



PRINCESS TALES

RETOLD & REMIXED

Edited by

DAPHNE LEE

YAB Tun Dr Mahathir
and family,

Hope you like

"Trick or Tree?"

Based on Sang Kancil and
Sang Buaya.

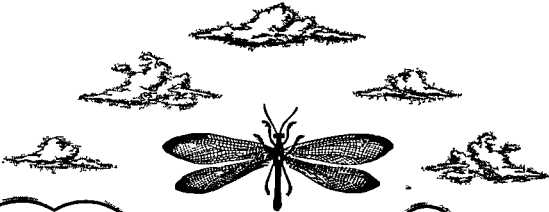
Dengan segala hormat-nya
Yang ikhlas,

Shan

30 Aug. 2012




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MALAYSIAN TALES

RETOLD & REMIXED



PUSTAKA PERDANA



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Edited by

DAPHNE LEE



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Malaysian Tales: Retold & Remixed

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ABOUT THE EDITOR



Daphne Lee is a writer and editor. She has published six picture books, as well as short stories in magazines and anthologies. She writes a weekly column about children's and young adult books for Malaysian daily, *The Star*, and runs reading initiatives for a Malaysian non-profit organisation. Daphne is also the publishing editor of OneRedFlower Press, which specialises in Malaysian picture books.



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FOREWORD

IN 1952, I sailed with my mother from Singapore to what was then British North Borneo in a small cargo ship carrying copra. When we sailed into Jesselton harbour, I realised that I was arriving at a kind of paradise, a fairytale land. The sea was green-blue and translucent, the flowers and foliage were startlingly bright and beautiful, and behind the town rose Mount Kinabalu, which I was later to see out of my bedroom window every day. I went to school, too, in the shadow of this mountain and when the *Sabah Times* ran a story writing competition, I wrote something called *The Legend of Kinabalu* which was of course a fairytale. Whether it had been told to me, or whether I made it up, or a combination of the two, I no longer remember. But the story was full of familiar ingredients: a young prince having to steal a precious pearl guarded by the dragon who lived at the top of the mountain, escaping death by the skin of his teeth, a beautiful princess who would be the prize if he succeeded, and so forth. I won the competition and that was my very first publication. I was nine years old and the year was 1953.



Although fairytales are often assumed to be children's stories, this is not why or how they were told in the first place. They are stories which explain our world in a pre-scientific age. They tell us about our deepest desires and our worst nightmares in a form which makes these easier to bear. They provide morals and examples. Virtue is rewarded. Evil is punished. Greed doesn't get you anywhere. We are taught to be better people. Magic is effective. The world of fairytales is full of marvels and impossible things: dragons, talking animals, flying carpets, transformations, and so on. And although they often have a basis in the real world, they take off from there into realms that we can scarcely imagine but are very happy to inhabit while we're reading.

These stories are full of the enchantment that I can remember from my childhood days in what is now Sabah, but what has always fascinated me is the fact that through all cultures, certain stories exist. Rags to riches ... the Cinderella tale is universal as are many, many others. The décor of the stories changes according to the country of their origin but the magic is the same, and it beguiles readers even in a world where we have a different kind of magic at our disposal: the internet and all its wonders.

I know the readers of this collection will enjoy the wonderful tales to be found in this book.

Adèle Geras





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