



The Atlas of Fairy Tales

Enchanting Beings from Every
Corner of the World

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Sandra Lawrence & Merve Atilgan

COVER
NOT FINAL



North
Sea

English Channel

WHY THE STORK
LOVES HOLLAND

3. THE NETTLE
SPINNER

FRANCE

THE BRAVE
LITTLE TAILOR

NETHERLANDS

5. THE TWELVE
DANCING PRINCESSES

10. HANSEL AND GRETEL

ASCHENPUTTEL

1. WHY THE SEA
IS SALTY

RING LINDWORM

DENMARK

THE JEALOUS QUEEN

2. THE PIED PIPER
OF HAMELIN

GERMANY

LOKI

POLAND

9. THE ENCHANTED
CROW

SWEDEN

THE BIRD 'GRIP'

Baltic Sea

LATVIA

LITHUANIA

THE SWAN
MAIDEN

6. THE FROG THAT CAME
FROM RIGA AND THE FROG
THAT CAME FROM JIEPLJA

BEARUS

8. THE PEASANT
AND THE BEAR

NORTHERN
EUROPE

ESTONIA

FINLAND

THE WONDERFUL
BIRCH

RUSSIA

CZECH
REPUBLIC

THE BRITISH ISLES



THE BRITISH ISLES

For a comparatively small land mass, the British Isles boast a huge number of folk and fairy tales. Strange creatures, supernatural folk and dragons all rub shoulders with stories of regular people who may be clever or foolish, lucky or unlucky.

1. DICK WHITTINGTON: This classic fairy tale of London, where a poor boy and his cat journey the world to earn enough money to marry the girl he loves, is based in truth. There really was a Richard Whittington who did not inherit wealth and had to make his own way in the world. He really did marry an Alice Fitzwain and really did become Lord Mayor. Interestingly, he was Lord Mayor four times, but the story was changed to fit the magical number three.

Something the tale doesn't tell us is that the real Richard Whittington installed a public toilet for his people over the river Thames – with 128 seats!

2. KING OF THE CATS: Cats were considered 'strange' creatures, which could be good or evil. In Dick Whittington the cat is friendly, but in other stories they may be witch's minions or even work for the devil. Part of their allure is that, more than any other domesticated animal, cats seem to have 'another life' that we humans never fully understand.

In one old tale, a traveller is amazed to see a group of cats holding a royal funeral by the roadside. On reaching his destination, he starts telling his host about the strange experience. Suddenly the family cat, who has been asleep by the fire, jumps up and screeches, "Then I am King of the Cats!" He disappears up the chimney and is never seen again.

3. THE THREE LITTLE PIGS: The number three turns up again in this very simple tale that you could tell in one sentence:

The big bad wolf easily blows down two pigs' homes, built of straw and sticks, but cannot destroy the third pig's house, which is constructed in sturdy brick.

But that would be very boring. This is an example of a story made for an excellent storyteller who can elaborate about the way the houses are built, how confident each little pig is, or how threatening the wolf is.

It also uses the storyteller's art of repetition, where everyone can join in, bellowing together the wolf's catchphrase: "I'll huff and I'll puff and I'll blow your house down!"

4. THE WELL OF THE WORLD'S END: In this famous tale from the Scottish Lowlands, a frog helps a girl complete a task, but she has to do it a favour in return. When it commands her to chop off his head, she refuses. It insists that she made a promise, so she sadly complies, and the frog turns into a handsome prince.

This story is a good example of an enchanted beast, like *The Snail Son of Japan*, *King Lindworm* of Denmark and *Beauty and the Beast* from France.

5. KATE CRACKERNUTS: Kate Crackernuts, from the Orkney Islands, is a story full of enchantments. When an evil witch turns Kate's sister's head into that of a sheep, Kate vows to reverse the spell. The girls run away and meet two princes, one of whom is sick. Of course, it all ends happily with the sister, no longer with a sheep's head, marrying one prince and Kate herself marrying his now-cured brother.

6. THE BREWERY OF EGGSHELLS: Fairies are rarely kind in stories from the British Isles, and for centuries some people really believed that sickly or crying babies were 'changelings' swapped by the fairies for evil creatures of their own. There were several ways of working out if this had happened, many of which depended on the changelings' amazement when humans did weird things.

In a classic tale from Ireland (they tell similar stories in Wales) a woman who suspects her twin babies have been replaced with changelings is advised to cook porridge inside an eggshell. The fairies are so astonished at her eccentricity that they reveal their trick and are forced to return the real children.

7. THE HEDLEY KOW: Fairies and sprites are well known for giving gifts that turn out to be worthless. Perhaps someone will receive a pocket full of gold that by the time they get home has turned into dried leaves. It is rare that the human is pleased when they discover the deception but this trickster story – where a pot of gold turns into silver, then lead, rock and eventually an imp – teaches us to be grateful for what we have.

8. STINGY JACK: Sometimes stories tell us how natural phenomena came about, like an interesting hill or a curious plant. In this tale, however, we learn the reason for a tradition once popular across Ireland: the Jack-o'-lantern.

The story explains how Jack tricked the devil into promising he wouldn't have to go to hell when he died, but he wasn't good enough for heaven either, so he is forced to roam the Earth lit only by a spooky light inside a carved-out turnip. Irish people took the custom with them to the United States, where today the lantern is more often made from a pumpkin.

SOUTHERN EUROPE

GATA
BORRALHEIRA

PORTUGAL

SPAIN

5. THE SPRIG OF
ROSEMARY

7. DIAMONDS
AND TOADS

10. PUSS IN
BOOTS

BEAUTY AND
THE BEAST

THE RIDICULOUS
WISHES

9. LA RAMÉE
AND THE
PHANTOM

8. THE SINGING
FIR TREE

4. THE CANARY
PRINCE

1. SWEET
PORRIDGE

2. TRITILL, LITILL
AND THE BIRDS

6. WATER
AND SALT

3. SNOW-WHITE-
FIRE-RED

Sicily
(ITALY)

Corsica
(FRANCE)

Sardinia
(ITALY)



MALTA CIKIEMFUSA

North Atlantic Ocean

Mediterranean Sea

Adriatic Sea

FRANCE

SLEEPING BEAUTY

GERMANY

CZECH
REPUBLIC

THE TWELVE
MONTHS

AUSTRIA

SLOVAKIA

HUNGARY

SLOVENIA

CROATIA

BOSNIA AND
HERZEGOVINA

SERBIA

MONTENEGRO

ALBANIA

THE MEDITERRANEAN AND EASTERN EUROPE

1. THE GRATEFUL
ANIMALS

4. ILEANA
SIMZIANA

5. THE FIRST
VIOLIN

3. BAŠ ČELIK

2. THE GOOSE
THAT LAID THE
GOLDEN EGGS

6. HODJA'S GIFT

Black Sea

Aegean Sea

PHOENIX



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myths, but the whole of Eastern Europe is rich with tales that constantly cross borders. It is hardly surprising - when people hear a fantastic story, they want to tell it to other people, and they spread, changing a little each time they are told. The stories from this region are deliberately very long and very complicated, perfect for relating to rapt audiences on long, dark nights.

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2. THE GOOSE THAT LAID THE GOLDEN EGGS: Fables are a specific kind of story that have a moral - a truth that is useful to learn about life. They often appear in Africa and Southern Europe, but the most famous fable-teller of all was Aesop, from ancient Greece.

In *The Goose that Laid the Golden Eggs*, a couple have a magical goose that lays a golden egg for them every day. They don't want to wait for their riches, however, and, figuring that there must be a huge lump of gold inside the bird, they kill it, only to discover it was just an ordinary goose after all. The moral of this story: don't be greedy.

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Our heroine goes out into the world disguised as a man and through a series of events, the young princess permanently becomes a prince and marries Ileana Simziana.

5. THE FIRST VIOLIN: The Roma people of Transylvania and southern Hungary are famous for their musical skills and tell of a princess who only marry a man who can do something that the world has never seen before. A boy is given a box and a stick by the fairy queen, who tells him to pluck some hairs from her head, and string them onto the box. He will be able to make people happy or sad by moving the stick across the hairs. The princess falls in love with the musician, everyone lives happily ever after, and the violin is brought to the world.

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One of thousands of stories about him sees him visiting Timur, lord of the Mongols, with a big bag of beetroots as a gift. On the way, he swaps the beetroots for a bag of figs.

Timur feels insulted at being given figs. He is so angry that he tells his soldiers to throw them at Hodja. Hodja merely offers thanks to Allah.

Timur is baffled. "My men are pelting you with figs. What are you thanking Allah for?"

"I am grateful I did not bring the beetroots," Hodja replies.

RUSSIA AND NORTHERN ASIA

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**SOUTH AND
SOUTHEAST
ASIA**





AFRICA

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long before artificial borders, so the stories have spread, told by people who intimately know the surrounding landscape - and the animals that share it with them.

1. TORTOISE AND THE SKY PARTY:

Tortoise is a favourite trickster in West African stories, especially Nigeria, where he is always making mischief. In one tale he had been so naughty that the gods did not invite him to their feast in the sky. Tortoise decided to go anyway, then behaved very badly by telling everyone his name was 'All-Of-You' so that when the gods said the food and drink was for 'All of You', he gobbled up the lot.

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African stories are filled with trickster animals. While Anansi is the most famous, Tortoise, Mouse and Hare are all popular, too. In some tales (and not always in Africa) Jackal is also a wily character, able to dodge traps, hide his tracks and even feign death to deceive pursuers.

The Mende people of Sierra Leone tell of the earliest times when the world was first made and Jackal himself was bested by a sneaky python, who stole basket of spare skins intended to give humans eternal life. The Creator refused to send another batch of skins, and ever since humans have been wary of both jackals and snakes.

3. THE DEATH OF ABU NOWAS AND HIS WIFE:

Tricksters are not always animals. A famous Tunisian folk tale tells how Abu Nowas and his wife quickly spent all their money and became poor. Cunning Abu came up with a plan to refresh his funds by pretending to be dead and getting money for a funeral.

There was a real person called Abu Nuwas, a poet from the eighth century, whose life was full of adventure and incident, even if no one really agrees on the details - they can't even agree on the spelling of his name! He is the hero of folk tales in countries as far apart as Algeria and Indonesia, and appears in several stories in *One Thousand and One Nights*.

4. THE CHILD WITH A MOON ON HIS CHEST:

The Sotho people tell of the great chief Boulane, who predicted that his first wife would give birth to a boy with a lucky moon on his chest. Jealous, Boulane's second wife switched the boy for a puppy and threw the baby away, but the boy was rescued by a little rat, then an ox, crabs and eventually some merchants who restored him to his family and exposed the wife's villainy.

The villains in folk tales are motivated by many things, including greed and a thirst for power, but, as with this tale, jealousy is also a powerful reason for their evil deeds.

5. THE ONE-HANDED GIRL: A Swahili tale tells of a brother and sister who are offered either their parents' property or their blessing. The greedy brother takes all their property, but the girl is happy with her blessing. The brother is still so jealous of his sister that he cuts off her hand, forgetting that she is blessed, and a prince falls in love with her.

6. TREAT YOUR CAMEL KINDLY: One day a young Bedouin man set out on a long journey. At night he treated his camel cruelly, tying her so tightly she could not even stand up. He lit a fire and made a bed, then saw her watching him. He pretended to go to sleep as the camel edged over to the fire, clearly intending to roll over onto him. He shouted, and the shock killed her, leaving him on his own in the middle of the desert. The moral is in the title: treat animals badly at your peril!

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Three sisters vie to become King Ravohimena's wife in this traditional story of shape-changing from Madagascar. Ravohimena marries all three of them but when Refarane, the youngest, gives birth to five sons, the other two wives throw the boys into the river and turn Refarane into a lemur, sending Ravohimena on a quest to save Refarane and her sons.

7.

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SOUTH AMERICA

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South America is another land of many different terrains, and stories to match them all. People from the Amazon rainforest tell tales of local animals, while those from higher, drier regions find inspiration from the Sun and the desert. Many stories from this region are about the loss of nature thanks to the evil of humanity.

1. THE GENTLE PEOPLE AND THE VALLEY OF THE HUANACOS: The ancient folk of Patagonia were known as the Gentle People – not to be confused with fairies, but they were magical. They lived in harmony with nature and wore gold, silver and other jewels.

One day a young man called Capsa saw men with evil eyes eating animal flesh. The men tore away his jewels and golden clothes, but Capsa escaped and ran home.

The prince gathered his people together and gave them two choices. They could learn to fight and become as evil as the north-men. Alternatively, they could retreat to the Valley of the Gallagos, where they would become huanacos, gentle creatures similar to alpacas and llamas. They remain there to this day, waiting for evil to die in the world.

2. THE SUNFLOWER: Sunflowers are bright orange, daisy-like plants native to South America, which move their heads across the day to follow the sun.

An Argentinian story explains how two neighbouring tribes used to get on well, until one Cacique (chief) wanted to marry Carandai, the daughter of the other leader. She had already promised herself to the Sun god, so refused his offer. The Cacique pretended to accept the decision, but soon set the village on fire and shouted, "Get your god to save you!"

Carandai prayed to the Sun god, who turned her into a tall, beautiful plant. Ever since, sunflowers' golden heads have gratefully watched their saviour as he moves across the sky.

3. QUEEN OF THE CONDORS: Not everybody can enjoy a happy ending. In this Peruvian tale, while the condor gets his recompense, we can't help feeling sorry for him in the end.

When the lonely condor spotted a beautiful young girl, he disguised himself and tricked her into returning to his kingdom in the mountains, but a

parrot brought her back home.

The furious condor ripped the little bird into many pieces and ate them, but every piece passed out of him as another brightly coloured parrot, which is why there are so many of them today. When his anger passed, the condor was alone, and heartbroken. His feathers turned black in mourning and his tears became the butterflies that waft through the air.

4. WHY THE MONKEY STILL HAS A TAIL:

Long ago, Rabbit disguised Monkey's tail as a snake while he was sleeping. Monkey, trying to kill the snake, pulled out his tail and Cat, who didn't have a tail then, took it for his own.

Monkey then goes to various creatures, who say they will help him get his tail back in return for something – which he must get from someone else, who, in turn, also wants something. For example, the cat wants some milk, which Monkey must get from Cow. Cow wants some grass, and so on. A storyteller might get the audience to remember the correct order for Monkey's tasks so he can regain his tail.

5. JABOTI'S FLUTE: The Tupi people of the Amazon rainforest love stories about a trickster tortoise called Jaboti, and while they are not the same as tortoise tales in Africa, it is interesting that people in two very different parts of the world think turtles are tricky! In the Amazonian legends, Jaboti is a musician who loves to play his flute.

In one story, he is caught by a hunter who puts him in a basket and takes him home to cook. The man tells his children to guard the basket, but when they hear music, they open it and Jaboti manages to escape.

The children, inspired by Jaboti's tricks, decorate a large stone and put it in the cooking pot. Their father cooks the pot for a long time, then tips out the rock, thinking he has cooked the tortoise for too long!

1.

5.

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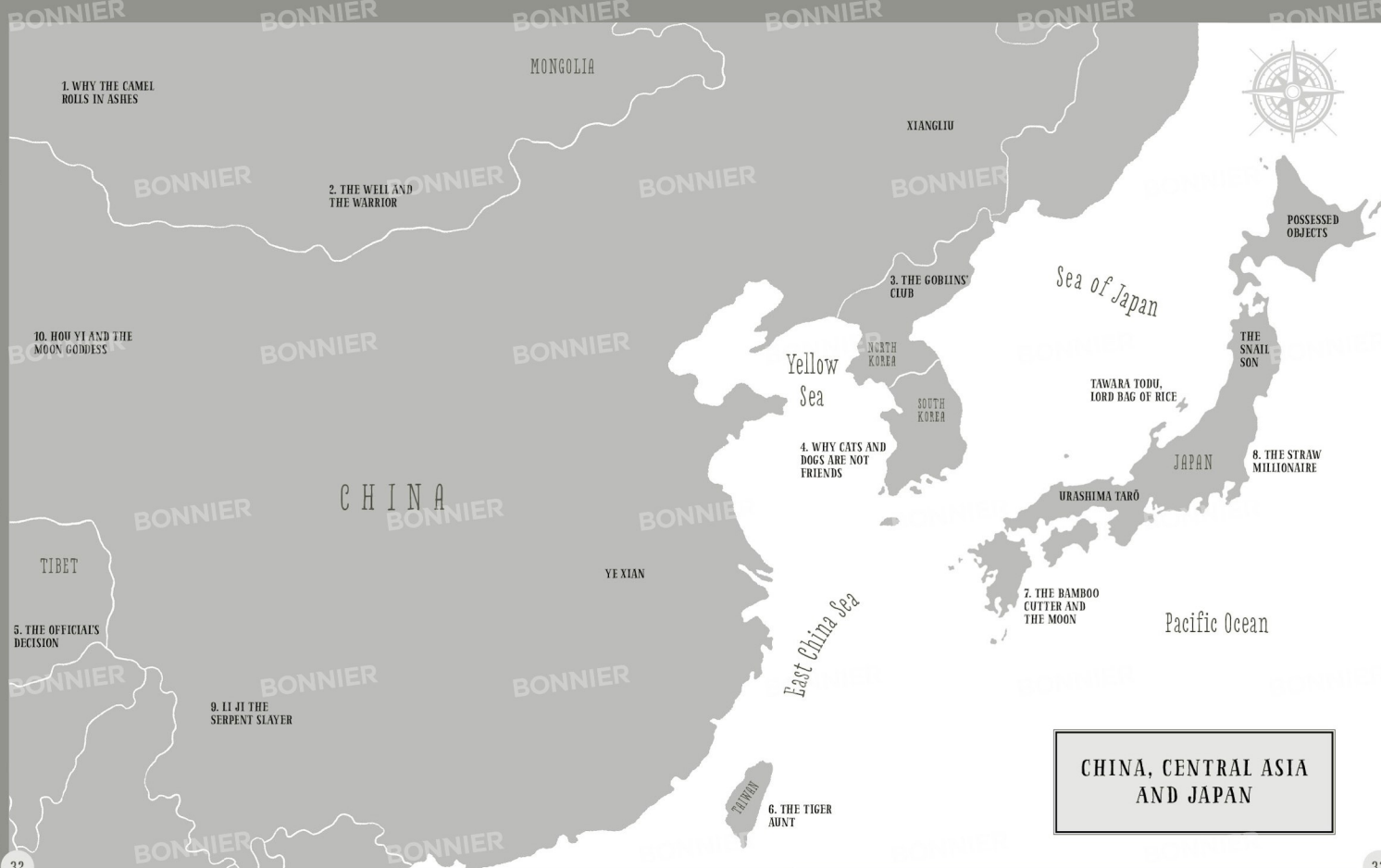
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1. WHY THE CAMEL
ROLLS IN ASHES

2. THE WELL AND
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10. HOU YI AND THE
MOON GODDESS

5. THE OFFICIAL'S
DECISION

9. LI JI THE
SERPENT SLAYER

MONGOLIA

XIANGLIU

3. THE GOBLINS'
CLUB

Yellow
Sea

4. WHY CATS AND
DOGS ARE NOT
FRIENDS

NORTH
KOREA

SOUTH
KOREA

Sea of Japan

TAWARA TODU,
LORD BAG OF RICE

URASHIMA TARO

7. THE BAMBOO
CUTTER AND
THE MOON



POSSESSED
OBJECTS

THE
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Pacific Ocean

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2. THE SUNFLOWER: Sunflowers are bright orange, daisy-like plants native to South America, which move their heads across the day to follow the sun.

An Argentinian story explains how two neighbouring tribes used to get on well, until one Cacique (chief) wanted to marry Carandai, the daughter of the other leader. She had already promised herself to the Sun god, so refused his offer. The Cacique pretended to accept the decision, but soon set the village on fire and shouted, "Get your god to save you!"

Carandai prayed to the Sun god, who turned her into a tall, beautiful plant. Ever since, sunflowers' golden heads have gratefully watched their saviour as he moves across the sky.

3. QUEEN OF THE CONDORS: Not everybody can enjoy a happy ending. In this Peruvian tale, while the condor gets his comeuppance, we can't help feeling sorry for him in the end.

When the lonely condor spotted a beautiful young girl, he disguised himself and tricked her into returning to his kingdom in the mountains, but a

parrot brought her back home.

The furious condor ripped the little bird into many pieces and ate them, but every piece passed out of him as another brightly coloured parrot, which is why there are so many of them today. When his anger passed, the condor was alone, and heartbroken. His feathers turned black in mourning and his tears became the butterflies that waft through the air.

4. WHY THE MONKEY STILL HAS A TAIL:

Long ago, Rabbit disguised Monkey's tail as a snake while he was sleeping. Monkey, trying to kill the snake, pulled out his tail and Cat, who didn't have a tail then, took it for his own.

Monkey then goes to various creatures, who say they will help him get his tail back in return for something – which he must get from someone else, who, in turn, also wants something. For example, the cat wants some milk, which Monkey must get from Cow. Cow wants some grass, and so on. A storyteller might get the audience to remember the correct order for Monkey's tasks so he can regain his tail.

5. JABOTI'S FLUTE: The Tupi people of the Amazon rainforest love stories about a trickster tortoise called Jaboti, and while they are not the same as tortoise tales in Africa, it is interesting that people in two very different parts of the world think turtles are tricky! In the Amazonian legends, Jaboti is a musician who loves to play his flute.

In one story, he is caught by a hunter who puts him in a basket and takes him home to cook. The man tells his children to guard the basket, but when they hear music, they open it and Jaboti manages to escape.

The children, inspired by Jaboti's tricks, decorate a large stone and put it in the cooking pot. Their father cooks the pot for a long time, then tips out the rock, thinking he has cooked the tortoise for too long!

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SOUTH
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