**WHAT IS A MAGIC HELPER?**

A stylistic element used by the author in the genre of fantasy to introduce magic into the story.
Magic helpers in fairy tales are often numerous.

For example, Fairy godmothers were added to *Sleeping Beauty* by Perrault; no such figures appeared in his source, *Sole, Luna, e Talia* by Giambattista Basile.

In the Grimm Brothers' variant of *Cinderella*, the protagonist is aided not by her fairy godmother but by her dead mother, as is the heroine of the Finnish variant, *The Wonderful Birch*. 
A great variety of other figures may also take the place of the magic helper. In *Vasilissa the Beautiful*, the heroine is aided by a wooden doll that her dying mother had given her; in *Rushen Coatie*, by a red calf sent to her by her dead mother, a calf that can continue to aid her after its death; in *Katie Woodencloak* by a mysterious dun bull; in *Tattercoats*, by a gooseherd who is her friend for a long time before his mysterious powers are revealed. In *East of the Sun and West of the Moon*, the heroine is given vital gifts by three old women she meets on the way.
Heroes seldom have actual fairy godmothers, but similar figures are common. In *The Golden Bird*, the hero is aided by a fox whose advice he takes; in *The Red Ettin*, by a fairy not his godmother; in *Puddocky*, by an enchanted frog that takes pity on him; in *Prince Ring*, by an enchanted dog; in *Fair Brow* and *The Bird 'Grip'*, by a dead man whom he had aided; in *The Horse Gullfaxi and the Sword Gunnfoder*, in an unusual reversal, by his stepmother.
The hero may also meet up with several extraordinary men who will help him as in *The Fool of the World and the Flying Ship*, *How the Hermit helped to win the King's Daughter, Long, Broad and Sharpsight*, and *The King Of Lochlin's Three Daughters*. Each one has an ability, such as seeing things miles off, hearing things miles off, an extraordinary shot, ability to drink a river, or others that allow them to fulfill the hero's tasks.
Talking animals are often the hero's helpers, perhaps more than any other type. The most common motivation of the animals is gratitude, after protection, receiving food, or (less commonly) settling a quarrel between several animals. In another variation, featured in *The Three Enchanted Princes* and *The Death of Koschei the Deathless*, the hero's three sisters have been married to animals. These prove to be shape-shifted men, who aid their brother-in-law in a variant of tale types.
Because of its retelling by Perrault, Puss in Boots is among the best known animal helpers, although in other variants of the tale, the hero (or heroine) is helped sometimes by a fox and occasionally by other animals.

Horses, as in *The Firebird and Princess Vasilisa, Făt-Frumos with the Golden Hair, The Magician's Horse, The Princess on the Glass Hill*, and *Ferdinand the Faithful and Ferdinand the Unfaithful*, are popular in the oral tradition; several tale types normally feature a horse almost as important as the hero.
The magical helper is often long faithful to the hero; the hero may fail many times after the initial test, often by not respecting the helper's advice. In *The Golden Bird*, the fox declares that the hero does not deserve his help after his disobedience, but still aids him.