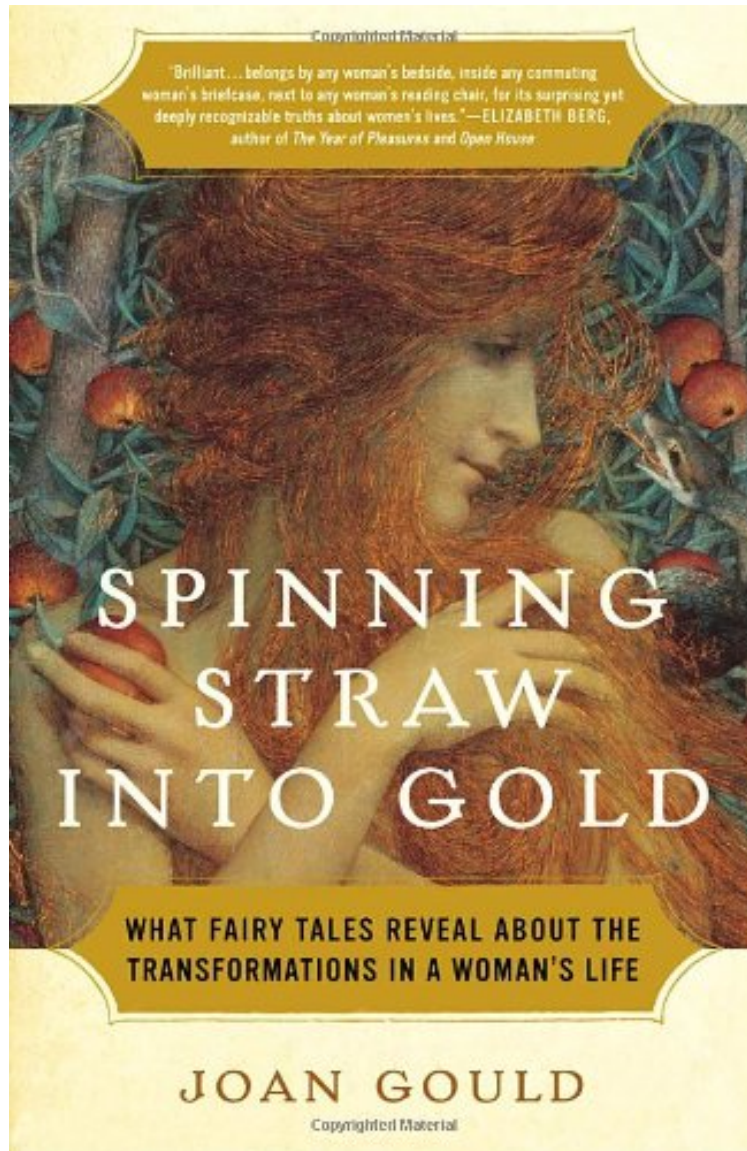


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## Spinning Straw into Gold: What Fairy Tales Reveal About the Transformations in a Woman's Life

Joan Gould

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0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Delightfully Well Researched Topic!!By erin danielleWhat a delightfully written book! As a lover of fairy tales, I found this to be both brilliantly researched and witfully penned. Gould is sterling in her observations and insights of the transformations of women. I would recommend this book to all lovers of the fairy tale as well as women in general!0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Excellent book for readersBy CJMI originally found this book at the library and loved it. I don't normally buy books, because I read a great deal and don't collect books. This book I had to buy because I will reread it many times so I wanted my own copy. It has provided a great depth and insight into my reading. It also has given me a better understanding of female roles in our society and culture and how we're conditioned to think and act as we do. Highly recommend.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Insiteful womens issuesBy bethinterpretation of fairystories which is useful- especially to women , but also to men.Good start place to why stories are useful, but how they have been changed to suit the state of the people they are told to and the social climate

Whats your favorite fairy tale? Whether its Cinderella, Beauty and the Beast, Hansel and Gretel, or another story, your answer reveals something significant about you, your experiences, and your soul. In this penetrating book, Joan Gould brings to the surface the hidden meanings in fairy tales and myths, and illuminates what they can tell you about the stages in your own life. As Gould explores the transformations that women go through from youth to old ageleaving home and mother, the first experience of sexuality, the surprising ambivalence of marriage, the spiritual work required by menopause and agingher keen observations will enrich your awareness of your inner life.Full of archetypal figures known to us all, *Spinning Straw into Gold* also includes stories from the lives of ordinary women that clarify the insights to be gained from the beloved tales that have been handed down from one generation to the next.

From BooklistThe virginal princess, the ugly stepsister, the wicked witch: through timeless fairy tales and their contemporary adaptations in films and novels, such caricatures have become deeply embedded in the collective consciousness and have helped shape society's standards for feminine beauty and behavior. Assigning them real-life counterparts, Gould examines how such stereotypes influence a woman's life as she moves from maiden to matron to crone through a comprehensive analysis of these familiar storybook characters. If Snow White, Cinderella, and Sleeping Beauty represent a young girl's confrontation of parental authority and cultural expectations, then Rapunzel, Jane Eyre, and Scarlett O'Hara symbolize her coming-of-age, and the tales of Hansel and Gretel and Demeter and Persephone explore ways in which elderly women face their final years and eventual death. In an engaging and erudite analysis of how these metamorphoses have been informed by or reflected in our ancient myths and contemporary mores, Gould reevaluates the personas women adopt in real life and in literature. Carol HaggasCopyright American Library Association. All rights reserved Brilliant . . . belongs by any womans bedside, inside any commuting womans briefcase, next to any womans reading chair, for its surprising yet deeply recognizable truths about womens lives.Elizabeth Berg, author of *The Year of Pleasures* and *Open House*Open Joan Goulds lovely book anywhere and you will find something recognizable, as relevant today as when you were a child. Thats the magic of fairy tales. Be wise, be strong, and grab life like the heroes and heroines in *Spinning Straw into Gold*.Nancy Friday, author of *My Mother, My Self and My Secret Garden*Taking the life of woman through her changes, from maiden to matron to crone, Joan Gould has written a passionate song of praise for life itself. Her book is as nourishing as the fairy tales she treats. Her inspired *Spinning Straw into Gold* rejuvenates us all.Robert Fagles, translator of *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*This is at once a deep yet thoroughly entertaining and enjoyable book.Maggie Scarf, author of *Secrets, Lies, Betrayals and Intimate Partners*From the Inside Flap"What's your favorite fairy tale?" Joan Gould asks in the Introduction to this brilliantly original book about the hidden meanings in fairy tales and what these beloved stories reveal about a woman's life. Whether your answer is "Cinderella" (most women's choice), "Hansel and Gretel," or another tale, your favorite conveys something significant about you, your experiences, and your soul- something perhaps not obvious to outsiders and possibly not entirely clear to you. Throughout this illuminating book, Gould delves into the deeper meanings behind fairy tales and myths-helping you to understand not only what your choice of fairy tale may mean for you, but also what you need to be doing during the three main stages of development: maiden, matron, and crone. "This is a book about women," Gould writes, "specifically about fairy tales and the way they illuminate the metamorphoses at each stage of a woman's life: those shifts in consciousness as well as biology that propel women from one level of being to another." As Gould expertly addresses the transformations many women experience-marriage, childbirth, and widowhood-her keen observations may surprise you, and it is through these revelations, that Gould truly works her magic. The story of Sleeping Beauty allegorizes the role that waiting plays in the attainment of womanhood; "Rapunzel" illuminates a bride's ambivalence toward her impending nuptials; "The Seal Wife" acknowledges a mother's sense of loss of self to the demands of her family. Most poignantly, through the myth of Demeter and Persephone, Gould grapples with the final stage of a woman's life, the unexpected expansion of a woman's spirit in old age. Full ofarchetypal figures known to us all, this wonderfully perceptive work is also populated with narratives from the lives of ordinary women. These personal stories- of Sleeping Beauties who fell asleep in puberty and awoke ten years later to find themselves married to the wrong man, or the right one-illustrate the rich

insights that are to be gained from familiar story figures. Replete with a wealth of wisdom about the private battles and public roles each woman must face in her life, "Spinning Straw into Gold explores the choices, demands, and changes a woman must face every day. "From the Hardcover edition.