



CFP DEMETER PRESS

Once upon a time, a mother ...
edited by Victoria Bailey and Vanessa Marr

Story submissions are invited for a new Demeter Press anthology that aims to challenge traditional, historical representation of mothers in popular fairy tales and childhood stories. This collection will defy typical, and even archetypal, tropes and characterizations, and ask, or prompt reflection on, such questions as: Do mothers have to be dead for adventures to occur? Are all step-mothers evil? Do all mothers want their children to marry into royalty? What is missing from this realm? What are fairy tale mothers not telling us/saying? What might the secret life of a fairy tale mother look like? If you could give a fairy tale mother magic powers, what would they be? What happens before or after the fairy tale? Could a childhood story be centred around a mother, or a mother be represented as a hero, rather than absent or powerless? What might a matricentric feminist fairy tale look like?

In this collection, authors are invited to reimagine past tales; to reflect on how the before or 'ever after' of common children's stories might have played out; to create new stories that contain more realistic representations of mothering and/or that address lack of representation of historically marginalized mothers experiences; or, to offer fantastical imaginings of what could have been, or could come to be.

Texts may be proposed that are written by one or more authors, in a traditional story format, prose, long-form poetry, graphic novel/comic style, in an adapted/ hybrid style, with or without accompanying illustration, or as entirely visual responses.

Submission Guidelines

- Please submit completed written work of 4,000 words maximum (or as appropriate for submission format), double-spaced, 12-point, Times New Roman font, in MLA reference format (if required), or visual responses reproduced to a high standard and supplied as high resolution JPEG or TIFF (300 dpi), AND a 100 word bio, by September 1, 2026.
- Please title Word. docs as follows: Demeter OUTM SURNAME1 e.g. Demeter OUTM Bailey1.
- Authors whose work is accepted will be notified by January 2027.
- **PLEASE NOTE:** Final acceptance of stories/submissions in this collection will be contingent upon the strength and fit of the completed text that is submitted.

Please send story submissions and inquiries via email to:

Dr. Victoria Bailey – drvbailey@gmail.com AND Dr. Vanessa Marr – V.Marr@brighton.ac.uk