



Moss Gown

William H. Hooks , Donald Carrick (Illustrator)

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Candace finds herself cast out of her home by jealous older sisters, but with the help of a witch woman and a magical moss gown, she captures the heart of the young plantation owner.

Moss Gown Details

Date : Published October 1st 1990 by HMH Books for Young Readers (first published March 1st 1987)

ISBN : 9780395547939

Author : William H. Hooks , Donald Carrick (Illustrator)

Format : Paperback 48 pages

Genre : Childrens, Picture Books, Fantasy, Fairy Tales, Cinderella

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From Reader Review Moss Gown for online ebook

Jennifer says

This is a well written story about a young girl who lives in the south with her sick father. Her sister just lie to him and tell him they love him more than gems. But the youngest girl who really does love him the most, says she loves them more than mean loves salt. He gets offended and demands that she leaves. She meets a witch who gives her the moss gown which allows her to meet her prince charming. Then she sees her father again and is able to regain his love. This type of southern Cinderella stays true to its source, because it's a young girl who is shunned from her family and has the sisters who are not truly who they say they are. She then meets her sort-of fairy godmother who helps her to meet her prince charming. It's a wonderful version! I think this version reveals insights into the southern culture with the family living on a large plantation and Candace goes to work in a kitchen at a plantation where she is reunited with her father. And everything works out for her in the end!

Kara says

The idea here is to blend the fairy tales of the Old World with the setting of the New World, an idea I have seen executed quite well in several fairy tale retellings.

However, it does not work here. Its feels forced to plop King Lear / Cap-of-Rushes onto a plantation setting, as well as extremely problematic. It's like a re-write of *Gone with the Wind* casting Scarlet as Boudicca.

Kitty says

Boyo loved this one. The pictures are gorgeous, and the story is intriguing even for a wee one.

Jennifer says

Another version of my favorite fairy tale —a southern Cinderella

Emily says

Interesting hybrid of King Lear and Cinderella set in the South. The illustrations are very evocative of the mood of the book. I like how the text is arranged according to phrases rather than a straight block of prose.

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Stephanie says

3.5

A version of the Cinderella tale type that includes the King Lear element in which the father chooses the wicked daughters over the good daughter. He eventually realizes his mistake but must suffer before he is reunited with his daughter after she has married the Prince character.

What is also note-worthy in this version is that the Fairy Godmother character is a "slender, black woman with cat-green eyes." It's unclear to me if this story takes place pre- or post-American Civil War, but I think the fact that the woman who helps Moss Gown (the Cinderella character), who is white, is black. I'm not sure whether to be entirely pleased by this fact though, given the woman is a witch which makes it feel somewhat stereotypical, but it is noteworthy regardless.

The illustrations remind me somewhat of Mercer Mayer's illustrations of fairy tales.

Charlotte Osborn-bensaada says

The author William Hooks explains that the story is based on stories from the tidewater section of eastern North Carolina. The story itself is an interesting combination of King Lear and Cinderella. according to the author this stems from the early English roots in this area. While I found elements of it dated, the happy black servants in the big plantation house, it was interesting to think about how the Shakespeare's King Lear is really one of many folktales.

Jamie says

This is a very sweet rendition of the classic Cinderella story. It tells of a sick father who has three daughters. When he asks them how much they love him the older two daughters say they love him as much as diamonds and gold. All material things. When the youngest daughter Candace is asked she says "I love you more than salt loves meat". Not understanding what she means by this, the father is hurt. He gives all his land to the older daughters and they have Candace banished from the property. Candace meets a witch woman in the swamp. She gives her a beautiful dress made of moss and rags and says anytime she needs her to say gris gris gris grine and she will be there for her.

Candace then makes her way to a house near the swamp. It is a home of very wealthy people and she becomes a servant there. Later on the young man of the house holds a ball and Candace goes wearing her beautiful moss dress and they fall in love. Finally, she reveals to him that it is her and they are married. At the wedding, the witch woman from the swamp brings her father. He is invited to a dinner in the home and she prepares food for him with no salt. He then remembers her and he is sorry for he now understands what she had said to him about her love for him.

This is a great story that teaches of kindness and understanding.

Deborah says

A cross between Cinderella and King Lear (as the Author's Note explains) Moss Gown is about an old man

who doesn't have much time left on the Earth. He calls his three daughters to him to see who he should bestow his property onto. He two oldest daughters are selfish and flatter him by saying they love him more than any gem. His youngest, Candance, who he loves the most, says she loves him more than meat loves salt, which disappoints the old man. He bestows his lands on the older sisters, who in turn kick out their younger sister. Candace goes far away and meets an woman in the forest who gives her a betwitched Moss Gown. Circumstances draw Candace to a manor (the setting is S. Carolina) where she begins to work in the kitchen. When she puts the gown on, Candace turns into a beautiful woman. The master of the manor falls in love with her, but like Cinderella Candace must leave before the moss gown turns back to moss.

Carrick does beautiful illustrations.

2nd - 4th grade.

Meg McGregor says

I have read many versions of the Cinderella story; I am always happy to come across another one!

Thanks, Calista, for recommending this book on Goodreads!

The text is lyrical prose and the illustrations take you straight back to the bayou country!

When my girls are a bit older, I definitely will read this to them!

Beverly says

Hooks explains in his author's note that this traditional southern US tale is a little bit Cinderella and a little bit King Lear. The lovely ink and watercolor paintings seem to place this tale before the Civil War, and before the time when hoop skirts became fashionable.

Janie says

Moss Gown = King Lear + Cinderella + Cajun magic + the South. If this story were a language it would be Afrikaans: European roots, other-continental fruits.

Cheryl says

Lovely folklore development of the themes and stories of Cinderella and of King Lear as brought to and blended in southeastern No. America. Some of us have read the slightly different regional variant, *Rush Cape*.

Hooks' text longish, but graceful and clear. Told with the right amount of detail; I wouldn't hesitate to recommend it to children age 7 up.

Carrick's art a bit like Trina Schart Hyman but more painterly: successful and appealing.

Full page author's note helpful.

Shelley says

This was one of my absolute favorite books as a child. It is a beautiful retelling of Cinderella.

Jennifer Heise says

This is a variant of the "Love like Salt" fairytale theme (<http://www.pitt.edu/~dash/salt.html>) as seen in Cap O' Rushes, more seen by Americans in the tragic version of King Lear. As a variant on Cap O' Rushes it's well-told, and I don't doubt that it's true to the origins of this variant in the Carolinas. And that's where it goes off the rails. When the rich white man turns his back on his youngest daughter for saying "I love you like meat loves salt," who rescues her? An African-american 'gris-gris woman' who goes on to serve her needs and fetch and carry for her. When Moss Gown goes to work in another house, she works with an all-black staff, who appear to treat her as a pet, too. I can't get past that. Yes, it's in the story, but is that a variant of the story that needs to be told in a picture book?
