The characters and images of fairy tales have cast a spell over adults and children for centuries. These fantastic stories have travelled across cultural borders, and been passed on from generation to generation, ever-changing, renewed with each re-telling. Few forms of literature have greater power to enchant us and rekindle our imagination than a fairy tale. But what is a fairy tale? Where do they come from and what do they mean? What do they try and communicate to us about morality, sexuality, and society? Fairy Tale: A Very Short Introduction draws on both classics and modern-day realizations in order to define a genre and evaluate a literary form that keeps shifting through time and history.