



The Six Swans

Jacob Grimm , Dorothee Duntze , Wilhelm Grimm , Anthea Bell (Translation)

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Six unfortunate young men were turned into swans by their stepmother. Their heart-broken sister vows to release them from the spell by sewing six shirts from starflowers and not utter a word, or laugh, for six long years.

The Six Swans Details

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From Reader Review The Six Swans for online ebook

Sarah says

This is one of my favourite fairytales however honestly I prefer Hans Christian Andersen version better but that is just a personal opinion.

Bette Hunter says

It was not Six, but eleven swans. It is possibly the best of all his fairy tales. A beautiful princess and her eleven brothers get a stepmother after their mother dies. The stepmother is very evil, and ousts the children away.

The daughter goes to a wood cutter on the forest and the brothers are turned into wild swans far far away. One day the swans arrives to visit their baby sister. They convince her that they can take her to their land far away if she climbs onto their backs and fly with them.

The way to the promised land is over a vast ocean and as they turn into men as soon as the sun goes down they have to reach land before this happens. At the last sun ray disappears in the horizon the eleven swans touch down on to a tiny island. Because they have been carrying their baby sister the flight took longer than usual and youngest brother does not quite get on land so his one arm is now forever a swan wing.

This is just the start of a long and incredible story on what the brothers and sister have to go through.

It is a beautiful tale of love and the power of good over evil.

A must read and so much better than the more well known translations..

Robin says

Lovely, intense version. Highly recommended for readers who don't mind when the heroine almost gets burned at the stake after being framed for murdering her babies. Ages 6-9?

Amanda says

Lovely illustrations complete this elegantly simple re-telling

NightRaven1553 says

This is probably my favorite fairy tale because it's the girl who was the hero and not just a girl who was put under a spell and had to be saved by a prince. The princess is determined to set her six brothers free from a curse that turned the brothers into swans. This story that the love of family is strong.

Katie Turley says

A king got lost in the forest and a witch helped him get out on one condition that he would marry her daughter. He did this but with great horror. He already had 6 children and he didn't know if his new wife would treat them well so he hid them in a far away castle in the forest. The queen found out about the children and went to go see them. She had sewn shirts to make them turn into swans when the material touched them. She did this to the 6 boys. The queen thought she had got rid of her step children. The king went to visit his children when he found that his boys were gone. He wanted to take his daughter home with him to protect him. She wished to stay in the castle one more night. That night she went searching for her brothers. She went into the forest and found a hunting lodge. She slept under one of the beds and soon 6 swans came in. They blew off their feathers and turned into boys again. They told her of only one way to save them. She could not talk or laugh for 6 years while she made them each a shirt made of sunflower peddles. She set to work. She was found by a huntsman and he took her to his king. The king fell in love with her even though she did not speak. They had 3 children but the king's mother did not like the queen. The mother-in-law stole the 3 children after they were each born and told the king that the queen had disposed of them. After the 3rd child the king said the queen had to be tried for killing her children. The day the queen was to be executed was the last day of the 6 years that she could not speak. Her brothers came and were saved by the shirts that she had sewn. She then told the king what had happened and they lived happily ever after.

I liked this book.

Crystal Bandel says

The Six Swans by Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, illustrated by Dorothee Duntze, translated by Anthea Bell, published 1998.

Nonfiction, folktale.

Picture book.

Grades K-3.

Found via *Publishers Weekly*, reviewer not identified.

This version of the Brothers Grimms' tale "The Six Swans" stays close to the original source, retelling this story in all of its particulars. This story follows a family where six brothers are turned into swans and the youngest child, a girl, has to make them six shirts of starflowers within six years without talking or laughing. The translation here sticks close to the source while still being accessible to children, and the illustrations highlight themes of the narrative while harkening back to European paintings. The reviewer also finds this book successful, stating that "Duntze succeeds in depicting the darkness of human experience without shielding children from strong emotion." Readers should be warned of some dark themes, including suspected cannibalism, but that should be expected with faithful versions of traditional fairy tales.

Karim Elmenshawy says

The mother-in-law returns the babies she stole, and she is the one who's burned at the stake as punishment. A good end

Georgiana-Laura Gheorghe says

Review for "The Six Swans" by Jacob Grimm:

It's one of the most popular fairy tales written by the Brothers Grimm. The story follows six princes who have been turned to swans by their stepmother and their sister's struggle to release them from the curse. Brother-sister relationship, parent-child relationship, risk-taking, sacrifice, determination, love, bravery, faith and magic are the things which the readers will find on every page they read. The swan is the symbol of grace, innocence, dreaming, love, unity, transformation and beauty. It is also present in Tchaikovsky's "Swan Lake", Hans Christian Anderson's "The Ugly Duckling" etc. I recommend this fairy tale to readers 6+.

Fables&Wren says

WrensReads Review:

I have the complete set of the Grimm Fairy-Tales, and there are so many that I haven't read! They are very short, as one would know, so I have decided to read each one and give them a review. Some are very vulgar, some are very cute and some don't even make sense. Some of them are well known fairy-tales and some have never been told. Some are fairy-tales we know but are not the same because they have been downplayed for the children.

This is just like the crow story about a sister being mute for a certain amount of years to make her brothers turn back into human.

Except she marries her dad.

So that's cool.

BARF BYE.

WrensReads | Goodreads | Twitter | Instagram

Jess says

One of my co-workers kept suggesting that I read this fairytale as I'm forever knitting something during our staff meetings. Though I don't think this was the version she wanted to give me, I really loved the simple

artwork of Raidt.

Mariana says

This was clearly the inspiration behind the first book in Juliet Marillier's Sevenwaters trilogy, Daughter Of The Forest, which I loved to bits when I read it some years ago! It made me want to revisit Sevenwaters, which I may very well do sometime in the future. I just love this story, however it's being told; I will forever be surprised it isn't a better known fairytale. I'll keep my fingers crossed that someone will make a proper film out of it someday ;)

Cami says

Wow. Never thought I would have criticism for a fairy tale...on the up side, it was sweet to see what the sister was willing to endure for her brothers. (Not speaking or laughing for SIX years?! While tailoring shirts out of flowers....sheesh!) That is all very moving, but then THREE of her children are taken away while she's performing these tasks and she still doesn't break her vow of silence in hopes of saving/finding them! And there is no resolution at the end when she finally can speak. It says, "she and the King live happily ever after with their six brothers"aw, sweet, but WHAT ABOUT THEIR MISSING CHILDREN?!!!! I'm curious to read more the the Grimm's fairy tales to see if any others are more, um, uplifting? Grimm is an understatement....

McKenna Crimmins says

This story was a lot like Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs, but instead about a beautiful girl and her six brothers who get turned into swans. This story is about how the girl goes through a journey of making six shirts made of the tiniest flowers and not speaking for six whole years in order to make her brothers become people again. She was brave and didn't let anything get in the way of her promise, not even her evil mother in law stealing all three of her children and blaming her on it. This story was a normal fairytale and ended with a happily ever after which all girls like to hear. This story is definitely for the elementary aged girl and the pictures were very detailed and went along with the story very well. I loved it.

Carlos De Eguiluz says

Otro relato genial de mis nuevos cuentistas favoritos.

Moraleja: La decisión de realizar una tarea, y la perseverancia para llevarla acabo, a pesar de las adversidades, conducen al éxito.
