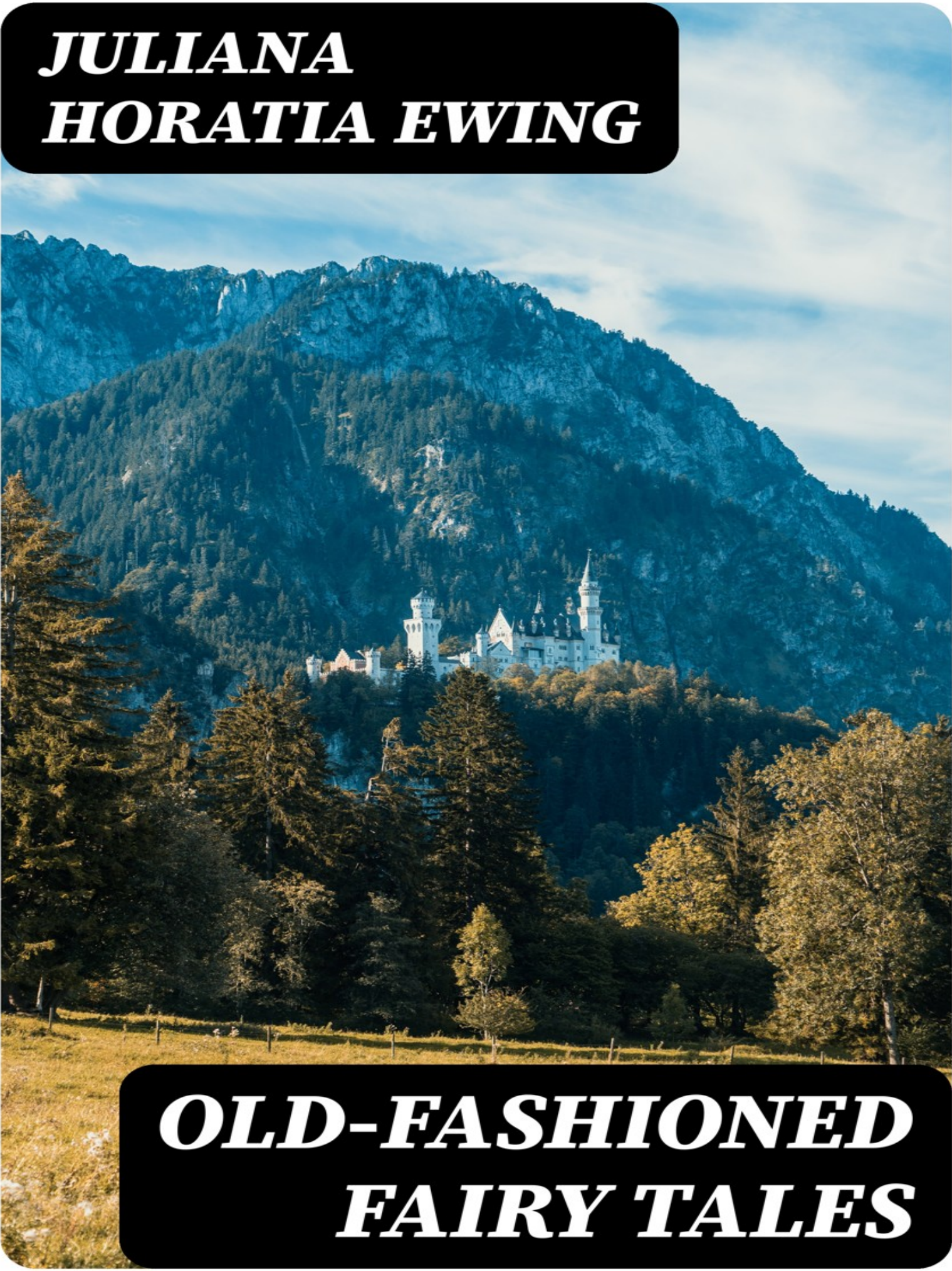


***JULIANA
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***OLD-FASHIONED
FAIRY TALES***

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Old-Fashioned Fairy Tales

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PREFACE.

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As the title of this story-book may possibly suggest that the tales are old fairy tales told afresh, it seems well to explain that this is not so.

Except for the use of common "properties" of Fairy Drama, and a scrupulous endeavour to conform to tradition in local colour and detail, the stories are all new.

They have appeared at intervals during some years past in "AUNT JUDY'S MAGAZINE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE," and were written in conformity to certain theories respecting stories of this kind, with only two of which shall the kindly reader of prefaces be troubled.

First, that there are ideas and types, occurring in the myths of all countries, which are common properties, to use which does not lay the teller of fairy tales open to the charge of plagiarism. Such as the idea of the weak outwitting the strong; the failure of man to choose wisely when he may have his wish; or the desire of sprites to exchange their careless and unfettered existence for the pains and penalties of humanity, if they may thereby share in the hopes of the human soul.

Secondly, that in these household stories (the models for which were originally oral tradition) the thing most to be avoided is a discursive or descriptive style of writing. Brevity and epigram must ever be soul of their wit, and they should be written as tales that are told.

The degree in which, if at all, the following tales fulfil these conditions, nursery critics must decide.

There are older critics before whom fairy tales, as such, need excuse, even if they do not meet with positive disapprobation.

On this score I can only say that, for myself, I believe them to be—beyond all need of defence—most valuable literature for the young. I do not believe that wonder-tales confuse children's ideas of truth. If there are young intellects so imperfect as to be incapable of distinguishing between fancy and falsehood, it is surely most desirable to develop in them the power to do so; but, as a rule, in childhood we appreciate the distinction with a vivacity which, as elders, our care-clogged memories fail to recall.

Moreover fairy tales have positive uses in education, which no cramming of facts, and no merely domestic fiction can serve.

Like Proverbs and Parables, they deal with first principles under the simplest forms. They convey knowledge of the world, shrewd lessons of virtue and vice, of common sense and sense of humour, of the seemly and the absurd, of pleasure and pain, success and failure, in narratives where the plot moves briskly and dramatically from a beginning to an end. They treat, not of the corner of a nursery or a playground, but of the world at large, and life in perspective; of forces visible and invisible; of Life, Death, and Immortality.

For causes obvious to the student of early myths, they foster sympathy with nature, and no class of child-literature has done so much to inculcate the love of animals.

They cultivate the Imagination, that great gift which time and experience lead one more and more to value—handmaid of Faith, of Hope, and, perhaps most of all, of Charity!

It is true that some of the old fairy tales do not teach the high and useful lessons that most of them do; and that they unquestionably deal now and again with phases of grown-up life, and with crimes and catastrophes, that seem unsuitable for nursery entertainment.

As to the latter question, it must be remembered that the brevity of the narrative—whether it be a love story or a robber story—deprives it of all harm; a point which writers of modern fairy tales do not always realize for their guidance.

The writer of the following tales has endeavoured to bear this principle in mind, and it is hoped that the morals—and it is of the essence of fairy tales to have a moral—of all of them are beyond reproach.

For the rest they are committed to the indulgence of the gentle reader.

Hans Anderssen, perhaps the greatest writer of modern fairy tales, was content to say:

"FAIRY TALE NEVER DIES."

J. H. E.

OLD-FASHIONED FAIRY TALES.

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GOOD LUCK IS BETTER THAN GOLD.

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There was once upon a time a child who had Good Luck for his godfather.

"I am not Fortune," said Good Luck to the parents; "I have no gifts to bestow, but whenever he needs help I will be at hand."

"Nothing could be better," said the old couple. They were delighted. But what pleases the father often fails to satisfy the son: moreover, every man thinks that he deserves just a little more than he has got, and does not reckon it to the purpose if his father had less.

Many a one would be thankful to have as good reasons for contentment as he who had Good Luck for his godfather.

If he fell, Good Luck popped something soft in the way to break his fall; if he fought, Good Luck directed his blows, or tripped up his adversary; if he got into a scrape, Good Luck helped him out of it; and if ever Misfortune met him, Good Luck contrived to hustle her on the pathway till his godson got safely by.

In games of hazard the godfather played over his shoulder. In matters of choice he chose for him. And when the lad began to work on his father's farm the farmer began to get rich. For no bird or field-mouse touched a seed that his son had sown, and every plant he planted thrived when Good Luck smiled on it.

The boy was not fond of work, but when he did go into the fields, Good Luck followed him.

"Your christening-day was a blessed day for us all," said the old farmer.

"He has never given me so much as a lucky sixpence," muttered Good Luck's godson.

"I am not Fortune—I make no presents," said the godfather.

When we are discontented it is oftener to please our neighbours than ourselves. It was because the other boys had said—"Simon, the shoemaker's son, has an alderman for his godfather. He gave him a silver spoon with the Apostle Peter for the handle; but thy godfather is more powerful than any alderman"—that Good Luck's godson complained, "He has never given me so much as a bent sixpence."

By and by the old farmer died, and his son grew up, and had the largest farm in the country. The other boys grew up also, and as they looked over the farmer's boundary-wall, they would say:

"Good-morning, Neighbour. That is certainly a fine farm of yours. Your cattle thrive without loss. Your crops grow in the rain and are reaped with the sunshine. Mischance never comes your road. What you have worked for you enjoy. Such success would turn the heads of poor folk like us. At the same time one would think a man need hardly work for his living at all who has Good Luck for his godfather."

"That is very true," thought the farmer. "Many a man is prosperous, and reaps what he sows, who had no more than the clerk and the sexton for gossips at his christening."

"What is the matter, Godson?" asked Good Luck, who was with him in the field.

"I want to be rich," said the farmer.

"You will not have to wait long," replied the godfather. "In every field you sow, in every flock you rear there is increase without abatement. Your wealth is already tenfold greater than your father's."

"Aye, aye," replied the farmer. "Good wages for good work. But many a young man has gold at his command who need never turn a sod, and none of the Good People came to *his* christening. Fortunatus's Purse now, or even a sack or two of gold—"

"Peace!" cried the godfather; "I have said that I give no gifts."

Though he had not Fortunatus's Purse, the farmer had now money and to spare, and when the harvest was gathered in, he bought a fine suit of clothes, and took his best horse and went to the royal city to see the sights.

The pomp and splendour, the festivities and fine clothes dazzled him.

"This is a gay life which these young courtiers lead," said he. "A man has nothing to do but to enjoy himself."

"If he has plenty of gold in his pocket," said a bystander.

By and by the Princess passed in her carriage. She was the King's only daughter. She had hair made of sunshine, and her eyes were stars.

"What an exquisite creature!" cried the farmer. "What would not one give to possess her?"

"She has as many suitors as hairs on her head," replied the bystander. "She wants to marry the Prince of Moonshine, but he only dresses in silver, and the King thinks he might find a richer son-in-law. The Princess will go to the highest bidder."

"And I have Good Luck for my godfather, and am not even at court!" cried the farmer; and he put spurs to his horse, and rode home.

Good Luck was taking care of the farm.

"Listen, Godfather!" cried the young man. "I am in love with the King's daughter, and want her to wife."

"It is not an easy matter," replied Good Luck, "but I will do what I can for you. Say that by good luck you saved the Princess's life, or perhaps better the King's—for they say he is selfish—"

"Tush!" cried the farmer. "The King is covetous, and wants a rich son-in-law."

"A wise man may bring wealth to a kingdom with his head, if not with his hands," said Good Luck, "and I can show you a district where the earth only wants mining to be flooded with wealth. Besides, there are a thousand opportunities that can be turned to account and influence. By wits and work, and with Good Luck to help him, many a poorer man than you has risen to greatness."

"Wits and work!" cried the indignant godson. "You speak well—truly! A hillman would have made a better godfather. Give me as much gold as will fill three meal-bins, and you may keep the rest of your help for those who want it."

Now at this moment by Good Luck stood Dame Fortune. She likes handsome young men, and there was some little jealousy between her and the godfather so she smiled at the quarrel.

"You would rather have had me for your gossip?" said she.

"If you would give me three wishes, I would," replied the farmer boldly, "and I would trouble you no more."

"Will you make him over to me?" said Dame Fortune to the godfather.

"If he wishes it," replied Good Luck. "But if he accepts your gifts he has no further claim on me."

"Nor on me either," said the Dame. "Hark ye, young man, you mortals are apt to make a hobble of your three wishes, and you may end with a sausage at your nose, like your betters."

"I have thought of it too often," replied the farmer, "and I know what I want. For my first wish I desire imperishable beauty."

"It is yours," said Dame Fortune, smiling as she looked at him.

"The face of a prince and the manners of a clown are poor partners," said the farmer. "My second wish is for suitable learning and courtly manners, which cannot be gained at the plough-tail."

"You have them in perfection," said the Dame, as the young man thanked her by a graceful bow.

"Thirdly," said he, "I demand a store of gold that I can never exhaust."

"I will lead you to it," said Dame Fortune; and the young man was so eager to follow her that he did not even look back to bid farewell to his godfather.

He was soon at court. He lived in the utmost pomp. He had a suit of armour made for himself out of beaten gold. No metal less precious might come near his person, except for the blade of his sword. This was obliged to be made of steel, for gold is not always strong enough to defend one's life or