

## Legends & Fairy Tales

Fairy tales are old stories that are usually about a battle between good and evil. They often include a beautiful woman who is captured, cursed, or even eaten by a cruel villain, and then rescued by a brave man. The woman may be a princess or just a poor girl, and the man may be a knight or a lowly woodcutter. The villain may be an ugly person, like a vicious giant or a wicked witch, or a cunning animal, like a fox or a wolf.

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Fables are different. They are stories that try to teach an important lesson. The tortoise and the hare, for example, is a fable about the importance of working steadily to achieve a goal, rather than rushing to finish first.

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Legends are again different. They are stories that try to explain history or the natural world. The Roman god Vulcan was thought to cause earthquakes and volcanoes by banging a hammer on his anvil; the Norse god Thor was thought to control thunder and lightning; and in China, dragons were thought to control water, including rivers, waterfalls, and rain.

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What is the difference between a fairy tale and a fable?

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What did the Romans think was the cause of earthquakes?

What does the story of the tortoise and the hare teach us?