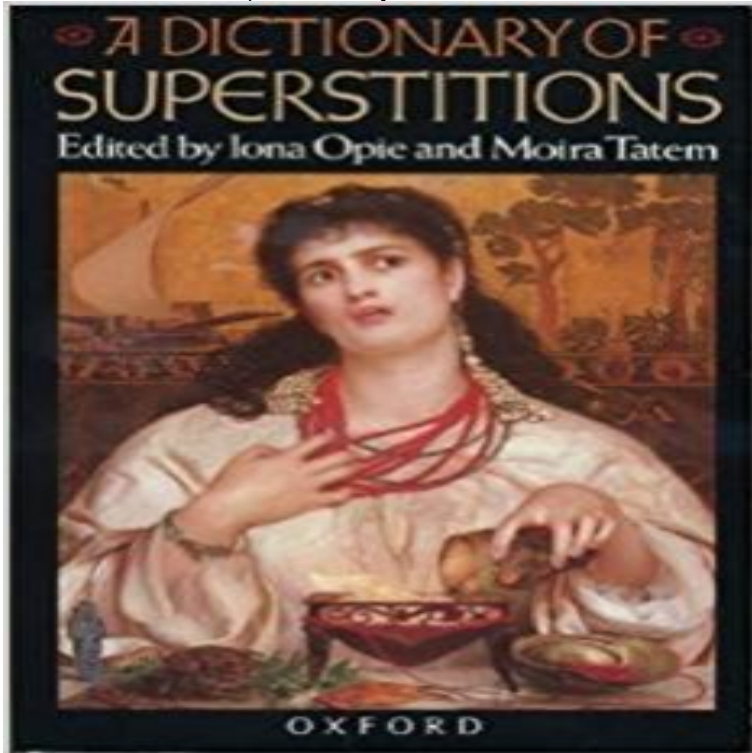


A Dictionary of Superstitions



Is it good or bad luck to mention a pig to a fisherman? What does it portend when you break a double-yolked egg? How many frogs do you need to cure whooping cough? Ranging from the familiar to the bizarre, and including everything from spells and omens to rituals and taboos, this delightfully informative dictionary covers a wide array of popular superstitions, touching on virtually every aspect of human culture. They embrace family life and the lore of farmers, sailors, miners, and actors; offer advice on the signs to observe when contemplating a journey or a marriage; reveal the significance of animals, plants, stones, colors, food and drink, the elements, and heavenly bodies; and outline the precautions to be taken after a death in the house or during a thunderstorm. Each entry is arranged alphabetically according to its central idea or object, and illustrated with a selection of chronologically ordered quotations that indicate the history and development of each belief. Superstitions have never before been treated in such depth or on such a scale. An entertaining volume for anyone curious about the beliefs of the past, *A Dictionary of Superstitions* also makes a valuable contribution to the study of folklore, providing the first systematic account of beliefs that form an integral part of our social life.

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