



# Forgotten Fairy Tales of Brave and Brilliant Girls

Books Reviewed:

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Reviewer:

[Lucy Staines](#) [3]

Editor's Choice:

off

Media type:

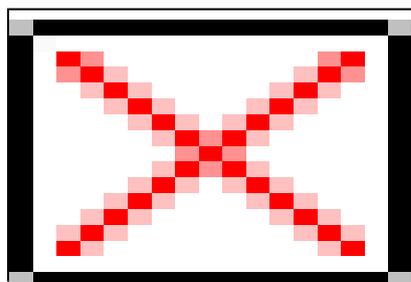
Book

BfK Rating:

4

Fairy tale princesses don't all sit around in towers waiting to be rescued by princes as this lively collection demonstrates. The female leads in these stories (four princesses and another handful of less elevated heroines) are all different but all driven by a desire to make their own decisions and lead their lives on their own terms. In a number of cases this leads to them rescuing princes who have fallen under spells, but don't expect that their happy endings see them walking down the aisle. Indeed, my own favourite, Rose Red, walks out of a palace saying goodbye to friends and family and into a life of adventure: 'For all we know, she is exploring still'.

Even in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and with **Frozen** bringing feminism (or at least a form of it) to Disney, we still need stories like these to balance the weight of tales that define princesses by their beauty and passivity rather than their ability to wield a weapon or tool (the first princess in this book has her own tool belt). As the introduction points out, there are thousands of fairy tales, far more than the ones we know best and which were gathered by those who like the Brothers Grimm have shaped ideas of what fairy tales should be: 'As these tales became famous, they overshadowed all the others? The brave and brilliant girls were hidden from view.' Not so in this story collection, where the girl who, Rapunzel-like, is trapped in a tower manages to dig herself out.



The tellings are accessible? the story is all here ? and fun too and should inspire readers to create their own adventures, both metaphorically and literally. There are illustrations throughout and the added bonus of an introduction by [Kate Pankhurst](#) [4] reminding readers that it's within their power to be as brave and brilliant as the girls in this collection or the girls and women whose stories she tells in her non fiction.

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