



Sleeping Beauty



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Soon, every other living creature in the castle was sound asleep too.

The king and queen slumbered on their thrones, while ladies and gentlemen slept in the middle of their dance. At the gates, guards snored at their posts and in the kitchen the cook nodded off over the princess's birthday cake. Even the court poet slept with his arms in the air and a verse on the tip of his tongue.

As time passed, a wall of thorns grew up around the castle, and the twelve good fairies

kept watch in case their sister should return to make mischief.


The legend of the sleeping princess spread, and many princes came in the hope that they would wake her.

All of them were stopped by the forest of thorns around the castle. Some retreated cut and bleeding and some never reappeared.

Nearly a hundred years went by and the princess and the castle were nearly forgotten. The thorns grew so high that not even the tallest tower could be seen. Inside, nothing moved. Dogs slept by the fire, fleas slept on the dogs, doves slept in the eaves and mice slept in the walls. Even flies hovered asleep above the quiet horses in the stable.

Then, one day, red rosebuds appeared amongst the thorns and a young prince who had come from far away stopped to look at them.





The prince had first noticed only the rosebuds, but he soon saw that they grew out of the largest thorn bush he had ever seen.

From a distance, he realised it was the size of a kingdom. He stopped at a cottage where he found an old farmer's wife feeding her hens, and asked her what she knew about it.

"To tell the truth, I'd nearly forgotten it was there," she said. "You'd think some magic lurked around that place! My father told me a story of a princess who was cursed to sleep for a hundred years. They say she is as beautiful as a rose, but that all who seek her shall perish."

The prince was not afraid, so he drew his sword and galloped on his horse towards the wall of thorns.

Unknown to him, this day marked a hundred years since Briar Rose had fallen asleep. As the prince neared the thorny wall it parted to make a path to the castle.

Soon he arrived at the gates, and there he saw people sleeping in the clothes of a hundred years ago. Everything was covered in climbing roses, and these opened ahead of him, leading him through corridors, up stairs and finally to a small room at the top of a tall tower.

The prince pushed open the door, and there he saw the sleeping princess. He stepped towards the bed, leaned over and gently kissed her. Her eyes opened.

"Are you the prince who was to wake me up?" she asked. "I've waited so long."

All around the palace,
people began to yawn
and open their eyes.

The ladies and gentlemen started dancing again, the guards stood to attention and the cook placed the cherry on Briar Rose's birthday cake. The court poet waved his arms and continued reciting.

Even the floors, roofs and walls of the castle came back to life as the dogs scratched, the fleas leapt, the mice rustled and the flies buzzed above the whinnying horses in the stable.

The princess and prince talked for many hours and then walked hand in hand to the throne room to speak to Briar Rose's parents.

The wedding was held soon, and at the table thirteen golden plates were laid for the fairies who were invited to give their blessing. They all lived happily ever after.

