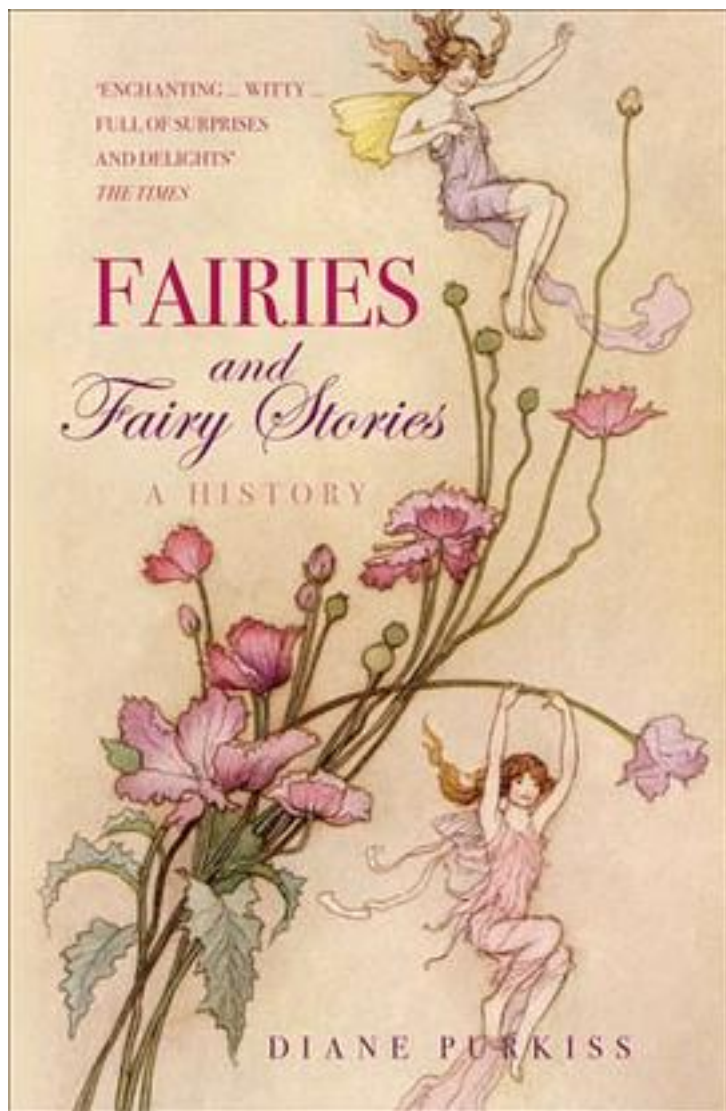


Fairies and Fairy Stories



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Whether on top of the Christmas Tree, at the bottom of the garden or in school pantomimes, today we think of fairies as sweet, dainty creatures with wands and butterfly wings. But, as Diane Purkiss shows, they have a far darker and more menacing history - as troublemakers, child-snatchers, seducers and changelings, representing our deepest fears and desires regarding birth, sex and death. From these dangerous beings of ancient myths and medieval folklore, to the sanitized 'wingy thingies' of Shakespeare and the Victorians, and even modern myths of alien abduction, this is an enthralling history of our need to believe in fairies.

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