

4 Beloved Tales

Cinderella

Stories Around the World

by Cari Meister



Cinderella

A French Fairy Tale *illustrated by Valentina Belloni*

Once upon a time, there was a beautiful girl who lived with her stepmother and two stepsisters. The stepmother and stepsisters had very cruel hearts and treated the girl poorly. They made her do all the work: scrubbing the dishes, mopping the floors, washing the clothes, and cleaning their bedrooms.



The stepsisters dressed in the finest gowns and slept in the finest beds. The poor girl was given only rags to wear. She slept on a straw bed. The stepsisters called the girl “Cinderella,” because her clothes were often covered in cinders and ashes from the fireplace near her bed.



One day, an invitation for the Prince's Ball arrived. The stepsisters were delighted! They spent the next few weeks picking out gowns and deciding how to style their hair.



Little Burnt Face

illustrated by
Carolina Farias

A Fairy Tale from the Micmac Tribe of North America

Once upon a time there lived a widower and his three daughters. They lived in a large village by the side of a lake. The oldest daughter was mean. The middle daughter thought only of herself. But the youngest daughter was kind and good.



Every day, when their father went off to hunt, the oldest daughter burned the youngest daughter with hot coals. She did this so often that the youngest daughter was covered with scars. The villagers called her “Little Burnt Face.” When the father asked why his youngest daughter was always burnt, the oldest daughter lied. “I forbid her to go near the fire, Father,” the girl said. “But she disobeys and always falls in.”



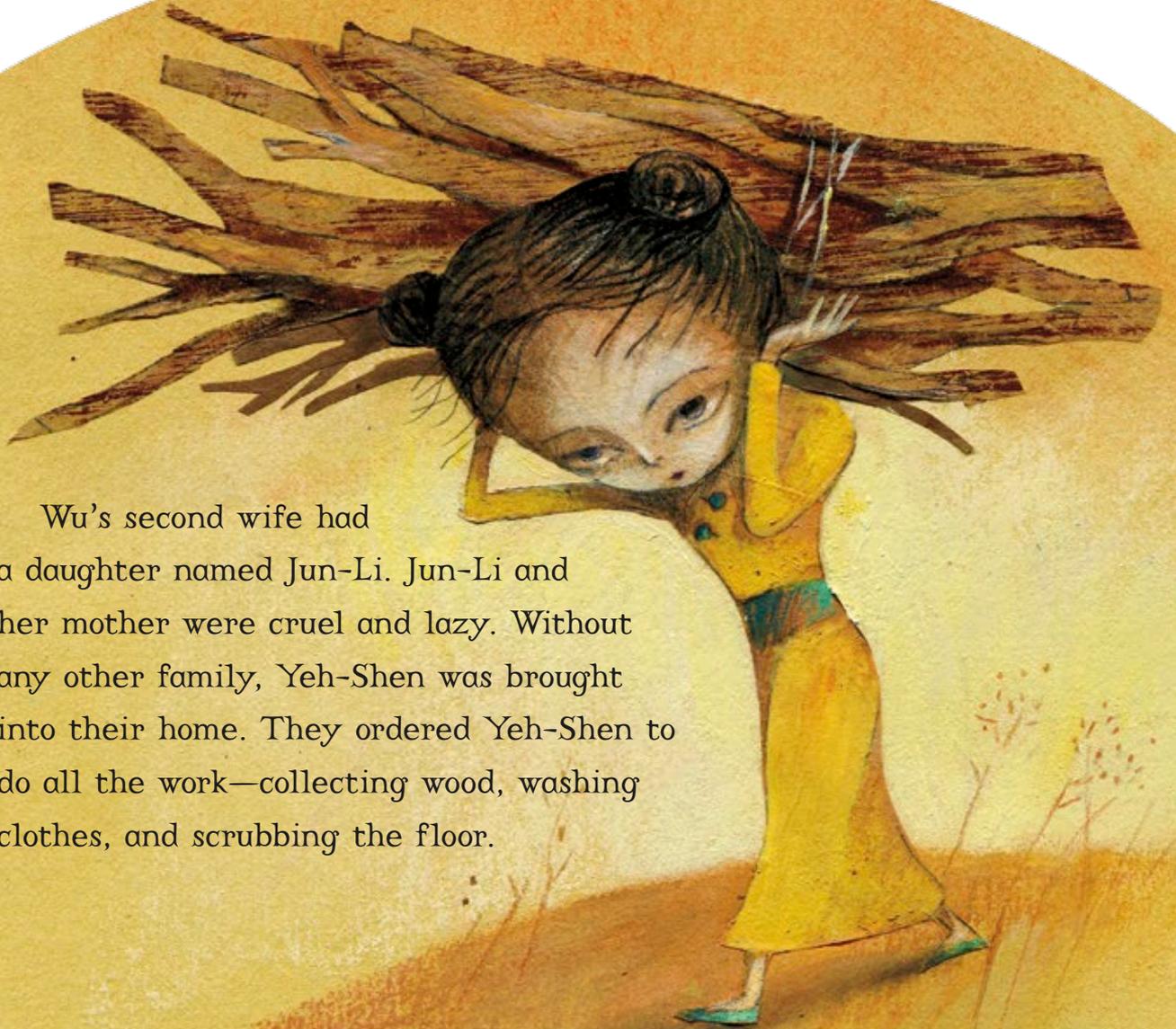
Yeh-Shen

A CHINESE FAIRY TALE

illustrated by Eva Montanari

Thousands of years ago in China, there lived a cave chieftain named Wu. He had two wives. His first wife was beautiful and kind. She gave birth to a daughter, Yeh-Shen, who was very much like her. Sadly, Yeh-Shen's mother died. Shortly thereafter, Wu died too.

Wu's second wife had a daughter named Jun-Li. Jun-Li and her mother were cruel and lazy. Without any other family, Yeh-Shen was brought into their home. They ordered Yeh-Shen to do all the work—collecting wood, washing clothes, and scrubbing the floor.



Yeh-Shen's only comfort was a golden fish that lived in the lake near the cave. Every day, she shared what little food she had with the fish.



One day Yeh-Shen's stepmother found out about the fish. She was furious. She did not want Yeh-Shen to have any joy. She captured the fish, cooked it, and served it for dinner. When Yeh-Shen learned what had happened, she wept. The fish had been her only friend.

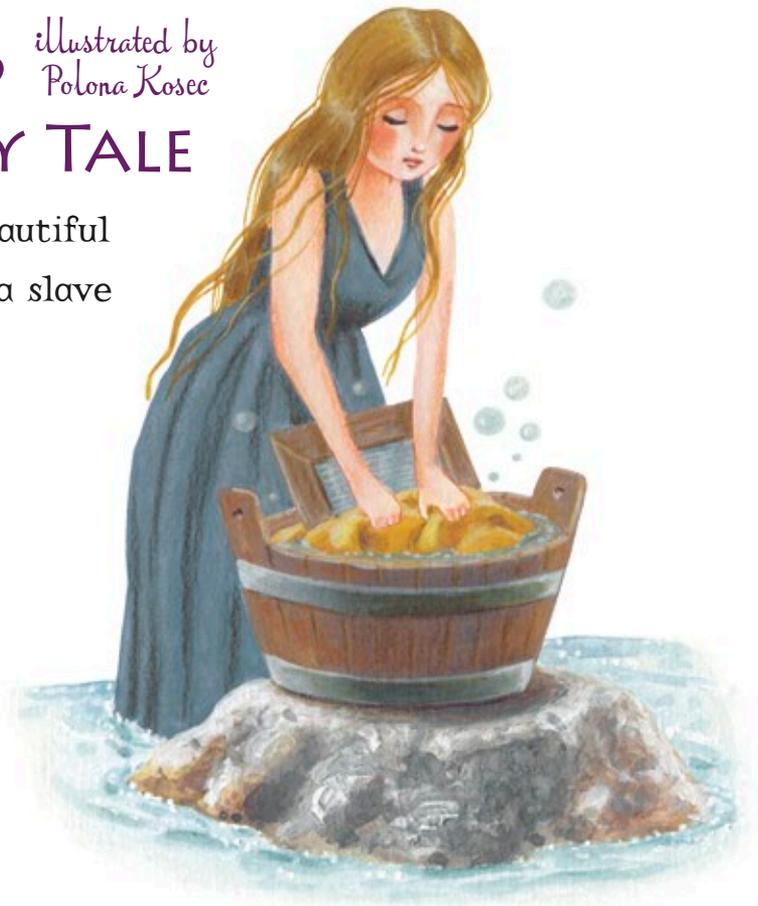
But the spirit of the fish spoke to her. "Do not worry," it said. "Whenever you need something, just ask my bones."



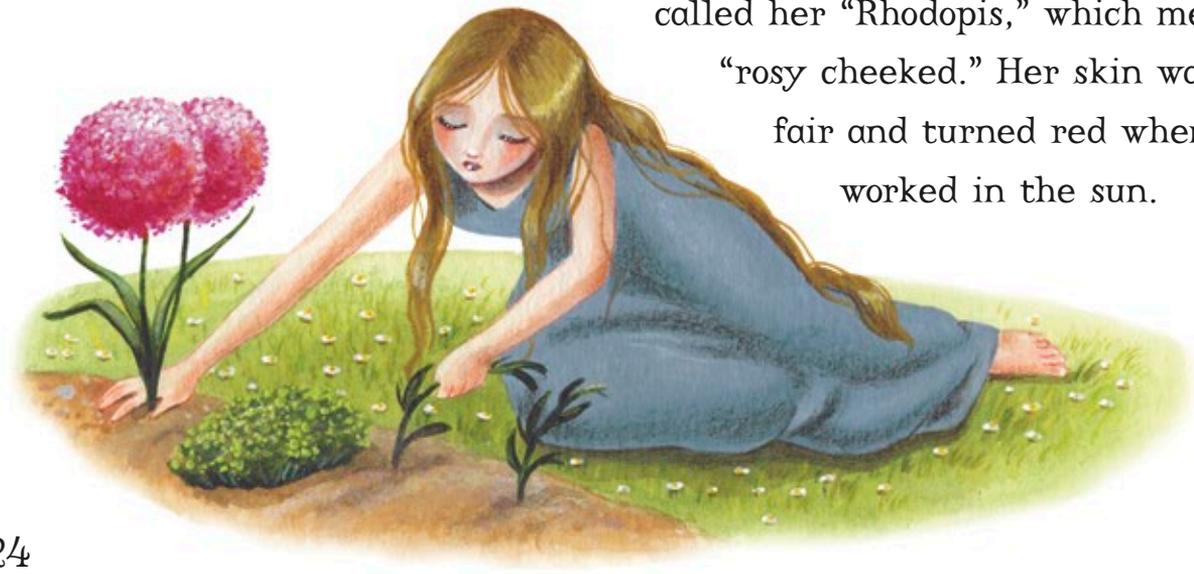
RHODOPIS illustrated by Polona Koscec

AN EGYPTIAN FAIRY TALE

Long ago, pirates kidnapped a beautiful girl from Greece. They sold her as a slave to an old master in Egypt.



The master had several servants already working in his house. They made the new girl do the hardest work—washing the clothes, making the meals, and weeding the garden. They called her “Rhodopis,” which means “rosy cheeked.” Her skin was fair and turned red when she worked in the sun.



Because the servants were mean, Rhodopis made friends with the Nile River animals. After her work was done, she often went to the river's edge. There she talked to the hippopotamus and danced with the ibis.



One hot day the master spotted Rhodopis dancing by the river. “Someone with such grace should not go shoeless,” he said.

He had a pair of rose-red slippers made for her. The other girls were jealous of the new slippers and treated Rhodopis even worse.

