



# The Birthday of the Infanta

*Oscar Wilde*

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## **The Birthday of the Infanta** Oscar Wilde

The Birthday of the Infanta by Oscar Wilde. Oscar Fingal O'Flahertie Wills Wilde (1854–1900) was an Irish author, playwright and poet. After writing in different forms throughout the 1880s, he became one of London's most popular playwrights in the early 1890s. Today he is remembered for his epigrams, his novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, his plays, as well as the circumstances of his imprisonment and early death.

"The Birthday of the Infanta" is a historical fiction short story for children by the Irish author Oscar Wilde. It was first published in the 1891 anthology *House of Pomegranates*, which also includes "The Young King", "The Fisherman and his Soul" and "The Star-Child".

The action of "The Birthday of the Infanta" takes place in Spain at an unspecified point in the past. It is the twelfth birthday of the Infanta, the only daughter, and only child, of the King of Spain. For her entertainment, an ugly young dwarf dancer is brought to the court. The Dwarf is completely unaware of how hideous he looks and does not realize that the reason that others laugh in his presence is because they are mocking his appearance. When the Dwarf sees his own reflection for the first time in his life, the consequences are severe.

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