

*For Mum and Dad,
who read to me every night
and showed me the power
of stories to comfort,
bring hope and inspire.*

IO

*To my grandma Dulce,
who told me the most
wonderful fairy tales.*

AS



THE LOST FAIRY TALES

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LITTLE TIGER
LONDON

AURORA AND THE GIANTS

A story from Germany

After many long years of waiting and wishing for a baby, King John and Queen Mathilde were blessed with a daughter. As was custom, the little princess was promised in marriage to a young prince called Frederick at birth. The baby had cheeks as rosy as the sunrise, so they called her Aurora, which means 'dawn'.

Close to the castle was a mighty river. Its emerald water flowed around graceful bends and glittered with promise on sunny days. The river was so wide that the far shore could rarely be seen from the castle. On very clear days, one could make out a carpet of enormous trees, playfully referred to as the Giants' Forest. A small island lay nearby, and King John made frequent trips there. It was a magical place where the flowers seemed more vibrant, the water appeared clearer than crystal and the air was soft and sweet.

One fine day, the king proposed an excursion to the island. He and Queen Mathilde sailed in one boat, and Aurora followed behind with her nanny. Twenty smaller boats carrying the royal entourage came in their wake. After a few hours of peaceful rest on the island, there was an ominous rumble of thunder, and the sky began to bruise and darken. The party quickly returned to their boats, sensing a storm. Sure enough, the rain began and the wind started to howl; the boats were tossed about like matchsticks and quickly became separated.



The king and queen's boat was first to reach the shore, and gradually the others arrived in sorry, bedraggled states. Just one was missing – the boat belonging to Princess Aurora and her nanny. Search parties were sent out through the night, without success. When the boat wasn't found, the queen and king accepted that their daughter had been drowned with hearts full of grief.

But Aurora was alive! The boat had capsized and her wooden cradle had floated to the far shore of the river. Little did anyone realise that the place they playfully called 'The Giants' Forest' truly was home to a race of man-eating giants!

Tertulla, the queen of the giants, found Aurora in her cradle on a stony beach. At first, Tertulla thought she had found a tasty snack. But, as she lowered her huge head to look at the baby, Aurora stopped crying and smiled. This smile spread a blanket of warmth through Tertulla; she fell in love with the child and from that day forth, treated Aurora as her own daughter. Tertulla's husband and her eight sons were forced begrudgingly to accept the baby as part of the family.

Aurora grew to love Tertulla dearly but felt no affection for the other mighty residents of the Giants' Forest. She remembered nothing of her past, believing that she was an orphan who had been taken in by the giants. Tertulla's greatest wish was for Aurora to marry her youngest son, Oglu, but the poor girl could think of nothing worse; he was brutish and had no kind words for anyone.

