

Persian Fairy Tales

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To Brave Women All Around The World,
Especially In Our Homeland

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Introduction

Nestled within the ancient, sun-kissed landscapes of Persia, where the whispers of history dance on the winds, lies a treasury of tales as old as time itself. These stories, passed down through the ages by the wise elders of the Persian land, are the lifeblood of tradition, a vibrant tapestry of wisdom, magic, and intrigue. Within the pages of this cherished tome, one embarks on a journey through twenty-four enchanting folk tales, each a precious gem sparkling with the essence of Persian heritage.

These stories, spun from the looms of memory and woven with the threads of oral tradition, transport us to a world where myth and reality entwine, where heroes and heroines embark on timeless quests of courage and adventure. Through the generations, these tales have endured, whispered in hushed tones beneath the glow of moonlit nights, passed from lips to eager ears with reverence and awe. As custodians of this living legacy, it is our privilege to unlock the secrets held within these

ancient narratives, to traverse the fabled landscapes of Persia and discover the timeless wisdom nestled within each cherished tale.

In this collection, the strength and resilience of Persian women shine brightly against the backdrop of history. Across the expanse of time, their stories resonate with power and grace, reminding us of the invaluable roles they played in shaping society. From the valiant warriors who defended their homeland with swords of steel and hearts of gold, to the cunning heroines whose wit outmatched even the cleverest of adversaries, these tales celebrate the indomitable spirit of women in ancient Persia. As the tales unfold, they illuminate not only the extraordinary feats of these legendary figures but also the enduring legacy of female empowerment woven into the fabric of Persian culture.

THE ENCHANTED TREE

The message of this legend is the futility of wickedness and crime, as well as the achievement of goals through effort and perseverance. The Enchanted Tree is a legend from the world of fairies and spirits, classified among the global tales. The theme and essence of this legend revolve around resilience, problem-solving in hardships, and finding a way to save oneself. The sorcerer is an anti-hero, and the doves come as helpers to the hero.

Once upon a time, there was a brave prince. Many years ago, he went hunting with his friends and searched the forest for a deer. He waited in the woods for a while, expecting his friends to join him, but they had lost their way and ended up going in the opposite direction. Suddenly, a terrifying howl shattered the forest's silence, and the prince noticed a large gray wolf standing behind

him. The prince's horse became frightened at the sight of the wolf and tried to escape by pulling the reins from the prince's grasp. However, the prince held onto the horse's reins firmly and used the whip to drive the wolf away from the horse. Before the prince could strike the wolf again with his whip, someone from afar shouted, "How dare you harm my domesticated animal!"

The prince turned to look behind him. A little further down the road stood an old sorcerer, and the wolf was approaching him, showing its yellow teeth. Upon seeing the sorcerer, the prince said, "Indeed, this wolf should be called a domesticated animal. Leash it quickly, or I will kill it with this whip. The sorcerer replied, "If you dare, go ahead and do it." As the prince turned his horse around and headed towards the city, the sorcerer shouted, "You will regret your actions today." When the prince emerged from the forest, his companions had moved so far away that there was no trace of them. The prince, believing he would reach his companions faster if he took a different path through the forest, bypassed it and swiftly headed towards an unknown destination. At that moment, he became extremely thirsty. Coincidentally, an old peasant

woman was standing by the roadside, and the prince asked her where he could find water. It turned out that the peasant woman was the sorcerer himself, disguised in this form. Seeing that he had the prince in his grasp, the sorcerer was pleased and told him there was a grand fountain in the forest's heart, and its water was even more refreshing than wine.

The prince, not wanting to waste his time, pleaded with her to show him the fountain. However, the prince did not know that the sorcerer was leading him into the forest to make him drink the enchanted water. When they reached the fountain, the prince dismounted his horse, filled his fist with the clear and sparkling water, and then drank it. After his thirst was quenched, he stood up to grab the reins of his horse, but before he could reach out his hand, he felt his head spinning. His hands slowly elongated and turned into branches of a tree. His feet sank into the ground and sprouted roots. In a matter of moments, the prince transformed into an elm tree. After a long search without finding him, his companions became disheartened, and, as his absence prolonged, another prince took his place as the kingdom's ruler. Although the

elm tree always tried to convey its misfortune and misery to passersby, they could not make sense of its unintelligible sound. When the lumberjacks came to the forest to cut down the dried trees, the elm tree would cry: "I am a prince, I am a prince!" But the lumberjacks could only hear the whistling of the wind. The harsh and chilling winters deeply saddened the elm tree. When the beautiful spring season arrived, and the melodious birds returned to the forest, the elm tree felt a new life within itself. In the first year, two forest doves built their nest on the elm tree's branches.

The prince was delighted by their arrival as he could understand their language well. On a midsummer night, the doves said to him, "Tonight, the king of the trees is coming to the forest. Don't you hear this uniform sound in the forest? It is the sound of trees preparing to welcome the king. They drop their dried leaves to the ground and shake their branches. The prince asked, "What does the king of the trees look like?" The doves replied, "He is a tall, dark-colored, and strong figure who resides atop one of the pine trees in the northern forests. Every year, on a midsummer night, he travels around the world to see if

the trees are doing well or not. " The prince asked, "Do you think he can help me?" The doves replied, "Ask him yourself." As the twilight of the midsummer night ended, darkness engulfed the world. Despite the blowing wind, the trees rustled their leaves, creating a pleasant melody, and at that moment, the king of the trees entered the forest. As the bird described, he was a tall, dark figure. With a sweet and delightful voice, the king of the trees asked, "Are you fine, my people?"

Almost all the trees responded, "Yes, Your Majesty." However, a few complained that their branches were falling. Even a tiny tree complained that its neighbor doesn't allow sunlight to reach it." The king of the trees, after addressing the complaints of the trees and bidding them farewell, was about to leave the forest when the enchanted prince cried out, "Oh king of the trees, please pause for a moment and listen to my plea, even though I am not one of your folks. I am a prince transformed into a tree by an evil sorcerer. Can you help me?" The king replied, "I'm sorry, dear friend, but I cannot assist you. However, do not lose hope. As I continue my journey worldwide, I will surely find someone to aid you. Wait

for me this time next year." The elm tree shook its branches, and the king departed from the forest. Once again, cold, dark, and silent winter arrived. When spring returned, a beautiful maiden with a group of lumberjacks came to the woods, and she slept under the shade of the elm tree during the day. The father of this maiden was a wealthy merchant who had gone bankrupt years ago and, consumed by grief and sorrow, bid farewell to the world. Since this girl had no one else but the woodcutter, she came to live with him and his family.

The woodcutter's family, who worked in the king's palace, tormented this beautiful maiden and made her do heavy tasks. The prince, who knew the girl's fate, felt his heart burning for her and gradually fell desperately in love. However, the beautiful maiden was unaware and felt a sense of tranquility and serenity washed over her whenever she lay under this elm tree. The woodcutters habitually cut down several large trees every summer to prepare firewood for the winter. That year, they decided to cut down that elm tree. The beautiful maiden cried out when she heard about their decision: "You must not cut down that elm tree!" The woodcutter, with cruelty, said:

"Tomorrow morning, we will cut down that large tree and make a bonfire with its branches on the midsummer night. Why are you crying, poor girl?" The beautiful maiden pleaded, "Please, I beg you not to cut down that tree." The woodcutter replied, "Don't talk nonsense. This tree has made you lazy. Tomorrow, no matter what happens, I will cut it down."

The beautiful maiden stayed awake all night, pondering how to save the elm tree. She was a clever girl, so an idea came to her mind. On the morning of the midsummer night, she climbed up the tree, sitting on its highest branches. She had a clear view of the forest and surrounding mountains from the top of the tree. The sun had just risen when she spotted the woodcutter and his workers in the forest. Imagine the prince's reaction upon seeing their axes and saws. The woodcutter told his workers, "I will strike the first blow." He lifted the axe to bring it down on the tree trunk when suddenly, a sweet and melodious voice was heard from the top of the tree, reciting these verses:

Break the axe, O unfortunate one,
For I am a human in the garb of a tree.
Whoever strikes me with a blow,
At that very moment,
they shall end their worldly existence.

The terrified workers shouted, "Demons possess this tree!
Before it harms us, let's flee!" Despite the woodcutter's
scolding and insults, they quickly scattered and ran away.
The timid woodcutter, once again, lifted his axe to bring it
down on the tree trunk when the voice of the young girl
resounded once more:

Break the axe, O unfortunate one,
For I am a human in the garb of a tree.
Whoever strikes me with a blow,
At that very moment,
they shall end their worldly existence.

Upon hearing this strange voice, the woodcutter became slightly frightened, but he remained stubborn and raised his axe into the air. However, the young girl began to sing her song for the third time. At that moment, a large branch detached from the tree and fell onto the woodcutter's shoulder. Terrified, the woodcutter quickly fled and disappeared. The beautiful maiden, fearing that the woodcutter might return, remained on the tree throughout the day. As the evening approached, exhaustion overcame her, and she fell into a deep sleep on top of the tree. In the middle of the night, she heard a horrifying sound. The woodcutter had returned and shouted, "Oh wicked and deceitful girl, come down from the tree now, for I will cut it down!" The frightened young girl looked down from above and saw the woodcutter standing beneath the tree. He held a lantern in his hand and had his sharpest axes resting on his shoulder. When he returned home and didn't find the girl there, he thought the voice that had scared him must have been the young girl's. The wicked woodcutter shouted from beneath the tree, "Come

down! I will show you how to play tricks. Ready or not, here I come!"

As he said this, he raised his axe to bring it down on the tree trunk, but suddenly, the sounds and voices of the trees, preparing to welcome the king of the forest, echoed through the woods. Startled and truly frightened this time, the woodcutter lowered his axe. Suddenly, amid the dark forest, he saw two figures approaching him. He stepped back to escape, but one of the figures lifted a magical staff and struck the woodcutter to the ground. The two individuals were the king of the trees and his friend, The Great Wizard. When the king of the trees reached beneath the tree, he shouted, "Oh beautiful maiden, come down and fear not. You have acted with great courage, and your misfortune has ended. Happy days await you." The maiden came down from the tree and stood before the king of the trees. She looked beautiful and captivating in her rustic attire. The Great Wizard lifted his magical staff and caressed the tree trunk. The tree suddenly transformed into a young prince of great stature.

Upon seeing the prince, the wizard said, "Welcome, Prince. The sorcerer who turned you into a tree can no longer harm you. I have turned him into an owl and bestowed him upon the Queen of the Lantern Land. And yet, you, the woodcutter, I shall now transform you into an ape, and you will turn back into a human when you plant as many trees as you have cut down. " In an instant, a giant ape leaped onto the trees. The prince expressed his gratitude to the king of the trees and the great wizard, then returned to his palace with the beautiful maiden. There, they got married and lived happily together for many years.

The Story of Three Travelers

This legend has been passed down in various forms and narratives in collections of myths, and it is one of those legends that leaves a question for the listener or reader to answer appropriately at the end. The general theme of this legend is similar to the story of Pinocchio or the Wooden Puppet, which is well-known in the popular culture of Europe and familiar to many children.

Once upon a time, there were three friends: a carpenter, a tailor, and a holy man. They set out together to travel through cities and see exciting things. On their journey, they arrived at a terrifying valley. Since they were tired, they decided to stay there. After dinner, the holy man said, "Friends, as I have seen more of the world and heard many things, I know this is a place of thieves. We should take turns keeping watch. Let's divide the night into three parts, and in each part, one of us should stay awake and

keep watch so the thieves cannot steal our boots and belongings." The other two agreed that the carpenter would stay awake in the first part, the tailor in the second part, and the holy man in the third part.

The two others fell asleep, and the carpenter stayed awake. As he sat there, he noticed that he was getting drowsy. He became afraid that sleep would overcome him. He started thinking about what he could do to stay awake. An idea came to his mind. He took a chisel, a plane, a hammer, and other tools from his bag and cut a branch from a tree. Using the wood, he crafted something in the shape of a girl and even gave it eyes and eyebrows. After completing these tasks, he had to wake up the tailor and sleep himself.

The tailor, just like the carpenter, woke up from his sleep and felt restless. He also thought about what he could do to shake off his drowsiness. He was delighted when he saw the carpenter had made a wooden figure. He quickly took his needles, thread, thimble, scissors, and fabric from his sewing kit. He sewed a set of clothes from linen and patches of cloth that matched the size of the wooden figure. Once he finished these tasks, he dressed the figure,

ensuring everything fit perfectly. He woke up the holy man and went to sleep himself.

The holy man woke up and saw that the carpenter had crafted and adorned a wooden figure while the tailor had dressed it in a delicate silk garment. He looked closely and saw that both had displayed mastery in their respective arts. If someone were to see it from afar, they would never imagine it was a wooden figure. He said, "It is better that I give this little girl life." He recited a prayer and blew a breath. The girl came to life. Then, to have something to do and stay awake, he taught her things that would be useful in her life. The holy man treated her with respect and taught her good things until the sun rose from behind the mountain and cast its light upon the valley. The two other friends woke up from their sleep and were delighted to see the little girl, remaining in awe as they witnessed her pure, beautiful, and well-mannered presence. The carpenter and the tailor argued, claiming the girl belonged to them. But the holy man remained silent. Now, children, tell me, whose girl do you think she is?