

# *The Princess and the Dragon: A Fairy Tale*

*By Theresa Schneider*

**O**nce upon a time, there was a beautiful princess – the most beautiful princess in all the land. Also once upon a time, there was a dragon named George. George was a greedy dragon who lived in a deep, dark cave with nothing but his piles of treasure to keep him company. He was a very, very mean dragon—

“Wait!” interrupted George. “Do I have to be a *mean* dragon?!”

***Shut up, George!***

**A**nway, one day as George was counting his possessions, he came upon something odd lying at the bottom of one of the piles: a book. He had no idea how the book had gotten in there, or even what it was, but since he was bored George decided to open it up and see what was inside. What he saw changed his life, at least for a couple of days.

The book was full of colorful pictures and strange symbols. George was intrigued by the pictures. He could see they were supposed to form some kind of story, but he could not figure out what the symbols meant. He decided then and there that he would search the whole world until he could find someone who would be able to read the story written inside of his book.

(As it turned out, the symbols were written in ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs and no one had been able to read them for 2000 years, nor would anybody be able to read them again until Napoleon’s troops discovered the Rosetta stone in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. But of course George didn’t know any of that—)

“Wait!” interrupted George. “Nobody can read this book?!”

***Yes they can!***

“But you said-”

***I lied.***

“Oh, ok.”

**M**eanwhile, in a not-so-distant land, the Princess Bertha—

“Excuse me?” said Bertha. “What kind of name is Bertha?”

***It happens to be a very good name!***

“But not for a princess! A princess should have a beautiful name like... Cinderella... Snow White... Rapunzel, or... Sleeping Beauty!”

***Your point?***

“Well,” she continued way too dramatically, “since *I* am a combination of the best traits of *all* those princesses, *I* should be called something like- like- *Sleeping Cinderapunzel White!* Yes!” She clasped her hands together, utterly delighted. “That’s perfect!”

***Um. Is that even a name?***

“It is now!” said Sleeping Cinderapunzel White triumphantly.

***Ok then.***

***M***eanwhile, in a not-so-distant land, the princess *Sleeping Cinderapunzel White* was taking a stroll through the enchanted forest. The enchanted forest was beautiful in the springtime. The trees had adorned themselves with gorgeous emerald-green leaves, the flowers of unearthly beauty (which were, in fact, from Mars) were blooming, and the birds (also Martian) were singing a lovely song. Sleeping Cinderapunzel White sang her own song as she walked along.

“La, la, la!” she sang—

“*Excuse me!*” shrieked Sleeping Cinderapunzal White. “What kind of song is *that?! It* doesn’t even have any words!!!”

***Well, it’s- it’s a princess song.***

“No it’s not! I refuse to sing it!”

***And what exactly do you propose?***

“Well,” Sleeping Cinderapunzel White said thoughtfully. “How about ‘Hit Me Baby One More Time!’”

***NO WAY! It’s more than enough that I let you change your name from Bertha to Sleeping Cinder-something-what’s-it! There is NO POSSIBLE WAY that I am going to let you sing ‘Hit Me Baby One More Time’ as you walk through the forest!***

***T***en minutes later...

Sleeping Cinderapunzal White sang her own song as she walked along: “If you’re not with me I lose my mind! Give me a siiiiiign! Hit me baby-”

Fortunately for the woodland creatures nearby, who could not *stand* her voice, Sleeping Cinderapunzel White was unable to finish. For just at that moment a white knight, who was also the charming Prince Charming, came galloping charmingly up on a charming white steed. The prince heard her song. He realized that he was on her turf and therefore should obey her out of respect, and so he did a rather odd thing: He hit her.

“Oh, ouch! Ouch!” cried Princess Sleeping Cinderapunzel White. “Why did you do that?!”

“I only hit thee, fair lady,” Prince Charming replied charmingly, “because thou *didst* request it.”

The princess, not realizing he was a prince, and not having any sort of mastery at speaking Old English, replied quite furiously, “I *didsted*- I *dist* – I *didest* – (Ugh. Forget it!) No, I didn’t!”

“But did thou not say, ‘Hit me, baby?’ as I rode up?”

“But not to you!” cried the princess. “It was a song!”

(I must point out that I told her not to sing it, but who listens to me?)

Prince Charming was thoroughly confused at this point, and Princess Sleeping Cinderapunzel White began to feel sorry for him – still not realizing he was a prince. “*It’s not his fault,*” she thought, “*that he has no knowledge of modern music. And he is kind of charming.*” Then something important happened: she began to fall in love with him and his charming ignorance of pop culture.

I’m going to explain why this is important. When, in the near future, the dragon kidnaps her and the prince rushes heroically (and charmingly) to her rescue, it is only proper that she be deeply in love with her rescuer. That way, when she says, “As a reward for saving my life, you may have my hand in marriage.” they will actually want to marry each other. This is absolutely CRUCIAL to the plot!

“I apologize for shouting at you,” said Sleeping Cinderapunzel White. “I did not realize you had thought my song was a request.”

“Thou art forgiven,” said Prince Charming. Then, unfortunately, he said a very UNcharming thing, “I realize of course that all women are very foolish creatures, which is why I am overlooking your mistake.”

With that, the princess yanked him off his horse, shoved him to the ground, kicked him, and screamed, “How dare you call all women foolish, you egotistical male monster!” Then she limped away, because you cannot kick a man in a suit of armor without causing your foot a good deal of pain.

Apparently, there are going to be some problems with the plot.

**T**he next day, George crawled out of his deep cave, which was positioned in one of the farthest corners of the enchanted forest. Spreading his large golden wings, he spiraled up into the air, overtop of the forest, up, up, up until he could see for miles. He saw mountains in the distance and rolling hills below him. He spied a man walking alone a good way off, and, clutching his book, flew to meet him.

The man screamed when he saw George. George laughed evilly—

“Wait!” interrupted George. “I don’t want to scare people!”

***George, you are a DRAGON!***

“But-“

***You’re big! You’re scary! You breathe fire! End of discussion!***

“Oh, alright.” George sulked. “As long as I don’t have to eat anyone.”

**A**nway, the man screamed when he saw George. George laughed evilly, holding out the book. “Foolish human! I do not want to eat you! I merely want you to tell me what is written in this book!”

At this the man trembled and cried, “Great Sir Dragon, I know not how to read!” George roared angrily and shot his flames up 50 feet in the air. Then he turned back to the man.

“I should eat you now,” he informed the man. “However, I should like to know where you are going, alone and without company.”

“Great Sir Dragon,” said the man, who spoke Old English rather well, “if thou must know, I am off to win the heart of a fair maiden, the beautiful Princess Sleeping Cinderapunzel White! Many brave men doeth travel far distances so that they might set their eyes upon her beautiful face, and she doeth turn them all away. Now, ‘tis I who will capture her heart and ‘tis I who she will not turn away. For I am different from the other wooers in that I am-”

“Yes, yes,” said George in a rather bored tone. “I’m sure you’re a very interesting person. But tell me: Do these men know how to read?”

“Of this I am sure,” said the man. “But-“

“Very well,” said George. “I will spare your life. Fare thee well.” Immediately, he took flight and soared away. Over the rolling hills until he came to a road, over the road until he came to a village, over the village until he came to a castle. And there, on a balcony, stood the beautiful princess, Sleeping Cinderapunzel White. She was singing again:

“I must confess that my loneliness is killing me noooow! Dontcha know I still believe! That you will be here, and give me a siiiign! Hit me—“

George hit her.

“You stupid dragon, why did you do that?!”

“Because, foolish human, you said, ‘Hit me!’ But that is irrelevant. Are you the famed princess, Sleeping Cinderapunzel White?”

Sleeping Cinderapunzel White held up her chin proudly. “I most certainly am!”

“Good! Now, in a very clichéd manner, I am going to kidnap you!” And with that George grabbed the princess and flew away from the castle—

“Wait!” said George. “But I don’t want to kidnap anyone!”

***Why not?!***

“It just seems so mean, taking her away from her home and her family and making her wait in my cave for a prince to rescue her...”

***It’s not like she has anything better to do!***

“Um, actually,” said Sleeping Cinderapunzel White, “I was right in the middle of my song.”

***Like I said, she has nothing better to do.***

“**W**here are you taking me?!” cried Sleeping Cinderapunzel White, struggling, but not too hard as she didn’t want to mess up her flawless golden hair and thus look bad for her suitors.

“I’m taking you back to my cave in the enchanted forest where you will stay until one of your many suitors reads this book to me!” George explained.

“But how will my suitors be able to read the book if it is hidden in a cave?” demanded Sleeping Cinderapunzal White. George looked at her for a minute, before sulkily turned around mid-flight, muttering something about a change of plans.

Back at the castle, a vast crowd of men gathered around the front gate, hoping to see the princess. In a dramatic flurry of motion, George landed atop the castle wall. The men gasped.

“Men from far and wide who have journeyed to ask for the princess’ hand in marriage,” announced George. “My name is George and I am a dragon.” That was, in fact, obvious, but everyone was too afraid to point that out. “I have been told that you came here from many different places and therefore you must speak many different languages. I have here a book.”

George held up the book. “I would like for someone to tell me what is written in here, because I do not understand the language. If no one tells me what it says, then I shall take Princess Sleeping Cinderapunzel White away to my hidden cave and you shall never see her again. Muwahahaha!” All the men wailed in agony.

“That’s the stupidest thing I’ve ever heard,” said the princess, but nobody paid attention to her comment. Instead, every single man there began arguing over who was most qualified to read the book and thereby save the princess.

Several rather bloody fights ensued before finally one man cried out (in a rather charming manner), “Fear not, fair princess! ‘Tis I who shall rescue thee!” It was Prince Charming on his charming white horse! “I am fluent in the languages of English, Spanish, French, Latin, Aramaic, and Greek!” he bragged. “I have been brought up speaking all of these easily, and if any man here is capable of reading Sir Dragon’s book, it is I!”

“I know you!” cried Sleeping Cinderapunzel White. “You’re that awful knight who thinks women are inferior! Well, you can forget being a hero! I’d rather be saved by- by- by *Martians* than by you!”

“‘Tis not my fault that I think that of women!” cried Prince Charming in reply. “That’s how I was brought up! And I am more than a knight! *I*,” he drew himself up grandly, “am *Prince Charming!*”

“I don’t care if you’re George Clooney!” snapped the princess. “You’re not rescuing *me!*” But Prince Charming had already begun flipping charmingly through the book, which the dragon had tossed down to him. After several minutes, Prince Charming frowned. It was a very charming frown.

“I know not this language,” he said finally. “It is foreign to me.”

“Of course it’s foreign to you,” said the man standing next to him. “These symbols are written in ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs and no one has been able to read them for 2000 years, nor will anybody be able to read them again until Napoleon’s troops discover the Rosetta stone in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century.

“I’m a scholar,” he added, “and I have been studying ancient Egypt for most of my life now, so I know for a fact that no man alive is able to read this language. Sorry,” he added to George.

“Don’t be sorry,” snarled George. “I’m getting several very tasty meals out of this arrangement!” And with that he picked up Prince Charming off of his horse and—

“WAIT!” interrupted George. “Do I *have* to eat him?!”

***Yes, George. You HAVE to eat him.***

“But-”

*George, no excuses. It is absolutely imperative to the story that you eat this man.*

“But-”

***GEORGE! JUST EAT THE MAN!***

“But I’m a vegetarian!!!”

*Oh, well, that’s just great. I’ve got a vegetarian dragon! You know what? DON’T eat the prince! Fine! But - I’ll tell you right now - you’re missing out. Now I’ll have to think of some other way to tie up the story! Thanks a lot, George!*

“Don’t mention it.”

*I’m being sarcastic!!!*

**J**ust as George was about to devour Prince Charming whole, a large shadow fell over the village. Everyone looked up in the sky to see what was coming down from above.

“It’s a bird!” cried someone.

“It’s a plane!” cried another.

“It’s superman!” cried a third.

But it turned out to be an alien spacecraft, which the Martians were more than happy to clarify once they had landed. They had come to earth to get their flowers of unearthly beauty back from the enchanted forest, they said, but when their radar caught the sound of Princess Sleeping Cinderapunzel White insisting she’d rather be saved by Martians, they had decided to come to her rescue. That’s when the captain of the ship stepped out and announced that he could translate the book.

“Back when Egypt was flourishing on Earth,” Captain Martin explained, “we on Mars were in close contact with them. We knew their language, and they knew ours. Though those on Earth have long forgotten us, we remembered them.” With that said, he picked up the book and began to read. It was an exciting story, about princes and princesses and dragons and Martians.

At the end of the story, George was so happy to finally know what it said that he let the princess go without eating anyone. The princess cordially thanked the Martian ship captain.

“As a reward for saving my life, you may have my hand in marriage,” she told him.

“Ok!” said Captain Martin. “I have always wanted to marry an Earthling!”

“And I have always wanted to marry a Martian!” exclaimed Princess Sleeping Cinderapunzel White. So they eloped to Pluto, where they were wed by a Plutonian (a rare privilege indeed), and afterwards they flew to Mars and lived happily ever after.

THE END—

“Wait!” exclaimed George. “Is that it?”

*Yes, George, that’s it.*

“What happened to everyone else?”

*They lived happily ever after too, George! Honestly, it’s a fairy tale!*

“Ok,” said George. “But I have one more question. Why was it so important for me to read that book in the first place? I mean, it really didn’t seem worth threatening lives over. The whole plot was a bit silly if you think about it—”

*Shut UP, George!*

THE REAL, ACTUAL, OFFICIAL END