



# **The Fairy Tale Fiction of Anne Isabella Thackeray Ritchie: Selections from "Five Old Friends" and "Bluebeard's Keys and Other Stories"**

*Anne Thackeray Ritchie, Anne Isabella Thackeray*

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FAIRY tales have long been an important part of the world's history and literature, especially for women whose voices have often been trivialized, ignored or made anonymous. Old wives' tales, fairy tales, and folklore-whatever terms are chosen-are part of our earliest literature and have often provided the medium for women's voices, for women's stories. Like the women of the French Salons who used traditional stories to create and recreate tales that both inspired and criticized their world and its expectations, women writers have long been recording and rewriting fairy tales for their own generations. The practice continues up to current times and will easily continue on past our own generations into a distant future. One such author from the Victorian era was Anne Isabella Thackeray Ritchie, the eldest daughter of William Makepeace Thackeray. Ritchie rewrote nine fairy tales into short stories and novellas, exploring and reinterpreting the tales for the audience of her time. She wasn't the first to do so--and certainly not the last--but she firmly belongs in this literary legacy, one in which she has all too often been overlooked. Edited with a new introduction by Heidi Anne Heiner, this volume includes Anne Thackeray Ritchie's nine short stories and novellas from Five Old Friends and Bluebeard's Keys and Other Stories: "The Sleeping Beauty in the Wood," "Cinderella," "Beauty and the Beast," "Little Red Riding Hood," "Jack the Giant-killer," "Bluebeard's Keys," "Riquet á la Houppe," "Jack and the Bean-stalk," and "The White Cat." Additional materials include Ritchie's introduction to The Fairy Tales of Madame D'Aulnoy and "Bluebeard's Ghost" by William Makepeace Thackeray, Ritchie's father. Heidi Anne Heiner is the creator and keeper of one of the world's top folklore websites at SurLaLuneFairyTales.com.

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