NEVER TOO OLD FOR FAIRY TALES

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Period 6
English
Ms. Baker
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Psychoanalysis Lense

Sigmund Freud is known as the father of psychoanalysis. His contributions to psychology are vast, and he is one of the most influential people in the twentieth century, or Freud’s century. Some of his theories and ideas include the stages of psychosexual development, the structural model (id, ego, and superego), the topographic model (conscious, subconscious, and unconscious) and the defense mechanisms. Even though his theories have gone out of favor and are often deemed as controversial, they are still important when it comes to analyzing characters and personalities. Analyzing with this theoretical lense is important because it provides the framework for interpreting the characters in works of literature, and it provides explanations when you are trying to learn more about a character. The psychoanalytic lense offers unique insights on how the human mind works. It is extremely useful in fairy tales because the psychoanalytic theory used to be relevant in the past, and fairy tales are also written in the past therefore it provides a new insight on how people thought back then. In the fairytale “Little Snow-White,” by the Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm (Brothers Grimm), Snow White lives with seven dwarfs, while the Evil Queen (her stepmother) is against her. The Evil Queen wants Snow White dead because, according to her magical mirror, Snow White is the “fairest of all.” In “Little Snow-White,” the queen possesses a highly developed id, with an undeveloped ego and superego because her character is strongly based on satisfaction, and she ignores the morals or reality. She also experiences a variation of the Oedipus complex and the structural (iceberg) model is significant to the Evil Queen’s character because her actions are driven by her unconscious.
To begin, the Evil Queen and Snow White experience a variation of the Oedipal stage in the human psychosexual development stages. The Oedipus complex is in the phallic stage of Freud’s psychosexual stages of development and involves the idea of rivalry between the child and the father over the mother, because the child starts to have sexual desires towards his mother. In this case, it is the opposite genders, and the roles are also switched because the mother wants to kill her daughter. In “Little Snow-White,” there is great rivalry and jealousy between the stepmom and the daughter. A reason why there is a reverse Oedipus complex in the story could be that Snow White does not have a strong attachment to her father, and instead of a mother, she has a stepmother. Also, since Snow White fears the stepmother, she could be keeping her feelings towards her father repressed and feels weaker than the Evil Queen. In doing so, the Evil Queen is able to take advantage of Snow White’s weak personality, and wants to kill her. Many readers are disgusted with the controversial Oedipus complex, and it has gone out of favor. Grimm states “Then she told them that her stepmother had tried to kill her, that the huntsman had spared her life, and that she had run the entire day, finally coming to their house.” This shows that the stepmother feels jealous and wants to kill the stepdaughter. In the end of the Oedipus complex, the child actually identifies with his father and eliminates the sexual desires towards his mother. In “Little Snow-White,” the stepmom and the daughter never identify with each other and they remain rivals throughout the whole story, with a reason possibly being that they do not have blood relations. The Evil Queen also never plays a mother figure; instead she is an evil person. This could also mean how in general, stepparents can have bad relationships with their stepchildren, often because of the stepparent’s behavior. In a larger scale, the Oedipus complex present in the story could relate to the fact that girls tend to have stronger relationships with their
fathers, instead of their mothers or stepmothers, and it is the same for boys with their stronger relationships with their mothers.

Following, the Evil Queen possesses an overdeveloped id, with an undeveloped ego and superego. The Evil queen has a very strong id, which means that she bases her personality on satisfaction and getting what she wants. Her ego and superego are undeveloped which means that the Evil Queen does not have any morals or she does not think about the reality. This is shown because her main goal in the fairy-tale is to kill Snow White because of Snow White’s beauty. Grimm states, “Then she thought, and thought again, how she could kill Snow-White, for as long as long as she was not the most beautiful woman in the entire land her envy would give her no rest.” She does not think about the consequences, or that killing your stepdaughter is very immoral. This also shows how the evil queen’s personality is unhealthy and that she lacks the reality principle and the moral principle in her character. The id, ego and superego also relate to the reverse Oedipus complex. The fact that the Oedipus complex never gets resolved means that the id to eliminate the stepdaughter is much stronger, than the realistic ego or superego. This suggests that in relation to psychosexual development, someone with an underdeveloped ego or superego is very unhealthy. In order to overcome the Oedipus complex, and for a person to be healthy, the ego is the strongest so that it can satisfy the needs of the id, not upset the superego and also consider the reality of a situation.

Furthermore, the Evil Queen’s actions are affected by her conscious and unconscious. The queen’s unconscious is motivating her actions, because there are fears of dying, getting older, and becoming ugly, which she is unaware of. The Queen copes using defense mechanisms such as denial, which is denying something that affects a person, and displacement, which is taking out impulses on a less threatening target. The queen is in denial of the fact that Snow
White is prettier, and that one day she will age and become ugly. The Queen is taking out these impulses on Snow White because like previously mentioned; Snow White’s character is weak when compared to the superior Evil Queen. Grimm states, “The queen took fright and turned yellow and green with envy. From that hour on whenever she looked at Snow-White her heart turned over inside her body, so great was her hatred for the girl. The envy and pride grew ever greater, like a weed in her heart, until she had no peace day and night.” She has a constant fear of getting older, ugly, and dying. This is why she must eliminate Snow White, so that she can be the fairest of all when she asks her magical mirror. The Evil Queen’s behavior to eliminate Snow White is also driven by the Thanatos drive, or the death drive. According to Freud, the two basic drives that motivate our actions and behavior are Eros and Thanatos, or life and death. Sex is the life instinct, a major driving force in human nature. Aggression is the death instinct, which protects us from others that we find harmful. In this case, the Evil Queen behavior is motivated by aggression because Snow White is harmful, and she prevents the Queen from being the fairest of all.

The Evil Queen's character remains an unhealthy character throughout the fairy-tale, when examined through a psychoanalytic lense. By looking at her character through the psychoanalysis lense, there is a deeper understanding using the theories of the psychosexual development stages, the structural model and the topographic model. The Evil Queen's struggle of having an overdeveloped id, an undeveloped ego and an undeveloped superego do not allow for the Oedipal Complex with Snow White to be resolved. The Queen experiences internal conflicts because of her fear of dying, aging, and becoming ugly. In order to cope with her conflicts, the Evil Queen employs the denial and displacement defenses, which sometimes when used in the wrong time can be destructive. This famous fairy tale shows that while outside
influences affect a person, ultimately a character's internal influences and conflicts lead to either triumph or defeat like in “Little Snow-White.” The character of an evil stepmother is also present in "Little Snow-White." The Evil Queen's traits of evil and jealousy make the reader have an unfavorable opinion of the Evil Queen, and it is evident that the Grimm Brothers intended for the reader to feel this way about the Queen. The Evil Queen's character resonates with the universal human condition of jealousy, which sometimes destroys relationships and families like in the fairytale “Little Snow-White.”
Once upon a time, there was the royal family of a great kingdom. The royal family was made up of a princess, a queen and a king. The princess was at the age of four, named Snow White. Like most children in their childhood, she was mostly attached to her mother, but that did not last for long after her mother died when the girl was five.

After the death of his lovely wife, the king married another woman, which became the queen, and the princess’s step-mom. The new queen and the princess were starting to become close. The new queen would treat the princess as if she was her biological daughter, and made all efforts for the princess to like her such as buying her presents and caring. Snow White was surprised at how much love the queen was showing towards her, and Snow White also enjoyed having her as a step-mom.

A year later, it was the princess’s birthday and she reached the age of six. It was her first birthday without her mother, but she still had a father. One night, she had a dream about kissing with her father, the king. She thought it was quite strange at first, but then she became used to the idea and showed deep affection towards her father. Snow White even started to think about having sex with her father. However, there was a problem in between whose name was the queen, or her stepmother.

One day, the daughter contrived a great plan on murdering her stepmother. She went in her room while the queen was sleeping and planned to stab her, however the queen woke up. After the queen had seen her stepdaughter’s attempt to murder her, she was shocked. She told her
husband, who was confused. Together, they thought that their daughter had mental issues, and decided to lock her into a cabin in the woods all alone by herself.

In the cabin, the girl was aided by three little birds that came to her everyday and gave her advice about life. They also brought food and cheered her up with their songs. The birds talked to Snow White about morals and how wrong it would be to kill someone, especially her stepmother. They advised her to apologize, once the queen would let her come back.

The girl stayed in the cabin for several years, until she was allowed back into the palace. During all the time that she was away, the king had died from a horrible disease, and the queen had to rule the kingdom alone. The queen felt quite lonely, so she decided to bring her stepdaughter back, thinking that she would have changed after all the time she was away. When the queen met with her stepdaughter, she was surprised at how beautiful and mature she had become. The daughter listened to the birds’ advice, and she did like they told her to. The daughter felt embarrassed and weak about the past, so she apologized to her stepmother severely, and the queen accepted her apology.

In the many following years, the queen and the princes had a better relationship than the one before, and together they ruled the great kingdom.
Artist Statement:

I chose to reinterpret the fairytale “Little Snow-White” by the Brothers’ Grimm, and I created “The Princess and the Queen.” This fairy tale includes some information about Snow White’s previous life events when she had her mother around her, and then it explains the relationship she built with her stepmom or the queen. I reinterpreted this fairytale by using ideas from Freud’s stages of psychosexual development such as the Oedipus complex in the phallic stage, and the similar Electra complex. In my fairytale, the daughter falls in love with her father, and is considered more evil than the queen. I tried to make the reader favor the stepmother in this fairytale, because often step-parents are portrayed as evil people that don’t get along with their children because of mistreatment and child abuse, however that is not always true. In the end, to show the Electra complex being resolved (and the successful development of both characters’ personalities), the queen and Snow White identify with each other and they have a strong bond. Last, this reinterpretation includes morals about jealousy, family and listening to the others’ advice.
The Lucky Shepherd

Once upon a time in ancient Illyria, there was a king who lived with his daughter. The daughter was reaching 18 years old, and she had to be married to someone soon. The king wanted to marry the princess with the prince of Kuksa, however the daughter refused. Instead, the princess and her father agreed on having a competition that would choose her husband. The first man who would reach the top of the steep and dangerous Mount Sharr would get to marry her. People had never climbed the top of the mountain, so the person that would do it would be bravest of all in Illyria.

Everyone in the kingdom learned about the competition to marry the King’s daughter, and in the end 3 men decided to compete. The first man was a peasant who was a shepherd. The second man was the owner of the largest park in Illyria, and the third was a rich man with a large estate. All three men were in love with the princess, and they dreamed of marrying her.

The day of the competition came, and the three men showed up at the beginning of the competition at Mount Sharr. The two wealthy men had equipment with them, whereas the peasant had only brought an axe and shoes. The queen and the king were both present at the competition. The king had no doubt and hoped that one of the two wealthy men would go first, however the princess wished differently. She had a deep interest in the peasant and she was very attracted to him.

The competition began and it was the sunniest day in Illyria. The men were all excited to climb Mount Sharr. The large estate owner made it halfway, however he got extremely tired so he decided to jump. But that was not very smart, since he ended up hitting his head on a rock and
he died. The competition was now between the largest park owner, and the poor shepherd. The largest park owner was ahead, whereas the poor shepherd was slowly reaching him.

Then, immediately a goat appeared in front of the wealthy man. The goat told the man, “Soon you will reach a house hidden inside the mountain. Make sure not to enter it, or you may disappear.” The wealthy man was shocked, and was annoyed by the goat’s advice. The goat then also told the same advice to the poor man, who accepted it gratefully and thanked the goat.

Once the wealthy man reached the hidden house, he was too tired and thirsty and saw that there was water inside it. Therefore, he decided to enter for a few minutes. However, once he entered he immediately fell asleep for several hours.

Then, the poor man reached the hidden house and he was tempted to enter, however he thought about the goat’s advice and continued without entering the hidden house. A few minutes after, the goat appeared and she was pleased with the peasant man. As a reward for listening to her advice, the goat told the man, “I will help you, if you sit and hold on to me.” The man sat on the goat’s back, and the goat quickly climbed the mountain, faster than ever. The goat and the man reached the top, and then the goat disappeared. At the top of the mountain, the king and the princess were waiting, and when they saw that the poor man had made it first, both had different reactions. The princess was amazed and happy, but the king was shocked and disappointed.

The princess and the shepherd married, and all the citizens of the kingdom were invited to their wedding. The shepherd became the most respected and bravest man of Illyria. He was no longer a peasant, but instead he became the husband of the princess of a rich kingdom. Eventually, the king started liking him and they became good friends. Together, the princess and the man lived a happy life together in the kingdom of Illyria.

Lesson/Moral:
• Listen to the advice of others since it will help you.

• When you have a goal, always follow it and try to succeed, and never give up easily.

• Never underestimate yourself because of your status or class in society.

Artist Statement:

The fairytale I created is named “The Lucky Shepherd,” and it is a fairytale about a poor man, who marries a princess at the end of the fairy tale. In this original fairy tale, I tried to include all elements and the structure of a true fairytale. It included the motifs of styles such as the use of the special number 3 (three men competing), rewards for the hero (the poor man married the princess), success of the hero (he had courage and strength to climb the mountain), an endurance test (having to climb the toughest mountain), an elder (the king and father), a hero (the poor man who also moves vertically in the fairy tale from poor to a rich man), a true love (the princess), villains (the other two men) and last, the helper, he friend and the messenger (the goat). I choose unique names for the kingdoms, such as Illyria being a region in the Balkan peninsula of Europe. The mountain is also relevant to the setting since Mount Sharr is a mountain range in the Balkans. I was also inspired by the idea of a quest/endurance test, so I used a mountain with the winner marrying the princess.
My previous knowledge on Rapunzel is limited and very basic. Based on the "Tangled," Disney version, I know that Rapunzel lives in a tower and she has extremely long hair, with some healing powers, so an evil woman kidnaps Rapunzel and keeps her as her daughter in a tower away from all people. Last I knew that Rapunzel meets with a Prince, he rescues her and they marry and live together. Rapunzel also goes to her real parents' kingdom and there is a huge celebration. After reading the two stories of Rapunzel, the "Tangled" version and the two stories have some similarities. There are differences between the 1812 version and the 1857 version. One change is that in the 1812 version, the evil character is referred to as a fairy and in the 1857 version, it is a sorceress. An example that shows this would be "Through the small narrow window of these people's house they could see into a fairy's garden that was filled with flowers and herbs of all kinds" (1812 p. 1), and "No one dared to enter, because it belonged to a sorceress who possessed great power and was feared by everyone" (1857, p. 1). This change represents and makes the "fairy" more evil and it perfectly fits the evil element of every fairy tale. A fairy is usually seen as someone who helps, but in this case it would be more appropriate for Frau Gothel to be called a sorceress, which is like a witch, and it makes it have a more evil and negative connotation. Excellent connection to King Leif."
Next, the 1812 version includes that Rapunzel is pregnant. However, the 1857 version did not include this, and we say Rapunzel just gives birth. A quote that shows this is on page 2 of the 1812 version. "Fräulein Gotthelf, tell me why it is that my clothes are all too tight. They no longer fit me." Whereas in the 1857 version it just states how "Fräulein Gotthelf, tell me why it is that you are more difficult to pull up than the young prince, who will be arriving any moment now?" This shows that Rapunzel is thrown into the wilderness because of pregnancy in 1812 whereas in 1857 version, they do not mention her being pregnant. The way that Rapunzel tells Fräulein Gotthelf shows that she is innocent and there is no evil in her. Some other differences include the beginning, ending, and the relationship between the prince and Rapunzel. In conclusion, I would consider the 1857 version more appropriate for children since the relationship between Rapunzel and the prince is less intimate, and also some details have changed or they are left out.

Deni, Thank you for your explanation of Rapunzel before you read the story. You have in depth explanations of the changes you identified and assess the final editions. Being that idea of kid-friendly is great! 12/10
"The Fairies" by Charles Perrault is a fairytale about two opposite sisters; one is ugly and rude and the other is beautiful and nice (kind). After some events, a fairy makes the kind girl speak diamonds and roses (when she speaks), and the mean sister speaks, snakes and toads will drop from her mouth. "Toad Wars" by Ursula Vernon is a fairytale, with the similar two sisters but within a different ending. Many details change about the story, with a different theme, and questioning the original story, you can see right into it!

First, many details were different. For example, the first and original version talks about a mother who is a widow and her relationship with the girls. Perrault states on paragraph 2, "The mother doted on the elder daughter naturally enough, since she resembled her so closely, and she disliked the younger one just as intensely." In "Toad Wars", these details are left out and the mother is not mentioned except for, "There was an incident when I was young and fed up with parental expectations..." Other details that are left out include how the fairy changed the two girls. This all relates to the moral of the stories which are different. The original version's mood is mostly just to be kind and polite whereas the reinterpretation is about cooperating and always trying for better. The reinterpretation story uses the original as a foundation or basis and then adds on to do it and it is further developed (like a sequel). Both sisters work
together and they use their "powers" in a good way to help
with rare and endangered amphibians. In the Perrault
version, the sisters do not cooperate and they are always against
each other. Perrault states "Both of them were so disagreeable and
dreadful that no one could live with them." Whereas Vernon
states "My sister—the one who speaks gold and diamonds—funds my
travels... I am grateful." This shows that the reinterpretation
has an even better theme—that people need to cooperate, be kind
and grateful. Some other details or things that are different is that
"Toad Words" includes certain words for frogs and certain ones for
frogs, and a happier ending.

Second, the reinterpretation questions the fact that if
you are not kind, you will not succeed, and the relationship
between the two sisters. Perrault states "No one would take the
miserable girl so at but she went into a corner of the woods and
died." I think that is not a good ending, so it is very strange.
Vernon shows how it is not the end of the world if you speak
frogs and toads, however it is just a challenge which can be
overcome and put to good use. In Toad Words, the
elder sister does not die, and instead the story is quite
moving, with her making the best of her situation, and
working with her sister.

Lastly, "Toad Words"'s theme comments on the "The Fairies"
theme. In addition to just being kind and polite, the
theme of the reinterpretation also includes that people need
to work together and that all challenges can be overcome.
The theme of "Toad Words" is also to take advantage of all your abilities and to not limit yourself even if you are feeling discouraged. This is the older sister because instead of just dying in the woods, she starts to use her ability to make changes regarding endangered amphibians and the environment.

In conclusion, both fairy tales have similar details and morals; however, there are definitely some changes and difference between the two.

12/10 Deni,

This is an excellent journal response and very sophisticated in your analysis and writing mechanics. You integrate quotes very well, identify key elements of both stories as well as delving deeply into the reasons for change and the results of this change. Excellent work!
The End