



Sleeping Beauty

Perseverance

A classic tale from Charles Perrault's collections about a beautiful princess who falls asleep for a hundred years on the day of her fifteenth birthday.

After a long time, rumours about the cursed kingdom, in which everything has fallen into eternal sleep, reach a young...



🕒 12 min

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Once upon a time, there was a kingdom far away and in it there was a beautiful royal palace. The palace was made of pink stones and grey glass. In that palace lived a king and a queen who had plenty of everything, except for one thing: a baby.

Every day, they woke up desperately hoping that this would be the day that they would have the joy of getting a little baby. They would love it with all of their hearts.

One day, the queen was sadly walking through the garden and listening to the royal **frogs croak**, when she decided to go closer to the lake.

Suddenly, one of the frogs croaked to her: "Your wish will come true. Within a year you will **have a daughter**."

Exactly one year later, the queen had **a little daughter**, who they named Marianne. The king was the happiest man alive, and to celebrate the birth of his daughter, he threw an enormous party to share his joy with everyone **in the land**.

As was always customary, the guest list absolutely had to **include the Fairies**, whose job it was to determine the fate of the royal daughter. There were thirteen fairies in total, but the king was distracted with happiness. He made a terrible mistake and only invited twelve.

On the day of the celebration, everyone in the kingdom was joyful. The atmosphere was filled with laughter all around, and even the servants in the palace whistled cheerfully **in the corridors**.

There was so much delicious food that the tabletops creaked **under the weight**. All the guests ate and danced waltzes and celebrated.

At midnight, the Fairies arrived to declare their wishes for Princess Marianne. They foretold a wonderful life for the little girl – wisdom, beauty, good virtue, riches and many other **good things**.

But – before the last of the twelve Fairies could speak – an unexpected guest interrupted the celebration. The thirteenth fairy, whom they had forgotten to invite, appeared in the door.

She wore a long black dress that sparkled like diamonds when she walked. As soon as she entered the room, everyone immediately got very quiet and all eyes were on her. She looked **very angry**. She knew she was the only one who hadn't been invited and she felt left out.

In a deep, dark voice, she declared: "When the princess reaches 15 years of age, she will prick her finger on a rose **thorn and die**." Then she turned around and disappeared like a draught through the door.

They were all terrified. Everyone knew a prophecy couldn't be undone. But one kind fairy was left for the last prophecy. She said: "She won't die, but sleep for one hundred years."

The king ordered all of the rose bushes, every branch, to be cut down and burnt. As Marianne grew into each of her prophecies, becoming beautiful, wise and kind, they still worried **about roses**.

Before they knew it, her fifteenth birthday had arrived. The dark fairy's curse! What would happen? As the castle prepared for the celebration, the princess wandered until she came to an unfamiliar door.

It was unlocked! And inside was a stone staircase that echoed her steps **as she went up**. There was a door at the top, but it was locked. Then she noticed an old, rusty key in the lock.

When she turned it, the lock ground with the sound of rust and the door opened **with a creak**. The princess cautiously entered the little chamber behind it.

There was a single small window and thick cobwebs everywhere. The furniture was covered in inches of dust that made her sneeze. She was about to leave when she noticed a single flower in the window.

It was in a little ceramic pot and it had **beautiful red petals**. It seemed like it came from another world; Marianne liked spending almost all of her free time in the royal garden. But she had never seen a flower like this in her life!

She moved closer to the window to look at the pretty bloom, and she noticed how sweet it smelled. It was a new scent and intoxicating. She wanted to touch it, but when she reached out to pick up the pot, she felt a little prick **on her finger** and she collapsed to the dirty ground, **fast asleep**.

That wasn't the only thing that happened. All over the palace, at the moment she pricked her finger, everyone in the palace dropped to the floor, falling **fast asleep too**. The royal parents, the servants, and the guests who had come to celebrate Marianne's birthday.

Even the wolfhounds in the yard, the horses attached to carriages, and blue birds in the middle of songs **fell asleep**. The only other sound that could be heard was the rustle of leaves as rose branches climbed the castle walls.

The castle and its people became a legend children whispered about; no one believed it existed. Little boys played gallant knights with swords and sticks **in the meadows**. As they grew up they dreamed about someday searching for the cursed kingdom and saving everyone inside.

They especially wanted to save Sleeping Beauty, the princess who they said was the most beautiful girl in the world.

Many village farm boys and even dashing princes from other kingdoms had tried to get to the palace over the decades. All of them only managed to find a dense thicket of thorny roses, which they found impossible to pass. They would sharpen their swords over **and over again**, but it was in vain. No matter how hard they tried, the wall of rose branches would not let them pass.

For a whole century, many different men, very short and very tall, very weak and very strong, nobles and peasants and even a few bakers and tailors, tried to get through and failed.

Until one day, when young, handsome Prince Julian was passing through the kingdom. His dappled horse needed **new shoes**, so he stopped in a local village to look for a blacksmith. The big-bellied blacksmith greeted the prince warmly, offering him refreshments while he waited for the new horseshoes.

While the prince waited for the blacksmith to work **on the horseshoes**, he listened to the smith's wife tell local children the legend of the cursed rose castle.

"...and so Sleeping Beauty, along with the kingdom, is still fast asleep to this day!" The blacksmith's wife finished her story and the children stared at her **with open mouths**. "Wow!" they all said, amazed.

On the other side of the window, Prince Julian was also awestruck; he jumped to his feet and with a few fast strides, he **reached the blacksmith**. He wanted to know everything the blacksmith knew about the story and asked for directions to the legendary cursed castle.

As soon as his horse was shod, he galloped immediately **towards the castle**. He had to overcome many difficulties on his way, but he was stubborn and determined. At last, he reached the palace. It was completely covered in thorny rose bushes.

Suddenly, it happened! The branches in the thicket started loosening right before his eyes, coming apart of their own accord to let him in. As soon as he walked through, the bushes snapped back to where they had been and created **a thick wall again**.

He reached the royal courtyard and everything and everyone was frozen, asleep in place. He searched all through the castle rooms, opening and closing doors, but there was no sign of the sleeping princess.

Finally, he found a door leading to a little tower with a chamber **at the top**. He walked up the stairs and found the sleeping princess lying on the ground.

He had heard that she was beautiful, but now that he saw her with his own eyes, he couldn't stop looking at her. She was gorgeous! He felt his heart speed up, and he bent down, stroked her long, fair hair, and gently **kissed her lips**.

The moment he kissed her, Marianne woke up, opened her eyes and gazed into the young prince's hazel eyes. He looked at her so sweetly that she knew it was his love that **had saved her**.

In the distance they could hear the dogs barking **in the courtyard**. Marianne took his hand and together they walked downstairs. Everyone was yawning, dazed and waking up from their slumber. The rose bushes were gone.

When handsome Julian and beautiful Marianne **got married**, the blacksmith and his family were all invited to the wedding. The party lasted for three days and three nights, and Julian and Marianne lived **happily ever after**.