Sleeping Beauty

Grimm’s Fairy Tale version - translated by Margaret Hunt - language modernized a bit by Leanne Guenther
Long ago there lived a King and Queen who said every day, “If only we had a child!” But for a long time they had none.

One day, as the Queen was bathing in a spring and dreaming of a child, a frog crept out of the water and said to her, “Your wish shall be fulfilled. Before a year has passed you shall bring a daughter into the world.”

And since frogs are such magical creatures, it was no surprise that before a year had passed the Queen had a baby girl. The child was so beautiful and sweet that the King could not contain himself for joy. He prepared a great feast and invited all his friends, family and neighbours.

He invited the fairies, too, in order that they might be kind and good to the child. There were thirteen of them in his kingdom, but as the King only had twelve golden plates for them to eat from, one of the fairies had to be left out.

None of the guests was saddened by this as the thirteenth fairy was known to be cruel and spiteful.

An amazing feast was held and when it came to an end, each of the fairies presented the child with a magic gift. One fairy gave her virtue, another beauty, a third riches and so on -- with everything in the world that anyone could wish for.

The fairies presented the child with a magic gift. One fairy gave her virtue, another beauty, a third riches and so on -- with everything in the world that anyone could wish for.

After eleven of the fairies had presented their gifts, the thirteenth suddenly appeared. She was angry and wanted to show her spite for not having been invited to the feast. Without hesitation she called out in a loud voice, “When she is fifteen years old, the Princess shall prick herself with a spindle and shall fall down dead!”

Then without another word, she turned and left the hall.

The guests were horrified and the Queen fell to the floor sobbing, but the twelfth fairy, whose wish was still not spoken, quietly stepped forward. Her magic could not remove the curse, but she could soften it so she said, “Nay, your daughter shall not die, but instead shall fall into a deep sleep that will last one hundred years. Over the years, the promises of the fairies came true -- one by one.

The Princess grew to be beautiful, modest, kind and clever. Everyone who saw her could not help but love her.

The King and Queen were determined to prevent the curse placed on the Princess by the spiteful fairy and sent out a command that all the spindles in the whole kingdom should be destroyed. No one in the kingdom was allowed to tell the Princess of the curse that had been placed upon her for they did not want her to worry or be sad.

On the morning of her fifteenth birthday, the Princess awoke early -- excited to be another year older. She was up so early in the morning, that she realized everyone else still slept.

The Princess roamed through the halls trying to keep herself occupied until the rest of the castle awoke. She wandered about the whole place, looking at rooms and halls as she pleased and at last she came to an old tower. She climbed the narrow, winding staircase and reached a little door. A rusty key was sticking in the lock and when she turned it, the door flew open.

In a little room sat an old woman with a spindle, busily spinning her flax.

The old woman was so deaf that she had never heard the King’s command that all spindles should be destroyed.

“Good morning, Granny,” said the Princess, “what are you doing?”
“I am spinning,” said the old woman.
“What is the thing that whirls round so merrily?” asked the Princess and she took the spindle and tried to spin too. But she had scarcely touched the spindle when it pricked her finger. At that moment she fell upon the bed which was standing near and lay still in a deep sleep.
The King, Queen and servants had all started their morning routines and right in the midst of them fell asleep too. The horses fell asleep in the stable, the dogs in the yard, the doves on the roof and the flies on the wall. Even the fire in the hearth grew still and went to sleep. The kitchen maid, who sat with a chicken before her, ready to pluck its feathers, fell asleep. The cook was in the midst of scolding the kitchen boy for a mess he’d made but they both fell fast asleep. The wind died down and on the trees in front of the castle not a leaf stirred.

There was a legend in the land about the lovely Sleeping Beauty, as the King’s daughter was called, and from time to time Princes came and tried to force their way through the hedge and into the castle.

Round the castle a hedge of brier roses began to grow up. Every year it grew higher until at last nothing could be seen of the sleeping castle. There was a legend in the land about the lovely Sleeping Beauty, as the King’s daughter was called, and from time to time Princes came and tried to force their way through the hedge and into the castle. But they found it impossible for the thorns, as though they were alive, grabbed at them and would not let them through. After many years a Prince came again to the country and heard an old man tell the tale of the castle which stood behind the brier hedge and the beautiful Princess who had slept within for a hundred years.

He heard also that many Princes had tried to make it through the brier hedge but none had succeeded and many had been caught in it and died.
The the young Prince said, “I am not afraid. I must go and see this Sleeping Beauty. The good old man did all in his power to persuade him not to go, but the Prince would not listen.

Now the hundred years were just ended. When the Prince approached the brier hedge it was covered with beautiful large roses. The shrubs made way for him of their own accord and let him pass unharmed.

In the courtyard, the Prince saw the horses and dogs lying asleep. On the roof sat the sleeping doves with their heads tucked under their wings. When he went into the house, the flies were asleep on the walls and the servants asleep in the halls. Near the throne lay the King and Queen, sleeping peacefully beside each other. In the kitchen the cook, the kitchen boy and the kitchen maid all slept with their heads resting on the table.
The Prince went on farther. All was so still that he could hear his own breathing. At last he reached the tower and opened the door into the little room where the Princess was asleep. There she lay, looking so beautiful that he could not take his eyes off her. He bent down and gave her a kiss. As he touched her, Sleeping Beauty opened her eyes and smiled up at him.

Throughout the castle, everyone and everything woke up and looked at each other with astonished eyes. Within the month, the Prince and Sleeping Beauty were married and lived happily all their lives.

The End