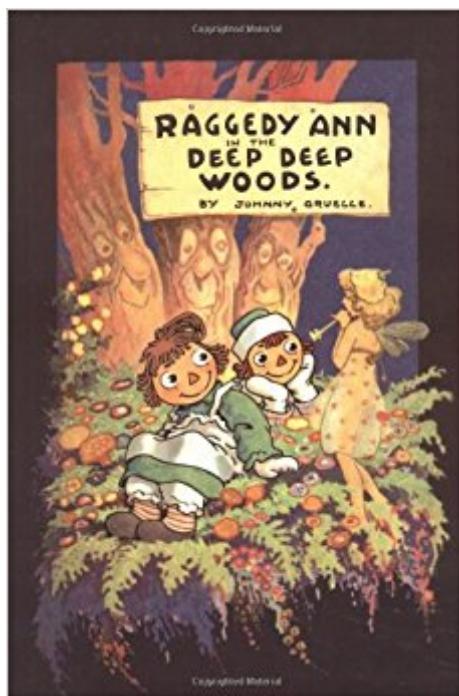


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# Raggedy Ann In The Deep Deep Woods: Classic Edition



## **Synopsis**

It's a wonderful day in the deep, deep woods -- and full of surprises too! Join Raggedy Ann and Andy as they frolic with their woodland friends and use their magical wishing pebble to make everyone's dreams come true. The Raggedys grant one wish after another -- from a magical lollipop tree to ice-cream parties for one and all. They even help old Doctor Lewellen Stork make a very special delivery of four weeny, teeny baby chipmunks to the chipmunk family. But the excitement isn't over just yet. When Raggedy Ann and Andy stumble upon a fairy ring, they learn about the most precious wish of all. Rejoice in the world of the kindhearted Raggedys as they wander through the enchanting land of the deep, deep woods. Full of magical creatures and magical wishes, this whimsical tale has delighted readers for many years. First published in 1930 and restored to its original condition with magnificent full-color artwork, Raggedy Ann in the Deep Deep Woods has been one of the all-time Raggedy Ann favorites. Fans will be certain this timeless treasure is a wish come true.

## **Book Information**

Age Range: 5 - 8 years

Series: Raggedy Ann

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## **Customer Reviews**

In Simon & Schuster's continuing program of Raggedy Ann reissues, the redheaded dolls go on a wish-granting spree in Raggedy Ann in the Deep Deep Woods by Johnny Gruelle. When their journey leads them to a group of forest fairies, they learn a lesson. The volume features the original

Johnny Gruelle (1880-1938) was an extremely talented cartoonist, illustrator, and storyteller. He had already written and illustrated a book of original fairy tales before creating the first two Raggedy books, *Raggedy Ann Stories* and *Raggedy Andy Stories*. *Raggedy Ann*, heroine of the first, was the favorite doll of his daughter, Marcella, who died after a long illness at the age of thirteen. It was from her that Johnny drew inspiration to eventually create over forty *Raggedy Ann* and *Andy* books, all capturing his unique vision of childhood. Many of the stories, illustrations, and adventures in the *Raggedy Ann* storybooks were based on Marcella's childhood adventures. *Raggedy Ann in the Deep Deep Woods* was one of Johnny's early adventure storybooks and has become one of his most enduring.

These were the stories my Dad read to me as a kid. They ought to be available to a new generation of children via all the major B&M bookstores. But as someone who once worked in a bookstore for five years in college back in the '90s, I observed even then that these works were never stocked. As a result, too few children are exposed to Johnny Gruelle's timeless classics. These are incredibly imaginative and whimsical stories, with illustrations completely unlike anything produced by anyone else (meaning much better than most children's illustrators/cartoonists' today). But more than that, these books convey values of kindness, compassion and the Golden Rule. Every children's librarian should stock Gruelle's books and every major bookstore should carry at least some of these classics. Back in the '70s and even into the mid '80s the dolls were ubiquitous. By the '90s, however, the dolls and the stories seemed to fall off the map. It would seem that because Disney never gained control of these classic characters, they have fallen out of the mainstream over the past 20 years, in particular. That's a real shame! I wish the Gruelle estate/hometown would work harder to publicize these works to a new generation.

When I mentioned to my niece that I would like to bake a raggedy ann cake for her 4 year-old's daughter's birthday, she confessed to me that my grand-niece had not yet discovered *Raggedy Ann*. I was astounded. I remembered that my aunt had made my first daughter a *Raggedy Ann* doll and how treasured it became. So I immediately ordered a copy of "*Raggedy Ann in the Deep Deep Woods.*" from to send to my grand niece. I was delighted! It was the same edition I had loved as a child. It had the pictures I remembered so well of lollipop plants and cookie flowers. Best of all I was reminded of the message of the book: "Be kind, be unselfish, be a good friend, have a big heart,

and always believe in the magical quality of life." Raggedy Ann's Deep Woods are filled with fairies and talking animals who reinforce this message. The last lines of the book are spoken by the fairy Queen,... "Almost every unselfish wish in the world comes true, whether there are fairies about or not!" Neither my girls or I ever believed the fairies were real, but the message stayed with us. Just a side note: I was thrilled to learn that Johnny Gruelle's son had moved to the mountains of N.C. where I grew up and that he was continuing his father's work. I was even more thrilled when my parents introduced him to me and my daughter. He immediately insisted on drawing four-year-old Laura a framable autographed picture of Raggedy Ann and Andy sitting by a stream making their magical wishes. Hurricane Ivan blew away the picture we had treasured for 35 years. But when I read once again the book about Raggedy Ann and her Candy heart it brought back a flood of magical memories that I would wish for any child.

Good copy

My seven year old loved this book. He's read it twice.

Not that very long ago, it was fairly common, especially among the middle and upper Anglo-American classes, for parents in the United States to entertain their young children with pleasant stories of elves, goblins, and fairies. Though ultimately derived from European sources, these were not the fairy tales of Perrault, Grimm, Anderson and Lang, but looser, sometimes spontaneous stories explaining natural phenomena such as rainbows, autumn foliage, snow flakes, or spring flowers. These fairy stories, some which also came from immigrant European grandparents, were also a part of the larger American media culture, and books on the subject, such as 1951's 'The Golden Books Treasury of Elves and Fairies,' could easily be found in libraries and kindergarten classrooms across the country. In addition to fireside and classroom fairy songs (such as 'White Coral Bells') and widely anthologized children's poems like James Whitcomb Riley's 'Little Orphan Annie' and 'The Pixy People,' there were an abundance of books like Johnny Gruelle's 'Raggedy Ann in the Deep Deep Woods' (1930), the Oz books of L. Frank Baum, Ruth Plumly Thompson, and John R. Neill, and the 16 Brownie books of Palmer Cox. Also widely available were the equally popular 'flower fairy' picture book series by Cicely Mary Barker. Even the Brownies division of the Girl Scouts of America reflected the fairy mythology in its literature: to see a helpful brownie, a young girl need only look into a pond or stream under a full moon, and the brownie--in fact the young girl's own reflection--would magically appear. During the first half of the 20th century,

Santa Claus was commonly depicted as surrounded by toy-making elves with pointed ears in his North Pole estate, and knee-hugging, green or red Christmas pixies were common holiday toys and tree ornaments. Early 20th century Halloween post cards imported from Germany depicted the natural world as a place teeming with mischief-making boogies, goblins, and elves of every shape and color. Most American children were familiar with the tooth fairy, and the Sandman, who brought sleep to children on a nightly basis, was a kind of fairy too. By the second half of the 20th century, however, America was rapidly moving away from its agricultural roots and the romantic sensibility that had dominated the arts for generations and given rise to these tales and images. By the end of the 1950s, most children were still familiar with the Disney film interpretations of the 'Snow White' (1938) and 'Cinderella' (1950) tales, and recognized Tinkerbell, at the opening of each segment of 'The Wonderful World of Disney,' as a fairy, if not as the single fairy character present in Disney's adaptation of J. M. Barrie's 'Peter Pan' (1951). Disney continued to keep fairies before the public, producing movies like 'Sleeping Beauty,' 'Darby O'Gill and the Little People' (both 1959) and 'The Gnome Mobile' (1967). In 1960s television programs as diverse as 'Bonanza' (1959-1973), 'Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea' (1964-1968), and 'Bewitched' (1964-1972), leprechaun and elf figures were prominently featured, though those on 'Bonanza' were eventually revealed to be dwarf actors perpetrating a hoax. In the advertising world, elves sold everything from Keebler cookies and Coca-Cola to Bacardi Rum. Johnny Gruelle's beautifully written 'Raggedy Ann in the Deep Deep Woods' (1930) is a pure, relatively early product of this era, and as delightful now as it was at the time of its release. As its story begins, Raggedy Ann and Raggedy Andy are adventuring in the deep woods, a world of "fairies and everything," a place where every creature--whether doll, animal, or elf--helps all others on principal and enjoys bringing delight to anyone encountered. Gruelle immediately pulls the reader into Raggedy Ann's and Raggedy Andy's lovely and colorful fantasy world, which, in mood, is the kind of environment that many parents in the days before television attempted to provide for their very young children. The idea in those not-so-distant times was to help children see the world as a warm, fantastic, and cooperative place bursting with potential, where envy, selfishness, bad manners, and aggression are plainly wrong and readily disarmed by love, understanding, and tenderness. Raggedy Ann carries a magic Wishing Pebble, which she constantly uses to bring happiness and material satisfaction to needy or less fortunate others. Raggedy Ann and Andy set a good example by being thoughtful, attentive sweethearts to one another, but everyone they meet--whether owl, rabbit, bee, or bear--or fairy, elf, or gnome--comes in for their kindly attention, politeness, and appreciation. Raggedy Ann and Andy are curious and enthusiastic, and only capable of seeing the good and the positive potential in the world around them. Thus, in

every way 'Raggedy Ann in the Deep Deep Woods' promotes solid Christian values of charity, kindness, and faith in the decent hearts and intentions of others. Every child deserves to be exposed to this world at least briefly. Gruelle's remarkable, lollipop-colored illustrations of the anthropomorphic fairyland, which nonetheless represent the book's reality principle, are perfectly fused with the text and add enormously to the book's power.'Raggedy Ann in the Deep Deep Woods' is an all-audiences volume which will thrill children, parents, educators, and those cynical individuals who have lost their way in the world and their faith in themselves.

Raggedy Ann and Andy...just looking at the art makes me nostalgic for those times long ago when my folks would add another Ann or Beloved Belindy book to my collection. Glad to have this one back.

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