

General Questions:

1. *Son of Gold and Sorrow* is a retelling of “The Story of Pretty Goldilocks” by Madame d’Aulnoy, not to be confused with the more familiar, “Goldilocks and the Three Bears.” Have you ever heard of this fairytale or author? (For the leader: see the Literary Connections section for more information.)
2. *Son of Gold and Sorrow* is told in alternating POVs between Aurelia and James. Which character do you identify with more? Did this change over the course of the story?
3. Both Aurelia and James are running from their pasts. Discuss the specifics of what (or who) they are each trying to escape. How are their pasts similar? How are they different?
4. In the Black Forest Aurelia and James encounter a number of different fae. How do they get away from: the fae that snatches Aurelia? The witch in the chicken-house? The green ladies? What do each of these external challenges teach us about James and Aurelia’s internal struggles? How do they grow closer to each other as a result of them?
5. Why is Aurelia afraid to fall in love with James? At what point in the story do Aurelia and James fall in love? (For the leader: consider discussing the differences between their initial attractions and feelings of love for each other and then how those feelings evolve, deepen, and grow as the story progresses.)
6. How does Pyros complete the first task?
7. Which of the other three tasks is the most difficult for James: finding the ring, bringing back the head of Galifron, or obtaining a phial of the Elixir of Beauty?
8. Did you anticipate that Aurelia would have to actually marry Pyros? How did you expect Aurelia and James to finally be together? In what ways did your expectation differ from what happens?
9. Let’s discuss a few quotes from the book:
 - a. Hugo, who knows quite a bit about curses from his story in *Son of the Deep*, tells James, “A curse can’t be challenged. It has to be fulfilled.” What does this mean? Give some examples of ways Aurelia (and James) initially try to challenge the curse? What are the consequences?
 - b. When James meets Torva at the border of Daphnis, James gives up his inheritance to his enemy instead of fighting him, saying,, “I have chosen love over gold.” How does this action show the fullness of James’s character growth?
10. Who is the hero/heroine of this story? Does James save Aurelia or does Aurelia save James? Explain.

Thematic Questions:

1. *Son of Gold and Sorrow* is a love story. How does the book show different forms of love? What is true love? Pay close attention to the disconnect between words used for love and actions that show love.
2. When Aurelia returns to Daphnis, she says to Mirela “There is more than one way to be damaged. I of all people know that.” And Mirela responds, “Yes, you do. But there is also more than one way to be healed.” In what ways does this book explore different wounds, both physical and emotional? How are different characters healed?
3. Aurelia suffers from anxiety throughout the story—what we might call anxiety disorder and anxiety attacks. How do you think the author handled anxiety as a character trait, but also as part of the fabric of the story in regards to themes such as love and acceptance, coming of age, healing, and family trauma?
4. Let’s talk about the fourth task and what it’s all about: Why is James declared “worthy” by the mouse in the pit? Why does he think he has died during the fourth task? Has he suffered a “death” of a sort? What actions or symbols of redemption can you identify in this scene? Of death and rebirth?

Literary Connections: *Son of Gold and Sorrow* is a retelling of “The Story of Pretty Goldilocks” by Madame d’Aulnoy, written in 1697. Madame d’Aulnoy is considered one of the first modern fairytale writers. “The Story of Pretty Goldilocks” is a short story and readers of *Son of Gold and Sorrow* will be able to identify character and plot point similarities, as well as contrast the differences between the two. (For the leader: Frisk and Galifron are both named in the original tale, a proxy for the king completes three seemingly impossible tasks for Princess Goldilocks with the aid of a fish who finds a ring in the river, a raven who helps defeat the giant Galifron, and an owl who gets past a dragon to retrieve a vial of beauty elixir from the Gloomy Cavern. The King throws his proxy into a tower prison and then dies when he mistakenly uses some of his own poison instead of the beauty elixir. Readers will note other similarities as well.)



Son of Gold and Sorrow by K. B. Hoyle is part of *The Fairytale Collection*, published by Owl’s Nest Publishers. *The Fairytale Collection* is a non-sequential series; the books exist in a shared universe with shared characters, but can be read in any order.

If you loved *Son of Gold and Sorrow*, please consider leaving a review on Amazon or Goodreads! And check out the other two titles in the Fairytale Collection series:

Son of the Deep, Son of Bitter Glass