

Classic Fables and Tales

Fable stories are one of the oldest literary genres in the world, which reveals profound philosophies with appropriate metaphors, colorful imagination and vivid scenes, and inspires people with wisdom and beauty. Those deeply significant fairy tales can also be sorted into generalized fable stories types. Fable stories are world cultural heritage that worth to be carefully stored and repetitively appreciated. In this case, Macao Post and Telecommunications Bureau shows to the public those western fable stories by means of stamps for appreciation and collection.

Stamp collections of *Classic Fables and Tales* designed by Macao local designer Helena Man In, Ng who lives abroad include four pieces of stamps and a souvenir sheet. The content is the following:

The Happy Prince is from *Oscar Wilde Classics*. Happy Prince doesn't know what sadness is when he was alive, and after he died people of the city build a beautiful statue for him which was gilded all over with thin leaves of fine gold, and two bright sapphires for eyes and a large red ruby glowed on his sword-hilt. After witnessing all kinds of human suffering, he was willing to sacrifice himself and use his rubies, the gold sheets on his body and the bright sapphires his eyes to alleviate others' sorrows to save the unfortunate, the suffering children and poor people. His appearance is no longer beautiful as before but his mind is more and more noble. And there is another protagonist in this fairy tale the Swallow who is innocent, lively, warm, and kind-hearted. Inspired by the spirit of self-sacrifice of Happy Prince, the Swallow has become a messenger of happiness for unfortunate people. This fairy tale expresses its compliments to those who "always keeps his optimistic attitude to life and sacrifice his own interest for other people."

Little Red Riding Hood is from *Grimm's Fairy Tales*. Once upon a time there was a sweet little girl who liked wearing her little cap made of red velvet given as a present by her grandmother. The little cap suited the girl so extremely well that everybody called her Little Red Riding Hood. One day, her mother asked her to take some food to her grandmother who lived in the forest and asked her to behave herself well on the way and do not leave the path. When Little Red Riding Hood entered the woods, a wolf came up to her. She did not know what a wicked animal he was, and was not afraid of him. The wolf tricks the Little Red Riding Hood to run off into the woods to look for flowers and he just ran straight to the grandmother's house and ate her up. And the wolf disguised as grandmother and swallowed up the Little Red Riding Hood when she came in to look for her grandmother. Fortunately, a brave huntsman saved the Little Red Riding Hood and her grandmother from the wolf's stomach. Later, people use the Little Red Riding Hood to describe those innocent childish and easily deceived children.

The Emperor's New Clothes is from *Hans Christian Andersen's Fairy Tales*. Many years ago, there was an Emperor so exceedingly fond of new clothes that he changed clothes every day and spent all his money on nice cloths and designers in the city could not meet his need for new clothes. Two swindlers told him they could weave the most magnificent clothing and those who were not clever would not be able to see the fabric. The King saw nothing but he, too, did not want to admit to being stupid or incompetent, so he agrees that the clothing is exquisite. After being dressed

in the invisible garments, the Emperor marches in the procession in front of his entire kingdom. Everyone in the kingdom sees the emperor without clothes, but for fear of being accused of being stupid or incompetent, they all pretend that they could see Emperor's fine clothing. Only a naive child cries out loudly "The emperor doesn't wear anything at all!" The awakened the dream of a man, in the laughter of others and the king became a laughingstock to all people. This tale tells us that bad people may take advantage of vanity of the other.

The Boy Who Cried Wolf is from *the Aesop's Fables*. There was a Shepherd Boy who liked lying only for fun and one time he called out, "Wolf! Help me." and the villagers came out to help him. He laughed at people, "You guys got fooled!" He tried the same trick several times. Finally, this Wolf did come out from the forest. The boy cried out "Wolf, Wolf," still louder than before. But this time the villagers, who had been fooled before, thought the boy was again lying, and nobody came to his aid. So, the Wolf made a good meal off the boy's flock. This tale tells us that we need to be honest, and we will put ourselves in danger of losing reputation if we deceive others.

The souvenir sheet of Classic Fables and Tales connects the four stories mentioned above and it highlights a kind-hearted swallow flying over a beautiful castle and helping people in need.

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