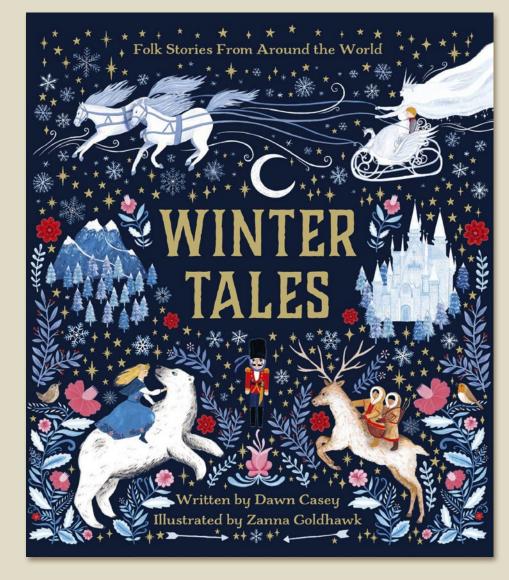
Winter Tales



A collection of winter tales from cultures around the world, beautifully brought together with striking gilt artwork.

- A timeless, treasured classic that speaks to all ages following on from the success of *Star Stories*
- Includes stories from cultures on every continent giving it a universal appeal
- Written by Dawn Casey author of Templar's *My Nana's Garden*.
- Over 76,000 copies sold worldwide (as of October 2022).

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Winter Tales



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TANUKI'S GOLD A folk tale from Japan

The Tanuki' is a member of the dog family that lives wild in the focests of Japan Like its cousin the fox, the tanula is small and agile, with a pointed snout and short legs, but its sliky fur is striped, like a badger or a racoon. The tanuki is famed in legends of old Japan as a magical creature - one favourite tale tells of a shape-shifting tanuki who could change into a kettle, and perform amazing acrobatics, bringing great good luck. This tale celebrates the way that when winter weather keeps us indoors, we feel especially grateful for the company of dear friends.

'Mukashi, mukashi' - very, very long ago, an old priest lived alone. He spent his days in prayer and meditation. He never needed to bother with earthly things for the local people brought him clothes and food, and patched his roof in the winter. One winter's evening, the priest was deep in prover. He knelt before the statue of the Buddha. He struck his bell and listened to the sound resound until it stilled to silence. "Nyaswil" What was that? From outside came a pitiful sound. The priest opened the door, and there, shivering in the cold, was a tanuki.

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· TANUKUS COLD ·

"Your holinesal" implored the creature. "Please, may I come in and warm myself by your fire? It's hitterly cold."

The priest's eyes opened wide in surprise. He knew that tanuki hibernate in winter. "Why aren't you in your burrow?" he asked.

"In winters past, the freezing frost and mountain snow were nothing to me. But now I grow old; I feel the cold in my bones. Please, let me in."

"Of course, of course!" said the kind-hearted priest, full of compassion. The tanuki lay thawing by the fire, eyes closed in exhaustion, wet fur steaming

cently. The priest continued his provers.

The tanuki slept by the sunken hearth all night, and in the morning, he padded away. The next night, the tanuki returned. And the next, and the next. He brought with him fallen sticks and dead leaves for the fire, and the old priest grew fond of the sight of him, sleeping by the hearth. The white fluff of his tummy rose and fell with the gentle rhythm of his snores.

The priest noticed that when he gazed upon the tanuki, asleep in such deep peace, he felt peace in his own body, too. His breathing slowed. His gaze softened. He stroked the creature's silky fur. Sometimes, the priest sat and sipped a bowl of green tea, and the tanuki curled beside him. Its warm weight was comfortable - it made him feel content.

When winter was over, and white snow gave way to pink blossom, the tanuki came to the hut no more.



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