

Karen Rowe's essay, "Fairy Tales and Feminism" is an encouragement of gender roles through the use of characters that lived according to the traditional roles assigned to females and eventually attained great rewards. In these fairy tales, the female characters used demonstrate a perfect epitome of women bold enough to stand the pressure and suffering inflicted upon them by circumstances and the society. In spite of the struggles these women characters undergo, they still possess qualities of worthiness which make them survive and experience fortune at the end. Of course, such fairy tales have great impact on the female gender and in the perpetuation of the stereotypes about women. According to Karen Rowe, these fairy tales spread stereotypes with negative impacts about women (Haase 38). Nevertheless, from the manner in which these fairy tales are presented and the strength possessed by the female characters discussed, it is evident that these fairy tales do not spread negative stereotypes about women.

Karen Rowe's essay represents the strength possessed by female characters. The fairy tales inscribe gender roles to women, "[t]hese tales which glorify passivity, dependency, and self sacrifice as a heroine's cardinal virtues suggests that culture's very survival depends upon a woman's acceptance of roles which relegate her to motherhood and domesticity" (Hallet & Karasek 348). Through various fairy tales about outstanding female characters, it is possible to get a full illustration of the role played by these fairy tales. In the four fairy tales told in the essay, we see various attributes associated with bold female characters. For instance, the story of Snow White illustrates a sense of acceptance on the female characters. She possesses the most important of all traits that women should have- beauty. Snow White remained beautiful even in the suffering she underwent; depending on the huntsman and dwarves to remain safe.

In the fairy tales, there is a reward for the protagonists- they ended up marrying a prince charming; immensely wealthy and handsome. In spite of the passivity the female protagonists in the fairy tales demonstrated, they portrayed extreme patience and courage as they waited for their princes who would eventually rescue them. This is confirmed in the story, "The executioners were just on the point of carrying out their dreadful instructions when the King galloped into the courtyard. After leaving her supper at the ball she has nothing more to do but stay at home and wait. Cinderella was lovely despite her rags, sleeping Beauty despite her 100 year spell, Snow White despite the evil taunts from the wicked Queen and Rapunzel despite her being locked in a tower and then living in misery in a deserted place. Cinderella was rescued, taken to the prince and was married. They display passivity, dependence, patience, and endurance" (Hallet & Karasek 34).

From the foregoing, it is evident that female fairy tales do not bring out a negative stereotype about women (Wilson 45). If anything, they bring the strong values of patience, endurance and inner boldness. The female characters in these tales are not only physically beautiful but also possess inner beauty. Karen Rowe's essay presents the power and strength in female characters and the rewards from the possession of desired attributes.

Works cited

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