

= The Tales of Beedle the Bard =

The Tales of Beedle the Bard is a book of children 's stories by British author J. K. Rowling . There is a storybook of the same name mentioned in Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows , the last book of the Harry Potter series .

The book was originally produced in a limited edition of only seven copies , each handwritten and illustrated by J. K. Rowling . One of them was offered for auction through Sotheby 's in late 2007 and was expected to sell for £ 50 @, @ 000 (US \$ 77 @, @ 000 , ? 69 @, @ 000) ; ultimately it was bought for £ 1 @. @ 95 million (\$ 3 million , ? 2 @. @ 7 million) by Amazon , making the selling price the highest achieved at auction for a modern literary manuscript . The money earned at the auction of the book was donated to The Children 's Voice charity campaign .

The book was published for the general public on 4 December 2008 , with the proceeds going to the Children 's High Level Group .

= = In the Harry Potter series = =

The Tales of Beedle the Bard first appeared as a fictional book in J. K. Rowling 's 2007 Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows , the seventh and final novel of the Harry Potter series . The book is bequeathed to Hermione Granger by Albus Dumbledore , former headmaster of Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry . It is described as a popular collection of Wizarding children 's fairy tales , so that while Ron Weasley is familiar with the stories , Harry Potter and Hermione Granger had not previously heard of them due to their non @-@ magical upbringing .

The book Hermione receives in Dumbledore 's will is a copy of the original edition of the fictional book . It is described as an ancient @-@ looking small book with its binding " stained and peeling in places " . In the novel it is also said the book has a title on its cover , written in embossed runic symbols .

The book acts as the vehicle for introducing the Deathly Hallows . Above the story " The Tale of the Three Brothers " , Hermione Granger finds a strange symbol which later is revealed by Xenophilius Lovegood to be the symbol of the Hallows . The triangle from the symbol represents the Invisibility Cloak , the circle inside the triangle symbolises the Resurrection Stone , and the vertical line represents the Elder Wand .

These three objects are also mentioned in the story itself (see below) , and are said to belong to the Peverell brothers , who are later revealed as being both Voldemort 's and Harry Potter 's ancestors . Towards the end of the novel , Albus Dumbledore also confirms Harry 's connection to the Peverells , and states that the three brothers might in fact have been the creators of the Hallows .

The introduction (written by Rowling) to the publications released in December 2008 mentions that the fictional character Beedle the Bard was born in Yorkshire , lived in the 15th century , and had " an exceptionally luxuriant beard " .

= = Publication history = =

Rowling started writing the book soon after finishing work on the seventh Harry Potter novel . During an interview with her fandom she also stated that she used other books as a source of inspiration for the tales . More specifically , " The Tale of the Three Brothers " , the only story included entirely in The Deathly Hallows , was inspired by Geoffrey Chaucer 's " The Pardoner 's Tale " from The Canterbury Tales .

= = = Handmade edition = = =

Originally The Tales of Beedle the Bard had only been produced in a limited number of seven handmade copies , all handwritten and illustrated by the author herself . The books were bound in brown morocco leather , and decorated with hand @-@ chased silver ornaments and mounted

semiprecious stones by silversmith and jeweller Hamilton & Inches of Edinburgh . Each of the silver pieces represents one of the five stories in the book . Rowling also asked that each of the seven copies be embellished using a different semiprecious stone .

Six of these original handwritten copies were uniquely dedicated and given by Rowling to six people who were most involved with the Harry Potter series . The recipients of these copies were not initially identified . Since then , two of these people have been named . One is Barry Cunningham , Rowling 's very first editor . Another is Arthur A. Levine , editor for Scholastic , the U.S. publisher of the Harry Potter books . Cunningham and Levine had lent their personal copies as part of Beedle the Bard exhibits in December 2008 .

Rowling also decided to create a seventh handwritten copy (distinguished from the others by its moonstone jewellery) to sell at auction in order to raise funds for The Children 's Voice charity campaign .

The idea came really because I wanted to thank six key people who have been very closely connected to the ' Harry Potter ' series , and these were people for whom a piece of jewellery wasn't going to cut it . So I had the idea of writing them a book , a handwritten and illustrated book , just for these six people . And well , if I 'm doing six I really have to do seven , and the seventh book will be for this cause , which is so close to my heart .

= = = Auction = = =

The 157 @-@ page " Moonstone edition " of the book was first put on display prior to bidding on 26 November in New York and on 9 December in London . The book was auctioned 13 December 2007 , at Sotheby 's in London . The starting price was £ 30 @,@ 000 (\$ 62 @,@ 000 , ? 46 @,@ 000) , and originally it was expected to sell for approximately £ 50 @,@ 000 (\$ 103 @,@ 000 , ? 80 @,@ 000) . The closing bid far exceeded all prior projections , as ultimately the book was purchased by a representative from London fine art dealers Hazlitt Gooden and Fox on behalf of Amazon , for a total of £ 1 @.@ 95 million (\$ 3 @.@ 98 million , ? 2 @.@ 28 million) . This was the highest purchase price for a modern literary manuscript at that date . The money earned at auction later was donated by Rowling to The Children 's Voice charity campaign .

Sotheby 's printed a forty @-@ eight @-@ page promotional catalogue for the auction . The catalogue featured illustrations from the book , as well as comments from J. K. Rowling on The Tales of Beedle the Bard . The catalogue was sold as a collector 's item , and the money from the sales also has been donated to The Children 's Voice .

= = = Public editions = = =

On 31 July 2008 , it was announced The Tales of Beedle the Bard would also be made available for the public , in both standard and collector 's editions . The book was published by Children 's High Level Group and printed and distributed by Bloomsbury , Scholastic , and Amazon.com. The decision was taken due to disappointment among Harry Potter fans after it had initially been announced a wide public release was not intended .

Similarly to Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them and Quidditch Through the Ages (two other books mentioned in the Harry Potter novels that have also been printed) the standard and collector 's editions of The Tales of Beedle the Bard feature commentary and footnotes from Albus Dumbledore , headmaster of Hogwarts and one of the main characters of the series . The standard edition also includes illustrations reproduced from the handwritten edition auctioned in December 2007 and the introduction by the author . The limited collector 's edition features ten illustrations by J.K. Rowling not included in the standard edition or the original handcrafted edition , as well as an exclusive reproduction of J.K. Rowling 's handwritten introduction , and other miscellaneous objects such as replica gemstones and an emerald ribbon .

The book , released on 4 December 2008 , was published in the United Kingdom and Canada by Bloomsbury , while the US edition was published by Scholastic , and the limited collector 's edition of the book , available in all three countries , by Amazon . The limited edition retailed for £ 50 (\$ 100 ,

? 100) , and around 100 @ , @ 000 copies have been printed . The book has been translated into 28 languages . Profits from the sale of the book were offered to the Children 's High Level Group . Initial sale estimates were roughly £ 4 million (\$ 7 @ . @ 6 million , ? 4 @ . @ 7 million) ; as of January 2010 an estimated £ 11 million (\$ 17 million , ? 13 million) were generated from sales for the charity .

= = Synopsis = =

= = = Overview = = =

Rowling wrote five stories for the book . One , " The Warlock 's Hairy Heart " , is not mentioned in Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows ; three others , " The Wizard and the Hopping Pot " , " The Fountain of Fair Fortune " , and " Babbitty Rabbitty and her Cackling Stump " , receive cursory attention . " The Tale of the Three Brothers " is the only story also included entirely in The Deathly Hallows .

= = = " The Wizard and the Hopping Pot " = = =

This story is about the legacy of an old man who , in his generosity , used his pot to brew magical potions and antidotes for other people when they needed his help . Upon his death , he leaves all his belongings to his only son , who has none of the virtues his father had . After his father 's death , the son finds the pot and a single slipper inside it together with a note from his father that reads , " In the fond hope , my son , that you will never need it " .

Bitter for having nothing left but a pot , the son closes the door on every person who asks for his help . Each time he does so , the pot takes on the symptoms of the ones who ask for help , it starts disturbing the son and prevents him from having any peace of mind . This continues until the son finally gives up and provides aid to the town . Upon doing this , the pot 's ailments are removed one by one and the son 's ordeal finally ends one day when the slipper he received from his father falls out of the pot ; he puts the slipper on the pot 's foot and the two walk off into the sunset .

= = = " The Fountain of Fair Fortune " = = =

In this story , there is a fountain where once per year , one person may bathe to have his or her problems answered . This is how three witches meet . The first witch , Asha , suffers from an incurable disease . The second , Altheda , endures poverty and powerlessness due to a robbery . The third , Amata , is distraught after being left by her beloved . The three witches decide to try to reach the fountain together but along the way , a knight , Sir Luckless , also joins them .

On their path to the fountain , they face three challenges . The first involves a giant worm that demands " proof of [their] pain " . The second , a steep slope where they have to bring the " fruit of their labours " . The third challenge , crossing a river , requires them to pay with " the treasure of [their] past " . Amata passes the challenge by using magic to withdraw the memories of her ex @ - @ lover and drop them into the water .

At the fountain , Asha collapses from exhaustion . To save her , Altheda brews an invigorating potion that also cures Asha of her disease and need of the fountain . Altheda realises that her skills are a means to earn money , so she also no longer needs the fountain . Amata realises that washing away her regret for her lover removed her need as well . Sir Luckless bathes in the water , after which he flings himself at Amata 's feet and asks for " her hand and her heart " which she happily gives . Everyone gets an answer to his or her problem , unaware that the fountain held no magical power at all .

= = = " The Warlock 's Hairy Heart " = = =

The story is about a young and handsome warlock who decides to never fall in love , so he uses Dark Arts to prevent himself from doing so . His family , hoping he will change , does nothing . However , one day , he hears two servants whispering about him not having a wife , so he decides to find a talented , rich , and beautiful witch and marry her to gain everyone 's envy .

He meets that girl the next day . Though the girl is both " fascinated and repelled " , the warlock persuades her to come to a dinner feast at his castle . During the feast , she tells him that she needs to know he has a heart . The warlock shows her his beating hairy heart inside a crystal casket in his dungeon . The witch begs him to put it back inside himself . After the warlock does so , she embraces him . However , being disconnected from its body for so long , his heart has developed savage tastes as it has degenerated into an animalistic state . And so he is driven to take by force a truly human heart . He tears out the witch 's heart to replace his own , but finding that he cannot magic the hairy heart back out of his chest , he cuts it out with a dagger . Thus he and the maiden both die , with him holding both hearts in his hands .

= = = " Babbitty Rabbitty and her Cackling Stump " = = =

This story is about a king who wants to keep all magic to himself . To do this he needs to solve two problems : he must capture and imprison all of the sorcerers in the kingdom and he has to learn magic . He creates a " Brigade of Witch Hunters " and calls for an instructor in magic . Only a " cunning charlatan " with no magical ability responds . The charlatan proves himself with a few simple tricks and begins to ask for jewellery and money to continue teaching . However , Babbitty , the king 's washerwoman , laughs at the king one day as he attempts to do magic with an ordinary twig . This causes the king to demand the charlatan join him in a public demonstration of magic and warns that the charlatan will be beheaded if anyone laughs . The charlatan later witnesses Babbitty performing magic in her house . He threatens to expose her if she does not assist him . She agrees to hide and help the demonstration .

During the performance , the brigade captain asks the king to bring his dead hound back to life . Because Babbitty cannot use magic to raise the dead , the crowd thinks the previous acts were tricks . The charlatan exposes Babbitty , accusing her of blocking the spells . Babbitty flees into a forest and disappears at the base of an old tree . In desperation , the charlatan states that she has turned " into a crab apple " and has the tree cut down .

As the crowd departs , the stump starts cackling and makes the charlatan confess . The stump cackles again , demanding the king never hurt a wizard again , and build a statue of Babbitty on the stump to remind him of his foolishness . The king agrees and heads back to the palace . Afterwards , a " stout old rabbit " with a wand in its teeth hops out from a hole beneath the stump and leaves the kingdom .

= = = " The Tale of the Three Brothers " = = =

The story is about three brothers who , travelling together , reach a treacherous river . They make a magical bridge over the river . Halfway across the bridge , they meet the personification of Death who is angry for losing three potential victims . He pretends to be impressed by them and grants each a wish as a reward . The oldest brother asks for an unbeatable dueling wand , so Death gives him the Elder Wand . The middle brother asks for the ability to resurrect the dead , so Death gives him the Resurrection Stone . The youngest brother doesn 't trust Death and asks for a way to stop Death from following him , so Death reluctantly gives him his Cloak of Invisibility . Afterwards , the brothers go their separate ways .

The oldest brother , bragging about his powerful wand , is robbed of it and murdered while he is asleep . The middle brother uses his ability to bring back the woman he loved , who died before he could marry her . However , she is not fully alive and is full of sorrow . He kills himself to join her . As for the youngest brother , Death never manages to find him , as he stays hidden under his Cloak . Many years later , the brother removes his cloak and gives it to his son . Pleased with his achievements , he greets Death as an old friend and chooses to leave with him as equals .

= = Reception = =

Sotheby 's deputy director Dr. Philip W. Errington described the handmade edition as " one of the most exciting pieces of children 's literature " to have passed through the auction house . After buying the book , Amazon also released a review , describing it as " an artifact pulled straight out of a novel " .

The Times reviewed the published book favourably , calling the tales " funny , sinister , wise and captivating " and likening them to the Brothers Grimm . The Telegraph reviewed it unfavourably , noting that they " would be unremarkable were it not for the body of work that lies behind it " and that there was " an element of padding to make it a respectable length " .

= = Live show = =

A live puppet show of The Fountain of Fair Fortune and The Tale of the Three Brothers is presented daily at the Diagon Alley expansion of The Wizarding World of Harry Potter at Universal Studios Florida .