

Fairy tale

[Environment](#), [Air](#)



Fairy tale is a basically a fantasy story about traditions and norms which covers various aspect of a society and culture. The fairy tales often involve marvelous elements and occurrences and miracles that happen throughout the story. Fairy tales are often set in settings that are geographically vague and ambiguous as most of the story begins with, "once upon a time". The fairy tales often have diminutive and malevolent creatures such as fairies, wizards, and dwarfs, speaking animals that do impossible tasks. The fairy tale arrived in human culture as a part of oral tradition handed over from generations.

The oldest tales were written in various cultures from Egypt to Greek covering various aspects of human nature. For example The Golden Ass has been written in Egypt in 1300 BC, but despite being an ancient tale, The Golden Ass depicts common characteristics of human being that are found in all societies regardless of age and time (Graham, 2000). Rumpelstiltskin is the main character in a fairy tale that originated in Germany in 19th century. The story begins when a poor miller in order to make himself important lies to king that his daughter can spin straw into gold.

The king shuts the girl in the tower forcing her to spin the wheel and convert straw into gold in three nights. The girl had no idea what to do. She was thinking of death, when a dwarf appears in the room and spins straw into gold for two nights. On third night the miller daughter has nothing to offer, but the dwarf makes a promise with the girl to offer her first-born child for his third night work. The king is very impressed from this act; and he marries the miller's daughter; however the dwarf appears when her first child is born. The queen offers all her wealth to save her child, but the dwarf will not listen.

In the end he agrees, if she could guess his name. At first she fails, but finally she guesses the name and the dwarf disappears. Rumpelstiltskin is the story of forcing children to impossible tasks by their parents; where the children have no way out. Maria (2003) has mentioned that “ The miller’s daughter in “ Rumpelstiltskin” is poor and beautiful, but otherwise wholly undistinguished and indeed indistinguishable from other fairy-tale heroines” but it’s through generic settings that she is noticed. Ironically the miller lied to King because he wanted to gain importance in King’s eyes sacrificing his daughter to gain the fake prestige.

Little did he realised that miller bragging about his daughter is putting her in trouble (Alice, 2000). In this story the girl had no way-out, she either has to die or convert straw into gold. Rumpelstiltskin works as a link to do the impossible; his intentions are not noble even they look noble; as he demands the future child; an irrational and impossible demand from the girl who is stuck up between selfish and greedy elders. Rumpelstiltskin is able to trap miller daughter in the guise of good; while his real intentions are evil.

The relation between mother and child is natural in any society;

Rumpelstiltskin tries to destroy this bond in which he is unsuccessful.

Rumpelstiltskin is shown as hero who portrays good in the guise of good, but becomes evil or villain towards the end of story. His maliciousness is hidden under the garb of doing good showing himself harmless that is far from true.

The problem with Rumpelstiltskin is his greed, even though the girl has nothing to offer, he is bent on having some thing in return even if it means

breaking the bond between child and mother, which makes him lower in character.

Thus we can see that Rumpelstiltskin is punished because he attempts to destroy the natural order (Graham, 2001) A fairy tale has certain main features. For example the story always begins in unspecified time, age and settings with once upon a time sentence. A fairy tale has simple characters and often revolves around one aspect of human character. For example Jack and the beans is a story of boy who do stupid thing but ends up getting wealth. Or poor girl becoming princesses, such as Cinderella who lives a painful life, but finally manages to marry a handsome prince.

Aladdin is a lazy bum who is good for nothing, but becomes a famous person by finding a magic lamp and marries the princess. Anna (2003) has pointed out that “ fairy tales are unquestionably part of the great worldwide body of great worldwide body of folktale”. Fairy tales are normally about children even though the earlier intentions in fairy tales was for adult audience . The characters of fairy tales are almost similar for example a greedy king, handsome prince, cruel stepmother and evil wizards are common among all fairy tales. These characters are larger than life.

For example the good characters are extremely good and evil are evil incarnate. The saint or holy man helps people in trouble without any reward or expectation. The stepmother is always cruel and jealous who hates a pretty and innocent stepdaughter as portrayed in Cinderella. In The Wonderful Birch, the heroine is persecuted by cruel stepmother, who makes her life miserable, in other cases father drives out story heroine from home

as can be seen in *Cap O' Rush*. However, being smart, beautiful, and intelligent, these girls overcome the crisis and marry princes or lords and secure a happy future (Encarta, 2001).

In other cases, there can be wicked animals, such as foxes, snakes, and lizards. Fairy tales normally have a happy ending, where evil is punished and good is rewarded. Fairy tales also show social mobility, especially in the Middle Ages, which was very hard to change. Fairy tales have the tendency to have a generic backdrop for the story settings. For example, the fairy tale characters are set in castles, cottages, the world of goblins and dark woods, or forgotten kingdoms and mythical lands. Such an environment provides liberty to the author to come up with any kind of plot or story.

Traditional fairy tales have a clear narrative structure with predictable outcomes. For example, a story begins in happy times, in the middle, some curse or monster overtakes the characters, which they fight back, and the evil is punished, leading again to a happy end (Maria, 1987). It was during the 19th and 20th centuries that fairy tales were associated with children's literature; while they were originally written for an older audience. The greatest success of a fairy tale is its morality or hidden meaning, which were meant for an adult audience.

In modern times, fairy tales are altered where violence is removed because a fairy tale appeals to sentiments regardless of age (Maria, 1987). Leila (2003) has mentioned the reasons for reading a fairy tale, "all fairy tales have a history" and are often "imitations of what various literary cultures have posited as the traditional, the authentic, or the non-literary". Fairy tales are

need of society; all societies have a tension between individual and the social needs; fairy tales fill this gap balancing the needs of two extremes by creating two worlds; the one we live in and the one we wish to live in.