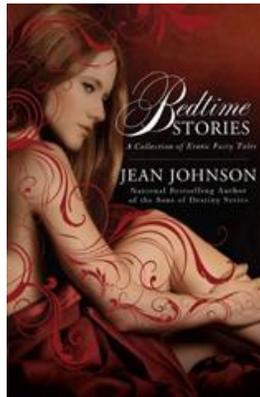


Review by: Heather
December 16, 2010

Pros: Beautiful re-imagined fairy tales

Cons: Some of these really needed more space & development

Rating: 3.5 out of 5



[*Bedtime Stories: A Collection of Erotic Fairy Tales*](#) is an anthology by Jean Johnson, who brought us the wonderful “Sons of Destiny” series. This time she takes a bunch of traditional fairy tales and turns them on their heads, giving them new contexts and an erotic twist. Or as the back of the book says, “an anthology of scandalous imagination that gives new meaning to the words *happy ending*.”

The eight stories included in this anthology are *The Frog Prince*, *The Courtship of Wali Daad*, *The Princess on the Glass Hill*, *Snow White and the Seven Dwarves*, *Sleeping Beauty*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *Puss-in-Boots*, and *The King Who Heard a Joke*.

The frog prince in Johnson’s tale helps the princess to rescue, well, not exactly a golden ball, and the requirements for his transformation are somewhat trickier than those in the usual story. It’s an amusing take on the tale, in particular for the frog’s-eye view on things. The prince is an entertaining character well worth spending time with.

Wali Daad’s tale was my favorite by far, and is both funny and sweet. The erotic part of the tale isn’t even the focus, but that’s just fine—I adored this one. Wali Daad is a poor

man who inadvertently ends up playing matchmaker for two very powerful people, and circumstances align in some highly entertaining ways.

The sci-fi take on the tale of the glass hill was the one that fell flat for me. It was a good concept, but I felt that it needed rather more space. The characters weren't developed well enough for me to buy into the plot and character developments, and there wasn't enough conflict to get in the way of the conclusion. It could easily have been developed into something twice as long.

The "Snow White" tale will be a real treat for readers of Jean Johnson's Nightfall books, since it revisits that world and does provide a few small glimpses of familiar characters. They aren't the main characters, however—instead we get a fascinating glimpse into a very unusual marital arrangement. I think the story would be accessible enough to people unfamiliar with the world, but it'll be particularly delightful to long-time fans.

"Sleeping Beauty" gets turned on its head, gender-wise, and is the second sci-fi tale in this book. This time the character development and conflict really shine through, and the story is delightfully fast-paced. Like the Nightfall books, it showcases Johnson's talent for world-building.

As for Beauty and her Beast, another sci-fi tale brings us a nice interpretation of this familiar tale. I won't say there's anything amazingly new here, but it's a solidly enjoyable story.

Puss-in-Boots is another one of my favorites, a tale in which the cat in question happens to be a noblewoman trying to escape an evil rival through shifting her shape. With the help of a handsome young man, she sets out to reclaim her home and take revenge for her family. We definitely get to see Jean's more playful side emerge in the erotic material here! As long as you enjoy some laughter with your sex, that's a great thing.

Jean tells a rather unusual version of the tale of the king who heard a joke. In her story, a farmer named Jack King accidentally clues his curious wife in to the existence of an unusual ability he has when she finds him laughing so hard he can't breathe—seemingly alone in the barn. The only problem is, he isn't allowed to tell anyone about that ability, and if he does, the consequences will be grave. How he tries to solve this problem is highly entertaining—and deliciously sizzling.

I think Jean is a stronger writer in the long form—some of these stories definitely felt like they could have benefited from more space to develop the characters, plot, and/or world. That said, I enjoyed her take on these traditional tales!