



# Tatterhood and Other Tales

*Ethel Johnston Phelps (Editor) , Pamela Baldwin Ford*

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These twenty-five traditional tales come from Asia, Europe, Africa, and the Americas. All the central characters are spirited females—decisive heroes of extraordinary courage, wit, and achievement who set out to determine their own fate. Some of their stories are comic, some adventurous, some eerie, and some magical. *The Chicago Sun-Times* writes: "A sparkling gathering of traditional, yet little-known, tales from all parts of the globe. The female characters. . . manage to outsmart, outdo, and over-power the villains with nerves of steel, cunning minds, and disarming senses of humor."

## Tatterhood and Other Tales Details

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Author : Ethel Johnston Phelps (Editor) , Pamela Baldwin Ford

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# **From Reader Review Tatterhood and Other Tales for online ebook**

## **Emily Turbert says**

I wish I was introduced to this book well before taking a college course in my 30's. These females don't sit idly by waiting for a prince to save them. A quick read (thankfully for my class!) and at times funny, and most definitely thought provoking.

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## **C.J. says**

Wicked good ramble of well-told fairy-tale yarns, diverse enough to explore all manner of episodes, specific and insightful enough to find and see women at the center of those tales. Well worth meandering through.

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## **Audrey Troutt says**

Great collection of positive stories.

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## **Alicia says**

My aunt got this for me when I was just a baby. I'm glad that I had this book growing up. It provided different perspectives whilst I was being brought up in a traditional Catholic environment. Pretty sure my dad would've burnt the book, if he could've foreseen it would give his little girl the crazy notion that she didn't have to be meek and obedient to have value.

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## **CreateEveryday Classroom says**

such a breath of fresh air when it comes to folk story telling.  
empowering women characters.  
the book is worth the purchase just for the story of Tatterhood although you will enjoy many more too

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## **Luisa says**

8/31/16 I was drawn to the title Tatterhood: Feminist Folktales From Around the World by Ehtel Phelps but was a bit disappointed with the contents. The introduction by Gayle Forman was very compelling, but the stories themselves fell short. Phelps researched and retells folktales from around the globe that depict women and girls as strong and capable characters, a contrast from the traditional poised, pretty and well-behaved females like Cinderella and Snow White. Tatterhood, a rebellious princess, saves her beautiful sister by releasing her from a spell and enjoys a happily-ever-after. The women in these stories are not passive

recipients of fate; they take matters into their own hands. Clever Manka was my favorite. The heroines in Tatterhood are unconventional, and their stories interesting. It's the writing itself that needs improvement. Be sure to read the introduction and notes at the end.

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### **Olivia says**

The stories themselves are great, and also not ones I had read before. However, I found many of the retellings somewhat lackluster, and I was also disappointed by how skewed it was towards European folktales, especially those from the British Isles. For better or worse (and I'm going to pretty confidently go with for worse) Americans have access to a better kept catalogue of European folktales than of folktales from anywhere else in the world, and this was even more evident thirty years ago. While I can understand why this may have hindered Phelps, I expected a book from the Feminist Press to do a better job at presenting stories from all over the globe.

In the end, my lack of excitement over Tatterhood is partly because by the time I was able to read, other feminist collections had grown from what Phelps started. I am grateful for Tatterhood, but it will never hold the same place in my heart that it holds for so many for whom it was the first of its kind.

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### **Laura says**

This book was the beginning of my feminist awakening.

It was published in 1978, and I discovered it in the early 1980s on the children's section of my hometown library. I couldn't have been older than 10 or 12. I grew up in a very religious, very conservative, and very traditional home.

Before this book, it had never dawned on me to question why there were fairy tales celebrating the bravery, resourcefulness, and abilities of boys....but not girls.

For reasons I could not articulate at the time, Tatterhood immediately replaced Cinderella as my favorite fairy tale.

And the first step to the path of questioning the world in which I lived had begun.

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### **Jillian says**

I have owned this book since I was a child. This book is full of tales from all over the world and is full of strong female characters. Though these stories may not be widely known to American children, they are thrilling and full of adventure. Full of strong heroines that young girls can look up to, nobody is waiting for a knight in shining armor.

I love this book because as you are reading it, you realize that this is unlike any other collection of tales. The women are strong and capable of doing amazing things.

This book is both traditional and not. The stories are traditional of other cultures, yet many girls aren't accustomed to strong female leads.

I could find this being used during social studies lessons of other cultures. It could also be an interesting lesson used to compare these to perhaps more "traditional stories" with the damsel in distress.

sources say that this book is for grades 7 and up, but I younger students would find these tales entertaining just as much as the older kids.

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### **Sara says**

One of my favorite books as a child!

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### **karenbee says**

[Nerd note: The cover and page count in this listing don't match the copy I borrowed, but I ran into a couple of roadblocks correcting it, so I'm leaving it as is. There are 210 pages in my hardcover copy, the cover matches a "Kindle edition" that's not linked to this one, and the description reads "twelve folk tales" although there are thirteen included in the copy I've got.]

*Tatterhood* is a solid collection of 13 folktales, all of which feature female protagonists, told with a young audience in mind. A few of them aren't as compelling as the rest, but I think that's just because they're not my style. "Tatterhood," "Janet and Tamlin" (the one story I'd already heard), and "Kate Crackernuts" were my favorites.

These stories are written in a way that flows with that simple but compelling fairy tale magic that makes new stories feel old and familiar -- making this an excellent collection of stories for reading aloud at bedtime.

(three-and-a-half stars)

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### **Lily says**

More like 3.5 stars, to be honest. This was a pretty good book, I read it in one evening. It's a small collection of old fairy tales with a more feminist bent to them, and that part I really enjoyed. A couple of the tales were really bizarre, but most had good messages if you're into the whole "looking for a deeper meaning" thing or something that is a good teaching/learning opportunity with your children. There's also a section in the end that spells out some of those deeper meanings a bit, and at the end of each of the fairy tales themselves was a small paragraph explaining where that fairy tale came from and backstory or history needed. In the case of words likely unfamiliar to English readers (such as the tales that are written in Scots) they include a footnote explaining what it means. So while it's not the best collection of fairy tales I've ever seen, and not all the fairy tales are that great, I'd still recommend reading it just for the feminist aspect, especially if you are raising young girls.

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**Maia says**

One of my absolute favorite short story/ multicultural fairy tale books as a child.

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**Sally Rhett says**

One of the best folktale collections I have

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**M.M. Strawberry Reviews says**

I have mixed feelings about this book. While it's nice to read stories where the woman is the protagonist, some of the stories were just sheer nonsense. I know some of these stories are old, but some of them have some of the strangest and most wtf plot elements. Perhaps it's my cynical eye, but the stories were a real hit and miss. A couple of them were actually quite clever, so this book gets 3.5 stars.

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**Shelley says**

This wasn't as good as I expected. Out of the 25 tales, I only liked 7:  
Kamala and the Seven Thieves, The Young Head of the Family, The Legend of Knockmany, Kupti and Imani, The Lute Player, Clever Manka, and The Shepherd of Myddvai and the Lake Maiden.

The author's other book The Maid of the North, has some good stories too. But both books are not as strong as I would like. Though both are better than the Yolen book of feminist tales, which really didn't have any that I liked very much... I was hoping to find one book that I could give to my niece, but really none of them worth giving... I will just have to create my own collection...

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**Terri says**

This is a fantastic reissuing of a collection of folktales where the female protagonists are clever, self-determining, strong, and capable. The stories span several continents with characters from a variety of backgrounds and a variety of ages. Princesses, old ladies, mountain women, and mothers provide a broad spectrum of female representation.

Most importantly, the stories are entertaining and full of the charm that attracts so many children to fairie tales and contributes to their continuing influence over young readers. The editing is smart - keeping the fantastical feel while simplifying the stories for young readers.

I can't wait to read these stories to my own daughter!

### **Amy says**

These were absolutely lovely. It's a group of fairytales collected by a feminist press. Most of the main characters are female, and 99% of the female characters in the story are proactive, brave, inventive, resourceful. It's everything I never read when I was a kid, and nothing like the passive bland princesses in the Grimm fairytales, or in Perrault's fairy tales. This is also a very diverse collection, it has stories from not just the standard European sources, but also Chinese, Jewish, African, and more.

I knew it would be great from the very first story, when Tatterhood and her family are locked inside a dining room and she asks why and her mother the Queen is like "well, these trolls come every 7-8 years and ransack the place and there's nothing we can do except stay safe in here" and Tatterhood is like, well that's dumb I'm gonna go out there and make them leave, bye. Delightful, even more so with the end of her story where the message is that she dresses silly and rides a goat and carries a spoon because she wants to, and she could change her appearance but only for herself and because she wanted to, not to please anyone else. So much love.

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### **Stephanie Wasek says**

Outstanding and well-thought-out collection, with insightful commentary that puts the stories in context. Was planning to give this to a friend after reading, but am now loath to part with my copy. Might just buy one for her, one for the pop-up library at my local tube station, donate a few to local primary schools ...

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### **Liesl says**

Tatterhood is born riding a goat and waving a wooden spoon because her mother the queen disobeyed the witch who allowed her to conceive, but her twin sister is sweet and fair. Tatterhood, who always looks tattered, goes on a journey to find the troll who traded her sister's head for a cow's and defeats him. She meets a prince who asks why she dresses as she does and rides a goat. She immediately turns the goat to a horse, her tatters to finery, and her spoon into a wand. She and the prince live happily ever after.

"Tatterhood," a Norwegian tale, is the first of 25 folk tales of brave, smart, and strong girls and women from collected, edited, and adapted from Africa, the Americas, Asia, Europe, the Middle East, and Russia by Ethel Johnston Phelps with a few grayscale illustrations by Pamela Baldwin Ford. Each tale gives the flavor of the region it originates from, and Phelps includes notes on the stories' themes and each story's origins. This volume is a necessary addition to any library.

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