

# The morality in the selfish giant by oscar wilde

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The Selfish giant "The giant was a selfish giant," says the story "The selfish giant" written by Oscar Wilde from Ireland, who wanted to bring forth a special moral which has been a serious topic for many centuries, and no less these days than ever before. He uses many characteristics of fairytales to create a conscious fairytale about the problem that is to this day the reason why the world is the way it is. Therefore I am going to write an analysis of his work on what the moral is, and what messages that was sent through the fairytale, as well as looking at the means he used to write the story.

First of all there is a question of symbols. Oscar Wilde used many symbols which are things we associate with other themes or feelings to create an atmosphere in the fairytale all together. A special example of this is the giant itself, because why didn't Oscar Wilde use a normal person? Or mayhap a wealthy old man for that matter? Many have heard the expression swollen. When a person is swollen, he is egotistical and self centred. He doesn't care about anyone else. Therefore, Oscar has pictured the giant's inner feelings with the outer appearance.

Other symbols are also present, like the great wall, which at first means exactly what it is supposed to, keeping people outside of the wall. That wall represents the giant's heart. First the wall is sealed tight; no one is coming in or out. The giant is at first satisfied with the arrangement, with no one to bother him, but after a long time he feels lonely, and the wall around his hear finds a crack. This is where the children sneak in, and melts the giant's heart. Last of the examples of symbols there is the little boy who couldn't reach the branches of the tree.

It is a test to give the giant the opportunity to do something nice, and he takes it. This little child is, as we get to know indirectly at the end, Jesus Christ. His hands bled, and the giant wished to avenge the little child. The child however dismisses the pledge, and says that it is the wounds of love, as Jesus died for all of human kind according to the bible. The giant had then grown old and feeble, and were on the verge of his life. Therefore he got the reward for his kindness to children, by being allowed into heaven by Jesus himself.

Oscar Wilde draws elements from other religions than Christianity as well, Buddhism for example, where he uses the Karma concept. "What goes around, comes around," which means that if you are nice, you will be rewarded, and if you are bad you will be punished. That forwards me to my second point, about personification. When the giant was selfish, the powers of nature had a role of its own to play in the story. The different aspects of nature were given the ability to do humanlike feats, like talking, sleeping and dancing.

Almost move at their own free will. For example when the giant was selfish, and closed up his garden. The winter and cold moved in to his life without leaving. The North wind was dancing, and said that they should invite the hail. This is something the forces of nature wouldn't do outside human imagination, but it puts a picture of nature having a life of its own. The flowers wouldn't come out of the ground because it felt sad for the children. The trees as well, bent as low as they could for the little boy who was too tiny for the tree climbing.

As if trees could bend on their own free will. That makes nature a part of the judge of who is good and who is bad in this world. Throughout the whole story, there is different judges which indirectly or even directly determine who is the bad guy and who is the good guy. Where Jesus is one of the judges, nature is one of the judges and the children are judges. The part about nature judging men originates from ancient Celtic folklore where people sacrificed to the spirits of nature which had a will of their own. Thirdly, there are the elements of fairy tales.

In fairytales there are almost always supernatural creatures, and in this one is no exception. There are two in " the selfish giant," the giant himself and the Cornish ogre. The ogre himself is a symbol, because in folklore, the ogre is a bad creature who eats children. Therefore there are hints that the giant might have been influenced by the ogre on his travels, becoming even worse than he was before as the wall was not built until he came back from his trip, and he didn't seem to have that idea before. Other elements from fairytales are the number seven.

The number seven appear when the selfish giant had been out travelling for seven years. There is however not much more reference to other numbers that is worth mentioning. Another element that is widely spread within fairytales is the personification which has been explained at the previous paragraph, where animals and inanimate objects get the abilities of a human. Last of all, there is the moral subject. Throughout the entire story you get the impression of what the moral is, and that is " what goes around comes around. In the beginning you can read that the giant was selfish, and

that means that he cared only about himself. He did naught for others, and he did not get anything in return. He seemed content with this at first, but when he got lonely, and the winter wouldn't let go we wished that he had done something good. When the children came, his heart melted and he wanted to help them. However, when he approached them, they ran away. That is a message that if you are a jerk, then everyone will think you are a jerk, no matter your intentions.

However, when he helped the child, the other children understood they could trust him. He turned, and decided to play with them instead of chasing them away. In this he got rewarded more than once. Because he got both his summer and spring back, he got many friends to play with, and he ascended to heaven after he died. This underlines the moral that if you do good, then good will come to you. I conclude with an agreement with the moral, that good is reaped if you sow it, and that good is what is best for mankind.

I really liked the story because I agree with the moral of the story, and it is a well written story as well. Oscar Wilde has used great elements in his story that brings it to life, and makes it interesting to read. It is very touching as well, because it requires a lot to make me cry. There is a joyful sadness about it all that makes you unsure if you are crying tears of joy, or of sadness. The part where he dies is kind of sad, because he dies. However, when it also confirms that he goes to a better place.