wherever they appeared, now seeing the reception given to the new-corner, were bursting with rage. But Finette kept clear of all their spite with the most perfect grace possible. To look at her you would have said she was born to rule, and Fleur d'Amour and Belle-de-Nuit who never saw their sister but with soot on her face and grimier-looking than a little dog, had so forgotten all about her beauty that they did not recognise her at all, and paid court to Cendron like the others. As soon as the ball was nearly over she set off quickly, reached home, undressed in haste, and put on her rags again. When her sisters came back they said: "Ah! Finette, we have just been seeing a young princess who is quite charming. She is not an ugly ape like you. She is white as snow, and redder than roses. Her teeth are of pearl and her lips of coral. Her dress must weigh more than a thousand pounds, for it is all of gold and diamonds. Ah, how beautiful! how lovely she is!" And Finette would answer between her teeth: "I was like that, I was like that". "What are you muttering?" they said. And Finette answered still lower: "I was like that." This little entertainment lasted for a long time. Hardly a day passed but Finette put on new clothes, for it was a fairy casket, and the more you took from it, the more there was in it, and the clothes that came out of it were so fashionable that ladies took her for their model.

One evening when Finette had danced more than usual, and had stopped rather late, in her desire to make up for lost time and to get home before her sisters, she walked as fast as ever she could, and let fall one of her slippers which was of red velvet embroidered with pearls. She did all she could to find it again on the road, but the night was so dark that her trouble was in vain, and she had to go in with only one foot shod.



Next day, Prince Chéri, the eldest son of the king, on his way to the chase, found Finette's slipper. He ordered them to pick it up, looked at it, turned it this way and that, kissed it, cherished it, and bore it away with him. From that day he would not eat. He grew thin and changed, was as yellow as a quince, melancholy, and spiritless. The king and queen, who loved him to distraction, sent in all directions for fine game and preserves for him. But to him these seemed less than nothing, and he only looked at them all, and would not answer the queen when she spoke to him. They sent to fetch doctors from all parts, even from Paris and Montpellier. When they arrived they were shown the prince, and having watched him three days and three nights without once leaving him, they came to the conclusion that he was in love, and that he would die if a remedy were not provided.

The queen, who loved him tenderly, wept oceans of tears because she could not find out whom he loved and so arrange for his marriage. She brought the most beautiful ladies to his room, but he would not even look at them. At last she said to him one day "My dear son, you will kill us with grief, for you are in love, and you hide your feelings from us. Tell us whom it is you long for, and she shall be yours even were she but a simple shepherdess." The prince, assured by the queen's promises, drew the slipper out from below his pillow, and showed it to her. "Madam," he said, "this is the cause of my illness. I found this dear little pretty slipper when I was going to the chase, and I shall never marry any but the lady whom it fits." "Very well, my son," said the queen, "do not grieve, we will send in search of her." And she went to tell the news to the king, who was very much astonished. Without delay he ordered that an announcement should be made with drums and trumpets that all the girls and all the women should come and try on the slipper, and that whosoever it should fit should wed with the prince. When all the ladies had heard the announcement they washed their feet with all sorts of waters, pastes, and pomades. There were some who peeled their feet, so that the skin should be more beautiful, others pared them, or fasted, to make them smaller. In crowds they set out to try on the slipper, but not one would it fit, and the more unavailing attempts were made the greater was the prince's distress.

Fleur d'Amour and Belle-de-Nuit one day dressed themselves so fine that they were a wonder to see. "Where are you going?" said Finette. "We are going to the great city," they answered, "where the king and the queen dwell, to try on the slipper which the king's son found; for if it fits one of us, the prince will marry her and she shall be a queen." "And might I go too?" said Finette. "You, in truth," said they. "You are a silly little goose. Be off and water the cabbages, you good-for-nothing."

Finette at once thought of putting on her finest clothes to go and try her luck with the others, for she had some idea that she would have a good chance. But what troubled her was that she did not know the way, for the ball they had danced at was not in the great town. She dressed in all her splendour, in a gown of blue satin covered with stars of diamonds, a sun made of them on her head, a full moon on her back, and all shining so brilliantly that you could not look at her without flinching. When she opened the door to go out she was very much

astonished to find the beautiful Spanish jennet that had carried her to her god-mother. She caressed him, saying: Welcome, little one; for you I am obliged to my god-mother, Merluche." Then it bent down, and she rode on it like a nymph. It was all covered with golden bells and ribbons, and its saddle cloth and bridle were priceless. As for Finette, she was far more beautiful than the fair Helen.

The jennet trotted lightly along to the music of the bells, cling, cling, cling. Fleur d'Amour and Belle-de-Nuit hearing the sound, turned and saw her coming. But what was their surprise at that moment, when they recognised that it was Finette Cendron! They themselves were all draggled, and their fine clothes covered with mud. "Sister," said Fleur d'Amour to Belle-de-Nuit, "I declare to you that that is Finette Cendron." The other said the same; and Finette passing close by at the moment, they were bespattered by her horse's hoofs, and their faces splashed with mud. And Finette laughed as she said: "Your highnesses, Cinderella despises you as much as you deserve"; then riding past them like an arrow she was gone. Belle-de-Nuit and Fleur d'Amour looked at each other. Are we dreaming?" they said. "Who could have given Finette her fine clothes and the horse? What an astonishing thing! She is in luck. She will put the slipper on, and our journey will be in vain."

While they were mourning over their disappointment, Finette reached the palace, and as soon as she came in sight, every one thought she was a queen. The soldiers presented arms, the drums began to beat, the trumpets sounded, and all the doors were flung open. Those who had seen her at the ball ran in front of her, calling out: "Room, make room for the fair Cendron, the wonder of the world!" With such pomp, she entered the dying prince's room, who, casting his eyes on her, was enchanted, and full of desire that her foot might be small enough to fit the slipper. Without delay, she put it on, and showed the other one which she had brought on purpose. "Long live Princess Cheri!" they burst out. "Long live the princess who will be our queen!" The prince rose from his bed, and came forward to kiss her hands, and she thought him handsome and full of wit as he poured his compliments upon her. The king and queen, who had been told the news, hastened to the spot, and the queen taking Finette in her arms, called her her daughter, her darling, her little queen. She gave her beautiful gifts, and the generous king added more. The cannons were fired, there was music of violins, and of pipes, and all kinds of instruments, and nothing was heard but the sounds of dancing and merriment.

The king, the queen, and the prince begged Cendron to give her consent to the marriage. "No," she said, "I must first of all tell you my story," which she did very shortly. When they heard that she was born a princess, they were still more delighted, and almost besides themselves with joy. But when she told them the names of the king and queen, her father and mother, they knew that it was they themselves who had conquered their kingdom, and told her so. Then she swore she would not consent to the marriage till they gave back her father's estates. This they promised, for having more than a hundred kingdoms, one more or less was of very little consequence.

In the meanwhile Belle-de-Nuit and Fleur d'Amour arrived, and the first news they heard was that Cendron had put on the slipper. They did not know what to say or to do, and would have liked to have gone back without seeing her, but when she heard they were come, she ordered them to appear before her, and instead of scowling at them, and of punishing them as they deserved, she rose and came forward to embrace them tenderly. Then presenting them to the queen, she said: "Madam, these are my sisters, who are very amiable; I beg that you will love them." So astounded were they at Finette's goodness, that they could not utter a word. She promised them

that they should return to their own kingdom, which the prince wished to restore to their family. At these words they threw themselves on their knees before her weeping for joy.

Never was there such a wedding-feast. Finette wrote to her god-mother, and put her letter along with magnificent gifts on the beautiful jennet. In the letter she begged her to find the king and queen, to tell them of her good fortune, and to say they might return to their kingdom when they liked. Merluche, the fairy, carried out these instructions perfectly, and Finette's father and mother went back to their own estates, and her sisters became queens like herself.

### Jakob and Wilhelm Grimm, "Ashputtle"

[Editor's Note: Jakob Grimm (1785-1863) and Wilhelm Grimm (1786-1859) are best known today for the 200 folktales they collected from oral sources and reworked in *Kinder-und Hausmarchen* (popularly known as Grimm's Fairy Tales), which has been translated into seventy languages. The techniques Jakob and Wilhelm Grimm used to collect and comment on these tales became a model for other collectors, providing a basis for the science of folklore. Though the Grimm brothers argued for preserving tales exactly as heard from oral sources, scholars have determined that they sought to "improve" the tales by making them more readable. The result, highly pleasing to lay audiences the world over, nonetheless represents a literary reworking of the original oral sources.]

A rich man's wife fell sick and, feeling that her end was near, she called her only daughter to her bedside and said: "Dear child, be good and say your prayers; God will help you, and I shall look down on you from heaven and always be with you." With that she closed her eyes and died. Every day the little girl went out to her mother's grave and wept, and she went on being good and saying her prayers. When winter came, the snow spread a white cloth over the grave, and when spring took it off, the man remarried.

His new wife brought two daughters into the house. Their faces were beautiful and lily-white, but their hearts were ugly and black. That was the beginning of a bad time for the poor stepchild. "Why should this silly goose sit in the parlor with us?" they said. "People who want to eat bread must earn it. Get into the kitchen where you belong!" They took away her fine clothes and gave her an old gray dress and wooden shoes to wear. "Look at the haughty princess in her finery!" they cried and, laughing, led her to the kitchen. From then on she had to do all the work, getting up before daybreak, carrying water, lighting fires, cooking and washing. In addition the sisters did everything they could to plague her. They jeered at her and poured peas and lentils into the ashes, so that she had to sit there picking them out. At night, when she was tired out with work, she had no bed to sleep in but had to lie in the ashes by the hearth. And they took to calling her Ashputtle because she always looked dusty and dirty.

One day when her father was going to the fair, he asked his two stepdaughters what he should bring them. "Beautiful

dresses," said one. "Diamonds and pearls," said the other. "And you, Ashputtle. What would you like?" "Father," she said, "break off the first branch that brushes against your hat on your way home, and bring it to me." So he brought beautiful dresses, diamonds and pearls for his two stepdaughters, and on the way home, as he was riding through a copse, a hazel branch brushed against him and knocked off his hat. So he broke off the branch and took it home with him. When he got home, he gave the stepdaughters what they had asked for, and gave Ashputtle the branch. After thanking him, she went to her mother's grave and planted the hazel sprig over it and cried so hard that her tears fell on the sprig and watered it. It grew and became a beautiful tree. Three times a day Ashputtle went and sat under it and wept and prayed. Each time a little white bird came and perched on the tree, and when Ashputtle made a wish the little bird threw down what she had wished for.

Now it so happened that the king arranged for a celebration. It was to go on for three days and all the beautiful girls in the kingdom were invited in order that his son might choose a bride. When the two stepsisters heard they had been asked, they were delighted. They called Ashputtle and said: "Comb our hair, brush our shoes, and fasten our buckles. We're going to the wedding at the king's palace." Ashputtle obeyed, but she wept, for she too would have liked to go dancing, and she begged her stepmother to let her go. "You little sloven!" said the stepmother. "How can you go to a wedding when you're all dusty and dirty? How can you go dancing when you have neither dress nor shoes?" But when Ashputtle begged and begged, the stepmother finally said: "Here, I've dumped a bowlful of lentils in the ashes. If you can pick them out in two hours, you may go." the girl went out the back door to the garden and cried out: "O tame little doves, O turtledoves, and all the birds under heaven, come and help me put

the good ones in the pot,

the bad ones in your crop."

Two little white doves came flying through the kitchen window, and then came the turtledoves, and finally all the birds under heaven came flapping and fluttering and settled down by the ashes. The doves nodded their little heads and started in, peck peck peck peck, and all the others started in, peck peck peck peck, and they sorted out all the good lentils

and put them in the bowl. Hardly an hour had passed before they finished and flew away. Then the girl brought the bowl to her stepmother, and she was happy, for she thought she'd be allowed to go to the wedding. But the stepmother said: "No, Ashputtle. You have nothing to wear and you don't know how to dance; the people would only laugh at you." When Ashputtle began to cry, the stepmother said: "If you can pick two bowlfuls of lentils out of the ashes in an hour, you may come." And she thought: "She'll never be able to do it." When she had dumped the two bowlfuls of lentils in the ashes, Ashputtle went out the back door to the garden and cried out: "O tame little doves, O turtledoves, and all the birds under heaven, come and help me put

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When they had all gone out, Ashputtle went to her mother's grave. She stood under the hazel tree and cried:

Shake your branches, little tree,

Throw gold and silver down on me."

Whereupon the bird tossed down a gold and silver dress and slippers embroidered with silk and silver. Ashputtle slipped into the dress as fast as she could and went to the wedding. Her sisters and stepmother didn't recognize her. She was so beautiful in her golden dress that they thought she must be the daughter of some foreign king. They never dreamed it could be Ashputtle, for they thought she was sitting at home in her filthy rags, picking lentils out of the ashes. The king's son came up to her, took her by the hand and danced with her. He wouldn't dance with anyone else and he never let go her hand. When someone else asked for a dance, he said: "She is my partner."

She danced until evening, and then she wanted to go home. The king's son said: "I'll go with you, I'll see you home," for he wanted to find out whom the beautiful girl belonged to. But she got away from him and slipped into the dovecote. The king's son waited until her father arrived, and told him the strange girl had slipped into the dovecote. The old man thought: "Could it be Ashputtle?" and he sent for an ax and a pick and broke into the dovecote, but there was no one inside. When they went indoors, Ashputtle was lying in the ashes in her filthy clothes and a dim oil lamp was burning on the

chimney piece, for Ashputtle had slipped out the back end of the dovecote and run to the hazel tree. There she had taken off her fine clothes and put them on the grave, and the bird had taken them away. Then she had put her gray dress on again, crept into the kitchen and lain down in the ashes.

Next day when the festivities started in again and her parents and stepsisters had gone, Ashputtle went to the hazel tree and said:

"Shake your branches, little tree,

Throw gold and silver down on me."

Whereupon the bird threw down a dress that was even more dazzling than the first one. And when she appeared at the wedding, everyone marveled at her beauty. The king's son was waiting for her. He took her by the hand and danced with no one but her. When others came and asked her for a dance, he said: "She is my partner." When evening came, she said she was going home. The king's son followed her, wishing to see which house she went into, but she ran away and disappeared into the garden behind the house, where there was a big beautiful tree with the most wonderful pears growing on it. She climbed among the branches as nimbly as a squirrel and the king's son didn't know what had become of her. He waited until her father arrived and said to him: "The strange girl has got away from me and I think she has climbed up in the pear tree." Her father thought: "Could it be Ashputtle?" He sent for an ax and chopped the tree down, but there was no one in it. When they went into the kitchen, Ashputtle was lying there in the ashes as usual, for she had jumped down on the other side of the tree, brought her fine clothes back to the bird in the hazel tree, and put on her filthy gray dress.

On the third day, after her parents and sisters had gone, Ashputtle went back to her mother's grave and said to the tree:

"Shake your branches, little tree,

Throw gold and silver down on me."

Whereupon the bird threw down a dress that was more radiant than either of the others, and the slippers were all gold. When she appeared at the wedding, the people were too amazed to speak. The king's son danced with no one but her, and when someone else asked her for a dance, he said: "She is my partner."

When evening came, Ashputtle wanted to go home, and the king's son said he'd go with her, but she slipped away so quickly that he couldn't follow. But he had thought up a trick. He had arranged to have the whole staircase brushed with pitch, and as she was running down it the pitch pulled her left slipper off. The king's son picked it up, and it was tiny and delicate and all gold. Next morning he went to the father and said: "No girl shall be my wife but the one this golden shoe fits." The sisters were overjoyed, for they had beautiful feet. The eldest took the shoe to her room to try it on and her mother went with her. But the shoe was too small and she couldn't get her big toe in. So her mother handed her a knife and said: "cut your toe off. Once you're queen you won't have to walk any more." The girl cut her toe off, forced her foot

into the shoe, gritted her teeth against the pain, and went out to the king's son. He accepted her as his bride-to-be, lifted her up on his horse, and rode away with her. but they had to pass the grave. The two doves were sitting in the hazel tree and they cried out:

"Roocoo, roocoo,

There's blood in the shoe.

The foot's too long, the foot's too wide,

That's not the proper bride."

He looked down at her foot and saw the blood spurting. At that he turned his horse around and took the false bride home again. "No," he said, "this isn't the right girl; let her sister try the shoe on." The sister went to her room and managed to get her toes into the shoe, but her heel was too big. So her mother handed her a knife and said: "cut off a chunk of your heel. Once you're queen you won't have to walk any more." The girl cut off a chunk of her heel, forced her foot into the shoe, gritted her teeth against the pain, and went out to the king's son. He accepted her as his bride-to-be, lifted her up on his horse, and rode away with her. As they passed the hazel tree, the two doves were sitting there, and they cried out:

"Roocoo, roocoo,

There's blood in the shoe.

The foot's too long, the foot's too wide,

That's not the proper bride."

He looked down at her foot and saw that blood was spurting from her shoe and staining her white stocking all red. He turned his horse around and took the false bride home again. "This isn't the right girl, either," he said. "Haven't you got another daughter?" "No," said the man, "there's only a puny

little kitchen drudge that my dead wife left me. She couldn't possibly be the bride." "Send her up," said the king's son, but the mother said: "Oh no, she's much too dirty to be seen." But he insisted and they had to call her. First she washed her face and hands, and when they were clean, she went upstairs and curtsied to the king's son. He handed her the golden slipper and sat down on a footstool, took her foot out of her heavy wooden shoe, and put it into the slipper. It fitted perfectly. And when she stood up and the king's son looked into her face, he recognized the beautiful girl he had danced with and cried out: "This is my true bride!" The stepmother and the two sisters went pale with fear and rage. But he lifted Ashputtle up on his horse and rode away with her. As they passed the hazel tree, the two white doves called out:

"Roocoo, roocoo,

No blood in the shoe.

The foot is neither long nor wide,

This one is the proper bride."

They then flew down and alighted on Ashputtle's shoulders, one on the right and one on the left, and there they sat.

On the day of Ashputtle's wedding, the two stepsisters came and tried to ingratiate themselves and share in her happiness. On the way to church the elder was on the right side of the bridal couple and the younger on the left. The doves came along and pecked out one of the elder sister's eyes and one of the younger sister's eyes. Afterward, on the way out, the elder was on the left side and the younger on the right, and the doves pecked out both the remaining eyes. So both sisters were punished with blindness to the end of their days for being so wicked and false.

### Tuan Ch'eng-shih, "Yeh-Hsien"

Among the people of the south there is a tradition that before the Ch'in and Han dynasties there was a cave-master called Wu. The aborigines called the place the Wu cave. He married two wives. One wife died. She had a daughter Yeh-hsien, who from childhood was intelligent and good at making pottery on the wheel. Her father loved her. After some years the father died, and she was ill-treated by her step-mother, who always made her collect firewood in dangerous place and draw water from deep pools. She once got a fish about two inches long, with red fins and golden eyes. She put it into a bowl of water. It grew bigger every day, and after she had changed the bowl several times she could find no bowl big enough for it, so she threw it into the back pond. Whatever food was left over from meals she put it into the water to feed it. When she came to the pond, the fish always exposed its head and pillowed it on the bank; but when anyone else came, it did not come out. The step-mother knew about this, but when she watched for it, it did not once appear. So she tricked the girl, saying, "Haven't you worked hard! I am going to give you a new dress." She then made the girl change out of her tattered clothing.

Afterwards she sent her to get water from another spring and reckoning that it was several hundred leagues, the step-mother at her leisure put on her daughter's clothes, hid a sharp blade up her sleeve, and went to the pond. She called to the fish. The fish at once put its head out, and she chopped it off and killed it. The fish was now more than ten feet long. She served it up and it tasted twice as good as an ordinary fish. She the bones under the dung-hill. Next day, when the girl came to the pond, no fish appeared. She howled with grief in the open countryside, and suddenly there appeared a man with his hair loose over his shoulders and coarse clothes. He came down from the sky. He consoled her, saying, "Don't howl! Your step-mother had killed the fish and its bones are under the dung. You go back, take the fish's bones and hide them in your room. whatever you want, you have only to pray to them for it. It is bound to be granted." The girl followed his advice, and was able to provide herself with gold, pearls, dresses and food whenever she wanted them.

When the time came for the cave-festival, the step-mother

went, leaving the girl to keep watch over the fruit-trees in the garden. She waited till the step-mother was some way off, and then went herself, wearing a cloak of stuff spun from kingfisher feather and shoes of gold. Her step-sister recognised her and said to the step-mother, "That's very like my sister." The step-mother suspected the same thing. The girl was aware of this and went away in such a hurry that she lost one shoe. It was picked up by one of the people of the cave. When the step-mother got home, she found the girl asleep, with her arms round one of the trees in the garden, and thought no more about it.

This cave was near to an island in the sea. On this island was a kingdom called T'o-han. Its soldiers had subdued twenty or thirty other islands and it had a coast-line of several thousand leagues. The cave-man sold the shoe in T'o-han, and the ruler of T'o-han got it. He told those about him to put it on; but it was an inch too small even for the one among the that had the smallest foot. He ordered all the women in his kingdom to try it on; but there was not one that it fitted. It was light as down and made no noise even when treading on stone. The king of T'o-han thought the cave-man had got it unlawfully. He put him in prison and tortured him, but did not end by finding out where it had come from. So he threw it down at the wayside. (Here the text is corrupt, and the tale becomes unclear.) Then they went everywhere through all the people's houses and arrested them. If there was a woman's shoe, they arrested them and told the king of T'o-han. He thought it strange, searched the inner-rooms and found Yeh-hsien. He made her put on the shoes, and it was true.

Yeh-hsien then came forward, wearing her cloak spun from halcyon feathers and her shoes. She was as beautiful as a heavenly being. She now began to render service to the king, and he took the fish-bones and Yeh-Hsien, and brought them back to his country.

The step-mother and step-sister were shortly afterwards struck by flying stones, and died. The cave people were sorry for them and buried them in a stone-pit, which was called the Tomb of the Distressed Women. The men of the cave made mating-offerings there; any girl they prayed for there, they got. The king of T'o-han, when he got back to his kingdom made Yeh-Hsien his chief wife. The first year the king was very greedy and by his prayers to the fish-bones got treasure and jade without limit. Next year, there was no response, so the king buried the fish-bones on the sea-shore. He covered them with a hundred bushels of pearls and bordered them with gold. Later there was a mutiny of some soldiers who had been conscripted and their general opened (the hiding-place) in order to make better provision for his army. One night they (the bones) were washed away by the tide.

Author's note: This story was told me by Li Shih-yuan, who has been in the service of my family a long while. He was himself originally a man from the caves of Yung-chou and remembers many strange things of the South.

Translated by Arthur Waley.

### "The Maiden, the Frog, and the Chief's Son"

Once upon a time, somewhere in Nigeria, there was a man who had a pair of wives. Each woman gave birth to a girl. "And one wife, together with her daughter, he couldn't abide; but the other, with her daughter, he dearly loved."

Ill luck came, and the hated wife died, leaving her poor child "with no mother of her own, just her father" and her stepmother. That cruel woman made the little girl "go off to the bush to gather the wood. When she returned, she had to pound the fura. Then she had the tuwo to pound, and after that, to stir." But she wasn't allowed to eat but "the burnt bits at the bottom of the pot".

Luckily for her, she did have "an elder brother, and he invited her to come eat regularly at his home." At home, she was not given even water to drink, but made to go "to the borrow-pit". She brought her scrapings along to feed to the frogs who thrived there, "and the frogs would come up and start eating the scrapings." So things went for some time.

The time of the big Festival came along, and that morning, when this girl came to the pit, a frog spoke to her. It said, "Maiden, you've always been very kind to us, and now we — but you just come along tomorrow morning." The frogs would then "be kind to you, in our turn", he told her. So she said that she would come. Yet first thing the next morning, her stepmother began to berate her for laziness, and gave her double the amount of chores to do before she could so much

as go for a drink of water. Finally she was allowed to go. When she got to the pit, the frog said, "Tut-tut, girl. I've been waiting her since morning, and you never came." To which she retorted, "Old fellow, you see, I'm a slave." She told him that her mother had died, and that she'd been put in the care of her stepmother, who hated her. "Says the frog, 'Girl, give us your hand.' And she held it out to him and they both leaped into the water."

Then he swallowed her, and whorfed her back up again. She was now "quite straight". And then he "vomited up cloths for her, and bangles and rings, and a pair of shoes, one of silver, one of gold." Then he told her to go along to the Festival, only that she must leave her golden shoe there, just as the festivities ended. So this she did. When she got to the Festival, the first person who noticed her was the chief's son. He was so taken by her that he spent the entire evening by her side, dancing and talking. When the music stopped, the girl kicked off one of her shoes and set off for home, but the chief's son followed her. "Presently, she said 'Chief's Son, you must go back now.'" And he honored her request. When she got home, she ran to the borrow-pit and met the frog. He swallowed her again, and when he had vomited her up, she was "just as she had been before, a sorry sight." Then she went and told her stepmother that she was not feeling good. That woman replied, "Rascally slut! You have been up to no good, refusing to come home, refusing to fetch water or wood, refusing to pound the fura or

make the tuwo! Very well then. No food for you today!" So the girl went hungry. But that same day, an announcement came from the Chief. "All the girls, young and old" were to come and try on a certain gold shoe found by the chief's son. Yet when all had been gathered, the shoe fit none. Then "someone said, 'Just a minute! There's that girl in so-and-so's compound, whose mother died.'" So she was found, and brought forward. And "the minute she arrived to try it on, the shoe itself, of its own accord, ran across and made her foot get into it." And the chief's son watched, and exclaimed, "Right! Here's my wife!" So he proposed right then and there and too her back to his compound. In the morning when she went outside, there was the frog. She said to him, "Welcome, old fellow!" And he told her that "tonight, we shall be along to bring some things for you." In the evening, there was a chorus of frogs around her hut. The leader told all assembled that the girl was his daughter, and that for her wedding, each frog should contribute as much as he could. So each brought according to his own wealth, and the chief frog "thanked them all, then vomited up a silver bed, a brass bed, a copper bed and an iron bed." He also brought up blankets and dishes, and other fine things. Then the frog gave her special instructions regarding how she must act within the household. If she felt troubled, she must "lie down on the brass bed". When her sister wives came to greet her, she must "give them two calabashes of cola nuts and ten thousand cowrie shells; then when his concubines come to greet you, give them one calabash of cola-nuts and five thousand cowrie shells." So, this is just what the girl did, making friends with the wives and concubines. But one night, her stepmother snuck into the

compound, and forced her stepdaughter to allow her stepsister to change places with her. But the next day, when the other wives came to greet the new wife again, the young woman gave them "a Pf of contempt". And when the concubines came, she cleared her throat, then "hawk[ed] and spit" at them. You see, this was what her sister had told her to do! Well, the chief's son also noticed a suspicious change in the behavior of his newest wife, and came to investigate. What he heard only confirmed his suspicion, So he called to his men, and they found the false wife and "chopped her up into little pieces." Then he went to the stepmother and demanded his wife back. He took her to his compound, "and next morning, when it was light, she picked up little gourd water bottle and going around behind her hut, there saw the frog." She thanked him again, and told him that what she would like best of all would be for a well to be built, so that all of the frog folk could come and live near her. "All right," said the frog, "You tell your husband." And she did so." Then the Chief's son ordered a well dug, "and the frogs came and entered the well. That's all. *Kungurus kan kusu.*"

From: Dundee, A. (1982) *Cinderella: A Casebook*. New York: Garland Publishing Inc.

Notes: This story shows something of the history of frogs in African mythology, where they are said to be virile symbols of masculinity, sort of amphibian ladies' men. Remember the folk song, "Froggie Went A' Courting"? The cultural roots run deep. Author Dundee concludes that this story was imported, rather than a true part of the Nigerian folklore.

### "Oochigeaskw—The Rough-Faced Girl (A Native American 'Cinderella')"

There was once a large village of the MicMac Indians of the Eastern Algonquins, built beside a lake. At the far end of the settlement stood a lodge, and in it lived a being who was always invisible.

He had a sister who looked after him, and everyone knew that any girl who could see him might marry him. For that reason there were few girls who did not try, but it was very long before anyone succeeded.

This is the way in which the test of sight was carried out: at evening-time, when the Invisible One was due to be returning home, his sister would walk with any girl who might come down to the lakeshore. She, of course, could see her brother, since he was always visible to her.

As soon as she saw him, she would say to the girls: "Do you see my brother?" "Yes, they would generally reply-though some of them did say "No."

To those who said that they could indeed see him, the sister would say:

"Of what is his shoulder straps made?" Some people say that she would enquire:

"What is his moose-runners haul?" or "With what does he draw his sled?"

And they would answer:

"A strip of rawhide" or "a green flexible branch", or something of that kind.

Then she, knowing that they had not told the truth, would say: "Very well, let us return to the wigwam!"

When they had gone in, she would tell them not to sit in a certain place, because it belonged to the Invisible One. Then after they had helped to cook the supper, they would wait with great curiosity, to see him eat. They could be sure that he was a real person, for when he took off his moccasins they became visible, and his sister hung them up. But beyond this they saw nothing of him, or even when they stayed in the place all night, as many of them did.

Now there lived in the village an old man who was a widower, and his three daughters. The youngest girl was very small, weak and often ill, and yet her sisters, especially the elder treated her cruelly. The second daughter was kinder, and sometimes took her side, but the wicked sister would burn her hands and feet with hot cinders, and she was covered with scars from this treatment. She was so marked that people called her Oochigeaskw, The-Rough-Faced-Girl.

When her father came home and asked why she had such burns, the bad sister would at once say that it was her own fault, for she had disobeyed orders and gone near the fire and had fallen into it.

These two elder sisters decided one day to try their luck at seeing the Invisible One. So they dressed themselves in their finest clothes, and tried to look their prettiest. They found the Invisible One's sister and took the usual walk by the water.

When he came, and when they were asked if they could see him, they answered: "Of course." And when asked about the shoulder strap or sled cord, they answered: "A piece of rawhide." But of course they were lying like the others, and they got nothing for their pains.

The next afternoon, when the father returned home, he brought with him many of the pretty little shells from which wampum was made, and they set to work to string them.

That day, poor little Oochigeaskw, who had always gone barefoot, got a pair of her father's moccasins, old ones, and put them into water to soften them so that she could wear them. Then she begged her sisters for a few wampum shells. The elder called her a "little pest", but the younger one gave her some. Now, with no other clothes than her usual rags, the poor little thing went into the woods and got herself some sheets of birch bark, from which she made a dress, and put marks on it for decoration, in the style of long ago.

She made a petticoat and a loose gown, a cap, leggings and a handkerchief. She put on her father's large old moccasins, which were far too big for her, and went forth to try her luck. She would try, she thought, to discover whether she could see the Invisible One.

She did not begin very well. As she set off, her sisters shouted and hooted and yelled, and tried to make her stay. And the

loafers around the village, seeing the strange little creature, called out "Shame!"

The poor little girl in her strange clothes, with her face all scared, was an awful sight, but she was kindly received by the sister of the Invisible One. And this was, of course, because this noble lady understood far more things than the mere outside which all the rest of the world knows. As the brown of the evening sky turned to black, the lady took her down to the lake.

"Do you see him?" the Invisible One's sister asked.

"I do indeed-and he is wonderful!" said Oochigeaskw.

The sister asked: "And what is his sled-string?"

The little girl said: "It is the Rainbow."

"And, my sister, what is his bow-string?"

"It is The Spirit's Road-the Milky Way."

"So you have seen him, said his sister.

She took the girl home with her and bathed her. As she did so, all the scars disappeared from her body. Her hair grew again, as it was combed, long, like a blackbird's wing. Her eyes were now like stars: in all the world there was no other such beauty. Then, from her treasures, the lady gave her a wedding garment, and adorned her.

Then she told Oochigeaskw to take the wife's seat in the wigwam, the one next to where the Invisible One sat, beside the entrance. And when he came in, terrible and beautiful, he smiled and said:

"So we are found out!"

"Yes," said his sister. And so Oochigeaskw became his wife.

### Walt Disney's "Cinderella," adapted by Campbell Grant

[Editor's Note: Walt Elias Disney (1901-66), winner of twenty-nine Academy Awards, is world famous for his cartoon animations. After achieving recognition with cartoon shorts populated by such immortals as Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck, he produced the full-length animated film version of "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" in 1936. He followed with other animations, including "Cinderella" (1949), which he adapted from Perrault's version of the tale. A Little Golden Book, the text of which appears here, was then adapted from the film by Campbell Grant.]

Once upon a time in a far-away land lived a sweet and pretty girl named Cinderella. She made her home with her mean old step-mother and her two stepsisters, and they made her do all the work in the house. Cinderella cooked and baked. She cleaned and scrubbed. She had no time left for parties and fun.

But one day an invitation came from the palace of the king. A great ball was to be given for the prince of the land. And every young girl in the kingdom was invited.

"How nice!" thought Cinderella. "I am invited, too." But her mean stepsisters never thought of her. They thought only of themselves, of course. They had all sorts of jobs for Cinderella to do.

"Wash this slip. Press this dress. Curl my hair. Find my fan." They both kept shouting, as fast as they could speak.

"But I must get ready myself. I'm going, too," said Cinderella.

"You!" they hooted. "The Prince's ball for you?" And they kept her busy all day long. She worked in the morning, while her stepsisters slept. She worked all afternoon, while they bathed and dressed. And in the evening she had to help them put on the finishing touches for the ball. She had not one minute to think of herself.

Soon the coach was ready at the door. The ugly stepsisters were powdered, pressed, and curled. But there stood Cinderella in her workaday rags. "Why, Cinderella!" said the stepsisters. "You're not dressed for the ball."

"No," said Cinderella. "I guess I cannot go." Poor Cinderella sat weeping in the garden.

Suddenly a little old woman with a sweet, kind face stood before her. It was her fairy godmother.

"Hurry, child!" she said. "You are going to the ball!" Cinderella could hardly believe her eyes! The fairy godmother turned a fat pumpkin into a splendid coach. Next her pet mice

became horses, and her dog a fine footman. The barn horse was turned into a coachman.

“There, my dear,” said the fairy godmother. “Now into the coach with you, and off to the ball you go.”

“But my dress--” said Cinderella.

“Lovely, my dear,” the fairy godmother began. Then she really looked at Cinderella’s rags. “Oh, good heavens,” she said. “You can never go in that.” She waved her magic wand.

“Salaga doola,  
Menchika boola,  
Bibbidy bobbidy boo!” she said.

There stood Cinderella in the loveliest ball dress that ever was. And on her feet were tiny glass slippers! “Oh, cried Cinderella. “How can I ever thank you?”

“Just have a wonderful time at the ball, my dear,” said her fairy godmother. “But remember, this magic lasts only until midnight. At the stroke of midnight, the spell will be broken. And everything will be as it was before.”

“I will remember,” said Cinderella. “It is more than I ever dreamed of.” Then into the magic coach she stepped, and was whirled away to the ball.

And such a ball! The king’s palace was ablaze with lights. there was music and laughter. And every lady in the land was dressed in her beautiful best.

But Cinderella was the loveliest of them all. The prince never left her side, all evening long. They danced every dance. They had supper side by side. and they happily smiled into each other’s eyes.

But all at once the clock began to strike midnight, Bong Bong Bong--

“Oh!” cried Cinderella. “I almost forgot!” And without a word, away she ran, out of the ballroom and down the palace stairs. She lost one glass slipper. But she could not stop.

Into her magic coach she stepped, and away it rolled. But as the clock stopped striking, the coach disappeared. And no one knew where she had gone.

Next morning all the kingdom was filled with the news. The Grand Duke was going from house to house, with a small glass slipper in his hand. For the prince had said he would marry no one but the girl who could wear the tiny shoe.

Every girl in the land tried hard to put it on. The ugly stepsisters tried hardest of all. But not a one could wear the glass shoe.

And where was Cinderella? Locked in her room. For the mean old stepmother was taking no chances of letting her try on the slipper. Poor Cinderella! It looked as if the Grand Duke would surely pass her by.

But her little friends the mice got the stepmother’s key. And they pushed it under Cinderella’s door. So down the long stairs she came, as the Duke was just about to leave.

“Please!” cried Cinderella. “Please let me try.” And of course the slipper fitted, since it was her very own.

That was all the Duke needed. Now his long search was done. And so Cinderella became the prince’s bride, and lived happily ever after--and the little pet mice lived in the palace and were happy ever after, too.

### Anne Sexton, “Cinderella”

You always read about it:  
the plumber with the twelve children  
who wins the Irish Sweepstakes.  
From toilets to riches.  
That story.

Or the nursemaid,  
some luscious sweet from Denmark  
who captures the oldest son's heart.  
from diapers to Dior.  
That story.

Or a milkman who serves the wealthy,  
eggs, cream, butter, yogurt, milk,  
the white truck like an ambulance  
who goes into real estate  
and makes a pile.  
From homogenized to martinis at lunch.

Or the charwoman  
who is on the bus when it cracks up  
and collects enough from the insurance.  
From mops to Bonwit Teller.  
That story.

Once  
the wife of a rich man was on her deathbed  
and she said to her daughter Cinderella:  
Be devout. Be good. Then I will smile  
down from heaven in the seam of a cloud.  
The man took another wife who had  
two daughters, pretty enough  
but with hearts like blackjacks.  
Cinderella was their maid.  
She slept on the sooty hearth each night  
and walked around looking like Al Jolson.  
Her father brought presents home from town,  
jewels and gowns for the other women  
but the twig of a tree for Cinderella.  
She planted that twig on her mother's grave  
and it grew to a tree where a white dove sat.  
Whenever she wished for anything the dove  
would drop it like an egg upon the ground.  
The bird is important, my dears, so heed him.

Next came the ball, as you all know.  
It was a marriage market.  
The prince was looking for a wife.



All but Cinderella were preparing  
and gussying up for the event.  
Cinderella begged to go too.  
Her stepmother threw a dish of lentils  
into the cinders and said: Pick them  
up in an hour and you shall go.  
The white dove brought all his friends;  
all the warm wings of the fatherland came,  
and picked up the lentils in a jiffy.  
No, Cinderella, said the stepmother,  
you have no clothes and cannot dance.  
That's the way with stepmothers.

Cinderella went to the tree at the grave  
and cried forth like a gospel singer:  
Mama! Mama! My turtledove,  
send me to the prince's ball!  
The bird dropped down a golden dress  
and delicate little slippers.  
Rather a large package for a simple bird.  
So she went. Which is no surprise.  
Her stepmother and sisters didn't  
recognize her without her cinder face  
and the prince took her hand on the spot  
and danced with no other the whole day.

As nightfall came she thought she'd better  
get home. The prince walked her home  
and she disappeared into the pigeon house  
and although the prince took an axe and broke  
it open she was gone. Back to her cinders.  
These events repeated themselves for three days.  
However on the third day the prince  
covered the palace steps with cobbler's wax  
and Cinderella's gold shoe stuck upon it.

Now he would find whom the shoe fit  
and find his strange dancing girl for keeps.  
He went to their house and the two sisters  
were delighted because they had lovely feet.  
The eldest went into a room to try the slipper on  
but her big toe got in the way so she simply  
sliced it off and put on the slipper.  
The prince rode away with her until the white dove  
told him to look at the blood pouring forth.  
That is the way with amputations.  
They just don't heal up like a wish.  
The other sister cut off her heel  
but the blood told as blood will.  
The prince was getting tired.  
He began to feel like a shoe salesman.  
But he gave it one last try.  
This time Cinderella fit into the shoe  
like a love letter into its envelope.

At the wedding ceremony  
the two sisters came to curry favor  
and the white dove pecked their eyes out.  
Two hollow spots were left  
like soup spoons.

Cinderella and the prince  
lived, they say, happily ever after,  
like two dolls in a museum case  
never bothered by diapers or dust,  
never arguing over the timing of an egg,  
never telling the same story twice,  
never getting a middle-aged spread,  
their darling smiles pasted on for eternity.  
Regular Bobbsey Twins.  
That story.

### **Bettelheim, Bruno. "Cinderella': A Story of Sibling Rivalry and Oedipal Conflicts"**

[Editor's Note: Having read several variants of "Cinderella," you may have wondered what it is about this story that has prompted people in different parts of the world at different times, to show interest in a child who's been debased but then rises above her misfortune. Why are people so fascinated with "Cinderella"?

Depending on the people you ask and their perspectives, you'll find this question answered in various ways. As a Freudian psychologist, Bruno Bettelheim believes that the mind is a repository of both conscious and unconscious elements. By definition, we aren't aware of what goes on in our unconscious; nonetheless, what happens there exerts a powerful influence on what we believe and how we act. This division of the mind into conscious and unconscious parts is true for children no less than for adults. Based on these beliefs about mind,

Bettelheim analyzes "Cinderella" first by pointing to what he calls the story's essential theme: sibling rivalry, or Cinderella's mistreatment at the hands of her stepsisters.

Competition among brothers and sisters presents a profound and largely unconscious problem to children, says Bettelheim. By hearing "Cinderella," a story that speaks directly to their unconscious, children are given tools that can help them resolve conflicts. Cinderella resolves her difficulties; children hearing the story can resolve theirs as well: This is the unconscious message of the tale.

Do you accept this argument? To do so, you have to agree with the author's reading of "Cinderella's" hidden meanings; and you'd have to agree with his assumptions concerning the conscious and unconscious mind and the ways in which the unconscious will seize upon the content of a story in order to resolve conflicts. Even if you don't accept Bettelheim's analysis, his essay makes fascinating reading. First, it is internally consistent--that is, he begins with a set of principles and then builds logically upon them as any good writer will. Second, his analysis demonstrates how a scholarly point of view--a coherent set of assumptions about the way the world (in this case, the mind) works--creates boundaries for discussion. Change the assumptions (as Kolbenschlag and

Yolen do) and you'll change the analyses that follow from them.

Bruno Bettelheim, a distinguished psychologist and educator, was born in 1903 in Vienna. He was naturalized as an American citizen in 1939 and served as a professor of psychology at Rockford College and the University of Chicago. Awarded the honor of fellow by several prestigious professional associations, Bettelheim was a prolific writer and contributed articles to numerous popular and professional publications. His list of books includes *Love is Not Enough: The Treatment of Emotionally Disturbed Children*, *The Informed Heart*, *Surviving*, and *The Uses of Enchantment*, from which this selection has been excerpted. Bettelheim died in 1990.]

By all accounts, "Cinderella" is the best-known fairy tale, and probably also the best-liked. It is quite an old story; when first written down in China during the ninth century A.D., it already had a history. The unrivaled tiny foot size as a mark of extraordinary virtue, distinction, and beauty, and the slipper made of precious material are facets which point to Eastern, if not necessarily Chinese origin. The modern hearer does not connect sexual attractiveness and beauty in general with extreme smallness of the foot, as the ancient Chinese did, in accordance with their practice of binding women's feet.

"Cinderella," as we know it, is experienced as a story about the agonies and hopes which form the essential content of sibling rivalry; and about the degraded heroine winning out over her siblings who abused her. Long before Perrault gave "Cinderella" the form in which it is now widely known, "having to live among the ashes" was a symbol of being debased in comparison to one's siblings, irrespective of sex. In Germany, for example, there are stories in which such an ash-boy later becomes king, which parallels Cinderella's fate. "Aschenputtel" is the title of the Brothers Grimm's version of the tale. The term originally designated a lowly, dirty kitchen maid who must tend to the fireplace ashes.

There are many examples in the German language of how being forced to live among the ashes was a symbol not just of degradation, but also of sibling rivalry, and of the sibling who finally surpasses the brother or brothers who have debased him. Martin Luther in his Table Talks speaks about Cain as the God-forsaken evil doer who is powerful, while pious Abel is forced to be his ash-brother, a mere nothing, subject to Cain; in one of Luther's sermons he says that Esau was forced into the role of Jacob's ash-brother. Cain and Abel, Jacob and Esau are Biblical examples of one brother being suppressed or destroyed by the other.

The fairy tale replaces sibling relations with relations between step-siblings--perhaps a device to explain and make acceptable an animosity which one wishes would not exist among true siblings. Although sibling rivalry is universal and "natural" in the sense that it is the negative consequence of being a sibling, this same relation also generates equally as much positive feeling between siblings, highlighted in fairy tales such as "Brother and Sister."

No other fairy tale renders so well as the "Cinderella" stories the inner experiences of the young child in the throes of sibling rivalry, when he feels hopelessly outclassed by his brothers and sisters. Cinderella is pushed down and degraded by her stepsisters; her interests are sacrificed to theirs by her (step)mother; she is expected to do the dirtiest work and although she performs it well, she receives no credit for it; only more is demanded of her. This is how the child feels when devastated by the miseries of sibling rivalry. Exaggerated though Cinderella's tribulations and degradations may seem to the adult, the child carried away by sibling rivalry feels, "That's me; that's how they mistreat me, or would want to; that's how little they think of me." And there are moments--often long time periods--when for inner reasons a child feels this way even when his position among his siblings may seem to give him no cause for it.

Why a story corresponds to how the child feels deep down--as no realistic narrative is likely to do--it attains an emotional quality of "truth" for the child. The events of "Cinderella" offer him vivid images that give body to his overwhelming but nevertheless often vague and nondescript emotions; so these episodes seem more convincing to him than his life experiences.

The term "sibling rivalry" refers to a most complex constellation of feelings and their causes. With extremely rare exceptions, the emotions aroused in the person subject to sibling rivalry are far out of proportion to what his real situation with his sisters and brothers would justify, seen objectively. While all children at times suffer greatly from sibling rivalry, parents seldom sacrifice one of their children to the others, nor do they condone the other children's persecuting one of them. Difficult as objective judgments are for the young child--nearly impossible when his emotions are aroused--even he in his more rational moments "knows" that he is not treated as badly as Cinderella. But the child often feels mistreated, despite all his "knowledge" to the contrary. That is why he believes in the inherent truth of "Cinderella," and then he also comes to believe in her eventual deliverance and victory. From her triumph he gains the exaggerated hopes for his future which he needs to counteract the extreme misery he experiences when ravaged by sibling rivalry.

Despite the name "sibling rivalry," this miserable passion has only incidentally to do with a child's actual brothers and sisters. The real source of it is the child's feelings about his parents.

When a child's older brother or sister is more competent than he, this arouses only temporary feelings of jealousy. Another child being given special attention becomes an insult only if the child fears that, in contrast, he is thought little of by his parents, or feels rejected by them. It is because of such anxiety that one or all of a child's sisters or brothers may become a thorn in his flesh. Fearing that in comparison to them he cannot win his parents' love and esteem is what inflames sibling rivalry. This is indicated in stories by the fact that it matters little whether the siblings actually possess greater competence. The Biblical story of Joseph tells that it is jealousy of parental affection lavished on him which accounts for the destructive behavior of his brothers.

Unlike Cinderella's, Joseph's parent does not participate in degrading him, and, on the contrary, prefers him to his other children. But Joseph, like Cinderella, is turned into a slave, and like her, he miraculously escapes and ends by surpassing his siblings.

Telling a child who is devastated by sibling rivalry that he will grow up to do as well as his brothers and sisters offers little relief from his present feelings of dejection. Much as he would like to trust our assurances, most of the time he cannot. A child can see things only with subjective eyes, and comparing himself on this basis to his siblings, he has no confidence that he, on his own, will someday be able to fare as well as they. If he could believe more in himself, he would not feel destroyed by his siblings no matter what they might do to him, since then he could trust that time would bring about a desired reversal of fortune. But since the child cannot, on his own, look forward with confidence to some future day when things will turn out all right for him, he can gain relief only through fantasies of glory--a domination over his siblings--which he hopes will become reality through some fortunate event.

Whatever our position within the family, at certain times in our lives we are beset by sibling rivalry in some form or other. Even an only child feels that other children have some great advantages over him, and this makes him intensely jealous. Further, he may suffer from the anxious thought that if he did have a sibling, his parents would prefer this other child to him.

"Cinderella" is a fairy tale which makes nearly as strong an appeal to boys as to girls, since children of both sexes suffer equally from sibling rivalry, and have the same desire to be rescued from their lowly position and surpass those who seem superior to them.

On the surface, "Cinderella" is as deceptively simple as the story of Little Red Riding Hood, with which it shares greatest popularity. "Cinderella" tells about the agonies of sibling rivalry, of wishes coming true, of the humble being elevated, of true merit being recognized even when hidden under rags, of virtue rewarded and evil punished--a straightforward story. But under this overt content is concealed a welter of complex and largely unconscious material, which details of the story allude to just enough to set our unconscious associations going. This makes a contrast between surface simplicity and underlying complexity which arouses deep interest in the story and explains its appeal to the millions over the centuries. To begin gaining an understanding of these hidden meanings, we have to penetrate behind the obvious sources of sibling rivalry discussed so far.

As mentioned before, if the child could only believe that it is the infirmities of his age which account for his lowly position, he would not have to suffer so wretchedly from sibling rivalry, because he could trust the future to right matters. When he thinks that his degradation is deserved, he feels his plight is utterly hopeless. Djuna Barnes's perceptive statement about fairy tales--that the child knows something about them which he cannot tell (such as that he likes the idea of Little

Red Riding Hood and the wolf being in bed together)--could be extended by dividing fairy tales into two groups: one group where the child responds only unconsciously to the inherent truth of the story and thus cannot tell about it; and another large number of tales where the child preconsciously or even consciously knows what the "truth" of the story consists of and thus could tell about it, but does not want to let on that he knows. Some aspects of "Cinderella" fall into the latter category. Many children believe that Cinderella probably deserves her fate at the beginning

of the story, as they feel they would, too; but they don't want anyone to know it. Despite this, she is worthy at the end to be exalted, as the child hopes he will be too, irrespective of his earlier shortcomings.

Every child believes at some period of his life--and this is not only at rare moments--that because of his secret wishes, if not also his clandestine actions, he deserves to be degraded, banned from the presence of others, relegated to a netherworld of smut. He fears this may be so, irrespective of how fortunate his situation may be in reality. He hates and fears those others--such as his siblings--whom he believes to be entirely free of similar evilness, and he fears that they or his parents will discover what he is really like, and then demean him as Cinderella was by her family. Because he wants others--most of all his parents--to believe in his innocence, he is delighted that "everybody" believes in Cinderella's. This is one of the great attractions of this fairy tale. Since people give credence to Cinderella's goodness, they will also believe in his, so the child hopes. And "Cinderella" nourishes this hope, which is one reason it is such a delightful story.

Another aspect which holds large appeal for the child is the vileness of the stepmother and stepsisters. Whatever the shortcomings of a child may be in his own eyes, these pale into insignificance when compared to the stepsisters' and stepmother's falsehood and nastiness. Further, what these stepsisters do to Cinderella justifies whatever nasty thoughts one may have about one's siblings: they are so vile that anything one may wish would happen to them is more than justified. Compared to their behavior, Cinderella is indeed innocent. So the child, on hearing her story, feels he need not feel guilty about his angry thoughts.

On a very different level--and reality considerations coexist easily with fantastic exaggerations in the child's mind--as badly as one's parents or siblings seem to treat one, and much as one thinks one suffers because of it, all this is nothing compared to Cinderella's fate. Her story reminds the child at the same time how lucky he is, and how much worse things could be.

(Any anxiety about the latter possibility is relieved, as always in fairy tales, by the happy ending.)

The behavior of a five-and-a-half-year-old girl, as reported by her father, may illustrate how easily a child may feel that she is a "Cinderella." This little girl had a younger sister of whom she was very jealous. The girl was very fond of "Cinderella," since the story offered her material with which to act out her feelings, and because without the story's imagery she would

have been hard pressed to comprehend and express them. This little girl had used to dress very neatly and liked pretty clothes, but she became unkempt and dirty. One day when she was asked to fetch some salt, she said as she was doing so, "Why do you treat me like Cinderella?"

Almost speechless, her mother asked her, "Why do you think we treat you like Cinderella?"

"Because you make me do all the hardest work in the house!" was the little girl's answer. Having thus drawn her parents into her fantasies, she acted them out more openly, pretending to sweep up all the dirt, etc. She went even further, playing that she prepared her little sister for the ball. But she went the "Cinderella" story one better, based on her unconscious understanding of the contradictory emotions fused into the "Cinderella" role, because at another moment she told her mother and sister, "You shouldn't be jealous of me just because I am the most beautiful in the family."

This shows that behind the surface humility of Cinderella lies the conviction of her superiority to mothers and sisters, as if she would think: "You can make me do all the dirty work, and I pretend that I am dirty, but within me I know that you treat me this way because you are jealous of me because I am so much better than you." This conviction is supported by the story's ending, which assures every "Cinderella" that eventually she will be discovered by her prince.

Why does the child believe deep within himself that Cinderella deserves her dejected state?

This question takes us back to the child's state of mind at the end of the oedipal period. Before he is caught in oedipal entanglements, the child is convinced that he is lovable, and loved, if all is well within his family relationships. Psychoanalysis describes this stage of complete satisfaction with oneself as "primary narcissism." During this period the child feels certain that he is the center of the universe, so there is no reason to be jealous of anybody.

The oedipal disappointments which come at the end of this developmental stage cast deep shadows of doubt on the child's sense of his worthiness. He feels that if he were really as deserving of love as he had thought, then his parents would never be critical of him or disappoint him. The only explanation for parental criticism the child can think of is that there must be some serious flaw in him which accounts for what he experiences as rejection. If his desires remain unsatisfied and his parents disappoint him, there must be something wrong with him or his desires, or both. He cannot yet accept that reasons other than those residing within him could have an impact on his fate. In this oedipal jealousy, wanting to get rid of the parent of the same sex had seemed the most natural thing in the world, but now the child realizes that he cannot have his own way, and that maybe this is so because the desire was wrong. He is no longer so sure that he is preferred to his siblings, and he begins to suspect that this may be due to the fact that they are free of any bad thoughts or wrongdoing such as his.

All this happens as the child is gradually subjected to ever more critical attitudes as he is being socialized. He is asked to behave in ways which run counter to his natural desires, and he resents this. Still he must obey, which makes him very angry. This anger is directed against those who make demands, most likely his parents; and this is another reason to wish to get rid of them, and still another reason to feel guilty about such wishes. This is why the child also feels that he deserves to be chastised for his feelings, a punishment he believes he can escape only if nobody learns what he is thinking when he is angry. The feeling of being unworthy to be loved by his parents at a time when his desire for their love is very strong leads to the fear of rejection, even when in reality there is none. This rejection fear compounds the anxiety that others are preferred and also maybe preferable--the root of sibling rivalry.

Some of the child's pervasive feelings of worthlessness have their origin in his experiences during and around toilet training and all other aspects of his education to become clean, neat and orderly. Much has been said about how children are made to feel dirty and bad because they are not as clean as their parents want or require them to be. As clean as a child may learn to be, he knows that he would much prefer to give free rein to his tendency to be messy, disorderly, and dirty.

At the end of the oedipal period, guilt about desires to be dirty and disorderly becomes compounded by oedipal guilt, because the child's desire to replace the parent of the same sex in the love of the other parent, the wish to be the love, if not also the sexual partner, of the parent of the other sex, which at the beginning of the oedipal development seemed natural and "innocent," at the end of the period is repressed as bad. But while this wish as such is repressed, guilt about it and about sexual feelings in general is not, and this makes the child feel dirty and worthless.

Here again, lack of objective knowledge leads the child to think that he is the only bad one in all these respects--the only child who has such desires. It makes every child identify with Cinderella, who is relegated to sit among the cinders. Since the child has such "dirty" wishes, that is where he also belongs, and where he would end up if his parents knew of his desires. This is why every child needs to believe that even if he were thus degraded, eventually he would be rescued from such degradation and experience the most wonderful exaltation--as Cinderella does.

For the child to deal with his feelings of dejection and worthlessness aroused during this time, he desperately needs to gain some grasp on what these feelings of guilt and anxiety are all about. Further, he needs assurance on a conscious and an unconscious level that he will be able to extricate himself from these predicaments. One of the greatest merits of "Cinderella" is that, irrespective of the magic help Cinderella receives, the child understands that essentially it is through her own efforts, and because of the person she is, that Cinderella is able to transcend magnificently her degraded state, despite what appear as insurmountable obstacles. It gives the child confidence that the same will be true for him,

because the story relates so well to what has caused both his conscious and his unconscious guilt.

Overtly "Cinderella" tells about sibling rivalry in its most extreme form: the jealousy and enmity of the stepsisters, and Cinderella's sufferings because of it. The many psychological

issues touched upon in the story are so covertly alluded to that the child does not become consciously aware of them. In his unconscious, however, the child responds to these significant details which refer to matters and experiences from which he consciously has separated himself, but which nevertheless continue to create vast problems for him.

### Yolen, Jane. "America's 'Cinderella.'"

It is part of the American creed, recited subvocally along with the pledge of allegiance in each classroom, that even a poor boy can grow up to become president. The unliberated corollary is that even a poor girl can grow up and become the president's wife. This rags-to-riches formula was immortalized in American children's fiction by the Horatio Alger stories of the 1860s and by the Pluck and Luck nickel novels of the 1920s.

It is little wonder, then, that Cinderella should be a perennial favorite in the American folktale pantheon.

Yet how ironic that this formula should be the terms on which "Cinderella" is acceptable to most Americans. "Cinderella" is *not* a story of rags to riches, but rather riches recovered; *not* poor girl into princess but rather rich girl (or princess) rescued from improper or wicked enslavement; *not* suffering Griselda enduring but shrewd and practical girl persevering and winning a share of the power. [\*In Chaucer's "Clerk's Tale" (from *The Canterbury Tales*) Griselda endures a series of humiliating tests of her love for and fidelity to her husband. She has become a symbol of the patient and enduring wife.] It is really a story that is about "the stripping away of the disguise that conceals the soul from the eyes of others..."

We Americans have it wrong. "Rumpelstiltskin," in which a miller tells a whopping lie and his docile daughter acquiesces in it to become queen, would be more to the point.

But we have been initially seduced by the Perrault cinder-girl, who was, after all, the transfigured folk creature of a French literary courtier. Perrault's "Cendrillon" demonstrated the well-bred seventeenth-century female traits of gentility, grace, and selflessness, even to the point of graciously forgiving her wicked stepsisters and finding them noble husbands.

The American "Cinderella" is partially Perrault's. The rest is a spun-sugar caricature of her hardier European and Oriental forbears, who made their own way in the world, tricking the stepsisters with double-talk, artfully disguising themselves, or figuring out a way to win the king's son. The final bit of icing on the American Cinderella was concocted by that master candy-maker, Walt Disney, in the 1950s. Since then, America's Cinderella has been a coy, helpless dreamer, a "nice" girl who awaits her rescue with patience and a song. This Cinderella of the mass market books finds her way into a majority of American homes while the classic heroines sit unread in old volumes on library shelves.

Poor Cinderella. She has been unjustly distorted by storytellers, misunderstood by educators, and wrongly accused by feminists. Even as late as 1975, in the well-received

volume *Womenfolk and Fairy Tales*, Rosemary Minard writes that Cinderella "would still be scrubbing floors if it were not for her fairy godmother." And Ms. Minard includes her in a sweeping condemnation of folk heroines as "insipid beauties waiting passively for Prince Charming."

Like many dialecticians, Ms. Minard reads the fairy tales incorrectly. Believing--rightly--that the fairy tales, as all stories for children, acculturate young readers and listeners, she has nevertheless gotten her target wrong. Cinderella is not to blame. Not the real, the true Cinderella. She does not recognize the old Ash-girl for the tough, resilient heroine. The wrong Cinderella has gone to the American ball.

The story of Cinderella has endured for over a thousand years, surfacing in a literary source first in ninth-century China. It has been found from the Orient to the interior of South America and over five hundred variants have been located by folklorists in Europe alone. This best-loved tale has been brought to life over and over and no one can say for sure where the oral tradition began. The European story was included by Charles Perrault in his 1697 collection *Histoires ou Contes du temps passt* as "Cendrillon." But even before that, the Italian Straparola had a similar story in a collection. Since there had been twelve editions of the Straparola book printed in French before 1694, the chances are strong that Perrault had read the tale "*Peau d'Ane*" (Donkey Skin).

Joseph Jacobs, the indefatigable Victorian collector, once said of a Cinderella story he printed that it was "an English version of an Italian adaptation of a Spanish translation of a Latin version of a Hebrew translation of an Arabic translation of an Indian original." Perhaps it was not a totally accurate statement of that particular variant, but Jacobs was making a point about the perils of folktale-telling: each teller brings to a tale something of his/her own cultural orientation. Thus in China, where the "lotus foot," or tiny foot, was such a sign of a woman's worth that the custom of foot-binding developed, the Cinderella tale lays emphasis on an impossibly small slipper as a clue to the heroine's identity. In seventeenth-century France, Perrault's creation sighs along with her stepsisters over the magnificent "gold flowered mantua" and the "diamond stomacher." In the Walt Disney American version, both movie and book form, Cinderella shares with the little animals a quality of "lovableness," thus changing the intent of the tale and denying the heroine her birthright of shrewdness, inventiveness, and grace under pressure.

Notice, though, that many innovations--the Chinese slipper, the Perrault godmother with her midnight injunction and her ability to change pumpkin into coach--become incorporated in

later versions. Even a slip of the English translator's tongue (*de vair* fur, into *de verre*, glass) becomes immortalized. Such cross fertilization of folklore is phenomenal. And the staying power, across countries and centuries, of some of these inventions is notable. Yet glass slipper and godmother and pumpkin coach are not the common incidents by which a "Cinderella" tale is recognized even though they have become basic ingredients in the American story. Rather, the common incidents recognized by folklorists are these: an ill-treated though rich and worthy heroine in Cinders-disguise; the aid of a magical gift or advice by a beast/bird/mother substitute; the dance/festival/church scene where the heroine comes in radiant display; recognition through a token. So "Cinderella" and her true sister tales, "Cap o'Rushes" ["*Cap a "Rushes"*": One of the 700 variants of "Cinderella" in which the heroine is debased by having to wear a cap (and in other variants, a coat) made of rushes.] with its King Lear judgment and "Catskin" wherein the father unnaturally desires his daughter, are counted. ["*King Lear judgment*": The story of King Lear has been identified as a variant of "Cinderella." In this variant, the King's one faithful daughter is cast out of the home because she claims to love her father according to her bond (but certainly not more than she would love her husband). The King's other daughters, eager to receive a large inheritance, profess false love and then plot against their father to secure their interests. The evil sisters are defeated and the father and faithful daughter, reunited. Before his death, Lear acknowledges his error.]

Andrew Lang's judgment that "a naked shoeless race could not have invented Cinderella," then, proves false. Variants have been found among the fur-wearing folk of Alaska and the native tribes in South Africa where shoes were not commonly worn.

"Cinderella" speaks to all of us in whatever skin we inhabit: the child mistreated, a princess or highborn lady in disguise bearing her trials with patience and fortitude. She makes intelligent decisions for she knows that wishing solves nothing without the concomitant action. We have each of us been that child. It is the longing of any youngster sent supperless to bed or given less than a full share at Christmas. It is the adolescent dream.

To make Cinderella less than she is, then, is a heresy of the worst kind. It cheapens our most cherished dreams, and it makes a mockery of the true magic inside us all--the ability to change our own lives, the ability to control our own destinies.

Cinderella first came to America in the nursery tales the settlers remembered from their own homes and told their children. Versions of these tales can still be found. Folklorist Richard Chase, for example, discovered "Rush Cape," an exact parallel of "Cap o'Rushes" with an Appalachian dialect in Tennessee, Kentucky, and South Carolina among others.

But when the story reached print, developed, was made literary, things began to happen to the hardy Cinderella. She suffered a sea change, a sea change aggravated by social conditions.

In the 1870s, for example, in the prestigious magazine for children *St Nicholas*, there are a number of retellings or adaptations of "Cinderella." The retellings which merely translate European variants contain the hardy heroine. But when a new version is presented, a helpless Cinderella is born. G. B. Bartlett's "Giant Picture-Book," which was considered "a curious novelty [that] can be produced . . . by children for the amusement of their friends" presents a weepy, prostrate young blonde (the instructions here are quite specific) who must be "aroused from her sad revery" by a godmother. Yet in the truer Cinderella stories, the heroine is not this catatonic. For example, in the Grimm "Cinder-Maid," though she weeps, she continues to perform the proper rites and rituals at her mother's grave, instructing the birds who roost there to:

Make me a lady fair to see,  
Dress me as splendid as can be.

And in "The Dirty Shepherdess," a "Cap o'Rushes" variant from France, ". . . she dried her eyes, and made a bundle of her jewels and her best dresses and hurriedly left the castle where she was born." In the *St Nicholas* "Giant Picture-Book" she has none of this strength of purpose. Rather, she is manipulated by the godmother until the moment she stands before the prince where she speaks "meekly" and "with downcast eyes and extended hand."

*St Nicholas* was not meant for the mass market. It had, in Selma Lanes' words, "a patrician call to a highly literate readership." But nevertheless, Bartlett's play instructions indicate how even in the more literary reaches of children's books a change was taking place.

However, to truly mark this change in the American "Cinderella," one must turn specifically to the mass-market books, merchandised products that masquerade as literature but make as little lasting literary impression as a lollipop. They, after all, serve the majority the way the storytellers of the village used to serve. They find their way into millions of homes.

Mass-market books are almost as old as colonial America. The chap-books of the eighteenth and nineteenth century, crudely printed tiny paperbacks, were the source of most children's reading in the early days of our country. Originally these were books imported from Europe. But slowly American publishing grew. In the latter part of the nineteenth century one firm stood out--McLoughlin Bros. They brought bright colors to the pages of children's books. In a series selling for twenty-five cents per book, *Aunt Kate's Series*, bowdlerized folk tales emerged. "Cinderella" was there, along with "Red Riding Hood," "Puss in Boots," and others. Endings were changed, innards cleaned up, and good triumphed with very loud huzzahs. Cinderella is the weepy, sentimentalized pretty girl incapable of helping herself. In contrast, one only has to look at the girl in "Cap o'Rushes" who comes to a great house and asks "Do you want a maid?" and when refused, goes on to say ". . . I ask no wages and do any sort of work." And she does. In the end, when the master's young son is dying of love for the mysterious lady, she uses her wits to work her way out of the kitchen. Even in Perrault's "Cinderella," when the fairy godmother runs out of ideas for enchantment and "was at a loss for a coachman, I'll

go and see, says Cinderella, if there be never a rat in the rat-trap, we'll make a coachman of him. You are in the right, said her godmother, go and see."

Hardy, helpful, inventive, that was the Cinderella of the old tales but not of the mass market in the nineteenth century. Today's mass-market books are worse. These are the books sold in supermarket and candystore, even lining the shelves of many of the best bookstores. There are pop-up Cinderellas, coloring-book Cinderellas, scratch-and-sniff Cinderellas, all inexpensive and available. The point in these books is not the story but the *gimmick*. These are books which must "interest 300,000 children, selling their initial print order in one season and continuing strong for at least two years after that." Compare that with the usual trade publishing house print order of a juvenile book--10,000 copies which an editor hopes to sell out in a lifetime of that title.

All the folk tales have been gutted. But none so changed, I believe, as "Cinderella." For the sake of Happy Ever After, the mass-market books have brought forward a good, malleable, forgiving little girl and put her in Cinderella's slippers. However, in most of the Cinderella tales there is no forgiveness in the heroine's heart. No mercy. Just justice. In "Rushen Coatie" and "The CinderMaid," the elder sisters hack off their toes and heels in order to fit the shoe. Cinderella never stops them, never implies that she has the matching slipper. In fact, her tattletale birds warn the prince in "Rushen Coatie":

Hacked Heels and Pinched Toes  
Behind the young prince rides,  
But Pretty Feet and Little Feet  
Behind the cauldron bides.

Even more graphically, they call out in "Cinder-Maid":

Turn and peep, turn and peep,  
There's blood within the shoe;  
A bit is cut from off the heel  
And a bit from off the toe.

Cinderella never says a word of comfort. And in the least bowdlerized of the German and Nordic tales, [when] the two sisters come to the wedding "the elder was at the right side and the younger at the left, and the pigeons pecked out one eye from each of them. Afterwards, as they came back, the elder was on the left, and the younger at the right, and then the pigeons pecked out the other eye from each. And thus, for their wickedness and falsehood, they were punished with blindness all their days." That's a far cry from Perrault's heroine who "gave her sisters lodgings in the palace, and married them the same day to two great lords of the court." And further still from Nola Langner's Scholastic paperback "Cinderella":

[The sisters] began to cry. They begged Cinderella to forgive them for being so mean to her. Cinderella told them they were forgiven.

"I am sure you will never be mean to me again," she said.

"Oh, never," said the older sister.

"Never, ever," said the younger sister.

Missing, too, from the mass-market books is the shrewd, even witty Cinderella. In a Wonder Book entitled "Bedtime Stories," a 1940s adaptation from Perrault, we find a Cinderella who talks to her stepsisters, "in a shy little voice." Even Perrault's heroine bantered with her stepsisters, asking tern leading questions about the ball while secretly and deliciously knowing the answers. In the Wonder Book, however, the true wonder is that Cinderella ever gets to be princess. Even face-to-face with the prince, she is unrecognized until she dons her magic ball gown. Only when her clothes are transformed does the Prince know his true love.

In 1949, Walt Disney's film *Cinderella* burst onto the American scene. The story in the mass market has not been the same since.

The film came out of the studio at a particularly trying time for Disney. He had been deserted by the intellectuals who had been champions of this art for some years. Because of World War II, the public was more interested in war films than cartoons. But when *Cinderella*, lighter than light, was released it brought back to Disney--and his studio--all of his lost fame and fortune.

The film was one of the most profitable of all time for the studio, grossing \$4.247 million dollars in the first release alone. The success of the movie opened the floodgates of "Disney Cinderella" books.

Golden Press's *Walt Disney's Cinderella* set the new pattern for America's Cinderella. This book's text is coy and condescending. (Sample: "And her best friends of all were--guess who--the mice!") The illustrations are poor cartoons. And Cinderella herself is a disaster. She cowers as her sisters rip her homemade ball gown to shreds. (Not even homemade by Cinderella, but by the mice and birds.) She answers her stepmother with whines and pleadings. She is a sorry excuse for a heroine, pitiable and useless. She cannot perform even a simple action to save herself, though she is warned by her friends, the mice. She does not hear them because she is "off in a world of dreams." Cinderella begs, she whimpers, and at last has to be rescued by--guess who--the mice!

There is also an easy-reading version published by Random House, *Walt Disney's Cinderella*. This Cinderella commits the further heresy of cursing her luck. "How I did wish to go to the ball," she says. "But it is no use. Wishes never come true."

But in the fairy tales wishes have a habit of happening--wishes accompanied by the proper action, bad wishes as well as good. That is the beauty of the old stories and their wisdom as well.

Take away the proper course of action, take away Cinderella's ability to think for herself and act for herself, and you are left with a tale of wishes-come-true-regardless. But that is not the way of the fairy tale. As P. L. Travers so wisely puts it, "If that were so, wouldn't we all be married to princes?"

The mass-market American "Cinderellas" have presented the majority of American children with the wrong dream. They

offer the passive princess, the "insipid beauty waiting ... for Prince Charming" that Rosemary Minard objects to, and thus acculturate millions of girls and boys. But it is the wrong

Cinderella and the magic of the old tales has been falsified, the true meaning lost, perhaps forever.

**Rafferty, Terrence. "The Better to Entertain You With, My Dear: .  
'Mirror Mirror,' 'Grimm' and Hollywood Love for Fairy Tales. *New York Times* 25 March 2012**

Fairy tales can come true, the old song goes; it can happen to you, apparently, if you're young at heart. Whether one believes this hopeful sentiment, and regardless of the age of one's internal organs, there's no doubt that fairy tales have for the past couple of years — and into the foreseeable future — been coming pretty regularly to screens both big and small, achieving, you could say, at least the kind of quasi-truth that movies and television can concoct.

On March 30 Tarsem Singh's "Mirror Mirror," a zippy new version of the Snow White story, arrives, and yet another retelling, "Snow White and the Huntsman," is threatened for this year. "Hansel and Gretel: Witch Hunters" looms on the horizon too, scheduled for early 2013. And two of the livelier series of the current television season, "Grimm" and "Once Upon a Time," are based on tricky fairy-tale premises. Not all these movies and shows are destined to live happily ever after in the memories of their target audiences, but the entertainment industry, with its childlike trust in the powers of its own magic, clearly believes we'll be enchanted.

Maybe so, but the characteristic tone of fairy tales and folk tales, which is derived from oral storytelling traditions, is awfully difficult to replicate on screen. Just last year Catherine Hardwicke's "Red Riding Hood" and Daniel Barnz's "Beastly" (an updated "Beauty and the Beast") showed that there are many dangers for filmmakers who venture into these dark woods.

"Red Riding Hood" tries telling the familiar tale in a more or less traditional manner, setting the action in the usual medieval village and decking its actors out in the customary peasant garb. The big-eyed, big-eared wolf that menaces Red and her granny has been turned into a werewolf, and an alarming lycanthrope-hunting cleric (played by Gary Oldman at his most unfettered) has been added, but the basics of the story remain intact, and Ms. Hardwicke, of "Twilight" fame, keeps the mood properly somber and hushed. But the picture is terrible. There's no real conviction in it: the younger actors sound as if they're speaking Esperanto; the older ones look weary and dazed, as if they were struggling to awaken from a long, long spell.

"Beastly" takes a different tack, transporting an old story to our brave new world, and it's just about as unconvincing. The classic tale, whose most widely read literary version is the 18th-century story by Jeanne-Marie Leprince de Beaumont, has been adapted before, notably by Jean Cocteau in 1946 and by Disney animators in 1991. Mr. Barnz sets the action in a Manhattan prep school, where an arrogant, good-looking rich kid is transformed by a witch into an ugly guy. He has to learn to be a good enough person for the sweet heroine to love him in spite of his looks.

The problem with Mr. Barnz's conceit is that, the film's title notwithstanding, the protagonist isn't a beast. Unlike the hairy animals of the previous movies, he's merely a not-very-slightly human: his "beastliness" looks like the work of a bad plastic surgeon and a seriously overzealous tattooist. The whole point of Cocteau's poetic romance is that the hero, for all his civility and courtly manners, is also an extremely deadly animal — a natural predator who when he falls in love with Belle has to muster every ounce of his willpower to refrain from killing and eating her.

Cocteau's film is, of course, an impossible standard. It's the greatest fairy-tale movie ever made, and there isn't really a close second. Jacques Demy's graceful, candy-colored "Donkey Skin" (1970) is the distant runner-up, a movie that treats an exceptionally disturbing story with a disconcertingly light touch. (It's about a princess trying to escape the clutches of her father, the king, who wants to marry her.) And Neil Jordan's 1984 "Company of Wolves," a "Little Red Riding Hood" reimagined by him and Angela Carter, is both scarier and more erotic than fairy-tale pictures usually allow themselves to be; it captures some of the violent terseness of the Grimm brothers' style, and it is distinctly not for children.

The world from which fairy tales and folk tales emerged has largely vanished, and although it pleases us to think of these stark, simple, fantastic narratives as timeless, they aren't. Thanks to video games, computer graphics and the general awfulness of everyday life, fantasies of all kinds have had a resurgence in the past few years. But the social realities on which the original fairy tales depend are almost incomprehensibly alien to 21st-century sensibilities; they reek of feudalism. And the lessons they're supposed to teach our young don't have much force these days. Kids learn to be skeptical almost before they've been taught anything to be skeptical of.

"Mirror Mirror" works hard to let the audience know that it's aware of its own silliness. Although the story is set in a vaguely medieval fairy-tale kingdom — easier to conjure now, with digital effects — the tone is cheerfully, unapologetically anachronistic. The mean queen seems to have stepped out of one of the riper episodes of "Desperate Housewives," while practically every line in the picture is delivered like a sitcom zinger. (Was there really so much insult humor in the Middle Ages?) And the story has been altered to reflect more contemporary notions about the roles of men and women. Snow White is a much more can-do kind of princess than the passive heroine of yore, and this Prince Charming is quite a bit less masterful. He can't stop Snow from saving him, when he believes that he should be saving her. "It's been focus-grouped," he protests, to no avail.



Despite — or perhaps because of — its rigorous lack of seriousness, “Mirror Mirror” may please its focus-grouped audience of children and tweens. (At the youth-intensive screening I attended, the seven dwarfs, a bickering band of brigands, stole the show.) It doesn’t tell us much about how we should think of fairy tales in our unenchanted present day, though.

The TV series “Grimm” and “Once Upon a Time” are, surprisingly, more thoughtful than any of the recent fairy-tale movies have dared to be. Maybe the succession of weekly episodes more closely approximates the regularity and one-thing-after-another quality of bedtime stories.

“Grimm,” on NBC, is mostly a horror show, in which a Portland, Ore., detective tracks down and vanquishes a beast of the week. The monsters, all with German names, pass for human; only a “Grimm,” a hereditary monster hunter like the cop, can see them for what they actually are. This is a handy power to have in 2012.

“Once Upon a Time,” on ABC, has a yet more elaborate concept. It seems that the evil queen of the Snow White story has put a curse on every other fairy-tale character: they’ve been transported to our time, to live in a small town, unaware of who they were in their previous, storybook existence. In its pulpy way the show evokes a sort of neither-here-nor-there feeling that seems widespread now in the developed world, a chronic sense of unreality. It isn’t a profound show, but an undercurrent of melancholy runs through it, even as it jauntily updates, mashes up and revises the stories we all grew up on. At its best “Once Upon a Time” can make you feel both young and very, very old at heart.