



The Tales of Mother Goose

Charles Perrault

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A collection of literary fairy tales written by Charles Perrault, published in Paris in 1697. The work became popular because it was written at a time when fairy tales were fashionable amongst aristocrats in Parisian literary salons. Perrault wrote the work when he retired from court as secretary to Jean-Baptiste Colbert, minister to Louis XIV of France. Colbert's death may have forced Perrault's retirement, at which point he turned to writing. Scholars have debated as the origin of his tales and whether they are original literary fairy tales modified from commonly known stories, or based on stories written by earlier medieval writers such as Boccaccio.

Elaborate embellishments were a preferred style at the French court. The simple plots Perrault started with were modified, the language enhanced, and rewritten for an audience of aristocratic and noble courtiers. Thematically, the stories support Perrault's belief that the nobility is superior to the peasant class, and many of the stories show an adherence to Catholic beliefs, such as those in which a woman undergoes purification from sin and repentance before reintegration into society.



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