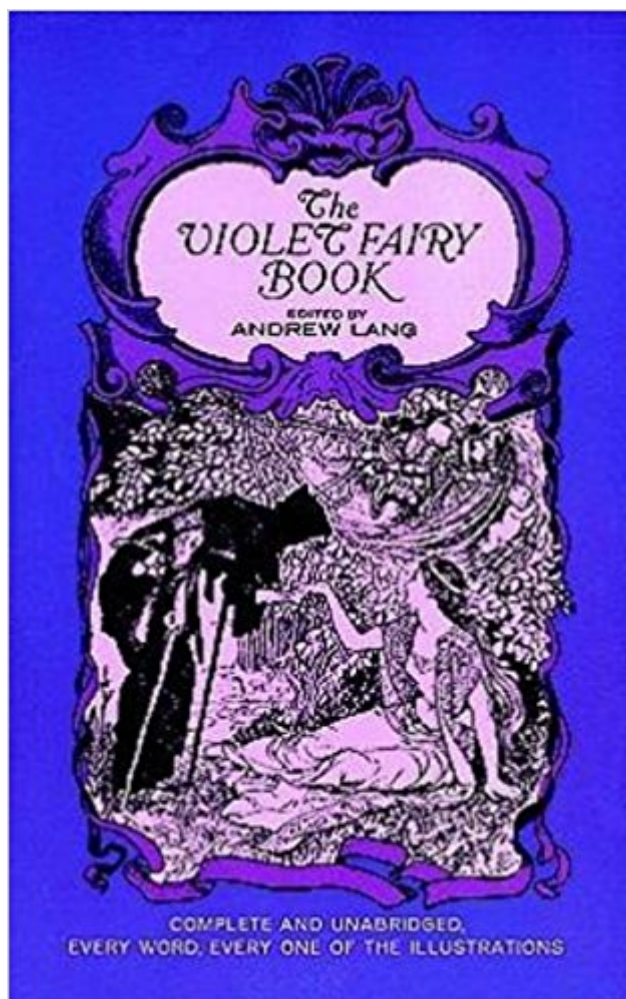


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The Violet Fairy Book (Dover Children's Classics)



Synopsis

Roumania, Japan, Serbia, Lithuania, Africa, Portugal, and Russia are among the sources of these 35 stories that tell of a haunted forest, chests of gold coins, a magical dog, and a man who outwits a dragon. Perhaps the best English versions available of these classic stories. 74 illustrations.

Book Information

Series: Dover Children's Classics

Paperback: 416 pages

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Customer Reviews

Andrew Lang (31 March 1844 – 20 July 1912) was a Scots poet, novelist, literary critic, and contributor to the field of anthropology. He is best known as a collector of folk and fairy tales. The Andrew Lang lectures at the University of St Andrews are named after him. He was born in Selkirk and was the eldest of the eight children. On 17 April 1875 he married Leonora Blanche Alleyne. She was (or should have been) variously credited as author, collaborator, and/or translator of Lang's Color/Rainbow Fairy Books he edited. He was educated at Selkirk Grammar School, Loretto, and at the Edinburgh Academy, St Andrews University and at Balliol College, Oxford, where he took a first class in the final classical schools in 1868, becoming a fellow and subsequently honorary fellow of Merton College. As a journalist, poet, critic and historian, he soon made a reputation as one of the most able and versatile writers of the day. He died of angina pectoris at the Tor-na-Coille Hotel in Banchory, survived by his wife. He was buried in the cathedral precincts at St Andrews.

I seriously cannot believe how long it took me to find and read Andrew Lang's Fairy books! Growing

up, my mother read to me the original Grimm's fairytales, just as my grandmother had done to her, and my great grandmother before her. It is a family tradition. But the Fairy Books might have to be added to that if/when I have children. The stories are all lovely, and I only wish they could be more mainstream, as many could be perfect Disney films. I have the Kindle versions, so I haven't experienced much of the artwork, but what I have seen is gorgeous. Most of the stories are okay for children in that they are not too scary, although some of them do involve lots of death. My favorite part is how they tell you where in the world the stories came from. I love traditional fables, and hearing unusual ones is just a treat. Seriously, they are free and beautiful! I highly recommend!

In the late 19th century, historian, scholar, and anthropologist, Andrew Lang, began publishing collections of fairy tales from around the world. The first volume was 'The Blue Fairy Book' published in 1887. Lang was not a true ethnologist, like the German Brothers Grimm. He was far more the 'translator' than collector of tales from the source, stories transcribed from being told by people to whom the tales were passed down by word of mouth. In fact, many stories in his first volume, such as Rumpelstiltskin; Snow White; Sleeping Beauty; Cinderella; and Hansel and Gretel were translated from Grimm's books of fairy tales. Some of his 'fairy tales' were even 'copied' from relatively recent fantasy fiction, such as A Voyage to Lilliput, the first of the four episodes in Jonathan Swift's Gulliver's Travels. My inspiration for commenting Lang's series of fairy tale books is for the sheer quantity of tales, the wonderful woodcut illustrations, some few of which may have become almost as popular as the tales (although not quite in the same league as Sir John Tenniel's illustrations for Lewis Carroll's great fantasies), and the fact that I had these when I was young. With twelve of these books, with between 30 and 36 stories in each book, this gives one about 400 different stories. If I were to recommend anything as standard equipment at a grandparents' house, it would be a complete set of these books. Needless to say, there are a few 'warnings' to accompany books assembled over 100 years ago. You will encounter a fair number of words with which even an adult may be unfamiliar, let alone a five year old. For example, on the second page of The Princess Mayblossom in The Red Fairy Book, a character puts sulfur in a witch's porridge. This requires at least three explanations. What is sulfur, what is porridge, and why is sulfur in porridge such a bad thing. More difficult still is when a prince entered the town on a white horse which 'pranced and caracoled to the sound of the trumpets'. In 19th century London, caracoling (making half turns to the right and the left) was probably as common and as well known as 'stepping on the gas' is today. But, if you're a grandparent, that's half the fun, explaining new words and ideas to the young-uns. There is another 'danger' which may require just a bit more explanation, although

in today's world of crime dramas on TV, I'm not sure that most kids are already totally immune to being shocked by death and dead bodies. In these stories, lots of people and creatures get killed in very unpleasant ways, and lots of very good people and creatures suffer in very unpleasant ways. It's ironic that the critics in Lang's own time felt the stories were 'unreality, brutality, and escapism to be harmful for young readers, while holding that such stories were beneath the serious consideration of those of mature age'. The success of a whole library of Walt Disney feature length cartoons based on these stories is a testament to how well they work with children. But do be warned, Uncle Walt did clean things up a bit. Lang's versions hold back on very little that was ugly and unpleasant in some of these stories. The down side to the great quantity of stories is that even when some come from very different parts of the world, there is a remarkable amount of overlap in theme, plot, and characters. But by the time you get to another story of a beautiful young girl mistreated by a stepmother, it will have been several month since you read Cinderella or the Little Glass Slipper in The Blue Fairy Book. The other side of the coin is that you can play the game of trying to recall what that other story was with a similar theme. There is one very big word of caution about buying these books through or a similar on line outlet. I stopped counting when I got to twelve different editions of The Blue Fairy Book, or a volume including several of these books. Not all of these editions have the original woodcuts and even worse, not all have a table of contents and introduction. The one publisher which has all twelve volumes is by Dover. Other publishers, such as Flying Chipmunk Publishing (yes, that's it's name) also have all the original illustrations, table of contents, and introduction, but I'm not certain that publisher has all twelve volumes. Dover most certainly does, as I just bought all twelve of them from . While I suspect these stories may have been 'old hat' for quite some time, it may be that with the popularity of Lord of the Rings, the Narnia stories, and the Harry Potter stories, all of which have their share of suffering and death, that these may be in for a revival. Again, the main attraction is that for relatively little money and space, Grammy and Grandad get a great resource for bonding with children.

The pictures are stunning.

Not what I anticipated. I bought the set of these to read to my son. As it turns out, fairy tails were very creepy when these were written. So they might be good for teenagers, but they will really freak you out when you read them thinking they were for kids.

This was my favorite of the Andrew Lang Fairy Tales books that I own. I have always loved fairy

tales and its refreshing to read a new take on some classic fairy tales, as well as many I have never read. The stories are classically written and have detailed artwork. For those of you, who love the classic stories of wonder and enchantment - Andrew Lang is an author worth checking out, as well as all of his well-written books.

The thirty-five stories in this book are taken from Romanian, Japanese, Serbian, Lithuanian, African, Portuguese, and Russian fairy story traditions. Included are "The Nine Pea-hens and the Golden Apples," "The Frog," "The Story of Halfman," and "The Boys with the Golden Stars," among others. I found this collection to be boring and weird, but not in the fairy tale way. Too many of them ended strangely where they didn't make sense to the story, and many of the ending left me flat. "The Violet Fairy Book," published in 1901, is the seventh of twelve collected fairy story books that were researched, translated and compiled by Andrew Lang (1844-1912) and his wife, Leonora Blanche Alleyne Lang, Andrew Lang, a Scotsman, was a literary critic, novelist, poet, and a contributor to the field of anthropology.

I really loved this book. Myth and folklore are timeless, even though all of the tales are somewhat old fashioned. Stories collected from such various locations such as Russia, Japan, Africa, Romania and Germany give insight into the culture where the stories originated, as well as just being a fun read. I look forward to reading all the other collections of stories.

While I love all of Andrew Lang's collections, I think this has to be one of my favorites. This is a collection that pretty much goes out of its way to collect every strange, exotic, and unknown tale on the face of the planet. Far from the simplicity of other tales, these are complex and detailed. Which probably means they were not passed down quite as much, but are wondrous and inspiring just the same

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