



# The Hen Who Dreamed She Could Fly: A Novel

By Sun-mi Hwang

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**The Hen Who Dreamed She Could Fly: A Novel** By Sun-mi Hwang

**A Korean *Charlotte's Web***

**More than 2 million copies sold**

This is the story of a hen named Sprout. No longer content to lay eggs on command, only to have them carted off to the market, she glimpses her future every morning through the barn doors, where the other animals roam free, and comes up with a plan to escape into the wild—and to hatch an egg of her own.

An anthem for freedom, individuality and motherhood featuring a plucky, spirited heroine who rebels against the tradition-bound world of the barnyard, *The Hen Who Dreamed She Could Fly* is a novel of universal resonance that also opens a window on Korea, where it has captivated millions of readers. And with its array of animal characters—the hen, the duck, the rooster, the dog, the weasel—it calls to mind such classics in English as *Animal Farm* and *Charlotte's Web*.

Featuring specially-commissioned illustrations, this first English-language edition of Sun-mi Hwang's fable for our times beautifully captures the journey of an unforgettable character in world literature.

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## Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

**An Amazon Best Book of the Month, November 2013:** You could read the adventures and struggles of Sprout, an egg-laying hen who escapes the coop with dreams of hatching her own chick, as a straightforward children's book. But just like all enduring classics, peel back a few layers and *The Hen Who Dreamed She Could Fly* easily transcends the just-for-kids label by deftly tackling universal themes of individuality, nurturing the young, the cycle of life and death, the meaning of friendship, and the eternal parent-child bond. This English-language translation of the best-selling Korean novel is sparse and economical as befitting the fable-like tale, allowing phrases and moments to breathe with emotion. You'll root for Sprout as she pluckily faces the elite barnyard coterie for a place to rest her head or as she tirelessly guards her baby from a hungry, conniving weasel. Anyone who is a parent--or has ever been loved by one--will find a moment (or two) where it's hard to keep the tears at bay. --*Bora McAteer*

From Publishers Weekly

The road of life is paved with hardships, even tragedy. Fate is implacable; we all must die. Yet it's possible to achieve happiness, and to make a positive contribution to humanity, if one perseveres. This is the lesson of this simply told but absorbing fable, a two million-copy bestseller in South Korea, and a story that will appeal to readers of self-help. The protagonist is a philosophically restless hen who yearns to raise a chick, but her eggs are collected daily by the farmer's wife. The hen encapsulates her longing in the name Sprout, which she gives to herself, signifying the fecundity of nature. Determined to do something with her life, Sprout escapes from her cage into the barnyard, but she's shunned by all its denizens except another outsider like herself, a mallard duck called Straggler. His lifesaving friendship enables Sprout to achieve one of her dreams: she hatches an egg she discovers in a briar patch, at first unaware that her offspring is not a chick, but a duckling. The book explores the joys of parenthood and the sacrifices required to nurture the next generation, the healing bonds of friendship, and the tug-of-war between nature and nurture. Spare but evocative line drawings by the Japanese artist Nomoco add to the subtle charm of this slim volume. B&w illus. (Nov.)

From [Booklist](#)

This novella, translated from Korean, explores ideals of compassion, individuality, sacrifice, and motherhood—all through a crew of barnyard animals. Confined to laying eggs in the chicken coop, scraggly hen Sprout has but a single dream: to hatch her own chick. When she's culled from the coop, Sprout narrowly escapes a weasel's clutches, thanks to Straggler, the misfit mallard duck. Soon Sprout discovers an abandoned egg in a briar patch, and contentedly settles on top of it, her dreams finally realized. Straggler brings fish to the nest and keeps the roaming weasel at bay, eventually forfeiting his life for the sake of the soon-to-be hatchling. It's survival of the fittest, barnyard-style, with a plucky, fiercely protective hen at the helm. The fable, which has sold more than two million copies in Korea, is in Kim's able hands; the English translation moves smoothly and straightforwardly and is aided by graceful black-and-white illustrations by Japanese artist Nomoco. Recalling Jonathan Livingston Seagull (1970), this slim but powerful tale will resonate with readers of all ages, who can take it at face value or delve deeper into its meditations on living courageously and facing mortality. --Ann Kelley

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