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# Fair, Brown & Trembling: An Irish Cinderella Story



## Synopsis

Three sisters live in a castle high among Erin's green hills. Fair and Brown go to church every Sunday wearing new dresses and leave their beautiful younger sister, Trembling, behind to cook. Then an old henwife comes to visit one Sunday morning, offering to repay Trembling for her kindness in the past. Before she knows it, Trembling is dressed in a lily-white gown and shamrock-green shoes, riding a milk-white mare to church. For the next two Sundays, Trembling stands at the church door in a new and more splendid gown -- a vision of loveliness to turn the head of every prince from far and wide . . . With her airy landscapes and funny detail work, Jude Daly has fashioned a charming variation on the old story.

## Book Information

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Hardcover: 32 pages

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Age Range: 3 - 7 years

Grade Level: Preschool - 2

## Customer Reviews

Daly's (Gift of the Sun) lush, pastoral paintings add depth and charm to a Cinderella variant folktale from the Emerald Isle. In this version, Trembling is the overworked and shunned younger sibling (not stepsister) of snooty twosome Fair and Brown. And rather than sport their finery for a royal ball, the young ladies (and all the gals in the land) vie to catch a husband by looking their most stunning at Sunday Mass. Enter an old henwife in the role of fairy godmother, and Trembling is soon the gorgeous and mysterious woman standing outside the church whom everyone in the congregation longs to meet. Though anonymous Trembling flees on her brilliant steed, a smitten Prince Emania

manages to snatch her tiny blue slipper as she rides away. A search for the slipper's owner ensues, but in a feisty twist, Prince Emania must also fight off competing suitors. The well-paced and pleasing blend of fresh and familiar elements will capture fairy tale fans anew. Daly provides willowy, stylized characters with distinct facial features, suggesting the work of Petra Mathers. Set in an unfettered green countryside, a playful black cat appearing on every spread, the illustrations give this oft-retold story a look both ethereal and rustic. Ages 3-7. (Sept.) Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Kindergarten-Grade 4-Daly's retelling is enhanced by the lusciously colored, somewhat fey illustrations. However, it is diminished by language that is less rich than that in Joseph Jacobs's version of the tale. In that telling, for instance, when Trembling is ready to go to church, the henwife who serves as the fairy-godmother figure tells her, "I have a honey-bird here to sit on your right shoulder and a honey-finger to put on your left." The next week, when the jealous sisters, Fair and Brown, want to equal the strange lady's splendor they, "would give no peace till they had two dresses like the robes of the strange lady; but honey-birds and honey-fingers were not to be found." In Daly's telling there are no honey-birds or honey-fingers at all, and the sisters' dilemma is simply that, "such fine cloth was nowhere to be found in the land of Erin." While readers may not know what a honey-bird is, they can instinctively surmise that it's a grand, desirable, and probably magical thing. It's the glimmer of the mysterious that is most missing from Daly's serviceable words-that, and several pages of plot that detail the history of Brown and Fair's continuing perfidy after Trembling's marriage. Though attractively illustrated, the storytelling vitiates the desirability of this book for folklore collections. Miriam Lang Budin, Chappaqua Public Library, NY Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc.

I received the book in excellent condition. I used it along with the "Irish Cinderlad" ( Shirley Climo) for a class read aloud for Read Across America. Student seem to enjoy the story and the pictures. Fifth grade class so I thought a little "Irish" comparative storytelling was appropriate.

I bought this book for a unit on Cinderella. It is a great diverse version of the classic Cinderella!! Students love the comparisons!

This is the second of this book that I have purchased. It is a fantastic Cinderella story

Fast delivery! Perfect for my Cinderella Unit.

My daughter's grandparents brought this home from Ireland for her, and we've been giving it as a gift to others ever since. Wonderful illustrations, with the cinderella story told just differently enough to be of fresh appeal.

In this Cinderella "spin-off", Trembling is the one at home cooking and cleaning whilst her two sisters, Fair and Brown, go to church. When the old henwife tells Trembling that she ought to have gone also, Trembling asks how she could in her old clothes. For three Sundays, the henwife dresses Trembling, sending her off on a different, beautiful horse each time. Her instructions are to not go into the church but to stand in the doorway and as soon as mass ends, to come home. Of course, the men soon take notice. How will a prince claim her as his own? What happens to Fair and Brown? You'll have to read to find out. A great addition to your Cinderella collection. Well-written and illustrated.

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