Abstract

Fairy tales, folk stories, and other kinds of fables have been used for centuries around the world as a way to not only tell creative stories, but impart important lessons to children of all ages. While it is true that there are some common fairy tales which other countries and cultures then adapt to better fit their own needs and norms, the types of characters from original stories around the world tend to all fall together in specific roles. My translation of three Japanese fairy tales, "The Crane's Repayment", "Momotaro", and "Princess Kaguya", introduces my readers to types of characters they might be familiar with, but in ways that could be completely culturally new. The heroes of these stories, a farmer, a child who grows up to be a hero, and a mysterious princess, are common echoes of archetypes found in fairy tales from around the world, and yet each explains something new and different about the Japanese culture from which they come. I present these translations in the hope that my readers will learn to appreciate something new about Japanese fairy tales, and maybe pick back up the old ones they knew as a child, in the hopes that they can read these stories with new eyes and see what all they have to offer.

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