

"the algonquin cinderella" and "tam and cam"

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One of the most famous fairy tales among both adults and children is Cinderella because it has been an ongoing legend since time immemorial. Cinderella is a tale which has been told from one generation to another, and over time, it has developed gradually together with its characters. The story of Cinderella, is in fact, very appealing to the extent that various versions of fairy it have appeared in different cultures from the Vietnamese version of " Tam and Cam" to the Native American version of " The Rough Faced Girl". The different versions, both the American and the Vietnamese, may indeed be based on very distinct beliefs but, however, both of them have one thing in common - the fact that good deeds will always overcome any evil. Apart from that, each of these stories still emphasizes on the aspects of magic, spirituality, outcomes and miracles (Ford200). The aspect of spirituality in the Vietnamese version in the tale Tam and Cam can be seen clearly throughout the whole story. A strong religious influence is depicted in the constant emergence of " Buddha" in which every time Tam is struck by grief, Buddha comes into view. Both stories, therefore, share a common idea that good overcomes evil. The two variations of the fairy tale of Cinderella have similar moral guidance as the original version of the tale, but the stories are different from what people expect.

Each of the two stories touches on different issues like, for instance magic, spiritual, outcomes and miracles which are based on the beliefs and culture of its specific or respective society or community. Whatever the version may be, the fairy tale of Cinderella will continue to be a source of entertainment that will benefit not only the current generation but future generations, as well. In the Vietnamese version in which Buddha appears to Tam each time

she was in grief, "...A Buddha who was sitting on the lotus in the sky heard her sobs and came down beside her..." (p. 229), this was a clear depiction that indeed, Buddhism was a religion that was practiced since the twelfth century in Vietnam. Strong religious influence is reflected in the fairy tale not only through the use of the name " Buddha", but also, references to Buddhist teachings like, for instance, Karma and reincarnation are used in the story, as well. Tam, is drowned in the story by her stepmother but eventually reincarnate in a bird, fruit and lastly into the real her once again.

The reincarnation reference can be seen here clearly. Buddha's teachings insist on reincarnation, which means that the spirit of humans revolves constantly around dying (death) and is being reborn (rebirth). At the end of the story, there is a clear depiction of Karma's reference. Tam's step mother's eventual death and "...the mother is eating her own flesh...

" (p. 233) are in accordance with Karma belief meaning that any good deeds will be repaid through good deeds while evil deeds, likewise, will be repaid through evil. The fates of Tam's cousin and step mother are, thus, due to the evil that they committed to Tam (MacDonald 220). In contrast to Tam and Cam's Vietnamese's version, the Algonquin Cinderella, on the other hand, emphasizes on the spirituality issue of beauty and vision. Cinderella, in this Native American story, is abused cruelly by her siblings who have badly injured her face. The scarring on her face, as a result of being abused, makes people in the community call her " the rough faced girl".

Cinderella, despite being mocked by her fellow villagers, being hooted by the sisters and despite her ugly appearance goes ahead to search for the "

Invisible one", a male partner longed for by all the young girls in the village for marriage. Despite the fact that Cinderella is disfigured and rough faced, her inner qualities, pure heart, perseverance and courage luckily make her the best choice for the Invisible One. It is through this outcome that readers can see how inner beauty is crucial in an individual as opposed to beauty which is only skin deep. Regarding miracles and magic, the fairy tale of Tam and Cam seems to be alike to other fairy tales since it is heavily dependent on miracle, and magic, and in various instances in the story, but for the aid of supernatural powers the situation is helpless. For instance, the jars in the story act as magic boxes through which Tam is able to find a miniature horse, accessories and her dream dress. One of the magical elements in the story is also displayed when Buddha appears to Tam as a life savior.

Another miracle is reflected in the way Tam is quickly reborn from being a bird, a fruit and eventually her real self again. The magic of Tam, however, does not entirely lie on the supernatural, rather, when Tam needs some help, the miracle of nature occurred, e. g. ". ... the birds came...divided the rice into two baskets..." and "...the elegant fowl returned with the bones...laid them at Tam's feet..." (p. 230) In Algonquin Cinderella, the miracles and magic are, however, dealt with differently because unlike Tam and Cam, where no Buddha or guardian angel come from above to save the desperate Cinderella, Cinderella struggles by herself to achieve what she aspires.

The Rough faced Cinderella requests her sisters to give her wampum shells, beautifies her feet with old moccasins and makes a dress from the bark of a tree in order to please the Invisible One and in addition, there is no provision of a miniature horse. In contrast, Cinderella is forced to walk to the

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ceremonial destination but, however, towards the end of the story, some miracles do happen. For instance, a miracle happens when the Rough faced Girl showers, is combed by the sister of the Invisible One only to be transformed into a very beautiful, attractive woman (Sierra 87). The outcomes of the two stories are different. The fates of the antagonists are one significant difference.

While the evil sisters in The Algonquin are being rejected by Invisible One's sister, both Tam's cousin and step mother in Tam and Cam end up dying due to their treacherous behavior. The protagonists of the two stories are also another major difference in that, in The Algonquin, Cinderella was privileged of getting an opportunity of becoming a very beautiful woman and eventually marrying the right man while in Tam and Cam, Tam was capable of getting back her husband and eventually revenging on her cousin and step mother. Even though there are some differences in the two stories, there is one thing that is common. In both, thus, " Good will always overcome evil". The two differences that are prevalent in the story of Cinderella, in some way contain same moral lessons as the original version of the Cinderella. However, they are different stories concerning readers' expectations.

This is because every story addresses different issues like, for example, magic, spiritual, contain outcomes and miracles which are based on the beliefs and culture of the society in question. However, irrespective the version of the story, Cinderella's story will still benefit future generations through this entertaining fairy tale.