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As one journeys through his or her life, decisions will ultimately have to be made—whether simple or complex. This will carry a person from point A to point B and, if fortunate, achieving point C along the way. This is never as simple a process as it appears to be, because life itself is not simple. A decision has consequences, both good and bad, and will lead people down their life paths. These decisions often include: what people will eat or wear, what career they will end up in, if and when they will marry.

This does not happen for all, as some are unfairly afflicted with disease or sickness, fall victim to freak accidents that cannot be controlled, and even where they are positioned on a global scale. One assurance that all of humanity has, regardless of belief, status, or gender, is the life cycle and the choices one can make. A person is born, lives, and dies; that is essentially, the life cycle. On the other hand, being restrained within this life cycle, humans can choose their paths and make their own decisions. In *Godfather Death*, by Jakob and Wilhelm Grimm, the decisions of a godson are explored as he journeys through his life, takes advantage of possible opportunities, and ultimately decides his own fate.

One will quickly see how a simple decision can change a life forever, through the following passage:

“ Show me my life light,” said the doctor, assuming it would be very tall.

Death pointed to the small stub that seemed about to flicker out.

" Oh dear godfather!" cried the terrified doctor. " Light a new candle for me. If you love me, do it, so I may enjoy my life, become king, and marry the beautiful princess."

" That I cannot do," Death replied. " One candle must first go out before a new one is lighted." 1 (11)

Having created a false sense of security for himself, the doctor assumes his candle will be very tall as Death is his godfather. This is so, because the doctor is given a second chance when he " cheat[s] [Death] out of his property" 1 (11) the first time. The doctor is amply warned of the consequences in spite of family ties. Death, of course, only gives him that chance due to the familial bond he has with his godson.

The doctor then sees for himself otherwise; his candle or life light is on the verge of extinguishing. This knowledge terrifies the doctor as he knows death is staring him in the face. Also an ironic situation as Death is showing his godson the life light. The doctor cries out in desperation for his godfather to light him a new candle and that Death should do it if Death loves him so the doctor can enjoy his life. This clearly puts the godfather in an awkward situation because he is, in fact, Death and claims a life when it is one's time to die.

Furthermore, when the doctor cries this request he says: " so I may enjoy my life, become king, and marry the beautiful princess." 1 (11) This sounds like a typical fairy tale that many dream of, but few actually acquire. Not only is this is a very greedy and selfish request because he disobeyed Death's

specific commands so that the princess could live, but the doctor then has the audacity to ask to remain alive so he can reap the benefits of curing the Princess's illness. Death replies that he cannot grant the doctors request as "One candle must first go out before a new one is lighted." 1(11)

In order for Death to conceivably be able to keep the doctor alive, someone else would have to die; a sacrifice will have to be made. As the doctor's light is flickering, it is a foreshadowing of his candle being the next to burn out as he has taken Death's rightful property by sparing a life. The doctor thinks he will ultimately be spared as Death is his godfather, but fails to realize that his godfather is Death first and foremost; the one who "makes all men equal" 1 (10) and takes "without distinction" 1 (10). Regardless of the Death's responsibility as a godfather, he could not sacrifice yet another life for his godson's disobedience. By choosing disobedience, the godson decides his own future despite his godfathers warning.

Breaking this down even further into a situation of ethics and morality, one can see the similar sacrifice between the godson's death and the biblical account of Christ's death. If one looks at the words godfather and godson, they can be broken down into god and father and god and son.

The godson in the story has to die—because he spares the King and then, the Princess—so his own sin can be made right; just as God, the father, sent his Son Jesus (God's Son) to be the ultimate sacrifice—to spare mankind because of its sin. Jesus became sin so mankind could remain alive; Jesus became the sacrifice.

Both the godson and Jesus' " candle[s] must first go out" 1 (11) before the Princess' and humanity's candles "[are] lighted" 1 (11). Although the godson ultimately dies for his own sins, he also dies so the Princess can remain alive, even though it is not his own choice. Death could have spared his godson's life, but did not as a light that is extinguished makes way for a new light to shine. This is the same with Christ. God could have spared Jesus' life, but did not so humanity's light could remain and shine.

The scripture: " For God loved the world so much that he gave his only begotten Son, in order that everyone exercising faith in him might not be destroyed but have everlasting life." 3 (NWT, John 3: 16, 1042) God gave his Son so everyone might have life. This is of course a choice God left to everyone, but because he loved so much, he gave his son as a sacrifice for everyone. If we use this same scripture and apply it to Godfather Death it would look like this: Godfather Death loved the world so much he gave his godson, in order that " all men equal," 1 (10) and " without distinction" 1 (10) might have life.

Both God and the godfather cannot light candles for people, as it is a choice left to the individual. The godson chose to spare the Princess and in turn "[falls] into the hands of Death" 1 (12); contrasting Jesus sparing mankind, having " all the chief priests and the elders of the people [come] to the decision to put Jesus to death." 2 (NIV, Matthew 27: 1) Both the godson and Jesus are killed so man might live. It does not state anywhere in Godfather Death or John 3: 16 that man will live only that man might live. Any person

can choose to listen to or reject what he or she hears, but there are consequences. 3

The godfather warns of the consequences saying: " But beware of using the herb against my will, or it will turn out badly for you." 1(10) The godson hears Death say this and listens, but for a time, then loses sight of his godfathers words when he chooses not listen to the warning and disobey. Again, quite comparable to the bible on the Fall of Man-Adam and Eve-when they choose to eat of the Tree of Knowledge (commonly referred to as the Tree of Good and Evil) and are thus, banished from the Garden of Eden for their disobedience. 3 (NWT, Genesis 3)

A simple decision and simple action taken by the godson in Godfather Death determines his fate. He gives up his life to saving another with the foreknowledge of the consequences; yet chooses to do this under his own false assumptions that Death will spare him because he is his Godfather. His action cannot be undone and in due course, stares his consequence in the face-Death. Despite any familial bonds, friendships, or religious beliefs, a person may be able to cheat death a while, but cannot escape it as it is inevitable to the human condition.

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