

Transcript of Story On Podcast: Beware the Flowers of the Forest - Fairy Tales

Chapter 1: Opening

[cheerful whistling theme song plays.]

Laura: Hello! Welcome to Story On! I'm your host, Laura and today, we are talking about Fairy Tales! Who doesn't love a good fairy tale, am I right!? So what makes a fairy tale....a fairy tale?

Well, many fairy tales start and end in a special way. That classic beginning line. You know what it is, right? Once upon a time! And sometimes fairy tales end with another classic line. "and they lived happily ever after."

Fairy tales usually have a good, innocent character, like Cinderella, and a bad, evil character, like her stepmother. There is usually a very clear good vs evil thing going on in fairy tales.

Fairy tales are often told like they happened a long time ago and they may take place in a kingdom, a small village or an enchanted forest.

There's usually some kind of magical element like talking animals, everyday objects coming to life. Or even magical creatures such as fairies, trolls, etc.

Fairy tales often end with a moral or lesson. Sometimes, the author comes right out and tells us what the lesson is, and other times, we have to kind of figure it out ourselves.

As you listen to my fairy tale, think about what the moral could be.

Alright, let's do this! It's time for the story!

[fading chime music]

Chapter 2: Story

Laura: This is Beware the Flowers of the Forest

Once upon a time, just beyond the borders of the kingdom of Noseblossom, there was a beautiful enchanted forest. It was filled with giant trees, whose leaves were always a sparkling emerald green, even in the middle of winter.

The striking trees were lovely but the thing that made the forest most incredible was the breathtaking flowers. The forest floor was covered with flowers in rosy pinks, lemon yellows and amber oranges. Like the trees, these flowers glowed with a powerful beauty

year round. No matter how cold or dry the weather, the petals never wilted, never drooped.

Not only did the picturesque flowers cover the forest with a colorful carpet, they also infused the air with the most remarkable smell.

The flowers often caught the attention of passers by, who inevitably found themselves drawn away from the nearby road and into the dazzling forest. Without fail, passersby would kneel down for a smell of the fragrant flowers and immediately become spellbound. There they would remain, wandering the forest, admiring and smelling the flowers for the rest of their days.

One sunny midsummer afternoon, a farmer from a neighboring kingdom was trotting down the nearby road. Farmer Wyatt and his horse Ivy were on their way to sell their veggies at the next village.

They were about halfway there when the most beautiful scent tickled Wyatt's nose. He quickly tugged Ivy's reins, signaling for the horse to stop. "What is that magnificent aroma!?" Wyatt wondered aloud.

"I haven't the faintest idea," replied Ivy.

Ivy, by the way, was a talking horse. Which came in handy, most of the time. "Should we keep going, sir or are we just going to stand here in the middle of the road?"

To say Ivy was impatient was an understatement. She didn't like to doddle. As a retired race horse, she prided herself on her ability to get from point A to point B in record time. She was always trying to beat her personal best. But, she was a loyal companion. So, she waited, jogging in place, till the farmer was ready to continue on.

Farmer Wyatt, however, was in no hurry. He didn't answer Ivy. Instead, he jumped off the horse and began following his nose to the source of that sweet perfume. Ivy reluctantly followed. This detour would really impact her finishing time.

It wasn't long before Wyatt's sniffer had led them straight into the enchanted forest.

"Ivy! Look at these stunning flowers! They're everywhere!" Wyatt called out, his voice thick with awe and admiration.

Flowers? Thought Ivy, as she sulked along in the background. She'd heard something about a forest with an unusual carpet of flowers before but she couldn't quite remember what it was. As she watched Wyatt kneel down to smell the flowers, she suddenly remembered. "Wyatt! Stop! Don't smell the flowers! It's aspell."

But she was too late. Wyatt had taken a long deep breath with his nose smooshed right down on the flowers. Had this guy even smelled flowers before? You don't put your nose ON the flowers, you put your nose NEAR the flowers. Oh dear. But, anyway, even from a distance, Ivy had seen the twinkle rise up from the flowers and enter Wyatt's nose. The spell had been cast.

[twinkling chime]

Wyatt's expression instantly changed. He no longer looked like himself. His eyes glowed purple. He looked empty, like he was sleepwalking. He spoke very slowly. "Look at the pretty flower. Oh, there. Another pretty flower. Beautiful!"

Ivy was worried. "Hey Wyatt, shouldn't we get back on the road? The market will be closing soon." Perhaps if she could coax him away from the forest the spell would fade.

The farmer looked in his horse's direction, shrugged his shoulders and lowered his body till he was lying on a lush pillow of flowers. He looked very comfortable. He closed his eyes and instantly began to snore.

Ivy knew Wyatt wouldn't be moving any time soon. She decided to look around the forest to see what she could find. Perhaps a little note with helpful instructions on how to break the spell? A horse could hope.

As she roamed the forest, Ivy couldn't help but admire the beauty of the flowers. It appeared she was immune to the spell (she remembered the horses saying something about it only affecting humans) but, regardless. She knew a fantastic sight when she saw one. The forest was the most beautiful place she'd ever seen. Ever imagined, even.

After she adjusted to the striking beauty of the flowers and the trees, she noticed little birds flitting around, singing happily and with perfect pitch.

[birds sing]

While she was focusing on the cheerful birdsong, Ivy heard the faint sound of running water.

[water flows]

A river! She was suddenly very thirsty. Ivy briskly made her way through the trees, and before long, she stood in front of a winding river. The water flowed powerfully, twinkling in the light of the sun. Ivy took a big long drink. The water tasted amazing! So fresh and crisp!

After a long thirst-quenching drink, Ivy slowly lifted her head. She had a strange feeling that she was not alone. That she was being watched. Ivy quickly turned her head to look behind her. There was a grey and black porcupine. It stood on two legs. Its quills glistened in the sunshine. It was holding a little wooden picnic basket.

“Umm h..hello there. Didn’t mean to disturb you. You seem really thirsty...I’m Fluffy, by the way. I’m here for my daily picnic.” Fluffy looked down at his basket, “I think I have enough to share. You like strawberries, don’t you?” Ivy chuckled to herself. A picnicking porcupine named Fluffy? Perhaps this oddly named creature knew something about the spell.

(Ivy): “Pleasure to meet you, Fluffy. I’m Ivy. Beautiful day for a picnic! But I suppose every day is picnic weather, inside this forest? Unfortunately I can’t stay. Stuff to do, you know? Say, do you know anything about the beautiful flowers here? My human seems to be under some kind of a spell?”

(Fluffy): “Oof. The flowers strike again. Yep, that’s a doozy of a spell, isn’t it? Sorry about your friend. You may as well give up on him, though. He’s a lost cause. My advice: Head to the next town with your head down, real sad-like. Squeeze out a few tears if you can. Maybe someone will feel sorry for you. Take you with them. That’s your best bet.”

(Ivy): “And leave Wyatt!? I couldn’t possibly do THAT! No, what I need to do is break the spell. Help him get out of this horrible paradise.”

(Fluffy): “Break the spell!? Oh dear. That would require a trip to Belina’s cabin. She’s the sorceress responsible for the spell. Even if you do make it there, ol’ Belina is unlikely to help you. You know, her being evil and all.”

And with that, Ivy knew what she must do. It was simple, really. Convince this poky porcupine to guide her to the sorceress’s cabin and persuade the evil witch to help his innocent friend. How hard could that be!? Ivy felt a lump growing in her throat.

On second thought, perhaps she should have a picnic with this poky creature. Even if it did mean breaking her strict policy of only eating on the road.

(Ivy): “You know, maybe I will take you up on those strawberries.”

(Fluffy): “Oh, how grand!”

Fluffy sounded excited for the company and got right to work setting up the picnic. The two chatted as they ate the strawberries and by the end of the picnic, Ivy had secured her guide to the sorceress’s cabin. Fluffy didn’t seem thrilled but apparently porcupines are known for their hospitality so he felt compelled. Ivy and Wyatt were guests of the forest after all.

They arranged to meet back at the river in an hour. Ivy sped back to check on Wyatt (being a retired racehorse really came in handy sometimes) while Fluffy gathered some supplies and said goodbye to his family.

Ivy found Wyatt right where she'd left him; asleep on the flowers. She figured she should leave him a note, in case he woke wondering where she was. "Where can I find some stationary around here?" she muttered to herself. She wasn't expecting a reply. She almost jumped out of her hooves at the sound of the strange voice.

(Alma): "Aisle 22, second shelf."

"Who said that!?" Ivy questioned after regaining her composure.

To Ivy's astonishment, a little elf seemed to appear right before her very eyes, fading slowly into view, upside down with arms and legs wrapped around the trunk of a tall oak tree.

The elf backflipped through the air and landed on her feet with ease. She was around the height of a large cat. Her hair glowed blue. She had smooth green skin. Her face was mischievous. She blinked her large orange eyes and smiled wide. She giggled.

(Alma): "Aisle 22! Oh haha! You should have seen your face! You were all (gasp?) and then (huh?). Hehehaha. Hilarious. Haven't seen you around here before. Let me guess....you got tired of being pampered at the palace so you fled to the woods for a more adventurous life!?"

(Ivy): "What? Fled the palace!? I'm not a royal horse! I'm a farm horse!"

(Alma): "Ah, ok. My bad. In that case...You were tired of working from dawn till dusk and you wanted to spend more time relaxing and basking in the sunshine?"

(Ivy): "Basking in the sunshine!? Do you not see that human sleeping over there!? That's Wyatt. He and I were on our way to the farmer's market when he smelled the flowers and now he's under the witch's spell!"

(Alma): "Yawn. Boring. I've heard that story a million times. I was hoping to hear something more interesting. Oh well. Welcome to the forest and all that. I assume you'll be staying here forever as well because you're a loyal companion and blah blah blah?"

(Ivy): "Oh I won't be staying. And neither will Wyatt. I'm on my way to the witch's cabin to break the spell. I was just going to leave him a note in case he wakes up before I'm back."

(Alma): "Break the spell? You?! Hahaha. That's a good one."

With a flick of her wrist, a note appeared. Alma dropped it next to Wyatt. It read: Hello human, can't talk right now, on my way to see a witch. Don't wait up, this could take a while. From your horse, Ivy.

(Ivy): "Hey, how did you know my name?"

(Alma): "I'm an elf. I know things."

(Ivy): "So you knew all along why I'm here in the forest then?"

(Alma): "Yep. I'm Alma, the oldest elf in this forest. I've been living in this forest for 200 years. I've seen a lot of surprising things....But I've never heard of anyone breaking the spell. I've seen plenty of creatures try. But, you're the first to ask Fluffy for help. That's a good start. Gotta go!"

And with that, Alma began fading away. "I'll be watching!" she whispered before erupting into a fit of giggles as she vanished into thin air.

So asking Fluffy for help was...what had Alma said? A good start. That was encouraging!

Ivy picked up her pace and raced back to the river to meet Fluffy. When she arrived back at the river, Fluffy was already there. He was sitting on a large rock by the river, playing the harmonica.

"Shall we?" Fluffy stood and gathered up his belongings.

And off they went. Traveling over hills and alongside rivers.

As they grew closer to their destination, the forest began to change. A subtle darkness filled the air. The birds stopped singing. And before too long, they had arrived.

The journey took a day and a half. It could have been faster, but porcupines aren't the greatest travelers.

"Sooo...now what?" asked Ivy as they stood peering down the flower covered hill at the weathered cabin. "Do sorcesses have doorbells?"

"Shhh!" replied Fluffy. His quills stood on end. "Something's not right."

Just then, the sky darkened. Large black clouds stretched in all directions. Thunder boomed. The flowers and trees shuddered. A strange squeaking sound filled the air and something began to fall from the sky.

“What is that?” Ivy wondered, squinting as the mysterious, squeaky blobs fell closer and closer to the ground.

Fluffy was the first to realize. “RATS!” he yelled. It was raining rats!

The rodents landed and began running around frantic and confused. Fluffy and Ivy screamed and huddled together. There wasn’t much else they could do; the rodents were everywhere!

A thundering laugh filled the air. “Mwahahahhaa! What’s the matter, dearies!? Don’t you like rats!?”

“Look! Up in that sequoia tree! It’s Belina.” hissed Fluffy. “She doesn’t seem happy to see us...”

“Really, I think she looks thrilled...” Ivy replied.

Belina was smiling wide and laughing loudly. She did look happy. But not because she wanted to welcome them.

Belina’s storm was getting worse. The trees began swaying. Petals began to rip off the flowers and swirl around in the wind. Ivy and Fluffy huddled tighter.

“I’m regretting accepting your invitation to come on this journey” Fluffy whispered.

“Oh me too! I’m thinking this visit was a very bad idea. Do you think it’s too late to turn around?”

Ivy was beginning to think living in the enchanted forest wouldn’t be so bad after all. Beautiful flowers, singing birds, magical creatures...life could be much worse!

But, Wyatt. What about Wyatt? Ivy felt a sinking feeling in her heart. She knew that she had to do everything she could to help Wyatt. He’d taken such good care of her.

[suspenseful music]

Ivy stood up, a new sense of determination flowed through her veins. She shouted, “Hey, Belina! I think we got off on the wrong hoof, I mean foot. How about we start over with a nice, calm conversation?”

Belina’s storm quieted. Belina appeared to be thinking it over, her warty fingers tapping her chin.

“A conversation...” Belina muttered quietly. Then, her eyes flashed orange “A CON-VER-SA-TION!?” The storm grew more intense than ever.

(Belina): “This is MY forest! I’ve made the most beautiful place in the world! You should be grateful to me! You should be thanking me! But instead you have the nerve to pester me with requests for conversations about breaking the spell!”

The glowing orange light burst from Belina’s eyes and surrounded her. She began to grow bigger and float ominously in the air.

“Oh fiddlesticks.” Ivy let out a shaky breath.

Fluffy jumped up and knocked frantically on the trunk of a nearby tree.

“Help us, dear friend! Now! Please help!” and with a purple puff of smoke, a familiar form appeared. It was little Alma the elf and she looked quite amused.

“I’m baaaaack! Oh Ivy, you should see your face! Hehehehe! Priceless!” She bent for a moment laughing and smacking her knee. Ivy watched as Alma’s face suddenly became serious.

“Listen Ivy. There’s not much time. Take one of Fluffy’s quills. Cover it in flower pollen and fire it at Belina. Do it quickly!”

What was Alma doing there? What did she know about breaking the spell? Would the pollen somehow defeat the sorceress? What if it just made her even madder!? Ivy didn’t have time to ask any of the questions that were swirling around in her head.

She sprung into action; grabbing a quill, coating it with pollen and then, despite her animal instincts screaming at her to turn around and go the other way, she began running directly at Belina, holding the quill in her teeth.

Ivy’s hooves pounded through the forest as she galloped faster and faster, leaping over rats as she ran. Soon, she was just a few feet away from Belina. With a flick of her neck, she launched the quill into the air. It soared towards the sorcesses, whirring as it flew.

“Come for a close up, have you deary!?” shouted Belina as she clasped her hands together. A red ball appeared between her hands.

She pulled her hands apart and it grew. A fireball. Ivy turned around and took a few gallops away.

There was a loud popping sound. The flowers all around her shriveled and disappeared. The rats vanished with a final squeak. Ivy turned around to see Belina’s cabin crumbling

in on itself. The place where Belina had been hovering in the air was empty. All signs of the sorceress were disappearing all around them.

Ivy's mind was instantly on Wyatt. With the flowers gone would Wyatt be free of the spell!?

Ivy rushed back to where she'd left him. She ran so fast, she practically flew. Definitely a new personal best!

As she got closer, Ivy's heart skipped a beat. There stood Wyatt, pacing impatiently, clutching the note from Alma. Wyatt turned at the sound of Ivy's winny. [horse whinny]

"There you are! We've gotta hurry if we're going to make the market! And what's this about a sorceress?! Never mind. Just tell me on the way, ok? We're late enough already!"

Clearly Wyatt had no idea how long he'd been sleeping for. Ivy explained that the market had long closed and that Wyatt had gotten some serious slumber.

Ivy turned and saw Fluffy and Alma watching from a distance. They had risked a lot to help her and Wyatt. How could she ever repay them? Then she had an idea.

Ivy motioned for her new friends to come closer and together they walked toward the road. As they exited the enchanted forest, there was a strange stretching sound. When they turned to look, they saw that the trees had fused together, creating a wall. No human or horse would be able to enter the forest ever again.

Back at the cart, the veggies lay waiting. Fluffy and Alma helped themselves before going back to the forest and Ivy and Wyatt returned home at last.

Over the years, Ivy and Wyatt made the journey to that very spot many times to visit their new friends and deliver fresh vegetables to the creatures of the enchanted forest.

The magical flowers never reappeared in the forest and no one knew what became of the wicked sorceress Belina. And they all lived happily ever after.

[cheerful music]

The End

Chapter 3: Discussion

Laura: Phew. Things got pretty intense there with the sorcerous, didn't they!? Can you imagine if it rained rats!? Yikes!!!

Let's talk about the moral or lesson you could learn from my fairy tale. Do you have any ideas about what it could be?

I didn't come right out and say it like some authors do and actually I think there are a few lessons that could be learned from this fairy tale.

One moral could be that you should always do what you can to help your friends.

Another moral could be don't be afraid to ask for help.

Are there any other lessons that you think someone could learn from this story? Let me know!

Now it's your turn to make up your own fairy tale. Who will be the good and the bad characters in your story? What kind of magical creatures or elements will you include? What moral will your fairy tale teach?

Draw a picture or write a story to create your own fairy tale and make sure to share it with your friends, your family and me laura@storyonpodcast.com.

[cheerful closing theme song starts]

That's our show for today! We hope you enjoyed it and that it has inspired you to think about your own fairy tale! If you would like to support Story On, you can give us a five star review wherever you get your podcasts. You can also tell your friends about us! Don't forget to subscribe so you always know when we put out a new episode. Until next time!

[music fades]