



The Birthday of the Infanta

By Oscar Wilde

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The Birthday of the Infanta By Oscar Wilde

The Birthday of the Infanta is a heart-wrenching tale about inner and outer beauty. Dedicated to Mrs. William H Grenfell of Taplow Court (Lady Desborough) The Birthday of the Infanta is about a hunchbacked dwarf, found in the woods by courtiers of the King of Spain. The hunchback's father sells him to the palace for the amusement of the king's daughter, the Infanta, on her twelfth birthday. Her birthday is the only time she is allowed to mingle with other children, and she much enjoys the many festivities arranged to mark it, especially the Dwarf's performance. He dances, as he did in the woods, thoroughly unaware of his audience's laughing at him. She insists on his performing a second time for her after dinner. The Dwarf mistakenly believes that the Infanta must love him, and tries to find her, passing through a garden where the flowers, sundial, and fish ridicule him, but birds and lizards do not. He finds his way inside the palace, and searches through rooms hoping to find the Infanta, but finding them all devoid of life. Eventually, he stumbles upon a grotesque monster that mimicks his every move in one of the rooms. When the realization comes that it was his own reflection, he knows then that the Infanta did not love him, but was laughing out of mockery, and he falls to the floor, kicking and screaming. The Infanta and the other children chance upon him and, imagining it to be another act, laugh and applaud while his flailing grows more and more weak before he stops moving altogether. When the Infanta demands more entertainment, a servant tries to rouse him, only to discover that he has died of a broken heart. Telling this to the Infanta, she speaks the last line of the story "For the future, let those who come to play with me have no hearts."

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Editorial Review

From [Booklist](#)

Gr. 5[^]-8. Russell, a well-known name in the comics-graphic novel universe, has made several other graphic novels out of well-known stories. Here, he transmutes Wilde's darkly sardonic tale, using much of Wilde's abundantly rich language. The Infanta, on her twelfth birthday, is a spoiled princess who resembles the famous Velazquez painting "Las Meninas." Her father, the king, still broods over her mother's death, but for the birthday celebration, dancing bears and Gypsies and jousts are brought out for her entertainment. So also is a little dwarf (who looks like the cartoon version of Quasimodo as a boy), whose dancing amuses the princess and the crowd, for he is misshapen and ugly. The princess gives him the white rose from her hair, and he searches the palace when she departs, looking for her. But the sight of himself in a mirror breaks his heart, and he dies. "For the future let those who come to play with me have no hearts," proclaims the princess when she learns that he died of a broken heart. The art, in classic comics-graphic novel style, has the text in word balloons and the full-color pictures in frames, with expressive line and acid color, full of visual references. Older children will appreciate the edgy story and the mouth-filling language as well as the format. *GraceAnne A. DeCandido*

Review

"I cannot praise these books enough. Perfect for a child's library although I suspect most adults will find them irresistible for themselves."

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Michael Madden:

Why don't make it to be your habit? Right now, try to prepare your time to do the important act, like looking for your favorite reserve and reading a book. Beside you can solve your problem; you can add your knowledge by the reserve entitled The Birthday of the Infanta. Try to make the book The Birthday of the Infanta as your good friend. It means that it can to be your friend when you feel alone and beside regarding course make you smarter than ever. Yeah, it is very fortunated for you. The book makes you more confidence because you can know everything by the book. So , let us make new experience and also knowledge with this book.

Alice Bowers:

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Roxie Lloyd:

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