An Astrological Profile of the Goldilocks Archetype

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Introduction

Fairy Tales help us to understand our inner psyche and they alarmingly illustrate our unconscious processes. Through re-reading the stories, these processes come alive again, to unite our unconscious with our conscious. 'The Three Bears', otherwise known as 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears', are variations of an old English oral tale which was written down nearly 200 years ago. Eleanor Mure was the author of the first recorded version of 'The Three Bears' in 1831. The story was created as a gift for her nephew, Horace Broke, who lived at the Mure family home in Hertfordshire. Originally told in verse, its illustrations were painted in watercolours. In Mure's narrative, the bears were three friends who lived together but were not related. When they returned from their walk, they discovered that someone had drunk their milk and broken their chairs. The discovered culprit was an old woman, not a little girl. Unlike later tamer versions, as a punishment for

trespassing, the bears try to burn her, but she wouldn't burn. They then try to drown her, but she held her breath. Finally, they "chucked her aloft on St. Paul's churchyard steeple," where she was impaled and left to die.

Eleanor Mure's gruesome story was initially published by Robert Southey, an Anglican poet who was Poet Laureate from 1813 until his death in 1837. Southey retained the horror but replaced milk with porridge. In 1850, Joseph Cundall rewrote a gentler tale and turned it into a story of a young girl called 'silver hair'. Here, the focus was a young child who disrespected the privacy of others and entered the bears' house without permission. It's interesting to note that the focus has shifted again, and today we are encouraged to acknowledge the development of the child in search of a true individuated self, choosing the middle ground between two extremes. This process requires the development of discernment, the aim being to ultimately find a healthy balance that doesn't go too far to either extreme. According to Bruce Dickson, Goldilocks is the archetype for the soul in a human experience. The way of moderation is translated into imagery suitable for young children. *(See Appendix for the current version of Goldilocks and the Three Bears.)*

Consequence of Imbalance

It is worth noting which fairytales we are drawn to and which we dislike, because this indicates the behaviour patterns we are required to address to achieve wholeness. We are like a cullender, everything we hear, see and experience is filtered through our own fears, intolerances and prejudices, because we all have them if we look deep enough. We are only aware of a tiny piece of our reality, and our psyche is continually trying to redress some imbalance. Forces outside create a disturbance inside and we then struggle, like a mollusc, with the inner agitation in the hope of bringing forth a pearl of insight. Our dreams may try to reveal a balancing process. Until we are fully conscious and honest with ourselves, we cannot satisfactorily connect to others, because through our insecurities and over-sensitivity we may project our fears and biases onto them. As with all fairytales, and Goldilocks is no exception, at the beginning of the story there is an attitude or initial disturbance which is typically dismissive or repressive. When other

elements of the story make themselves known, the ego is then forced to pay attention and is humbled.

Goldilocks is a spiritual story, with a hidden meaning that reveals a premature seeker trespassing into a higher realm of consciousness that she is not spiritually prepared to enter. Golden symbolises that which is rich and precious, and golden hair symbolises the child's divine potential. Although she is drawn to the higher realms and attempts to gain entrance to the domain of her Higher Self (entering the bears' house), she is neither invited nor spiritually prepared for the experience. In Jungian esoteric terms, the bears' house represents the inner realm of the Higher Self, composed of a higher triad of body, soul and spirit with which the ego is required to integrate. Goldilocks, the trespasser, makes a premature attempt at initiation before purification and integration of her ego state has occurred. In esoteric psychology, Goldilocks represents the neophyte, someone new to the experience, the unready seeker, who has intuition of the divine but not the discipline and purity required for initiation into higher realms

The Symbolism of Number Three

There are three bears. The bears represent instinctive behaviour. Number three and the repetition of three is specific, representing a triad or trinity, and is recognized as a symbol of the unity of body, mind and spirit to assist full integration and assimilation. Three is of universal significance throughout history and all over the world. The dynamism of number 3 (ready, steady, go) resonates across cultures spiritually, religiously and philosophically, representing balance, movement and divine order. Three is the archetypal number of change and transformation. In psychological terms, the three bears represent three aspects of the Self, the three levels of psychic development; Father Bear symbolising the instinctual aspect, Mother Bear symbolising the emotional nature, and Baby Bear symbolising the innocent, intuitive aspect of ego-consciousness.

Goldilocks wanders lost through the primal, natural forest into this triadic arena. However, she is unable to find balance as she finds things too hot, too cold, too big, too small, too uncomfortable, revealing that she hasn't yet achieved individuation, the level of equilibrium where the ego aligns comfortably with the Self. The bears' house symbolises Goldilock's attempt to enter the realm of the Higher Self. Eating the porridge symbolises the premature consumption of spiritual energies before the nervous system or psyche is ready. Sitting in the chairs symbolises attempting to assume mastery of the inner realms before mastery of self has been achieved. Sleeping in the bed symbolises seeking higher union before being ready, mistaking an inner state of bliss for higher consciousness and higher awareness. The sleep symbolises illusion, where Goldilocks believes she has found the comfort she is seeking in a higher realm, but it is just a dream as conscious integration has not yet been achieved. When the bears (guardians of the higher self) return, Goldilocks awakens and flees, which is the psyche in self-defence mode as it rejects the intrusion of the immature ego. The psyche expels her, symbolised by the bears awakening her from her sleep.

The Threshold Guardians

Mystery traditions teach that it is necessary to pass the threshold guardians before being allowed to enter into the inner realms. The three bears in the Goldilocks story symbolise the unconscious forces that protect the higher realms. Goldilocks' flight represents protection as she is expelled from the higher realms (the Bears' house) in order to continue to prepare herself through the attainment of humility (Leo), the attainment of discernment (Virgo) and the attainment of balance (Libra). The personal astrological charts indicate the condition of these attributes in the current life experience.

Psychologically, Goldilocks' running away signifies the ego recoiling from confrontation with the Higher Self. Jung describes this as the encounter with the numinous or spiritual quality, where the authentic Higher Self overwhelms the immature ego, which is unable to sustain the higher

vibrational energies. However, having made the premature contact, her psyche is imprinted with the higher vibrational realm, which she remembers as being 'just right'. Goldilocks will be led back to the higher state when she has achieved a higher level of consciousness through humility,

The Goldilocks story is a psychic initiation myth as the ego wanders into instinctual territory, represented by the bears, experiments with the polarities of physical experience, and discovers a pattern of balance that is necessary preparation for individuation. This process involves integrating various aspects of the personality, such as the conscious and unconscious elements, to achieve a sense of wholeness and self-realization. A perfect balance. In Jungian terms, the 'just right' motif is the first awakening to self-regulation as the ego is guided towards equilibrium.

Astrological Profile

This personality may be used to describe someone who wants everything to be 'just right', not too much and not too little. The individual may be highly sensitive and attuned to comfort. Perfectionist tendencies, where extremes are resisted in the search for optimal conditions, may lead to indecision and frustration. The individual may be destined to constantly walk the line between extremes in a search for harmony. There is likely to be tension between conscious direction and emotional comfort until a middle way is found. In terms of an astrological profile, the individual will be working to achieve a better balance in the areas where the planetary energies are located in their chart. These may relate to relationships, finances, work/home balance etc. There is likely to be a tendency towards going from one extreme to another in the areas indicated. We may find a lack of discernment (Virgo represents discernment), a lack of respect for boundaries (Saturn represents boundaries). A weak or unbalanced Libra may indicate lack of social skills. There may be indications of the individual being naïve, 'pushy', and immature, because Goldilocks trespasses and takes what isn't rightfully hers, demonstrating a vulnerability to overstepping boundaries. The Jungian Goldilocks archetype is curious, playful and exploratory, with a childlike bravery mixed with naivety. Goldilocks enters the bears' home uninvited and takes advantage of what she finds.

Both Carl Jung and Daniel Levinson viewed middle adulthood as a critical period of transition and potential restructuring as the individual attempts to achieve inner balance. There is a need to integrate opposing aspects of self and life, for example being young as opposed to growing old, the feminine aspect of self as opposed to the masculine aspect. Through a process of self reflection and the expression of qualities that have been repressed, there is a motivational drive to restore balance by changing attitude and perceptions. Relationships and situations that maintain a balanced state of agreement and harmony are commonly preferred. Extreme attitudes are said to aggravate intergroup conflict and polarisation. Although, contrary to popular belief, research has shown that stubborn extremists are more likely to change their attitude than moderates.

Everything in Moderation

To embrace the middle path is to avoid extremes. Temperance in its modern use is defined as moderation or voluntary self-restraint. It is typically described in terms of what a person voluntarily refrains from doing. In the early 1800s, temperance was a movement to limit drinking in the Unites States because there was a concern for social ills and practical health. This movement was rooted in Protestant Christian beliefs, where excessive alcohol consumption was seen as moral deterioration and a national sin. To develop temperance, one was expected to be calm, composed, patient, prudent and self-controlled. It was stated that a person who exhibits temperance has self-control and does not surrender to unwise desires.

Aristotle referred to finding balance as the Golden Mean. Using courage as an example, he described this virtue as the mid-point between rashness and cowardice. The sweet spot between too much and too little is said to define a good life. Materialism causes us to disdain balance, with McDonalds and many popular food outlets offering super-size meals. The cultural obsession with acquiring more money, more success, more social media likes, causes many to feel dissatisfied and depressed.

The Goldilocks Zone

Located in our star's habitable zone, the Earth is perfectly placed in what astronomers call a star's Goldilocks zone, where the sun isn't too hot or too cold but just right. As the sun bathes the Earth in nurturing life-giving warmth, we are encouraged to flourish. However, buffeted and battered by life's experiences, we persistently search for our own Goldilocks zone where, even momentarily, things may seem to be 'just right'.

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APPENDIX

Goldilocks and the Three Bears

Goldilocks wanders through the forest and discovers the family home of three bears. She pushes open the door and goes inside where she discovers three bowls of porridge on the table. Father bear's big bowl of porridge is too hot, mother bear's medium sized bowl of porridge is too cold but baby bear's small bowl of porridge is 'just right'. Goldilocks eats all of baby bear's porridge.

Goldilocks then finds three chairs in the living room, she sits in each chair and discovers that father bear's big chair is too hard, mother bear's medium sized chair is too soft but baby bear's small chair is 'just right'. She sits in this chair but it breaks.

Goldilocks goes upstairs and sees three beds in the bedroom. She lies down on father bear's big bed but it is too hard. She lies down on mother bear's medium sized bed but it is too soft. However, when she lies down on baby bear's small bed it is 'just right' and she falls asleep.

The three bears return home from their walk. Father bear says '*someone has been eating my porridge'*. Mother bear says *'someone has been eating my porridge'*. Baby bear says, '*someone has been eating my porridge and they have eaten it all up*!'

The three bears check the living room. Father bear says, *'someone has been sitting in my chair'*. Mother bear says '*someone has been sitting in my chair'*. Baby bear cries '*someone has been sitting in my chair and they have broken it.*'

The three bears go upstairs to check their bedroom. Father bear says '*I see that someone has been laying on my bed*'. Mother bear says ' *someone has been laying on my bed too*.'. Baby bear cries out '*someone has been sleeping in my bed and there she is.*' Goldilocks wakes up sees the bears, jumps out of the bed and runs out of the house.