



# The Grateful Dead Tales From Around the World (SurLaLune Fairy Tale Series)

*Heidi Anne Heiner, Gordon Hall Gerould*

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The Grateful Dead folktale type can be traced back at least 2,000 years. The tales of earthly rewards received for providing decent burial to the dead are both didactical and entertaining, with some of the earliest examples appearing in scripture and mythology. In modern times where laws heavily regulate burial practices, the tales have lost much of their social impact, but they still provide entertaining insight into past times.

In 1908, Gordon Hall Gerould wrote a monograph—*The Grateful Dead: The History of a Folk Story*—in which he discussed over 100 variants of the tale, a remarkable and diverse piece of scholarship that has received higher recognition in recent years. The full text of Gerould's work is provided in this volume.

This collection also includes over 45 folktales and ballads with Grateful Dead motifs.

In addition, the full text of four English plays that use the motif are provided, including:

- *The Old Wives' Tale* by George Peele
- *The Fatal Dowry* by Nathan Field & Philip Massinger
- *The Fair Penitent* by Nicholas Rowe
- *The Insolvent: or Filial Piety, A Tragedy* by Aaron Hill

Other pieces of scholarship and miscellanea are offered, too, including an English translation of *The History of Oliver and Arthur*, a fifteenth century French romance.

When combined in one convenient volume, these materials provide a fascinating overview of an often neglected folktale type for both the formal scholar and armchair enthusiast.

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