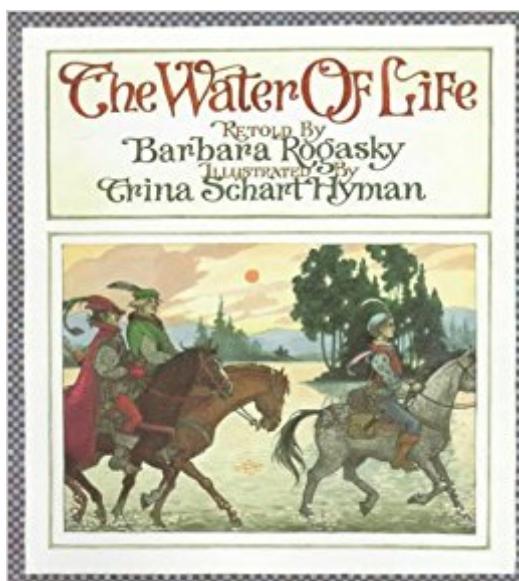


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# The Water Of Life: A Tale From The Brothers Grimm



## **Synopsis**

A prince searching for the Water of Life to cure his dying father finds an enchanted castle, a lovely princess, and treachery from his older brothers. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

"Based on a Grimm fairy tale, Rogasky's elegant text portrays the age-old battle between Good and Evil," was PW 's comment. "As usual, Caldecott Medalist Hyman has created stunning illustrations that are inventive and richly detailed." Ages 5-8. Copyright 1991 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Kindergarten-Grade 6 A retelling of a little-known tale from Grimm. Three brothers weep at their father's fatal illness until an old man tells them of a magic cure, the Water of Life. Each in turn sets out to find the cure, but because the older two have unpure motives and are mean-spirited, they do not succeed. The youngest son, through kindness and perseverance, attains the magic fluid and the love of a princess who promises to wait a year for his return. Tricked by the older brothers who substitute bitter sea water in his goblet and present the Water of Life to their father as their own achievement, the youngest brother is banished. At the end of the year, the false brothers try to win the princess, but the youngest once again wins the prize through strength of character and purity of motive. This traditional tale with all the trappings of magical elements, romance, and underlying psychological truth, is brought to life by Rogasky's spirited telling and Hyman's lush illustrations. The richly detailed paintings bring the landscape of the folk tale vividly to life, from the sick king's dark

bed chamber hung with tapestries and dimly lit by stained glass windows, to the lightness and cheer of the wedding celebration at the end. Particularly noteworthy is the artist's use of color and light to vary the mood. An exquisite blend of text and illustrations, this rendition will be appealing to older children as well as those in primary grades. Connie C. Rockman, The Ferguson Library, Stamford, Conn. Copyright 1986 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

This story is one of my favorite tales from the Brothers Grimm. The story is skillfully re-told by Barbara Rogasky and beautifully illustrated by Trina Schart Hyman, one of my favorite illustrators. I used to read only the first half of the story to my third grade class before a field trip and promise them that I would read the second half at the end of the day if everyone behaved. Parents wanted to hear the ending as much as the children.

I am a fan of fairy tales. And I love to share my passion for a good story with my son. My 5 year-old loved this book from the first reading. It is not a short read for a 5 year-old, but it held his attention again and again. It is one of his favorites. I bought this book because I love the illustrations of Ms. Hyman. We have read "Bearskin" by Howard Pyle, "Little Red Ridinghood", and "The Fortune Teller", all illustrated by Ms. Hyman. Her colors are vibrant and exciting. It seems that every book Ms. Hyman is involved with includes a great story and a great story teller. "The Water of Life" has it all, love, tests and trials, devotion, greed, and betrayal. It gives us, mother and son, lots to talk about. I recommend this book heartily.

Misplaced this beloved book and was so happy to find another copy! My son and I enjoyed reading this book again, and, again, when he was young.

Without hesitation I can assure you that "The Water of Life" is one of the most beautiful and intricate fairytales and picture books I have ever come across in my life. If you are a folk-lore scholar, a lover of beautiful illustrations, or a parent who believes that children are capable of absorbing the deeper side of fairytales rather than brainlessly watching the sugary-sweet rubbish that the T.V. spoonfeeds them today, then here is the picture book for you. Retold by Barbara Rogasky and illustrated by the fantastic Trina Schart Hyman, this story is a perfect blending of art and literature, and will stay with you for a very long time. Don't believe me? Well, when I was no more than five years old my father got this book out of the library, but nine years later, all I could remember was a certain illustration

that depicted the prince escaping from the enchanted courtyard. It was such a narrow escape as the gates closed on him, that his heel was torn off. This picture and the narrative stayed with me all those years, till I picked up another Trina Schart Hyman book, whose style of illustrations seemed vaguely familiar... After some typing on the public library's search engine "The Water of Life" was refound, and I stood in the library parking lot staring in amazement at the illustration that had stayed in my head for over nine years. Well enough reminising, I'll get to the plot of the story. It is based on the Brother Grimm story, but unlike other retellings of their tales which "shear" certain components of their narratives, Barbara Rogasky keeps in all the details and subquests that make the story so intricate. If you've ever read Brothers Grimm you'll know that the pretty little stories you usually see nowadays are very unlike their original counterparts. Often the Grimm Brothers would go off into tangents in their storytellings, adding unexplained or irrelevent people and events, which made them slightly confusing, but all the more colourful and fascinating. "The Water of Life" tells the story of three brothers whose father was very ill. After the two eldest brothers go, are rude to a small dwarf traveller and therefore trapped in a ravine between two mountains, the youngest son rides out to find the Water of Life and cure his father. He is not so coarse to the dwarf and so gathers some useful advice: that the Water is held in the fountain of a courtyard in an enchanted castle, guarded by iron gates and fierce lions. The Prince enters this place and there meets a beautiful Princess. You guessed it, it's love at first sight, and the Prince gathers the Water for his father, promising that he'll return to wed the Princess in a year's time. But his treacherous brothers have other plans - to have their brother destroyed and claim the Princess for themselves. It has all the components of a traditional fairytale: an ill king, three feuding brothers, a castle under a spell, a dwarfin companion and a beautiful princess, but here appear like brand new under Barbara Rogersky's working of the mysterious narrative. There are passages of intrigue and detail galore: the table of enchanted princes, the youngest son's travels with the magic bread and sword, the huntsman sent to kill him, and the wise Princess's own plan to secure her true love. Yet despite the darker tones of the tale, the morale shines through: that of honesty, love and truth always coming through in the end. And then of course, there's Trina Schart Hyman's illustrations. They evoke a beautiful and deep medieval/fairytale world, and perfectly echo the story, as well as creating an extra depth of their own. Long after the dwarf disappears from the narrative, he features in the illustrations, peeking from behind trees and watching the action from high bluffs. Likewise, the lions that guard the gates of the castle appear in the narrative only as "watch-dogs", but continue to appear at the Princess's side like overgrown house cats. There are stories within stories, as the tapestries in the king's bed chamber seem to tell an unknown but fascinating woodland tale, and there is no picture more

intriguing than the table of enchanted princes: one with butterfly wings, one with stag's horns, one with a unicorn horn, another with a bird's head... Likewise, the sight of the two elder brothers wedged between two mountains on horseback is comic, claustrophobic, inventive and completely realistic. Finally, everyone may groan at the "love at first sight" passage, but Hyman's incredible details create love and adoration between two figures that \*make\* you believe in it. Her details and use of colour are perfection, and out of all her works, "The Water of Life" is one of the best. Children are some of the most underestimated creatures in the world, and they deserve to have this wonderful story read to them. Turn off the T.V. and open "The Water of Life". Hopefully will place a picture of the product on this webpage so that everyone can see for themselves and not just take my word for it just how beautiful this book is.

My daughter who is getting her Master's in Art asked for this book for Christmas. She adores Trina Schart Hyman illustrations. I really loved this book. The illustrations are really beautiful with many little interesting things to pick out in them. Children will find the scene from the enchanted castle especially fun. All the princes are sitting frozen in time at a banquet table. One is a frog, one a unicorn, another has butterfly wings, etc. Most of the pictures have a dark cast to them but the last one of the wedding is bright and cheery with little children wearing red costumes and throwing pink petals. The bridal couple are gorgeously dressed too. Moral of the story: Be kind and good and you will achieve true happiness.

This book is extraordinary in every way! The retelling of the story is superb in detail and pacing; the illustrations (by a now-favorite illustrator Trina Schart Hyman) are immaculate. I actually got this book simply on the strength of Ms. Hyman's recommendation; which is to say, if she chose to illustrate it, that's good enough for me. She has very high standards for her authors! And this book did not disappoint. Barbara Rogasky's writing is precise, beautiful, and rings true. I cannot recommend this one highly enough for your first grader. It will remain a favorite for many years to come.

I am a huge fan to Trina Schart Hyman and these illustrations are excellent and lovely. Full of her usual detail. The story is really nice too. It is a well retold version of the story.

this illustrated book retells a brothers grimm story - the water of life. it's about 3 princes who go on expeditions to find an elixir that'll cure any disease to treat their sick father. but the story doesn't just

end there. with some bigger words, this book is suitable for children aged between 4 (if you're reading to them) and 8 (who could benefit from the vocab). the pictures have a medieval quality to them, which isn't surprising since the illustrator has also portrayed arthurian legends in her other works.

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