

To my malevolence—I am Nightmare

yet you need me. Satin-draped beauty, glass shoes, whistling dwarves—all window-dressings. New fathers, mothers dare not forget me. Ignore fairies, godmothers; cut or keep braids; sleep one hundred years or eight hours; spin straw into gold, weave invisible thread into emperor's clothes: without me, all are naught. Capricious old biddies with lace doilies and elderberries glean lessons from me. Crazy scientists, hustlers—all hoist their cups. Like oil to an engine, my ilk helps bullfrogs find matrimonial bliss, teaches arrogant folk humility, makes it likely tears will heal blindness.