Summer Reading 2020 is here! You may be thinking that summer reading and fairy tales are just for kids, and that’s where you would be wrong! Adults can join in on the adventure. HCLS has compiled a list of book recommendations for adults to coincide with Summer Reading 2020’s theme: *Imagine Your Story: Fairy Tales, Mythology, and Fantasy*. So, are you ready to fall down the rabbit hole, journey to an enchanted kingdom, or slay some dragons? Let’s check out some popular novels that have re-imagined classic tales from the realms of myth, fairy tale, and legend. Here are our recommendations for old tales told anew.
**Those Ancient Greeks**

**Circe by Madeline Miller**

The #1 *New York Times* bestseller is a retelling of Greek mythology through the eyes of the witch Circe. Readers of Homer’s epic poem *The Odyssey* will recognize Circe as the sorceress who lives on an island and turns men into pigs. The daughter of a mighty Titan and a beautiful nymph, Circe is not a full goddess, but neither is she mortal. She exists in the shadows of her more powerful siblings and is banished for her witchcraft. Join Circe as she learns that power is not everything, and exile can be freeing.

**The Wicked Stepmother Gets Her Say**

**All the Ever Afters by Danielle Teller**

This beautifully crafted historical fiction is set in a medieval world of manors and serfs, abbeys and nuns, and courts and nobles. There is no magic, no fairy godmother, and no talking mice. Instead, there are realistic explanations for the fairy tale. Cinderella takes a backseat in this novel. It is Agnes, Cinderella’s stepmother, who is our heroine. Forced to work as a laundress at the local manor, thrown out of an abbey, and losing her business after her husband's death, Agnes has had a string of bad luck. But, through sheer grit and intelligence, she challenges the rules of gender and class. *All the Ever Afters* is available on Hoopla as an eBook and audiobook.
**Down the Rabbit Hole**

*Alice I Have Been* by Melanie Benjamin

This historical fiction chronicles the life of Alice Liddell Hargreaves, the young girl who inspired Lewis Carroll’s *Alice in Wonderland*. It gives an account of the controversial relationship between the young Alice and the Oxford professor Charles Dodgson (aka Lewis Carroll). As she nears her 85th birthday, Alice reflects on her privileged Victorian childhood and that golden summer when a young girl encouraged an older man to write down his most fanciful story. Speculate on whether or not that relationship was entirely innocent or tragically sinister. Are you ready to fall down the rabbit hole again with this beautifully written but very dark novel?

**Of Celtic Fairies, Druids, & Kings**

*The Last Days of Magic* by Mark Tompkins

Whatever happened to magic? Were the Irish fey folk real? In this gritty, political fairy tale, medieval Ireland is plunged into war as the old ways of magic and the new force of Roman Catholicism do battle. Fairy twins try to protect magic, while a Vatican commander has been tasked with annihilating all supernatural creatures on the Emerald Isle. Who will win? And what effect will it have on modern times, particularly for a young graduate student. The stakes are high in this historical fantasy. On the table is the very existence of magic.
Okay, we admit it – we judged a book by its title. Though, it is a pretty awesome one. And the anthology is not about murder and cannibalism. Well, at least, not all of it. This book presents forty short fairy tales, including works from Neil Gaiman and Joyce Carol Oates. Check out how these authors have re-imagined the tales of Cinderella, Snow White, and Rumpelstiltskin. Take a look at some other legends from Russia, Japan, and Vietnam. Just like the original fairy tales, there’s some pretty gruesome and macabre content. But there’s adventure and romance too!

**Maya Gods & Cinderella in the Jazz Age**

*Gods of Jade and Shadow*

by Silvia Moreno-Garcia

This urban fantasy is a variation on *Cinderella*, Mayan mythology, and Mexican folklore, taking place in Mexico during the Jazz Age. Forced to be a maid in her family’s estate, Casiopea Tun spends her days scrubbing floors and caring for her spiteful grandfather. When she opens a hidden chest, she accidentally releases the Mayan God of Death, Hun-Kamé. Together they travel into the underworld to reclaim Hun-Kamé’s throne from his duplicitous brother. Come along for a wild tale with this Roaring Twenties version of Cinderella – except this girl has an attitude.
From the author of *Bird Box* comes a bizarre Old West retelling of *Sleeping Beauty*. Carol suffers from an eerie condition, lapsing into a coma for days on end. To all onlookers, Carol appears to be dead. No breath shows when a mirror is placed under her nose, and she does not react to the outside world. Now, her husband wants to bury her alive and claim her fortune. Will Carol’s true love, a renegade outlaw, make it in time to save her? *Sleeping Beauty* just became a horror novel, playing on everyone’s fear of being buried alive.

It is New York in the 1920s. Prohibition has prompted speakeasies to pop up everywhere, and girls are wearing shorter hemlines and learning to Charleston at secret dance halls. The most captivating of these flappers are the twelve Hamilton sisters. No one knows their real names. Men just call them the “Princesses.” No one knows that they are kept secreted away from the world by their wealthy, tyrannical father in his mansion, never allowed to leave the house. Follow along in this modern reworking of *The Twelve Dancing Princesses*, a fairy tale made famous by the Brothers Grimm. *The Girls at the Kingfisher Club* is available on Hoopla as an audiobook.
Do any of these titles enchant you?

After all, fairy tales are not just for kids.

With Summer Reading 2020 in full digital swing, HCLS suggests that you get lost in one of these classic tales retold. Whether you want to go on a quest or learn about the historical roots of these fantastic stories, there’s always a good book to crack open.

Now, do any of these titles make you want to revisit those classic tales of your youth?

You can check out any of these books with your PINES card. If they are not available, you can place a hold or request from another system.

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