

***Good Night Stories for Rebel Girls* is for people who want something different from fairy tale princesses. Here you'll find the amazing stories of one hundred inspiring women from the past and present.**

We all know how fairy tales go. A beautiful girl waits for a prince to come and rescue her. Then she marries him and lives happily ever after. But what if the girl was clever, creative, brave or strong instead of beautiful? What if she wanted to be an astronaut, a politician, a pirate or a spy instead of a princess? And what if she didn't need a prince to make it happen? That's the idea behind the book *Good Night Stories for Rebel Girls*. It's a book of fairy tales with a difference: all the stories are true.

The book tells the stories of one hundred inspiring women from 1500 BC in the time of Ancient Egypt to the modern day. The magic of the book is in the way it is written. It's not just boring biographies but it's told in the style of fairy tales. Some of the stories begin 'Once upon a time' just like a traditional fairy tale. They paint a picture of the life, dreams and achievements of each of the women and girls.

You probably won't recognise the names of most of the women but, by the time you finish reading, you'll wonder why. Sometimes, it's because people tried to remove them from history. Like Hatshepsut, one of the most successful pharaohs of Egypt. She brought peace and money to Egypt for 25 years. But after her death, her name was removed from government documents – and some of her statues were destroyed – by men who came after her. Other times, it's because a man's name became more famous. For example, Charles Babbage is called the 'father of computers' but a woman, Ada Lovelace, wrote the first computer program.

For many of the others, it's not obvious why we haven't learned about these women before. Society has often rewarded and celebrated the achievements of men more than women. If you close your eyes and imagine a war hero, an architect and an explorer, the picture that comes into your mind is probably of men. If you read the book, you can start to replace those pictures with women of all colours and ages. These women fought for their rights, broke rules and refused to behave the way society expected them to.

One problem with the book, unfortunately, is the title because it suggests it's a book for girls. It's a great idea to celebrate and inspire young girls to show them how powerful they can be. But the stories are just as interesting for boys to read. And it's just as important that boys imagine women as scientists, Formula One race car drivers and presidents.

Not all the women included are 'good girls'. Margaret Thatcher's story is a good example. She was Britain's first female prime minister and it gives one example of why people liked her and one example of why people didn't like her. But people didn't like a lot of things Margaret Thatcher did and the book doesn't make it clear that most people do not see her as a hero. Another woman, Jingū, Empress of Japan, decided to start a war with Korea because of a dream and the writers don't make any comment about this either. Pirates too might seem unusual heroes. They were, after all, dangerous criminals. Although it's good to see girls in a variety of roles, including politicians, pirates and invaders, it would be interesting to have a moral judgement sometimes. If these characters had a bad ending to their story or got what they deserved, it would show that just because they're female, they're not always good people.

There are now two *Rebel Girls* books after the first book sold a million copies in 36 different languages. The authors, Elena Favilli and Francesca Cavallo, raised the money to make the first book from crowdfunding on Kickstarter in 2016. With the help of 13,454 people from 75 countries, they raised \$1 million – the most money ever raised for an original book on Kickstarter. Readers wanted more, so the authors raised another \$866,000. In 2017, they produced a second book with another hundred women's stories.

Good Night Stories for Rebel Girls is the perfect book for reading a bit here and a bit there. But if you're the kind of person who watches a whole series of a TV show in one weekend, you'll probably do the same thing with this book.