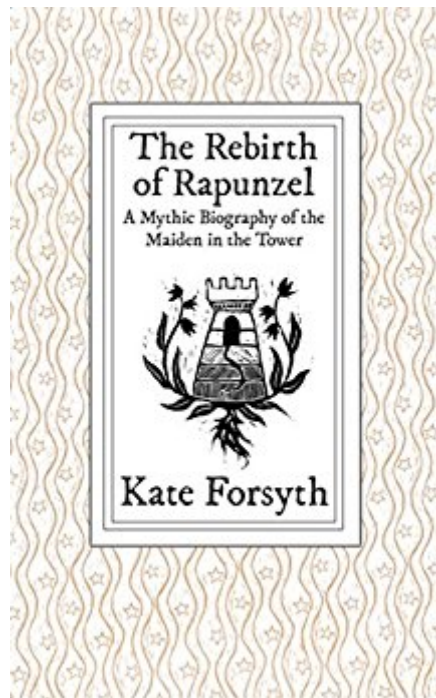


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The Rebirth Of Rapunzel: A Mythic Biography Of The Maiden In The Tower



Synopsis

A unique collection presenting Kate Forsyth's extensive academic research into the Rapunzel fairy tale, alongside several other pieces related to fairy tales and folklore. This book is not your usual reference work, but a complex and engaging exploration of the subject matter, written with Forsyth's distinctive flair.

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Customer Reviews

I've read and loved Kate Forsyth's Bitter Greens and The Wild Girl, though I still need to get onto reading her last novel The Beast's Garden, a retelling of Beauty and the Beast. When The Rebirth of Rapunzel arrived in my inbox I was really excited, since it was the non-fiction component to Forsyth's MFA of which Bitter Greens was the fiction part. I love learning about the development of stories throughout the ages and The Rebirth of Rapunzel delivered exactly that for the story of the maiden in the tower. The Rebirth of Rapunzel consists of three sections. The first is the titular exegesis, the second is a translation of Charlotte-Rose de Caumont de La Force's

Persinette by Jack Zipes, and the last section is a collection of articles published between 2006 and 2015, all touching upon the Rapunzel tale and on the power of storytelling. The translation of De La Force's original is wonderful to read and will be familiar to anyone who has read Bitter Greens and the third section illustrated the role Rapunzel's tale has played in Forsyth's life from her early childhood to the present. My favourite part however was the exegesis. It not only reveals the way Forsyth developed her novel and what influenced her, it also gives a comprehensive overview of the development of the fairytale from its earliest roots in early matriarchal mythology to its most well-known incarnation in the Grimm's collection of tales, to its more recent iterations, such as Disney's Tangled. What I found fascinating about tracing the tale through the ages is the way that each re-interpretation says as much about the teller of this version of the tale and the age they lived as it does about the tale itself.

This book was given to me by the publisher at no cost. I adored Kate Forsyth's Bitter Greens a few years ago - a reimagining of the Rapunzel story, along with the story of one of its first tellers, Charlotte-Rose de Caumont de La Force (1650-1724). It's a book of excruciating loveliness, whose three interleaved stories are told in heartbreaking detail and with great compassion. But I'm not here to talk about that. If you haven't read it - and even if you don't think you like fairytale reimaginings - you really ought to go read it. What The Rebirth of Rapunzel does is present Forsyth's research into the story of Rapunzel - about the differences in versions, and the people who told them, along with what the story has meant, can mean, and what it shows us about fairytales in general. I think it's just awesome that research like this can find a home; it's so depressing when something you've spent many years on simply... disappears into a black hole. Forsyth has made her research very readable. I'm coming from a background of literary and historical criticism (I've read a couple of the books Forsyth refers to), but I'm pretty sure that such a background isn't necessary to understand and appreciate Forsyth's points. This isn't academic-lite; it's academic-approachable. Read more... The book has three sections. First is Forsyth's exegesis itself, with a remarkably personal first chapter in which she talks about the appeal of the story to the child-Kate, after a horrific experience that saw her spend a lot of her childhood in hospital. It's here she also introduces the idea of a fairytale as a 'memeplex' which is brilliantly intriguing. In Chapter 2 Forsyth introduces a theory that fairytales can, or might, reflect lost matriarchal myths.

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