



American Indian Fairy Tales

William Trowbridge Larned , Henry Rowe Schoolcraft

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Iagoo, the story-teller knew the fairy tales and wonder stories told him by his grandfather. Where did robin get his red breast? How did fire find its way into the wood? Why was Coyote more clever than the other animals? Iagoo would answer these questions with his stories. Adapted from legends collected by noted ethnologist Henry R. Schoolcraft in the Lake Superior region in 1839, this charming collection of seven stories will delight youngsters and lovers of Native American myth and legend.

American Indian Fairy Tales Details

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Author : William Trowbridge Larned , Henry Rowe Schoolcraft

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From Reader Review American Indian Fairy Tales for online ebook

Douglas Cootey says

I've come to the end of another lovely collection of folktales. This collection was important to me because it was given to me by my grandmother almost thirty years ago. The book originally belonged to my great grandmother. She was apparently a fan of art and had enjoyed the illustrations. There were other illustrations tucked inside from another book, as well. I tracked down the book they came from, which is a story for another day. I usually left the book on the shelf because it was so old and deteriorated, but I found the book on Project Gutenberg, so I finally was able to enjoy it.

The art by John Rae was hard to discern sometimes because the color had begun to bleed from this 1921 edition, although it could also have been due to a lousy print job. Regardless, the illustrations were fanciful and matched the stories well. My favorite was the one of the last, which depicted the punk-Wudjies, or fairies. The stories were culled from an earlier publication which I have discovered is on Project Gutenberg, so I'll be reading it next to see how Westernized these tales had become in the retelling.

My favorites were the stories with characters with distinct personalities striving to overcome an enemy, often a personification of weather. The second to last story (Mish-o-sha, the Magician) could have fit well thematically with some Irish folktales I have read due to the evil magician and the three trials, but was distinct because of the way nature was depicted. At one point, Seegwun, the hero, convinced a flock of seagulls to not eat him and, instead, carry him back to the magician astride their backs as the thousands of seagulls beat their wings. Imagery like that helps Native American folklore stand out from other cultures. There is a grand majesty to their imagination that felt both old fashioned and modern. Although the book has been reprinted, I recommend looking it up on Project Gutenberg so that you can enjoy it with the original illustrations.

Jessica says

Partial Reading/Rating:

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Iagoo, the Story-Teller (OKAY)

Shin-ge-bis Fools the North Wind (GOOD)

Shin-ge-bis Fools the North Wind (cont.) (GOOD)

The Little Boy and Girl in the Clouds (GOOD)

The Little Boy and Girl in the Clouds (cont.)(GOOD)

The Child of the Evening Star (LOVED)

The Child of the Evening Star (cont.)(LOVED)

The Child of the Evening Star (cont. again)
(LOVED)

The Child of the Evening Star (end) (LOVED)

The Boy who Snared the Sun (OKAY)

The Boy who Snared the Sun (cont.) (OKAY)

The Boy who Snared the Sun (end) (OKAY)

How the Summer Came (OKAY)

How the Summer Came (cont.) (OKAY)

How the Summer Came (end) (OKAY)
The Fairy Bride (GOOD)
The Fairy Bride (cont.) (GOOD)

Kieren says

I would have preferred reading traditional tales of Native Americans' culture by Native Americans so that is certainly what I will seek out next.

Mohammad says

its a nice and good book

Rocky Ternal says

If you enjoy American Indian stories, this is a nice collection. Cute, short and fun. Great to read with your children because they are fun but you can also draw some life lessons from.

Chad says

Cute stories.

Ahmad Sharabiani says

American Indian Fairy Tales = North American Indian tales, William Trowbridge Larned
American Indian Fairy Tales is a collection of short stories told By W.T. Larned and Illustrated by John Rae, 1921, P. F. Volland Company With one exception, all the tales in this book are adapted from the legends collected by Henry R. Schoolcraft, ethnologist and government agent for the Lake Superior country, and published in 1839 with the title, "Algie Researches."
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Thom Swennes says

It is remarkable how similar these American Indian tales are to traditional European fairy tales. Many of them could be brought under the category of fable, allegory or parable as many have a moral or lesson to live by. Many are extremely perfervid and leave a marked impression on the reader. Right and good always defeat the peccant wrongdoer. This book, though relatively short (100 pages) it relates ten myths explaining everything from the creation of mountains to the changing of the seasons. Animals are often given both speech and personalities as demure vessels to relate a story. I enjoyed the reading of this book and think that many other readers will feel the same.

Ashley says

I love fairy tales. Always have. It was great to be able to take a look at the fairy tales of another culture. They felt more like folk tales than fairy tales, but oh well. Some of them had moments of each, and I enjoyed the stories. It was an impulse buy, and I'm really glad that I picked it up.

mar says

Great tales, with lots of imagination and parts of Indian mythology.

Abdulaziz Fagih says

it sound like children stories and the guy who's reading also preform as his listeners are children

Katy Wilmotte says

Well-written with lovely illustrations. Favorite stories: "Shin-ge-bis Fools the North Wind," "The Child of the Evening Star," and "Grasshopper."
3.5 stars.

bup says

I'm not much of a sociologist, but these enchanting tales fascinated me. Like European fairy tales (but unlike, for instance, Japanese Fairy Tales), these tend to have clear morals, reward good, and act as cautionary tales.

Also like European mythology, the 'spirit' or 'soul' appears as a puff of white smoke when it's visible. Is that common to all of humanity - that the 'ghost in the machine' is an ethereal substance, and white?

Less surprisingly, lots of talking animals, and tales about when the world was new, and tales that personify things like "spring" and "the north wind."

Oh yeah - there are even a couple of tales where the bad guy is vulnerable only in one part of his body - the leg and foot.

These were obviously collected after Europeans had interacted with the New World*, so I don't know how much corruption had occurred to these tales (a powder horn is mentioned in one), but if there's not much, I'd love to hear theories about the commonalities of the tales from various cultures that had been out of touch for millennia.

Also, they're good - it's a short audiobook (about two hours), and the stories do have that 'magic' about them that makes for a tale that stays with you for a long time. The seductive feeling of each story lingers.

This would be a great thing for kids on a car trip, too - entertaining and world-expanding.

*originally collected by a guy in the 1830's sent by the government - sort of a Neil Lomax for the 1800's. Then this version was written in the 1920's.

Gale says

TALES OF MAGIC AND MANITOO

NB: THIS REVIEW REFERS TO THE 1993 DERRYDALE HARDCOVER EDITION.

During the 30 years during which Henry Schoolcraft lived among the Indians of the Great Lakes area, he undertook a personal mission to learn their folklore and then transcribe into English. This book offers ten Native American fairy tales on fine quality paper with excellent color illustrations by John Rae. Whether they are tales of adventure, love, or quests for glory and improvement of the tribe, they reveal basic human traits: we see our 21st century selves mirrored in recognizable behavior, from character flaws to noble sacrifice. Some tales offer explanations for natural phenomena.

These tales are recounted to rapt young listeners--hungry to learn the ways and values of their people--by old venerable Iagoo, whose tribal function is to preserve their history by means of oral tradition. The total anthology underscores the close relationship between humans and spirits, between mankind and the animal realm, between people and their environment (Mother Earth, Father Sky). This celebration of the interconnectedness among humans and their world reminds readers that every action has a consequence, for which we must take the blame or shoulder the responsibility. Contemporary readers will recognize many similar traits and personality quirks, which reveal the commonality of the human experience.

(November 15, 2011. I welcome dialogue with teachers.)

Ida Wilcox says

I really enjoyed these stories.

Its always good to read fairy tales from other cultures.
