

POWER  
— TO THE —  
*Princess*

15 favorite fairytales retold  
with girl power



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POWER  
— TO THE —  
*Princess*



Lincoln  
Children's Books



Dear Reader,

A few months ago, I had the pleasure of attending the Noble Monarch Jubilee, a special conference for leaders from Fairy Tales to meet, share successes, and swap ideas. It was there that I met some of the princesses featured in this book.

Belle, undercover agent of the Fairyland police, spoke on a panel with Cinderella about income equality and crime prevention. Aurora (otherwise known as Sleeping Beauty) and Snow White gave a talk about body image and the science of sleep. Rapunzel gave a sneak peek of her cutting-edge inclusive design tools. The programming was top-notch and highlighted the hard work of these royal leaders, their fun personalities, and their amazing potential. However, it was the conversation away from the spotlight that captured my attention. After the book signing session, I overheard the princesses talking among themselves.

“I wish our fans knew the truth about us,” said Sleeping Beauty.

“I know—it’s so annoying,” Belle the Brave complained. “Everyone thinks we just marry princes and live happily ever after.”

“You’re telling me. I’m tired of autographing glass shoes. That’s not what being a princess is about,” agreed Cinderella.

“But how can we show people more of who we really are?” asked the Little Mermaid.

As the princesses talked, I could tell there was something missing from their stories. “I think I might be able to help you,” I interrupted. “I’m an author, and if you’re interested, I could write a book about you.”





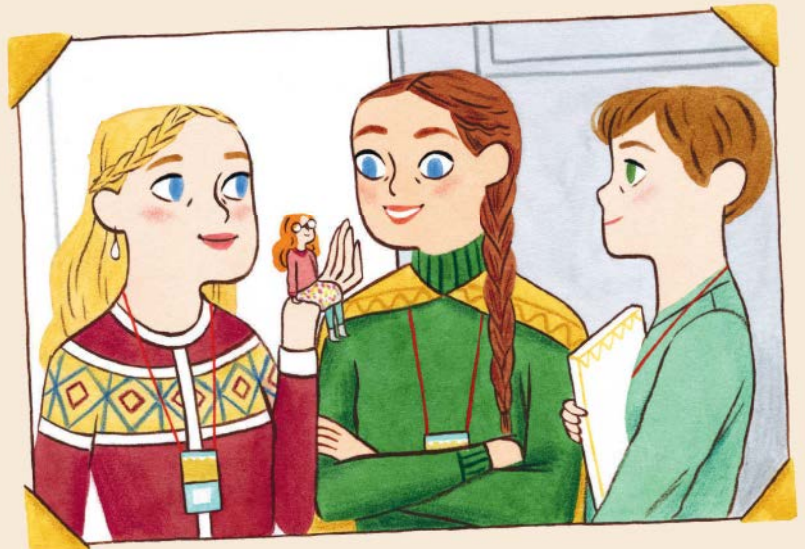
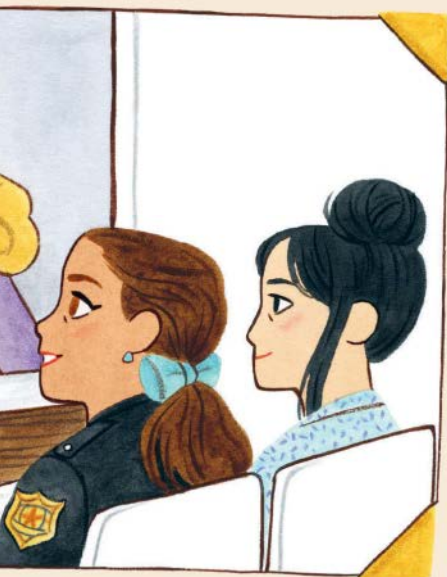
Luckily for me, the princesses were into the idea. That day, we talked a lot about their stories, and what it means to be a princess. They taught me that a princess is a person who seeks to help others, is open to learning new things, and who looks for ways to add purpose to their own lives and to the lives of those around them.

Over the following months, I interviewed the princesses to discover their unique stories. Each one told me about where they were from, and of a time when they or a family member or friend faced a big challenge. Often there was magic or mystery. Sometimes a daring adventure or a quest. And always funny moments and surprises too.

What struck me the most was that every princess I met reminded me of someone I knew. My friends, my family, people I've worked with: athletes and artists, teachers and scientists, parents and kids. I believe the characters in the princesses' stories will remind you of people you know too. Maybe the princesses make the same mistakes or have the same triumphs, take the same risks or face similar challenges.

Now that their stories have been retold, turn the pages and get reacquainted with these powerful princesses. Maybe like I did, you'll recognize some of your own story too!

*Vita Murrow*



# Noble Monarch Jubilee

## LIST OF ATTENDEES AND THEIR STORIES



Belle the Brave

❧ p. 6 ❧



The Little Mermaid

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Rapunzel

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The Snow Queen

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Elisabeth and  
the Wild Swans

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Star and the Twelve  
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Zade and  
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Little Red Riding Hood

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Sleeping Beauty

🎀 p. 78 🎀



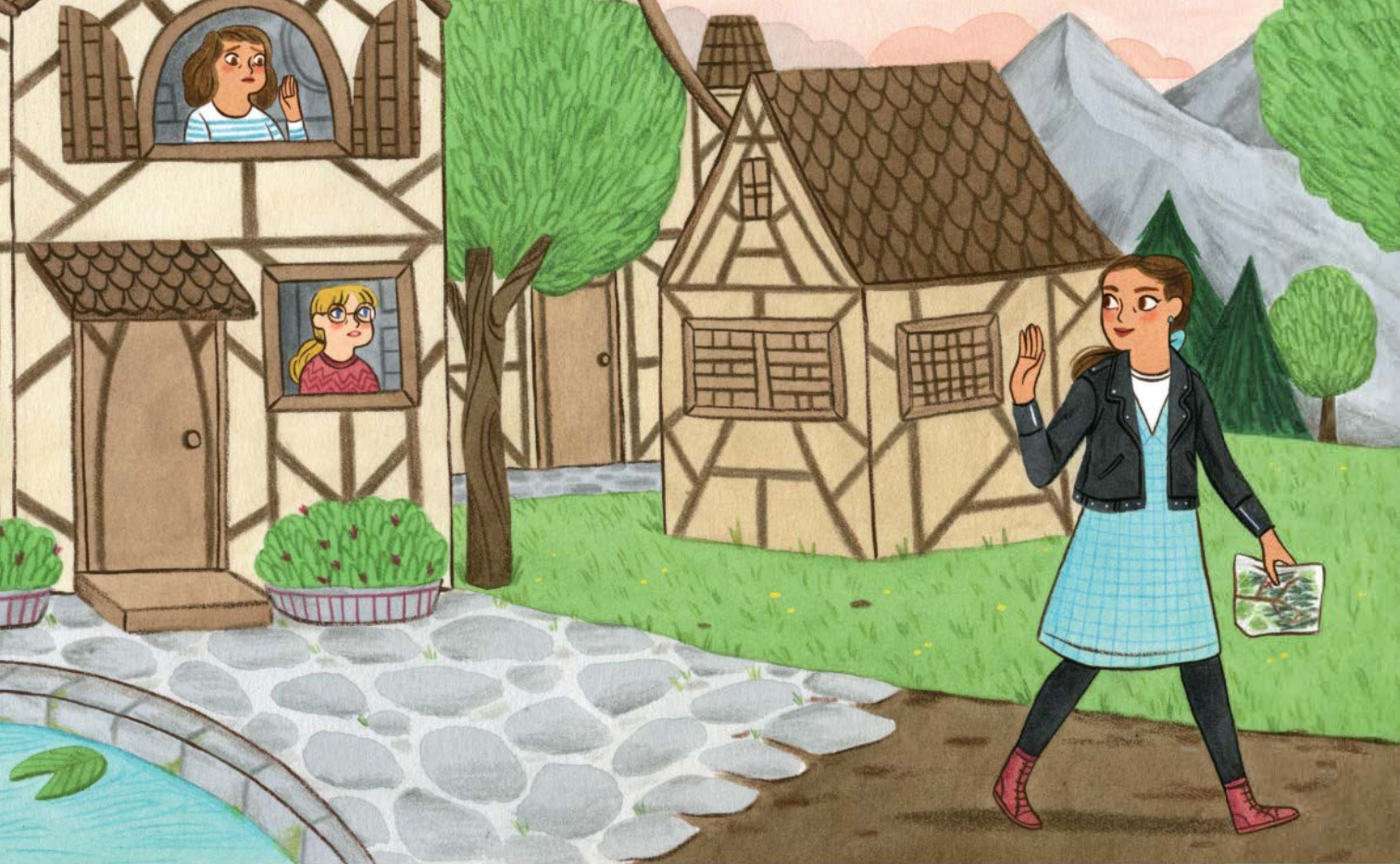
Snow White

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Evangeline and the  
Frog Prince

🎀 p. 90 🎀



# Belle the Brave

Once upon a time, in a sunny French province, there lived a girl named Belle. Belle the Brave to be precise, because Belle was fearless. What is fearless? Fearless is breathing deeply when you have to get a shot at the doctor's. Fearless is walking proudly through a tangle of spiderwebs. Fearless is jumping from high rocks into cold water. And in Belle's case, fearless meant venturing into a scary forest, when no one else would even consider it. (The place was called the Forbidden Forest, after all.)

It all started one bright and cheery day, when Belle's father had to go on a trip. Each of his daughters had a special request.

"Can you bring me back a set of paper and paints?" asked one.

"Winter is coming. I'll have a warm hat if you spot one," asked the other.

"Belle, what can I bring you?" her father asked. But Belle was busy, studying her map of the Forbidden Forest.

"Oh, you know me, nothing special. Maybe a flower?"

The sisters happily waved their father on his way. But after a few days passed, and their father hadn't returned, they began to worry. Days turned to a week, and finally Belle realized she alone would need to go in search of him. For among her sisters, she was the best tree climber, cobweb walker, and rocky-ledge jumper. Plus, she had been working on her Forbidden Forest map and this was just the





opportunity to try it out.

“Are you sure you should be doing this?” fretted Belle’s sisters. “It’s nearly dark and what about the . . . you know . . . monsters?”


“Monsters bonsters,” said Belle. “I’ll be perfectly fine.” She gave her sisters a big hug and kiss and set off—just as brave as you please—into the night. Soon the call of owls welcomed her as she ventured into the Forbidden Forest.

The trail grew thick and brambly, and Belle drew out her trusty map for guidance. An expert tracker and navigator, Belle was quick to identify a route. But as luck would have it, a flash of lightning felled a tree right in her path!


“Ugh!” Belle moaned, because the tree was too big to climb over, even for her. However, the forest heard her sigh, and the next flash of lightning illuminated another path, leading away from the main one. “All right!” thought Belle. She’d always suspected the Forbidden Forest had some good hidden secrets.

Belle followed this new path and was soon brought to the foot of a great and mysterious castle. It was shrouded in fog, veiled by glistening snow, and circled by an immense rose garden. It nearly took Belle’s breath away, but she did manage one word of marvel: “Wow.”



Belle climbed nearly a hundred stairs to reach the door. As she leaned against it to catch her breath, the mighty latch gave way, and the door swung open to reveal




a great hall. It was dark and freezing cold, without a soul in sight. Belle stepped inside and was just about to call out when the door closed behind her with a great thud, and a large shadow took its place.




As Belle turned around, she could see that the shadow belonged to an enormous creature. Overgrown and clumsy, with terrible posture and likely terrible breath, too. A beast, really. Belle could also make out someone's feet behind the Beast, so she called out, "Papa, is that you?"



An exhausted heap of a man was collapsed at the Beast's feet. Belle could see that her father was weak and sick. Also, that he was clutching a once-lovely stem of roses.



"Gracious!" exclaimed Belle to the Beast. "Can't you see he's unwell? Don't just stand there—help me out."



Belle pulled her father up and found him a soft chair to sit in. She hurried to the hearth to begin making a fire. "What are you doing?" she said to the Beast, who was standing like a stunned statue. "Bring in some dry wood, would you?"

"I'd like you to leave!" the Beast bellowed. "Your father was sneaking around on my property, and I'm not one for guests. He is now my prisoner!"

The shouting stirred Belle's father. "Belle, what on earth are you doing here?" he gasped. "Get out while you still can. This is no place for you!"

"I'll be the judge of th—"

"I caught this man stealing from my rose garden," the Beast roared as he pulled Belle's father to his feet, "so one of you is going to pay for it with your freedom!"

"Oh, don't you threaten me!" Belle shot back. "Put my father down right now!" The astonished Beast let Belle's father fall back into the chair. Belle got right in the Beast's face. "Now here's my counteroffer," she said. "You let my father go, and I'll stay here to repay his debt."

And so, it was agreed. Belle would stay on as a guest of the Beast. As days turned into weeks, and weeks turned into months, it wasn't all cupcakes and sprinkles, but it also wasn't all thorns and nettles, either. It was true: the Beast was a real grouch and terrible host, and kept himself to himself. Yet Belle knew things weren't always as scary as they might first appear.

One day, both the Beast and Belle arrived in the pantry at the same time for a snack. They reached for the cookie butter at just the same moment, and the Beast—in a gentler mood than normal—quickly withdrew his hand and made to leave the room.

"Wait," Belle said. "Grab me a spoon—we'll split it." The Beast hesitated at the door and then, to Belle's surprise, turned around, spoon in hand. They sat together enjoying the cookie butter to the last dollop, and finding, surprisingly, that they had lots to talk about.