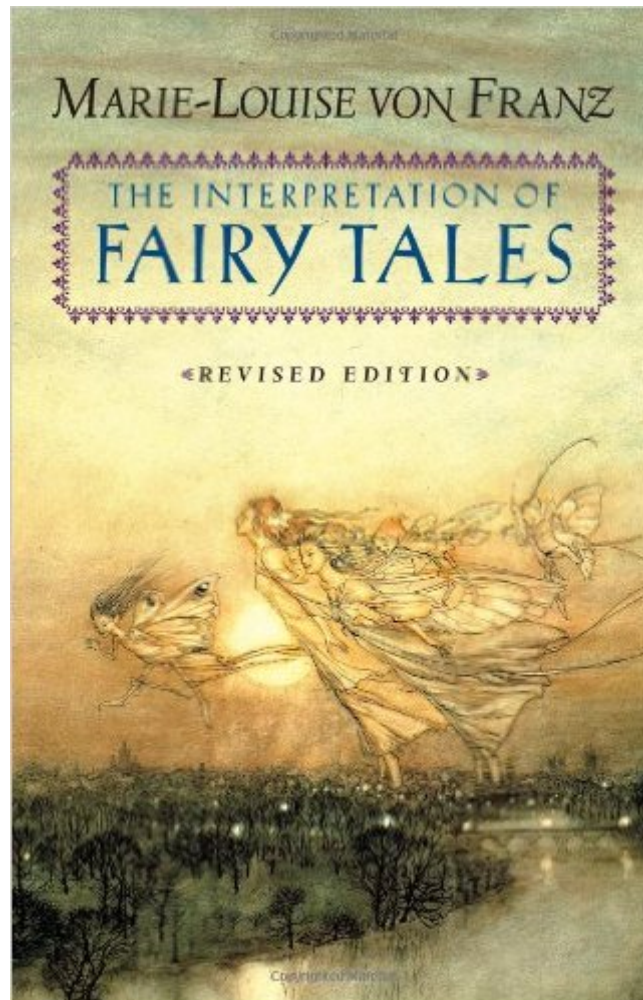


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# The Interpretation Of Fairy Tales



## Synopsis

Of the various types of mythological literature, fairy tales are the simplest and purest expressions of the collective unconscious and thus offer the clearest understanding of the basic patterns of the human psyche. Every people or nation has its own way of experiencing this psychic reality, and so a study of the world's fairy tales yields a wealth of insights into the archetypal experiences of humankind. Perhaps the foremost authority on the psychological interpretation of fairy tales is Marie-Louise von Franz. In this book—originally published as *An Introduction to the Interpretation of Fairy Tales*—she describes the steps involved in analyzing and illustrates them with a variety of European tales, from "Beauty and the Beast" to "The Robber Bridegroom." Dr. von Franz begins with a history of the study of fairy tales and the various theories of interpretation. By way of illustration she presents a detailed examination of a simple Grimm's tale, "The Three Feathers," followed by a comprehensive discussion of motifs related to Jung's concept of the shadow, the anima, and the animus. This revised edition has been corrected and updated by the author.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I want to second the good review already written and add that the thing about Marie-Louise von Franz is her great readability compared with most of Jung, who can at times be very obtuse. All of von Franz's fairy tale studies are valuable and useful, but for the beginning searcher, this IS a good place to start. Von Franz, "the greatest living heir to C.G. Jung," is down-to-earth in her writing, and her examples of interpretations are always crystal clear and practical. She IS a Jungian, but for her Jung is just a tool that she uses -- she is no slave to a method. She freely admits that any

interpretation is just one of many possible ones one might make. Beware! If you like this book and find it useful, you will want to read ALL of her other books.

M.L. von Franz was one of Jung's closest associates and is proclaimed by some to be his intellectual heir. She was a language specialist, in particular ancient languages, and worked with Jung from her early twenties until his death. Von Franz has the knack of going to the essence of Jungian theory without some of the circumlocution that so many complain of in Jung's collected works. Fairy tales were her forte and she believed by analyzing fairy tales in terms of their collective, not their personal meaning, one would connect with the wisdom of the collective. This book provides step-by-step instructions for doing fairy tale analysis according to the method of mythological amplification. She also provides examples of her own analysis of fairy tales. Von Franz believes that all fairy tales are describing one psychic fact--that of the Self. (The Jungian Self includes both the individual self and the collective unconscious). The Self has so much complexity and variation that many different tales are necessary to describe it. This is an important book that describes some of the basic tenets of Jungian psychology in an easy-to-read form. It is one I return to over and over in my exploration of symbolic material.

I've read a number of ML von Franz's interpretations of fairy tales and I've found them all invaluable. While, as ML von Franz states herself, you don't have to agree with every breakdown or rely upon her interpretations as the absolute truth, the stances she takes are fascinating and offer another view of reality, specifically a window into another way of understanding a great deal of our literary past. This particular book works as a strong introductory text to the work that Marie-Louise von Franz has done in her break down of fairy tales.

This book by Marie-Louise Von Franz provides valuable insight into the varied uses of a Jungian approach to psychology. Interpreting fairy tales provides us with skills and techniques to help interpret our own fairy tales, that of our dreams and life stories. Useful for all students of Jung and applicable in our own lives if only for the joy of seeking connections and associations in our own experiences. Ideal for dreamers and philosophers as well as beginner Jungians.

This is the first book by Marie-Louise von Franz that I have ever read. I have been aware of her being a student of Jung but never got around to reading her works. After reading this fascinating and remarkable study on fairy tales, I'll be taking up a search for her other works. "The Interpretation

of Fairy Tales" (up to 200 pages) is an useful work that analyzed fairy tales, starting with the history and theories of fairy tales, an enumerated scrutiny of "The Three Feathers," and finally, examinations of motifs as related to Jung's concepts of shadow, animus, and anima. I have found this work to be quite good introduction to an interpreting fairy tales, and it is quite valuable and an easy reading. It is to be recommended.

The author is a Jungian analyst and a feminist as well. Her knowledge of European folk-tales is extensive, and her analyses are thought-provoking, even if you don't entirely understand Jungian psychology. Well worth comparing with Bruno Bettelheim's , which takes a Freudian approach.

I am into Jung, and Marie-Louise von Franz, being a student of Jung and in his inner circle, was no disappointment. Sometimes the original Jung can be difficult to understand, but I found von Franz to be very clear, not over wordy and to the point. Her humor is a relief after reading hardcore Jung. In other words, some complicated ideas were simplified and clarified, others explained more in detail and the whole book was enjoyable to read. So, if you are into this sort of thing, I would recommend highly this wonderful book.

Dr. Marie-Louise Von Franz was one of Dr. Jung's closest disciples and colleagues. This book is a bit hard to follow on occasion, so great is Dr. Von Franz's erudition, but the insights are worth the investment in time. She's truly a wonder!

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