



Princess Florecita and the Iron Shoes

By John Warren Stewig

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Young and old will be held in thrall by a brave princess's quest to save a sleeping prince. John Stewig's enchanting retelling of this Spanish fairy tale is filled with echoes of Snow White and Sleeping Beauty but with a refreshing twist--a strong, able heroine. Richly detailed pastels with a contemporary edge bring this fairy tale to strikingly beautiful life.

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Princess Florecita and the Iron Shoes By John Warren Stewig Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Kindergarten-Grade 4?Stewig retells a Spanish fairy tale with overtones of Sleeping Beauty. A little black bird tells Princess Florecita about an enchanted sleeping prince who can only be saved by a maiden stroking his forehead as he wakes on Midsummer's Eve. In order to reach him, she is told that she must wear out a pair of iron shoes. Once on her quest, she gleans information from the mothers of the West, East, and North winds and reaches the prince just in time to break the spell. Stewig's story is rich in imagery. He embroiders the basic straightforward version found in Alison Lurie's *Clever Gretchen and Other Forgotten Folktales* (Crowell, 1980). His rhythm and pacing are just right, and the storytelling is at once traditional and fresh. A source note cites Lurie's version and earlier French and Spanish sources. Popp's delicate watercolor illustrations are dreamy and gentle, employing dramatic accents of color, although the sugary lavender wash seems overdone. Some of the paintings are striking and original, such as the portrait of the mother of the West Wind with her bittersweet-orange shawl and her straw cloche adorned with a curiously anachronistic sunflower. The overall quality of the illustrations is uneven, however, and they don't all mesh well with the text, but Popp demonstrates promising talent. A fine choice especially where the demand for good "princess" stories exists.?Donna L. Scanlon, Lancaster County Library, PA

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From [Booklist](#)

Gr. 4^-7. Stewig's fine picture-book retelling of an old Spanish tale will remind readers of "Sleeping Beauty," though in this version it's a beautiful princess who saves a sleeping prince. Florecita learns the prince's story from a small blackbird, who tells her that only a maiden who wears out a pair of iron shoes can save the prince. Aided by the *ancianas*, mothers of the winds of the west, east, and north, Florecita braves foul weather and fearsome creatures to break the enchantment successfully. Stewig captures perfectly the romantic nature of the story, at the same time showing that it is Florecita's courage, determination, and selflessness that allow her to succeed. Popp's beautiful illustrations, rendered in warm earth tones, have an otherworldly quality, just right for a fairy tale. In contrast to the dreamy backgrounds, Florecita and the *ancianas* appear as realistic, strong, vital women. *Chris Sherman*

Users Review

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Marilyn Washington:

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Daniel Starkey:

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Mary Wright:

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