



UNIVERSITETET I AGDER

# On the Yellow Brick Road

Fantasy, Fairy Tales, and the Coming of Age Journey

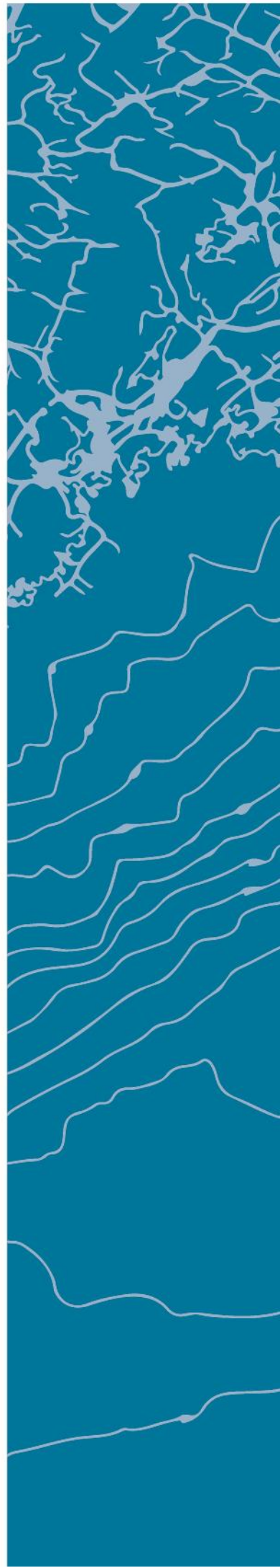
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## Introduction

In recent years, fantasy literature has risen in popularity. There are more and more fantasy novels published and its popularity only continues to grow. The genre started as novels from children and then the target audience expanded to include young adults and adults. To do this, the genre had to adapt to the changes the new readers demanded. Characters needed to become more than images for the child reader to identify with. They needed to have motivations and flaws to fit the world the older audience knew. Morals and ethical messages also needed to change, as older readers might already have read the educational stories before. Due to this evolution, the fantasy genre grew. Novels became numerous and the stories adapted further to fit the audience and era. Somewhere along the way, this genre passed the fairy tales in popularity, and in our modern world fantasy fiction is one of the largest fiction groups.

Genres are, however, complex. It has been claimed that genres have started resembling each other more, making it more difficult to distinguish which novels belong in which genre. Tzvetan Todorov claims that “literature now seem to be abandoning the division into genres” (Todorov, 7). This is relevant to our understanding of fantasy, for fantasy and fairy tales, together, are an example of genres that are arguably becoming very similar. The reason the genres are becoming more similar is due to the aforementioned readers. Teenage girls, for example, may want a romantic novel over a mystery novel. This is, of course, a general statement as individuals are different even within age groups. However, these demands mean that authors can find their preferred section of a genre. A fantasy novel, for example, can contain enough romantic traits to make the story a romantic novel set in a fantasy world, or it can have romance being only a small part of the plot. Other fantasy novels may resemble historical novels or mystery novels. With this mixing of traits and creation of sub-genres all readers can find a story they like.

While there are more and more fantasy novels being published, almost the only fairy tales that are published are Disney's versions of older tales. The two genres are very similar both when it comes to what elements are used, how they are used, and even how the plot is used. This thesis is an exploration of these similarities. I will explore the relations between the two genres, and hope to illustrate the various similarities. How close are fairy tales and fantasy? What differences are there really? I will focus on the journey motif in both genres, and in particular the coming-of-age journey, and the elements that feature in the genres. The key questions I will be asking in my analyses are: what do the characters learn on their journey? How do they change? I will also be asking whether or not the protagonists could have succeeded on their journey on their own, or if they would be the same if they had not embarked on the journey at all. My analysis will show that the four questions receive the similar answers from both novels. It will also show that "The Snow Queen" will also have similar answers to its fantasy counterparts. Other traits in fairy tales and fantasy will of course be mentioned, however they will not be given much focus unless they appear in a journey story.

The two main works I will be using in the fantasy genre are Neil Gaiman's *Stardust* (1999) and L. Frank Baum's *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* (1900). Both novels show aspects used in both genres, although they are both fantasy novels. Because of the various definitions of the fairy tale and fantasy genres, I will mainly be using *The Bedford Glossary of Literary Terms* to define them, as the definitions found in this book are the ones most readers more or less agree with. Both of the novels I am using have been called fairy tales for adults, however I consider them both to be works of fantasy, and this blurring of genre lines is something I will come back to when looking at said novels. To properly compare the two genres, I have also included the analysis of a fairy tale with a coming of age journey. This tale is H.C.

Andersen's "The Snow Queen" (1844). This particular story has perhaps the most obvious journey motif. Other tales have this motif as a minor part of the plot instead of the main part.

Literature also has an ethical dimension. This dimension usually comes into play with moral lessons and other life lessons discussed in a novel or tale. Claudia Mills states in the introduction to *Ethics and Children's Literature* that "[w]hether or not [the novels'] authors are on record as seeking to advance a didactic agenda, and even where [the novels'] authors are on record as refusing to advance any such agenda, it remains the case that all literature advances values" (Mills, 5). When we look at literature this way, the characters in the story have to be approached in a way not entirely dissimilar to how we approach real-life people. This is why I in some cases will write about the characters almost as if they were real people. I am aware that they are merely parts of works of fantasy, but they still need motivations and reasons for what they do. Immersion is difficult for the reader if the protagonist does something "just because". There must be a reason for the decision he or she makes for the story to be believable. These literary characters are important for our own learning, and thus have to be life-like.

To understand why certain genres develop, it is frequently important to look at the genre's history. Fairy tales, for instance, were established as a genre when the oral folk tales were written down during the seventeenth to nineteenth century (Murfin and Ray, 163). At the same time, the tales were recast from tales for adults to children's stories. Fantasy emerged during the mid-nineteenth century (165), and unlike the fairy tale, this genre was intended for children and young adults at its conception before spreading to adult readers.

In Chapter 1, "The Genre question", I will focus on the elements found in fairy tales and fantasy, as well as the concept of genre itself. The sections on elements in fairy tales and fantasy will parallel each other, as the traits explored will be found in both genres. Rather than drawing any major conclusions, this chapter will rather contain an exploration of the literary

journey and which typical journey elements the reader will expect to find. These seven common traits include basics such as the hero and the helper, yet the journey is the most important. I will be drawing on my own readings in the discussions as well as examples. Following this will be a general comparison between the genres where I summarise several of the points I have discussed in the sections on the genres. The chapter will end with an analysis of H.C. Andersen's "The Snow Queen".

Chapters 2 and 3 feature analyses of *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* and *Stardust*. The main focus of the analyses will be the two questions mentioned above; what lessons do the protagonists learn, and how do they change? The answer to these questions lie in the journey the main characters embark on. For the sake of clarity and in the interest of making a systematic comparison, these two chapters will resemble one another and have the same basic structure.

The thesis will end with a conclusion, where I will go over my findings from studying the genres and the three texts. This conclusion will also feature my main comparisons.

## Chapter 1 - The Genre question

### 1.1 Genre

When we discuss genres, it is sometimes difficult to define them. The reason for this is that there are several definitions for every genre, and there are several points of overlap between different genres. Authors borrow from other stories and genres. If one particular element fits into several genres – for example the journey motif – then that element will undoubtedly be found in each genre with which it fits. Therefore, a definition of what a genre is, in addition to the definitions of the fairy tale and fantasy genres, is needed. “Genre, we might say, is a set of conventional and highly organised constraints on the production and interpretation of meaning” (Frow, 10), this is one of the things John Frow states in his book *Genre*. He also says that genre is “a universal dimension of textuality” (2). A genre is not a set of firm rules that the stories have to fit in with, but instead a set of guidelines defined by several similar works. Some genres follow these guidelines closer than others, and the historical period in which a story was written can have an impact on its genre. The story itself also has an impact on the genre it belongs to. Frow says that texts “work upon genres as much as they are shaped by them, genres are open-ended sets, and participation in a genre takes many different forms” (28).

David Duff states in *Modern Genre Theory* that “the modern period has been more typically characterised by a steady erosion of the perception of genre” (Duff, 1). Literature evolves to fit into the new period – as evidenced by a lot of the fantastic disappearing when the trend in literature was realism – and genres borrow elements and plots from each other. At the same time, Duff’s statement may be overstating things, as there are still clear distinctions between most genres, although some – like fantasy and fairy tales – are so close to each other



that they could almost be considered the same genre. Most fairy tales I have read after I started researching have had the potential of becoming longer fantasy novels with a bit of fleshing out of both the characters and plot.

“Though the myth, fairytale, and fantasy story differ in frame or form, they remain similar in function. They are all overflowing with archetypes” (Indick, 17), and these archetypes are some of the foundations of the story. Below, I will be looking at several traits as well as archetypes – which are “images, figures, character types, settings, and story patterns that [...] are universally shared by people across cultures” (Murfin and Ray, 30) – found in fairy tales and fantasy. Sometimes, the stories are so full of archetypes that they become almost clichéd, and the readers feel like they have read it all before. Of course, the author may have intended it to be that way from the start as a form of irony.

## 1.2 Fairy tales

If we consult a dictionary for the definition of “fairy tale”, we will find it is a “prose narrative intended to entertain or instruct that typically relates fantastic or magical occurrences involving a hero or heroine” (163). This definition might not be accepted by some people studying the genre, however. Ruth Bottigheimer defines fairy tales as “commonly narratively and lexically simple, may or may not include fairies, unfold along predictable lines, with magically gifted characters attaining their goals with thrice-repeated magical motifs” (Bottigheimer, 57). That the definition differs from critic to critic is a further sign of how the perception of genre is becoming looser.

According to the *Bedford Glossary of Literary Terms* there are two types of fairy tale, these being the folk tale – often called the wonder tale – and the literary fairy tale.

Folk fairy tales, oral tales verbally transmitted through a successive generation within a given community, tend to evolve over time and to emphasize plot and repetition as memory aids. Literary fairy tales, written by a specific, identified person, may be original stories or may retell, draw on, or adapt stories from folk fairy tales or other sources such as myths (Murfin and Ray, 163).

Some folk tales evolved over time and became fairy tales when they went from oral tales to written ones and spread to new places. Others, like Kipling's *The Jungle Book*, developed from a fantasy novel to a fairy tale when the story was reworked by Disney.

The structure of a fairy tale remains the same whether it is a folk tale or a literary tale. The heroes set out on a quest or journey to solve a problem, break a curse, or win a princess etc. These heroes face various challenges on their way. The greatest challenge or the main villain is the last thing they face on their journeys. They might end up changed by their travels, but they return victorious if they successfully show the correct amount of heroism, knowledge, and compassion. Some tales, however, have the hero die no matter how righteous he was or how well he performed. Examples of the type of tale where there is no happy ending is H. C. Andersen's "The Little Match Girl". Due to this, there are two types of ending for the fairy tale, yet other than this, there is little structural variation.

Dividing literary works into categories can be challenging due to overlap and borrowing. Fairy tales have several subcategories that are difficult to classify. Vladimir Propp states in his *Morphology of the Folktale* that "we shall say that the division of fairy tales according to themes is, in general, impossible" (Propp, 7). There are just too many themes that are used in tales to properly divide them. How could we call one fairy tale an "animal tale" when animals play a crucial role in several other stories that do not, for various reasons, classify as an animal tale? With the different themes and characteristics appearing in several tales, it becomes almost impossible to use themes to categorise the tales. No matter how thorough a critic is, there will likely be a tale that contradicts the way it has been categorised.

So, what are the main themes found in fairy tales? The most well-known, and the one most readers automatically think about when hearing the words “fairy tale” is good versus evil. This theme is simple in this genre. There are no villains changing sides, and everything is more black and white than what we will later see in the fantasy genre. Other common themes include coming of age, transformation, humility, and class. The hero or heroine can go from child or teen to adult, they can transform – either from beast to human, as in “Beauty and the Beast” or from commoner to royalty, as in “Catskin” or “Cinderella” – and humility is necessary. If a potential hero is too arrogant, he or she will not have the happy ending the successful hero has, but rather become humiliated by for example having tar dumped on his or her head, as in “Mother Holle”, or receiving lashes from a whip, as in “Herding the King’s Hares” [“Gjete Kongens Harer”]. The point about class as a theme comes from the protagonist’s possibility to climb the social ladder. This climbing is usually achieved through marrying well, and the upper classes remain unattainable to other characters than the hero and helpers.

In addition to the themes found in fairy tales, there are a multitude of functions the characters can be assigned. These are usually group-exclusive, though a few are more universal. Propp has a list of functions frequently assigned to the different characters. These functions are all well-known, and almost self-explanatory. The helpers, for instance, have four functions. They help transform the hero, rescue the hero from his or her pursuers, they help the protagonist move through the world, and remove misfortune and lacks (79). These functions are crucial in the protagonists’ tales, and without the helpers, they would fail. The villains only have two functions typically attributed to them – they either pursue the hero, or they fight or otherwise hinder him from achieving his goal. Yet both classes are important to the story. It does not matter how many functions the character group performs, only that they perform them. Of course, this makes some characters flatter than others, especially if that

particular character neither shows up often, nor has a clear motivation when he or she appears.

Like most genres, fairy tales have had to transform with the times. They were once the most common stories told. They were there to guide, teach, and caution, and in earlier times only existed through spoken words – and thus there are often several similar tales with only slight variations found in different geographical regions. However, over the years the tales have changed to suit modern society, instead of being kept as cautionary tales. When they were first written down, the stories contained all the themes they had had as an oral tale – even the darker ones. When the literary style became more moralistic, the fairy tales adapted to this by toning down their sometimes morbid imagery. This might be because parents or other adults felt the tales were too morbid and not suitable, or the children to be too young, impressionable or delicate – and the views on what is appropriate or not could change with the generations – and so the tales were rewritten to fit the new standard. According to Neil Philip transformation “is the key to the fairy tale, and fairy tales have been endlessly transforming themselves throughout history and, by some strange alchemy, endlessly staying the same” (Philip, 40). Below, several elements frequently found in fairy tales will be given.

### **1.2.1 Species**

When we talk about fairy tales, one of the first things that springs to mind is, well, fairies. Therefore, the first element I will look at is the different species. Fairies show up very rarely, but other races appear more frequently. These are incredibly varied, from humans, to animals, to dwarves, to dragons, to trolls, and everything in-between. Sorceresses and wizards are frequently portrayed as a separate race in fairy tales, although they are most often humans with the ability to cast magic. There are a few characters that are similar to what we think of

as fairies, for example Thumbelina who is born from a flower in H. C. Andersen's tale "Little Tiny". She is very fairy-like, but it is not stated anywhere that she is a fairy. It is not stated that she not a fairy either, so the readers can decide this for themselves. She does not have wings, yet she is the same size as a fairy, and a few fairies live around flowers. The supernatural races of a fairy tale are usually helpers or villains rather than main characters, as the latter are most often human.

### 1.2.2 Magic

Magic is an important part of several fairy tales. It is not a necessity, as stories such as "Little Red Riding Hood" do not have a villain who uses magic. However, the majority of fairy tales have some sort of magic in them, and often, it is this magic that drives the story forward or is the root of the conflict.

Everything can be magical in a fairy tale, even the nature around the protagonist. As Warner states in *Once Upon a Time*:

no one in a fairy tale is taken aback when rocks and trees and streams and waterfalls act under their own volition or shape-shift from one form to another [...] protagonists take it in their stride that if you drink the water of a certain stream, you will be turned into a wolf or a deer or a dragon or a snake (Warner, 21).

This idea of nature being magical entered literature as early as ancient mythology. Nature is central to several tales, and in some it is an ally, while it can be an obstacle in others. In "The Snow Queen", it is both. Winter is against Gerda in the tale, while spring brings new hope and aids her. The river in the beginning of her journey could be seen as hindering her when it sweeps her into the unknown, yet it also brings her much closer to Kay. In Disney's version of "Cinderella", the mice help the protagonist daily – she has animal helpers – while in an older version, the tree she plants on her mother's grave is responsible for Cinderella being

able to go to the ball (Grimm, *Grimm's Fairy Tales*, 165-167). This latter example is an example of nature being magical and helping.

Another kind of magic found in fairy tales is that associated with words. Magical words may seem innocent, yet they carry a weight that can turn into a blessing or a burden. Such words cannot be rescinded, although someone can occasionally tweak them just a bit. The clearest example of this is in "Sleeping Beauty", where the one fairy not invited tells the king and queen that their daughter will prick her finger on a spindle and die once she reaches a certain age. The one fairy left who has not given the new-born a blessing is able to shift it to a deep sleep, but that is all she is able to change; "[t]here's a profound respect in the genre for what words do in the world, as well as in the stories. Of all the charged, active, enchanted elements in the tales, it is the words of the story that possess charmed life" (Warner, 41). The fairy tale is not the only genre that grants words such powers. Fantasy, as we will see later, does not have the same powerful phrases, although they, too, are rather powerful, and not in the same abundance.

In addition to words, there is another form of magic found in fairy tales. If a character believes something will happen, it might just happen. This is the power of faith. Faith does not need to be religious faith, but rather the hero or main character's belief in him- or herself, in the power of magic, or just the belief that they want or need something. This motif is found in tales where someone must complete a certain task while ignoring several attempts at distraction. An example is the Grimms' "The Six Swans" where a woman has to make garments for her six brothers, but is sentenced to death as she works. As her execution is about to start, her brothers – who have been cursed to take the form of swans – return: she throws the shirts over them so they return to their human form, and they tell the king the truth, saving her. She knows she needs to finish the garments, believes in her ability to do so, and does not let her upcoming fate distract her, for which she is then rewarded.

### 1.2.3 The Hero

There is no tale without a hero. It can be a boy or a girl, man or woman, but the hero is the main character, and the one who will be facing all the challenges his or her journey contains. There is also more than one type of hero, according to Vladimir Propp; the seeker-hero and the victim-hero (Propp, 80). While the seeker-hero departs on a quest or a search, he also reacts to the main helper and what he or she tells him, and usually marries. The victim-hero only reacts to this main helper, says Propp, and does not set out on a journey.

The following scenario is one commonly found in fairy tales: “[a] *hero ventures forth from the world of common day into a region of supernatural wonder: fabulous forces are there encountered and a decisive victory is won: the hero comes back from this mysterious adventure with the power to bestow boons on his fellow man*” (Campbell, 30, original italics). It is also found in the fantasy genre as well as several other genres. This formula is everywhere in literature. Because of this, the hero is the one character-class found in the most stories. The group is varied in race, age, and gender, and sometimes deviates from the formula or only performs parts of it. Of course, the fairy tale hero is often a common person, instead of a noble or other important figure. Rarely do we see a prince as a hero, although we might see princesses slightly more often. Usually the hero in fairy tales is female; not male as we probably would expect from reading Campbell’s descriptions, which focus on the male stereotype.

In the fairy tale, there is very little variation on the hero motif: he or she is either honoured or disdained, and has a symbolical deficiency, which may be as simple as not being royalty or noble (37). This use of the motif makes the hero more recognisable, but also more clichéd. This was, however, a powerful plot point in the tales, which is probably why it has survived

the test of time and genres. To have a common person able to do all the hero does, and most often rise in social status at the end, was inspiring to the readers and listeners, and the moral tales utilised this to cast more light on the way one should behave.

However, in some tales, the hero or heroine changes during the story. He or she may grow up during the tale, and this causes a contrast between how he or she are at the beginning and the end of the narrative. One such tale is “The Snow Queen”, which I will look at later. This coming of age motif is not that common, although it might be implicit, like in “Little Red Riding Hood”. In this tale, the heroine’s path from the safety of her home and to her grandmother’s can be seen as her travelling from childhood to adulthood, and the wolf is a symbol of how dangerous the world can be for an unprepared woman. The heroine becomes sexually mature, and the wolf is there to take advantage of this. In this way, the coming of age motif is apparent in several tales, albeit somewhat hidden.

#### **1.2.4 The Helpers**

Sometimes, the heroes need help from an outside source. The protagonist of the tale is not expected to solve the problem on his or her own, and has helpers to aid them along the way. They can have several or few, yet the number is usually one, three, five, or seven. These four numbers are repeated in most other events in the tale. The helpers are not always the heroes’ travelling companions, either, and some helpers are unable to aid the protagonist, in which case they guide them towards someone else who can.

A helper is also able to perform the functions Propp laid out for the hero-class (Propp, 83), as the only thing the hero does that the helper is unable to replicate is his or her reaction to the class Propp calls donor. This also goes the other way, as the hero can, if he for example does



not have any travelling companions, take on the functions of a helper. This just goes to show that the functions are not always class-restrictive.

In addition to the roles a helper has, Propp also lists three categories they can fit into; a universal helper – who is able to perform all five functions mentioned earlier – a partial helper – who fulfils some of the criteria – and a specific helper – who performs one function only (82). Out of the three categories, the first is the one with the least members, as most helpers belong to categories two and three. In a way, although they are somewhat limited in what they can do, the helpers are the most versatile character group in the fairy tales, as they are not in any way limited to any race.

### **1.2.5 The Villains**

In opposition to the helper is the villain. This character is someone the hero has to defeat in order to achieve his goal. Hilda E. Davidson mentions that while the typical villains in fairy tales are family members, tyrants, or jealous companions, “no serious threat comes from hostile animals, apart from occasional fierce beasts on guard” (Davidson. 110). Of the three main groups of villains, the most used is the family member; and in particular the stepmother. She has become an archetype and is found in several tales – such as “Cinderella” and “Snow White”. Another common villain is the stepsister found in tales like “Beauty and the Beast”. There are tales which have an animal as the main villain, and one of these is “Little Red Riding Hood”, although the wolf is rather humanoid with its ability to speak and act like the grandmother. However, such animal villains are rarer than enemies from within the family and tyrants. The villain’s job in the tale is to oppose the hero, and attempt to keep him and his companions from their goal. In addition to this, the villain is also a character that shows the reader that evil is always punished in the moral tales.

### 1.2.6 The Journey

In several fairy tales, the hero must travel to fulfil his goals. This journey is usually short due to the length of the tale, but it can also be longer. The goal can be anything from visiting a relative, to rescuing a friend, to marrying a princess. To set out on their journey, the protagonists need motivation. However, as Propp states, motivation “add[s] to a tale a completely distinctive, vivid [colouring], but nevertheless motivations belong to the most inconstant and unstable elements of the tale” (Propp, 75). All the characters’ actions while they travel have motivation, and these are different from character to character, and tale to tale. These motivations can be callous and selfish, and change throughout the tale. Sometimes this motivation can be a response to something that is lacking. In Disney’s “The Little Mermaid”, the protagonist finds her home lacking after she falls in love, and she is willing to make a deal with a witch to be able to get her man. In the stepmother’s case in “Snow White”, it is that she lacks Snow White’s beauty.

On a quest, there will be obstacles in the hero’s path to keep him from reaching his goals. There will most often – like with the helpers – be three, five, or seven of them, and they can either be overcome by the hero alone, and/or by the helpers he has with him. The sequence of obstacles is something Nancy Howard calls “the road of trials” (Howard, 7). If it is the helpers who tackle the obstruction, it will be one main helper doing what needs to be done, though the others might have come up with the solution. The problem that needs solving can be a minor one, such as a puzzle, or a more major one, such as mountain or crevice that needs to be crossed. These puzzles range from locked doors which require specific keys, to rivers or gorges that need to be crossed, to moral choices on who the hero wishes to save – and everything in between. Sometimes an item is needed to proceed, sometimes what is lacking is a certain power or ability of either the hero or the helpers. The item itself can be either

mundane or clearly magical, though the latter is rarer. It is most often a seemingly mundane object that is given magical properties. The journey needs these quests and obstacles to challenge the hero in order to show that he or she is different from the villain. They also make the reward at the end feel more like a reward than it would have been if he or she could just waltz in to claim it.

The following description is of a journey focusing on the hero more than what he encounters in detail. While the circumstances, locations, and degree of willingness vary, the hero leaves his or her safe place in one way or another. Campbell writes that the call to adventure “signifies that destiny has summoned the hero and transferred his spiritual centre of gravity from within the pale of his society to a zone unknown” (Campbell, 58), and that refusing to go will “convert the adventure to its negative [...] and [the hero] becomes a victim to be saved” (59). In this way, the hero does not really have a choice in whether or not to embark on the quest, lest his world changes for the worse. Of course, most fairy tale heroes do not refuse the call. When they set out, the first helper is most often, as Campbell states, “a protective figure” (69), who introduces the hero to their quest; either with a magical object or advice. This protective helper is in some cases – like for example “The Snow Queen” – more of a hindrance. The first helper is very often a crone or fairy godmother or wizard, or other older person, and while it is usually a woman, men are not excluded from this role. He or she is also more often than not supernatural in nature.

After meeting the helpers, which Campbell calls the “personifications of [the hero’s] destiny” (77), the hero will encounter the unknown. This unknown sometimes has a guardian before the hero can enter, to test his resolve or whether he is ready to leave home. Once he has passed this point, the hero faces several trials. This leg of the journey is usually what the tale focuses on, as it is what initiates the hero into the ranks of heroes and adulthood should he succeed, instead of staying a common man. It is also what leads him to his reward. Only

when the road of trials is conquered can he receive his boon. Sometimes this boon is love – for example the princess and half the kingdom as in the tales about the Ash Lad [*Askeladden*] – other times, it is simply treasure.

The hero has one last thing to accomplish when he or she has finished the road of trials: “[w]hen the hero-quest has been accomplished, through penetration to the source, or through the grace of some male or female, human or animal, personification, the adventurer still must return” (Campbell, 193). This is the last leg of the journey. However, much like when he received the call, the hero can refuse to return, as we will see when we look at *Stardust*. Once again, this could have negative consequences; at least if the hero does not belong in what Tolkien calls the Faërie world.

This is the basic outline of the journey, and elements can be switched out to fit other stories. One type of fairy tale that does not entirely fit into this mould is the moral tale. These tales are often without a journey, or it is very small and non-significant, or they might contain several potential heroes like in the Ash Lad tales. Only one potential hero succeeds through being humble, kind, and clever while the failures only focus on the end goal and neglect the challenges that would help them in their last trial. The one who succeeds is most often the one who listens to the helpers available to him or her along the way and goes through the challenges without complaining, instead of avoiding the obstacles or believing he or she is better on his or her own.

In addition to the other uses of the journey, some journeys almost resemble a travel journal to a fantastical land. Hulme and Youngs state that “[t]ravel broadens the mind, and knowledge of distant places and people often confers status, but travellers sometimes return as different people or do not come back at all” (Hulme and Youngs, 2), and this is certainly true for some of the moral fairy tales, where the hero starts out as one person and ends up as another. This is one of the main reasons why travel writing is useful in terms of comparing the journeys in

fairy tales and fantasy with journeys in real life. Much like the trips found in literature, physical trips in our own world can change the person embarking on them due to their new experiences and knowledge. In this way, the fairy tale and fantasy journeys resemble old travel journals written in third person with magic and other fantastic elements thrown in.

### **1.2.7 Change or Transformation**

Another thing several fairy tales contain is a transformation. This could be because of a curse – as in “Little Brother and Little Sister”, collected by the Grimms – or someone having their older curse reversed. This latter change usually occurs when the hero or heroine has completed all the tasks needed. Warner claims that fairy tales “usually restore the victims of metamorphosis to their original form. Or they transfigure them to be far more beautiful than before” (Warner, 36). In most modern fairy tales, for instance the Disney versions of the older ones, there is a happy ending, and in several of these, a common girl becomes a princess, or a common man becomes a prince – as in “Aladdin”. The main characters start off as beautiful in their rags, whether that beauty is on the outside or inside, yet with the silks and jewels after their transformation, they are lifted to a new level. The part where the character simply returns to normal is more common in the older tales, where the goal is usually not to become a princess or win love, but to lift a spell, which sometimes goes awry, as in for example H. C. Andersen’s “The Wild Swans”, which is his version of the Grimm’s “The Six Swans”. This tale’s heroine does not get her sewing done in time, and as a result, one of her brothers will have a wing instead of an arm where she does not get the sleeve of the tunic done.

### 1.3 Fantasy

“[W]hat do we think about when we think about fantasy? Magic and magical creatures, wizards and witches, giants and monsters, haunted forests and mythical worlds” (Indick, 1). These archetypal characters from the fantasy genre are also found in fairy tales and myths. The reason for this overlap is that the fantasy genre rose out from the fairy tale, and borrows inspiration and elements from older genres, as the latter in turn did when they were relatively fresh. If we go by the *Bedford Glossary of Literary Terms*, fantasy is there defined as:

“A type of fiction set wholly or in part in a vaguely medieval Arthurian or imaginary land populated by inhabitants subject to magic, as well as magical figures, creatures, or beasts. Attempts to define the term more broadly are complicated by the overlap between fantasy fiction and other genres, such as science fiction and horror, and further compounded by the tendencies of fantasy authors to import and mix elements of different genres” (Murfin and Ray, 165).

This glossary also states explicitly that fantasy has its roots in the older folk- and fairy tales, and that it first emerged during the Victorian period (165). The genre was at first geared towards children or young adults – much like today’s fairy tales – but, as I mentioned in the introduction, later authors expanded the audience to include all ages, usually with changes in themes to separate the child from the adult reader.

Themes commonly found in fantasy novels are many. The most common is once again good versus evil. This theme can be simple or it can be more complex. In *Harry Potter*, for instance, Severus Snape spends the most of the series appearing as an evil character, only to finally show how he was good all along upon his death in the last book. Love is another common theme, as well as perseverance and coming of age. Love is a power in fantasy stories. Sometimes the hero or heroine is only able to defeat the villain if he or she has a love interest, friends, or family to protect. Perseverance comes in when the protagonist faces overwhelming odds, and he or she pushes through the obstacles to complete his or her goal.

Coming of age is once again about maturing, whether it is in both body and mind, or only in mind.

The structure of a fantasy story is much the same as the one from fairy tales, which I mentioned earlier. The heroes still set out on a quest or journey, and must complete several challenges before they can return home in victory. However, fantasy characters often have longer journeys that might lead them to a different land than they started in. Fantasy novels also frequently have twists and turns in the plot. The heroes, for example, sometimes attempt to evade their destiny – an example here is Sonea from Trudi Canavan's *Black Magician* trilogy. These heroes will flee from the unknown before being forced to confront the unfamiliar that lies ahead. Another twist could be that the hero is in fact the villain, but due to the way the earlier narrative is written, this is not revealed before the end. Due to most of fantasy narratives being longer stories, the authors have enough space to add detail to the environment and events surrounding the hero. The possible plots and endings of a fantasy novel are many; the hero may die, succeed, be permanently injured, or only partially succeed, for example.

Fantasy worlds often feel much like our own world, only with magical elements. The genre can however, Indick states, offer the reader “an entryway into a different world. The real world is

so full of unanswerable questions and irresolvable problems, [and] is abandoned for the fantasy world, in which the mysteries of creation are beheld, and the underlying forces of nature are revealed.

‘Escape’ offers the reader relief from a pre-existing state of despair, the world of sorrows is left behind in favor of a fantasy world of limitless potential and eternal hope (Indick, 19).

This means the reader can forget the real world for as long as the story lasts. Because of this, the successful works of fantasy can be called “immersive fantasies”. This refers to works that are “based on the reader’s ability to accept the fantastic without questioning it; they are immersed in a story overflowing with fantastic elements, yet are indirectly asked to believe in everything” (Glina, 68), while not being given an explanatory narrative. Immersive fantasy is focused on the reader having to experience the unknown together with the main character, while a quest fantasy is focused more on the quest than the reader. The fantasy genre is broad, with the many subgenres that overlap.

One can also make a basic distinction – partially overlapping with the one between immersive and quest fantasy – between low and high fantasy. Nikki Gamble defines low fantasy as stories where “non-rational happenings occur in the rational world” (Gamble, 158). This type of story take place in our real world, with added fantasy elements. High fantasy is something she defines as having an alternate world, which can be entered in different ways:

1. *The primary world does not exist.* In this type of fantasy the reader is transported directly to the alternative world [...]
2. *The alternative world is entered through a portal in the primary world.* This type of fantasy enables the writer to make a direct comparison between the two worlds [...]
3. *The alternative world is a world-within-a-world, marked off by physical boundaries* (159-160).

This distinction between low and high fantasy may be used as an argument for fairy tales to be placed in the fantasy genre. Fairy tales take place in our rational world, and could as such be classified as low fantasy.



### 1.3.1 Species

There are several species in fantasy novels, even if some of them are focused on just one. Three examples of novels with different races being present and integral to the plot are the *Harry Potter* series, *The Legend of Drizzt*, and, of course, *The Lord of the Rings*. These three showcase a multitude of races and their relationships with each other. The varying species might be the reason for the main conflict in the story, or they might be there to show their support or disdain for the hero when he or she encounters them. As with the species in fairy tales, there are some who are more likely to become villainous than others. These evil species include trolls, orcs, pixies, and revenants. The good ones include humans, elves, and unicorns.

### 1.3.2 Magic

In fantasy, much like the fairy tale, magic is central. It is free to come and go, and might show up in only a few, select individuals - or be within everything from the natural elements, to the characters, to the buildings. If magic is something that can be harnessed in the story, the wielders of it often have an object to direct it with. This can be a wand, a staff, a ritual, or some specific, magical words, to name a few typical variants. There are different types of magic, or *mana*, as Indick lays out:

Sometimes mana exists in magical objects such as enchanted seeds, beans, weapons, armor, wands, rings, crystal balls, etc. This form of magic is available to anyone holding the object. Magical rituals, typically involving the concoction of potions and/or the recitation of spells, can conjure mana. This form of magic is only available to those who are well versed, willing to learn, or able to discover the secret ways of magic. Magicians in the traditional sense are those beings who have an innate connection with the forces of mana around them, or with the spirits that control the mana. Magic in this mode is only available to certain people, who may or may not be considered human (133).

The people who can use magic change as well, depending on the type of magic in the story. Unlike the fairy tales, magic-users in fantasy are not limited to wizards, witches, and sorceresses. There are entire series centred around only one type of magic-user – like in *Harry Potter*. Some have several types mingling – for example R.A. Salvatore’s *The Legend of Drizzt*, where there are evil sorceresses, good witches, oracles, and several other species that use magic.

Words carry weight in fantasy. It might be because this is the primary difference between humans and beasts, and beasts do not usually cast magic spells. Instead, they embody the magic. In the human and humanoid case, magic is more verbal. A spell is very often set in motion by a spoken or written word, or a drawn magical circle. The spoken words in a spell are usually from a dead, archaic language to illustrate its age.

Enchanted objects and objects that hold parts of a person’s soul or magic is another archetype in fantasy. Once again, the One Ring (in *Lord of the Rings*) is an example here, as it contains a piece of Sauron. To be able to put their essence into the object, the enchanter “instills spiritual/magical power into the detached object, while also separating himself from his spiritual core” (Indick, 137). There is a magical object in nearly every fantasy novel, either given to the characters or stumbled over by accident and then kept. Often, the characters do not get any explanation for how the object works, and are left to figure it out for themselves.

### **1.3.3 The Hero**

Every journey and quest need a hero. The hero in fantasy literature is not that different from the one in myths and fairy tales. Like in those genres, the hero archetype symbolizes “the rites of passage that all humans must undergo at different times in life” (Indick, 22). In fantasy, there are so many heroes that follow the typical behaviour, and so many who deviate

from it that giving even an estimated number of these is impossible, although the motif itself has not changed all that much and still influences most of the stories containing a hero. Once again, this hero can be male or female, human or animal, magical or mundane. One example of a hero in fantasy literature is Harry Potter, and another is Nathaniel from Jonathan Stroud's *The Amulet of Samarkand*. If we go through the steps outlined by Campbell – the call to adventure, the road of trials, the fight with the Dark Lord, and the return – Harry is first separated from his known world when he starts at Hogwarts and is thrust into the wizarding world. His initiation starts once he starts school, and he has several challenges throughout the year. While he does return to the muggle world every summer, his journey towards adulthood does not near its end before he defeats the Dark Lord Voldemort in the seventh book, after which he then rejects the return to the muggle world to stay in the wizarding one, with no negative consequences known to the reader.

However, like literary genres change over the centuries, the literary hero changes slightly as well. The questions and mysteries of old have been answered and new ones have filled their space. The hero must evolve, too:

The modern hero, the modern individual who dares to heed the call and seek the mansion of that presence with whom it is our whole destiny to be atoned, cannot, indeed must not, wait for his community to cast off its slough of pride, fear, rationalized avarice, and sanctified misunderstanding [...]. It is not society that is to guide and save the creative hero, but precisely the reverse (Campbell, 391).

While bringing problems to light, the hero must also solve them, instead of waiting for the world around him or her to change. The modern hero is, in a way, easier to relate to for modern day readers, as he or she often reflects challenges, themes, and issues found in the modern world. Had the hero been the type to solve all-world problems instead of being limited to his or her own little bubble, they would feel like an overpowered, mythical figure, and the readers would have a harder time immersing themselves in the story.

The hero in Faërie deals with issues of self-identification and other identity issues (Indick, 41). Like Campbell, Indick focuses on the male hero. He is more common in fantasy than in fairy tales, although they have the same function: to symbolise the passage into adulthood, and the different rites of passage, be they physical or psychological. The same theme of supernatural aid also appears here, and the hero is given, or otherwise obtains, an important article – which may be advice, an item, or a weapon (49) – and this article has both magical powers and a psychological power to drive the hero forwards.

### **1.3.4 The Helpers**

As in fairy tales, the main character frequently has someone to help. These helpers can be any race in the story, any gender, and any age. They can be searched out if the hero knows about them, or they can be encountered seemingly on random. This group has not really changed from the fairy tales, except that they are more fleshed out and rounded characters, and they have their own goals. Sometimes a fantasy helper can be antagonistic, as we will see when we read *Stardust*, and do their best to hinder the hero in the beginning. The helpers in a fantasy novel can be magical or they can be entirely ordinary, and because they have their own goals, the help they give may come with conditions.

This group not only there to help the hero, but also to balance out the villainous forces; “[i]n fantasy, each dark force is countered unerringly by a parallel force of light” (Indick, 5). The hero is usually inexperienced in the ways of the world, and the helpers are usually more knowledgeable. They become the guides for the hero and lead him to his destiny.

### 1.3.5 The Villains

The hero usually needs someone or something to fight against. A villain is needed to create tension in the story. As Indick states, the Wizard is most definitely an archetype in fantasy literature (91). He can either be a helper or a villain. If he is an adversary to the hero, he could be a full-blown Dark Lord like Sauron and Voldemort, or he may be subtler in his underhanded deeds. The most common scenario is that he is the ultimate evil that the main character must defeat. Of course, it is not only wizards who fit into this category. C.S. Lewis' *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* has a very good Dark Lady, in the White Witch Jadis, as the main enemy for the Pevensies.

In a fantasy world, there is little to no modern technology, and it is often set in a primeval or medieval age, with some factions having better technology than others. Some villains, for example Saruman in *Lord of the Rings*, have quite a bit of it, yet, as these factions often do, uses it for evil. In fantasy, the more technological societies are usually portrayed as the negative. In a way, it could be argued that nature is the source of magic, and by resorting to industry, the villains are destroying that. In other fantasy contexts, the villains refuse to adapt to the new technology flowing into their society. An example here is provided by the Death Eaters from *Harry Potter*. They hold onto their old traditions, and do not want any new blood in the Wizarding World due to the muggle borns' new ideas that will undermine centuries of tradition for the upper class.

### 1.3.6 The Journey

Within the genre of fantasy, there are several types of subcategories and plotlines. One of the perhaps more common plots is the journey plotline, which is the basis for what in *The*

*Cambridge Companion to Fantasy Literature* is called “quest fantasies” (Senior, 190). There, this type of fantasy is defined as follows:

a series of adventures experienced by the hero and his or her companions that begins with the simplest confrontations and dangers and escalates through more threatening and perilous encounters [...]. The protagonist, generally an average person with hidden abilities, receives a call to action and reluctantly embarks on the first adventure. Choice is crucial in quest fantasy, so protagonists face several cruxes where their choice determines the fates of many. [...] The final stage of the quest brings the hero into direct confrontation with the Dark Lord, whose defeat is a result of some action or decision by the hero (190).

However, while the above is the basic formula of this type of story, Senior also points out that the formula is far from rigid, can easily be changed, and “leads us into the heart of the human condition” (199), which means that the reader can recognise aspects of themselves in the characters. Another name for the quest fantasy – and this name also applies to fairy tale journeys – is *Voyage and Return*, which is what Alice Nuttall applies to the journey (Nuttall, 88).

A quest fantasy is of course primarily about the journey. But what happens to the characters while they travel? The challenges they face differ from tale to tale, and not every challenge has an impact on every character in the group. Sometimes, an obstacle is geared towards one specific helper, or one specific lesson they need to learn. In some novels, the party of heroes includes very few individuals – in both *Stardust* and R.A. Salvatore’s three first stories about Drizzt Do’Urden, the group consists of two characters: Tristran and Yvaine, and Drizzt and his panther companion. No matter how few they are, if the obstacle is geared towards them having to work together, it will bring them closer together. To succeed in its quest, the party must learn to adapt to every situation they come across. This adaptation is truly what separates them from the villains, who are set in their ways and refuse to budge.

There is a reason why the fantasy hero either comes from the mythical world or, if he or she lives in our world, needs travel into the world of Faërie. They need to learn who they really are, and where they belong in the world. As Indick claims, this self-knowledge cannot be “studied or learned, only experienced” (Indick, 25), and to experience enough to make an informed decision, they must leave their home. Harry Potter, for example, could not have become the brave man who defeated Voldemort and married Ginny Weasley if he had chosen to go back to the Dursleys or not gone to Hogwarts when he got his letter. Frodo Baggins would not have become the hero who destroyed the One Ring if he had decided to remain in his cosy hobbit hole. They both needed to be booted into the unknown, and see for themselves where they belonged and how the world really is.

Of course, the journey motif itself is not exclusively tied to the quest fantasy, instead appearing in several genres as a tool for the characters’ growth. It functions much like a coming of age motif, even if the journey is limited to the hero’s inner journey where “experience and maturation are gained” (Nnolim, 183), rather than a physical journey. The journey plotline is one of the most universal ones, states Nnolim, who describes the journey-plot as much the same as a quest fantasy – only without the fantastic elements – with a scenario where the protagonist “often ends up learning quite a few lessons about himself, about human nature in general, or about the nature of the world” (183).

The physical journey is crucial to the psychological growth of the hero:

[t]hough the symbolism of the Hero’s Journey lies in the concept that this is truly an inner quest for psychological unity, the outer journey is focused on the physical quest, which usually involves the destruction of a shadow figure (dragon, ogre, tyrant) and/or the retrieval or destruction of a significant object (golden treasure, hostage princess, sacred/magical relic) (Indick, 59).

It is through the physical steps that he or she and their companions find answers to their questions and figure out what is important to them and their lives. In a way, the journey is a

reward in itself, as without it, the hero would probably never have left the city or village he or she started in.

### 1.3.7 Change or Transformation

As in fairy tales, characters in fantasy novels can be cursed into the form of something else, they can transform themselves to hide or ambush, or they can be socially elevated at the end of their quest. Often, the main character will find where they belong at the end of the novel, and stay there instead of going back to their starting point. An example of this is Drizzt Do'Urden in *The Dark Elf* trilogy. He refuses all the common traits of his typically evil species, and sets out to find his own niche in the world, which he then finds on the outside of Icewind Dale. By doing this, Drizzt evolves into his own person instead of just another drow.

In the *Harry Potter* series, animagi are wizards that are able to change into an animal – Minerva McGonagall turns into a cat, for example – and this is a big plot point in the third book, where Sirius Black escapes Azkaban. In *The Hobbit*, Beorn is a shape-shifter as well, changing into a big bear and initially terrifying the Company. Shape-changing is pretty common in fantasy novels, although there are novels where the magic-users do not change into anything else; for example *The Black Magician* trilogy.

The change from animal to human or back again is not the only change frequently found in fantasy. The hero can be either young or old. If the novel contains a coming of age motif, he or she usually starts out as a child and matures as the story goes on. This may be because childhood “is an age when the belief in fairies and spirits [...] is tolerated and even encouraged” (Indick, 34). By having the character mature, the author could give the readers a way to experience the journey into adulthood together with the protagonist. Children, Schiller claimed, are closer to nature than adults, as nature is “a representation of our lost childhood”



and the perfection of the ideal of naturalness (Schiller, 22). Because they are so close to the natural, according to this Romantic view, they do not see nature the same way the adults do. The wonder is not there in the same way. The perfection the adults find in nature is something the children are surrounded with and have not yet left behind.

One almost universal aspect of childhood is naïveté. Thought of consequences are frequently far away from the children's minds, and they focus on their goals instead; whether that be pleasing a parent or finding the cookie jar. It is the same for individuals who are childish in nature even after they have grown up. Schiller used the example of a man who confessed any secrets he may have had to a deceiver, stating that "we laugh at him but cannot prevent ourselves from honouring him for it. For his trust in the other comes from the honesty of his own disposition" (26). If the hero is a naïve adult, it might be because he has hopes that do not correspond with reality. There are heroes like this, and these sometimes go through the road of trials and end up as more mature individuals by the end of their journey.

When a hero goes on a quest and changes as a result, it might be because he has met his Other. The Other, in Howard's definition, represents "that dark, unlived, and generally unacknowledged part of the central character's personality, kept hidden away from the eyes of the world and often from the protagonist's own awareness" (Howard, 4). This character is frequently called a mirror or a double, or even alter-ego. If the hero accepts his Other, he will almost undoubtedly fulfil his quest. If, however, he refuses his Other, this character will quickly turn from helper to villain. It might also be that the Other is a villain, and is more of an image of what the hero can become. If this is the case, there is usually more than one double in the narrative.

## 1.4 Comparison of the genres

Now we have seen several major traits from both fairy tales and fantasy. As we can see, the two genres are very similar in this aspect, although the selection is limited seeing as I have focused on traits that also fit with the journey motif. Of the aspects above, the helper, villain, hero, and magic are perhaps the aspects most readers automatically think about when hearing either “fairy tale” or “fantasy”, yet the other traits are not any less important. But what are the differences?

The clearest difference between the genres is the structure, which I have explained briefly in the general sections of each genre. Fairy tales are, as I have previously stated, formed around a rigid structure, and most tales follow the majority of the guidelines for the genre. The hero sets out to solve a problem of some sort, and meets physical or moral challenges on his or her way. Then the hero can go one of two ways After defeating the villain at the end of the journey, he or she return victorious, or he or she dies either after defeating the villain or the hero dies due to earlier choices. Fantasy novels follow a much looser structure, and there is enough space for the authors to explore the fantastical world and play with the traits they decide to include in the story. This leads to differences from the fairy tale structure, as parts of the fantasy narrative might follow other character groups, not only the hero. The author increases the tension by letting the reader see the villain’s motivation, for instance, or use this extra space to add traits from other genres and create a fantastical mystery or romantic novel.

This leads me to the second major difference: the stories’ length. As previously stated, fantasy novels are generally longer than fairy tales. There are fantasy short stories, yet these, too, explore more of the environment and characters than the fairy tales. The short stories also follow the looser structure where the villain can be encountered early on, and even be defeated as the first thing the hero accomplishes. This difference is smaller than the difference in structure because both fairy tales and fantasy stories vary in length. Despite this, fairy tales

are usually very short although they sometimes focus on a larger time span than the fantasy short stories.

Then there are the heroes. Both types of hero follow Campbell's guidelines from *Hero With a Thousand Faces*, which I have looked at earlier in this chapter. In fantasy, the heroes can be found in any social class, while they in fairy tales is almost always commoners. Another difference between the heroes is the problems they encounter on their quests. While both types solve issues connected to the time the story was written in, fairy tales are frequently more general or ethical, and the problems are often still recognisable in our modern world. Examples are right and wrong, and what may happen to young women if they are unprepared for the world. Fantasy stories usually show more complex issues. There are more nuances of good and evil in the narrative, while fairy tales only have the two sides.

Of course, there is also the issue of morality. Here, there are both differences and similarities. These are found in both genres, yet they are more commonly displayed in fairy tales, due to the cautionary and educational tales. Fantasy narratives may contain the same ethical lessons about right and wrong behaviour as fairy tales, yet these are more frequently found in children's books. When they appear in novels for adults, the issues are usually more complex and hidden within the scenes of the novel. A similarity on the issue of morals is that in both genres the stories are usually a child or young adult character's first meeting with the wider world.

The list of similarities is much longer. In every aspect we have looked at earlier, there are similarities between the two genres. Both genres contain magic that is evident in wizards, witches or other magic users, or in the nature surrounding the characters. There are heroes, helpers, and villains in both genres and these fulfil the same functions. The hero is usually the main character the story follows, and he or she can be the only character able to solve the problem or defeat the villain. Helpers usually fill their role as the hero's aides and councillors,

while the villains attempt to stop the hero and helpers. There is change or transformation in almost every story, whether they be fairy tales or fantasy. This might be on the hero's part, or other characters. The change may be in mind – for example the transformation from child to adult – or in form – from human to beast, or beast to human. Even the journeys commonly fulfil the same purpose in both genres. They are there to drive the characters' developments, to give the reader an image of right and wrong through obstacles, and show that the villains can be defeated and goals reached.

### **1.5 Analysis of “The Snow Queen”**

The reason I decided to include it in this thesis is to show a fairy tale to compare with the two fantasy novels. This will hopefully supplement the general points already made, in order to make the differences and similarities between the genres clear. This fairy tale will be analysed with an emphasis on the journey motif. While the journey motif is more prominent in fantasy novels, several fairy tales have it as well, and “The Snow Queen” has perhaps the clearest example within the fairy tale genre of a journey that changes the heroine.

H. C. Andersen's “The Snow Queen” is about Gerda trying to find her friend Kay. The devil has a mirror that changes the good traits of the person who looks into it to bad traits. The mirror is broken and the shards fly into the human world. Kay gets one of these splinters in his eye, making everything he sees ugly, and he gets another one in his heart, turning it to ice. The following winter, he hooks his sleigh to the Snow Queen's and is pulled along. Gerda, who grew up with Kay, decides to search for him. She floats in a boat down the river, meets a sorceress that tries to keep her, then travels further to Lapland and Finland in search for the Snow Queen's castle. When she finds it, Kay is sitting on the floor trying to spell “ETERNITY” in icy letters. She melts the splinter in his heart, and after the one in his eye is

removed, they return to the town they once lived in. Upon reaching home, they find out they have grown up.

In the tale, the action is very compact. Where there should be long time spans, the author has inserted time jumps. As a result, any changes to the characters are nearly invisible. The reader would feel disconnected if the characters suddenly had other views and values. In the tale, Kay changes rapidly, although that is because of the splinters, and his change is not for the better. If we look at the characters' journey of life, Kay acts out and becomes almost cruel (Andersen, *Winter Tales*, 4-5). While some of his new pastimes are sensible, the way he behaves is not, even though the adults do not seem to care, instead commenting on "what a remarkable head that boy has" (5). Gerda, on the other hand, stays the way she was at the beginning of the tale: headstrong, compassionate, determined, and naïve.

There are two main lessons Gerda learns while on her journey: to have faith, and to be independent. From an early age, she has been exposed to Christianity and bible verses, so faith in God is only part of the lesson. The other part is to have faith in herself. She is the key to rescuing Kay from the Snow Queen. No one else knows the boy well enough to attempt a rescue, but Gerda has grown up with him, and she is perplexed by his sudden change of attitude. Thus, her own attitude towards her mission is crucial. If she had decided not to go after her playmate, or lost faith in her ability to see it through, Kay would not have been rescued. The power to save her friend is already inside her. The snowflakes the Snow Queen uses to defend her castle, for example, are defeated by Gerda's breath:

Then little Gerda said the Lord's Prayer; the cold was so intense that she could see her own breath; it came out of her mouth like smoke. Her breath became thicker and thicker, and took the form of little angels who grew larger and larger as soon as they hit the ground. All had helmets on their heads, and lances and shields in their hands; their numbers increased, and when Gerda had finished her prayer a whole legion stood around her (24).

This clearly shows Gerda putting her faith in God, while she frees Kay through her tears – “little Gerda wept hot tears, which fell upon [Kay’s] breast. They penetrated into his heart, thawed the lump of ice and consumed the little splinter of glass in it” (25).

As in most fairy tales, Gerda has helpers to aid her through her ordeal. She has the crow, the prince and princess, the robber-girl, the reindeer, and the Lapland and Finland Women. Gerda can talk to the weather and animals, making them into something like helpers, as they give her the hope to push on. The sorceress by the river is not a traditional helper, as she seeks to keep Gerda with her, even if it is not out of maliciousness. She is the first person from outside the little town that Gerda meets, and the magical garden allows her to rest for the last time until she finds her friend and recovers from the fright of the river journey. However, the river also keeps her from progressing, and thus the sorceress is difficult to place. She is neither helper nor villain, yet she both helps and hinders Gerda in reaching her goal.

Her other helpers do not hinder her on her journey. The crow gives her new hope and a direction in which to start searching, even though his information turns out to be about a prince rather than Kay. The prince and princess give her a carriage and boots and muff, which are much more suited to the weather, as she had been wearing spring clothes in autumn. The robber-girl seems like a villain in the beginning with her violence and statements of “[s]he shall give me her muff and her pretty dress, and sleep with me in my bed” (18) and “[t]hey shall not kill you, even if I do get vexed with you; I’ll do it myself then” (19), yet she gives Gerda gloves in place of her muff, some food for the journey, and the reindeer she loves to tickle with her knife so the girl can reach Lapland. The reindeer is her transport, and functions as her voice when they arrive at the houses of the two women, while the Lapland Woman cannot give much help other than the information that they need to travel to the Finland Woman. It is this last helper who reveals Gerda’s powers, something I will come back to.

It is these creatures and people who drive the story forwards, as little Gerda would likely not have been able to get to Kay without their help. My reason for claiming this is that Gerda is a child, and while children can be very stubborn, determined, and tough, being on her own in the wilderness with only the clothes on her back and no idea of which direction to turn, would likely have caused Gerda to fail. Without her helpers, she would have been lost, and unable to go either forwards or back home.

She also needs to have faith in her helpers, none of whom she has ever met before. Upon meeting them, she must have faith in their ability and willingness to aid her on her journey. In this way, trust is both part of the lesson on faith and a separate lesson. Trusting her helpers makes her able to push on, yet one of those she trusts is the old sorceress - who would rather have Gerda living with her, and removes all roses from her garden to keep her for a while longer. Due to this, Gerda loses several months, not because of physical force, but due to the magic keeping the garden in full bloom the entire year; “[o]h, how I have tarried!” said little Gerda. ‘Autumn has come already’” (12). Had the magic worked the way the sorceress wanted, Gerda would likely have stayed in the garden.

Independence is something that comes from having faith in oneself. Gerda is the only one who can save Kay, as the Finland Woman remarks:

‘I can give her no greater power than she already possesses; don’t you see how great that is? [...] She cannot receive any power from us; she possesses it in her heart: it consists in her being a sweet innocent child. If she cannot herself get to the Snow Queen and remove the glass from little Kay, we cannot help her’ (23).

This comes to fruition when Gerda cries and melts the ice around Kay’s heart. Her entire journey has been alone, broken up by the times she is with her helpers. Once she does get to Kay, that changes, as he becomes her travelling companion on the way home. The fact that she steps out into the unknown world without someone to hold her hand makes her able to

grow up that much faster. She has no one to hide behind, and while she can converse with the weather, animals, and flowers, she does not have any human interaction except for those brief meetings. Being independent means that Gerda needs to step out of her comfort zone without help. She alone must make decisions that will affect her future. Instead of staying a child, where the adults usually decide for her, she has to mature enough to make good decisions without thinking about the consequences. Her journey, with the absence of a travelling companion, is what makes her the adult she is at the end of the tale.

Kay is different from Gerda. He does not have the journey she does as the basis for his maturity. The splinters in his eye and heart cause him to act out; to become much like the stereotypical teenager. He goes from being afraid when seeing the Snow Queen – “her eyes sparkled like two stars, but there was no peace and rest in them. [Kay] got frightened and jumped down from the chair” (3) – to falling in love with her – “[s]he no longer appeared to him to be of ice when she sat outside his window beckoning to him; in his eyes she was perfect, and he felt no fear at all” (6). In a way, the shards force him to partially grow up, even if he takes a wrong turn. His stay at the Snow Queen’s castle is what makes him ready to accept what the grandmother told him and Gerda over the years, and Gerda’s tears are what free him from his confinement. During his time in the castle, he is freezing, and he cannot leave until he completes his task: spelling the word “Eternity” with ice blocks (25). When he is freed, that is an existence he does not wish to continue. By seeing the error of his ways and learning from this, Kay ensures that by the time he and Gerda return to the beginning he, too, becomes an adult.

Although the two join the ranks of adulthood, they both keep some of their childhood: “[t]here they both sat, grown up and yet children – children in heart; and it was summer – warm, pleasant summer” (27). Until they walk in the door, none of them notice any change. Even with all the months they have been gone – Kay vanished in winter and Gerda went after



him during the spring, and was held up in the autumn, and they both returned during the summer months – nothing around them has changed. The grandmother does not even comment on this, only quoting a passage from the Bible: “Except ye become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of God” (27). Because they have both kept their innocence in their hearts even when growing physically, they will be able to enter Heaven, and this ties in with the power of faith. Had the two lost their childishness entirely, they might have stopped believing in the stories and in God, or they could have kept on believing, yet they would have lost the innocence and sense of wonder they once had.

While Gerda encounters magical beings, there is little magic in the surrounding nature. There are areas where magic is explicitly shown – for instance the sorceress’ garden and the Snow Queen’s palace – yet the environment for most of the journey is entirely ordinary. Gerda’s two animal helpers are both able to speak, as are the flowers and the wind. This shows that there is magic surrounding the young girl. She never falters when she is faced with the long road ahead, and is determined to continue her search for Kay no matter what. The trip feels shorter in the narrative as Gerda travels by coach and on the back of a reindeer, which cuts down on travel time. There is no magic in the travelling, like there will be in the two fantasy novels.

In addition, there is no secondary world. The whole tale takes place in our real world, with added magic and fantastical elements. As stated earlier, this is the main requirement for low fantasy. “The Snow Queen” could quite easily be a fantasy novel. The two primary things that make it a fairy tale are the length and the characters themselves. The length of the tale is something that could easily have been expanded. The author would only have to expand on the journey to the Snow Queen’s castle and the journey back. The characters in Andersen’s tale are rather flat. They are not fleshed out as well as in fantasy novels; with flaws and

greater goals. A fantasy character has motivation, goals, and a backstory. Gerda has a goal in her quest to rescue Kay, but other than that, she is not explored as a character.

## Chapter 2 – *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*

L. Frank Baum states in the introduction to his novel, *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, that it “aspires to being a modernized fairy tale, in which wonderment and joy are retained and the heartaches and nightmares are left out” (Baum, xii-xiv) because the old moral tales are no longer needed. Education has taken over the moral lessons, rendering the gruesomeness of the tales moot. In this chapter, I will discuss what Dorothy learns on her journey through Oz, and which changes she goes through. I will include a small section on Campbell’s hero motif, and if she needs her helpers to be able to succeed in her quest.

The novel follows a journey motif and houses a multitude of unknown creatures such as the Munchkins and Winged Monkeys instead of the fairies, elves, dwarves, or other fantastical races. What the narrative does have is magic, witches, and a wizard. Michael O. Riley also mentions in his study *Oz and Beyond* that “nowhere in the text [does Baum] refer to Oz as a fairyland” (Riley, 51). As stated earlier, the fantasy and fairy tale genres are very similar. In my opinion, there are two things that make this novel slightly difficult to class as belonging exclusively to one of them. The first is the use of morals or underlying messages, which is often not visible in fantasy works. This narrative has two when we look hard enough; the first being that belief in oneself is the way to success (Baum, vii). The other moral, as stated by Jerry Griswold in his “There’s No Place Like Home: The Wizard of Oz”, is that

we already have what we sometimes think we lack. That we sometimes make mountains out of mole hills and that such problems are easily dissolved. That the search for solutions is, for similar reasons, a fruitless enterprise. That we cannot be given what we already possess. That we are already home (Griswold, 474-475).

The other thing is the fact that Dorothy is not as fleshed out as fantasy characters typically are, yet at the same time she is not as flat as fairy tale characters can be.

In the introduction to his novel, Baum states that he has removed the gruesomeness found in older fairy tales. He has indeed removed a lot of violence that could have been present from the narrative and replaced it with more light-hearted descriptions. With this light-heartedness and easily beaten villain, Baum's text is more in the realm of children's fantasy than teen or adult fantasy, which usually have more brutal details and battles. Dorothy, for example, only knows she has killed the East Witch because "just under the corner of the great beam the house rested on, two feet were sticking out, shod in silver shoes with pointed toes" (Baum, 7). The West Witch's demise is not explicit either, with the most explicit reference being the Witch herself stating "'in a few minutes I shall be all melted, and you will have the castle to yourself. [...] Look out – here I go!'" (91), and the brief description of Dorothy pouring more water on her so she turns to dust. In fairy tales, the villain quite often suffers a gruesome fate, as I have previously stated. The stepmother in the Grimm's "Little Snow White", for example, was "forced to put on the red-hot [iron] shoes, and dance until she dropped down dead" (Grimm, *Complete Grimm's Fairy Tales*, 258). This is not the case for *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*. While the fate of the villain is death, as in so many other fantasy stories with an evil adversary, when it happens it is almost anticlimactic. The hero usually figures out the villain's weakness or some other way of defeating them before facing them, yet in Dorothy's case, she throws water in a fit of anger, with no real plan. The whole obstacle the Witch presents is solved by accident. Baum has succeeded in writing a novel without an explicit didactic message, as the reader needs to think about what this message could be. However, fantasy as a genre was not properly established at the time of Baum's writing, which is likely why he claims it is a fairy tale. His novel is now often considered to be the first American fantasy (Attebery, 82). With the similar traits and themes, deciding which genre the novel belongs to is difficult.

Dorothy's physical journey takes her through the Land of Oz. This land is not that different from the real world, with the exceptions of the magical beings. That the land is familiar to both Dorothy and the reader means the two can experience the land and journey together. The possible immersion is not broken because the grass is an unnatural colour or because there is a gigantic castle in the sky. Dorothy does not react to the fact that she has been transported to another world with disbelief, which helps her and the reader move along, instead of stopping and wondering about every fantastic piece of this new world. As Riley states, Oz itself "is a celebration of the wonder inherent in nature, and as a reader travels with Dorothy and her companions on their exploration of this beautiful and wondrous land, there is a strange familiarity about it" (Riley, 56). That Dorothy does not react to the strangeness of Oz might be because both she and the reader are expecting it. The reader knows from the start that the story will not be entirely realistic and as such expect fantastic things to happen. Had Dorothy been overly surprised by the changes, it might have stopped the flow of the novel. With Dorothy being a child – and the target audience also being children – the reader experiences the story through her. This means they can leave their own reality behind for a while.

Oz is not very big if Dorothy explores most of the land. It could be much larger than what the reader explores together with Dorothy. The main population is centred around the Emerald City and the four smaller areas which the Witches inhabit, and nothing else is seen. It is not explained whether Dorothy only explores part of the region or not in *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, but "one receives from the story the sense of vast space" (Riley, 52), and the reader is thus given an inkling that the land is bigger than what is explored in this first novel. More of the land and its neighbouring countries were explored in the many sequels. Because the novel is a work of fantasy, Oz could be rather large and remain hidden within the U.S. desert. It could easily have been concealed with magic; a pocket dimension of sorts.

The magic in the story is in plain view with the Witches, yet at the same time, it is hidden within the environment. It is subtler than magical beings showing off their powers. It makes the Tin Woodman and Scarecrow able to move and talk, makes the Lion able to speak, and brings Dorothy to Oz and takes her home to Kansas via two different methods; the tornado and the Silver Shoes. Twisters are a common phenomenon on the farm, and Dorothy has probably experienced a few of them. On the other hand, a regular tornado could be magical if it appeared out of nothing, and its only purpose was to bring her to the Land of Oz; which describes the twister in *Oz*. The Silver Shoes are magical throughout the novel. They, like the Golden Cap, are magical objects to be found and used to solve puzzles or obstacles in Dorothy's path. These are, as magical objects frequently are, obtained after defeating a villain – the Shoes by Dorothy's house crushing the Wicked Witch of the East, and the Cap by defeating the Wicked Witch of the West. The Shoes and the tornado are Dorothy's portals. *Oz* has two one-way portals, which means that Dorothy can enter the land with the tornado but is unable to use the same method to return. When Nikolajeva writes about portals in her book *The Magic Code*, she states that “[f]lying may also be a way of travelling into a secondary world” (Nikolajeva, 92). This is exactly what Dorothy does. She is flown into Oz, and she leaves Oz by flying. This way is more convenient due to Dorothy's home in Kansas. She could have gone through a door in the house – like the Pevensies in the Narnia novels – but it is instead nature that carries her away to the fantastical land.

Dorothy's three helpers are three entirely different individuals with similar goals. The Scarecrow is made of straw and fabric, and wants a brain so he can be intelligent. The Tin Woodman is made of metal – although he was once a regular man – and wishes for a heart so he can love again. The Cowardly Lion is a talking lion that seeks courage because he is afraid of everything around him. They all join the young girl on her journey along the yellow brick road because the Wizard of Oz may be able to help. Their personalities are both similar and

different. They put emphasis on different things. The Tin Woodman, for example, is a romantic, while the Scarecrow feels intelligence is better: “‘I shall ask for brains instead of a heart; for a fool would not know what to do with a heart if he had one.’ ‘I shall take the heart,’ returned the Tin woodman; ‘for brains do not make one happy, and happiness is the best thing in the world.’” (Baum, 32-33). The Lion, for his part, believes courage is the most important. However, they all agree on travelling to the Emerald City, that they lack something, and that they need to help Dorothy. The three helpers are all naïve individuals and still childlike at the beginning of the narrative, and they stay that way until the middle of the story. The fact that they already possess the wanted qualities is something the three show repeatedly throughout their journey. The first obstacles they face as a team are overcome thanks to the Scarecrow’s brain and intelligence and the Cowardly Lion’s bravery. The Tin Woodman’s compassion does not show in the challenges, but he is easily moved to tears. In fact, all four companions unknowingly possess what they seek, as Dorothy receives the Silver Shoes almost immediately after setting foot in the Land of Oz.

Campbell’s hero-motif is clear in *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*. This plot element joins in with the journey motif as the two are frequently found together. Dorothy is definitely a common person instead of a noble. She is different from some other fantasy heroes, since she does not get an opportunity to refuse the call to action as she is swept away by a tornado. Once in the Land of Oz, she meets the Witch of the North, who gives her a reward in the form of a protecting kiss, after defeating the guardian of the land (the Wicked Witch of the East). From there, she meets her three main helpers, travels to the Emerald City, receives a secondary quest which she finishes, and returns to the Wizard for her reward. The novel could have ended here had it not been for the twist created by the Wizard revealing that he, like Dorothy, is a regular human, without magic at his fingertips: “‘I’m just a common man [...] I am a humbug’” (107). The primary quest then takes off in a different direction. Usually, when

a helper is unable to aid the protagonist further, they send them to someone who can – for example the Lapland Woman sending Gerda to the Finland Woman in “The Snow Queen” – but in *Oz*, the Wizard is gone, and the information that Glinda may be able to help comes from a guard in the Emerald City. Upon reaching the Good Witch, Dorothy finally receives her reward in the form of a way home. This very brief outline illustrates several of the points Campbell mentions in his work *Hero of a Thousand Faces*, as well as the typical journey formula. The heroine receives a call to adventure she cannot refuse, she goes through several challenges, this time on a literal road, and solves problems. This then culminates in a reward or boon when she has succeeded; she is able to go home. There are, of course, deviations, as the formula is not absolute, but flexible. One of these deviations comes in the form of the challenges found in the novel. Normally, there would have been several different challenges, rising in difficulty as the novel progressed. In *Oz*, however, several of the obstacles Dorothy faces are very similar. The first three obstacles, for example, all centre around getting past a hole stretching across the yellow brick road. The last three all have the group getting through the lands of a different race unscathed, and without destroying the buildings or individuals in the case of the China People.

This similarity to Campbell’s hero-myth shows that Baum has not deviated too far from the typical hero-story. Edward W. Hudlin has looked at how well the guidelines Campbell outlines coincide with the narrative in *Oz*. He writes that the “mythic hero or heroine is frequently a person of mystery [...] Dorothy is described as an orphan, and no other facts about her past are given except that she came to Aunt Em from somewhere else” (Hudlin, 446). Dorothy is indeed a mysterious person, having no background to explain why she is the way she is. She could be from Oz for all the reader knows, yet the only other person known to have entered the Land from the outside is the Wizard. To the residents of Oz, leaving the Land is impossible due to the great desert. Hudlin also states that “each witch is confined to



her own corner of Oz” (450), but this is an imprecise claim. If they had been confined to their specific corners, what is the Witch of the North doing in the East Witch’s territory? It seems that the Wicked Witches stay in their territory, as if to defend it, yet they can leave it. To Dorothy, the Wicked Witches represent challenges, while the Good Witches are helpers and guides, and it makes sense for the guides to be able to travel instead of being restricted to a geographical area. At the end of it, he says that Dorothy “has conquered or conciliated all, and so returns without obstacle” (462). Dorothy has fulfilled the journey in a way that makes her eligible for the hero’s return. In a way, her return is a boon to her relatives, and her own reward is the change the Kansas prairie has undergone while she was away.

While some of the challenges are easier than the ones found in several other fantasy novels, they are still necessary for Dorothy and her companions to learn what they need to be independent, mature individuals. Without them, the journey would have been a single, linear jaunt through the Land of Oz, with only disappointment waiting for them. The alliance the four characters create would not have formed, as the first obstacles tie them tighter together. Even if the Wizard had sent them to take out the Wicked Witch of the West, missing the earlier challenges would have rendered Dorothy completely unprepared for facing her. Although some fantasy works have the main characters facing the villain early to show them they are not ready yet, and are still vulnerable, this would have changed the entire *Wonderful Wizard of Oz*. This would have introduced more violence into the novel. Instead of it being a happy story where the protagonists only suffer minor setbacks, it would show a young girl probably being defeated by an older woman. It is, of course, possible that Dorothy could have defeated the Witch with water, yet she would likely not have understood how the land and magic works. It is also worth mentioning that while the reader is aware that *Oz* is not real, they do not expect Dorothy to complete her journey unhindered. As I mentioned earlier, the

characters need to be believable for the reader. In our real world, we encounter obstacles we need to overcome, and even children are aware that some things ought to be fought for.

As in so many other fantasy novels containing an evil entity the main character must defeat, Dorothy needs to face the West Witch alone. Two of her helpers are in pieces along the road, and the Lion is imprisoned in the Witch's domain. This challenge, if we follow the hero-myth and quest-fantasy formulae, should have been the most difficult to overcome for Dorothy. Instead, it is by pure chance that the Witch makes her angry enough to throw water at her, without knowing water is the key to success. It could be argued that it is not the Witch herself that is the core obstacle, but the Wizard. He is the one who sends them out to defeat the Witch if they want him to give them what they seek. Of course, he does not expect them to succeed, and he has no means of fulfilling his promise. However, the challenge here is convincing him to help, and to do this, the group must defeat the Wicked Witch of the West. She becomes an object that has to be collected or destroyed – like for example *Harry Potter's* horcruxes and Frodo's the One Ring – in order for the quest to be completed.

Before Glinda can give Dorothy a way home, however, the girl has to overcome one last challenge in the form of a moral choice. Glinda tells her “I am sure I can tell you of a way to get to Kansas.’ Then she added, ‘But if I do, you must give me the Golden Cap’” (Baum, 144). This is the penultimate time she could have failed her quest. I approached the idea of items of power in Chapter 1, and like the One Ring in *Lord of the Rings*, the Golden Cap is an object of power. It is infused with magic, and thus able to call and control the Winged Monkeys. Had Dorothy refused to give Glinda this Cap, she would have shown herself to be corrupted by the power it holds. This is rather common in fantasy and fairy stories. The hero is given an opportunity to show that they are better than the villain. The choice may be obvious or more covert, and it may be presented as a challenge. The characters who make the wrong choice fail their quest. A prime example of this is the Norwegian “Herding the King's

Hares". In this folk tale, the Ash Lad and his brothers come across an old woman with her nose stuck in a piece of wood. His two brothers refuse to help and fail in the task the king gives them, while Ash Lad helps her out, and receives a magical flute that calls the hares back, making him able to complete the task.

*The Wizard of Oz* has an almost symmetrical structure. It has nearly the same amount of challenges to begin the journey as it does to end it. The Witch is the middle point, and the group encounters the Wizard both before and after facing her. In addition, Dorothy encounters a Good Witch as both her first and her last encounter in Oz. The Wicked Witch of the East was not noticed before she was pointed out, and it was the house that crushed her. Of the magical objects Dorothy collects on her journey, the Golden Cap is received last, but used first, while the Silver Shoes are received first and used last. There are, however, two things that ruin the symmetry. One is that the four companions face an additional challenge before reaching the Emerald City – the poppy field – and the other is that they never travel to the North. She starts in the East, travels to the middle before going to the West, then goes back to the middle, and then to the South. While Dorothy meets the Good Witch of the North, she never enters the Witch's domain. At the same time as the structure is typical for a fantasy novel, it deviates from the fairy tale structure. The villain is faced in the middle of the story, rather than the end. This, the separate world, and the derailment of Dorothy's quest after the Wizard is gone, makes the novel fit more into the fantasy genre than the fairy tales.

## **2.1 Lessons**

Dorothy comes face to face with several ethical choices in the novel. She needs to decide whether to help the Scarecrow or Tin Woodman or not, for example. Through the different obstacles she encounters, she learns the life lessons she can only learn in Oz.

Acceptance is important in the narrative. Magic is rather apparent in Oz, and Dorothy must accept this new world in order to get anywhere. All four companions already have what they need, though they did not know it in the beginning, and had thus not yet accepted what they are. Dorothy searches for a way back to Kansas, the Lion for courage, the Tin Woodman for a heart, and the Scarecrow for a brain, yet the three helpers express these qualities early in the narrative, while Dorothy gains the Silver Shoes upon her arrival in Oz. Without accepting themselves and the fact that they have the qualities they seek, they are not able to succeed in their individual quests. This lesson is present in most genres, as well as in real life. When reading the novel, the reader needs to accept the strangeness just like Dorothy, and in real life, we have to accept both ourselves and that others are different.

While some of the lessons are taught to the helpers, they serve a double role as Dorothy's mirrors, reflecting her state of mind both before and after the journey. The Cowardly Lion is searching for courage, revealing him to be insecure, much like Dorothy is, as she has not yet grown up and found her place in the world. In both his and Dorothy's case, they need to learn that it is all right to be scared, but not let it paralyze them. They need to learn that strength is something that dwells within, and sometimes needs a push from an outside source to awaken. Even though Dorothy towards the middle of the narrative is captured by the Wicked Witch of the West, and she is subservient in the beginning of her captivity, she needs to stand up for herself and the Lion when the Witch attempts to steal her Silver Shoes: "'[y]ou have no right to take my shoe from me.' 'I shall keep it, just the same,' said the Witch, laughing at [Dorothy], 'and someday I shall get the other one from you, too'" (91). She must face the overwhelming odds of an older Witch, instead of simply accepting her circumstances and remaining under the Witch's control. The Lion is important because while Dorothy shows some fear, he is the reflection of both her fear and strength. With him coming along, Dorothy

can accept Oz without question as her fear and insecurity is mostly outsourced to the Lion while she is travelling.

Cunning and compassion also play a role in the narrative, just as we will see in *Stardust*. With the different challenges, the companions need to find a way through them, often using cunning instead of force, while compassion is what makes Dorothy help her friends, and forgive the Wizard of Oz when he is revealed to be a fraud. In fantasy, the characters often have to outwit their adversaries and be kind to those they meet on their way. Compassion is also important in fairy tales, and perhaps especially in the many Norwegian folk tales starring the Ash Lad. The helper that embodies Dorothy's cunning and knowledge in *The Wizard of Oz* is the Scarecrow, who wishes for a brain. Compassion is something Dorothy shows early on, when she helps the Scarecrow down from his stake (even though she has just met the strange creature):

‘Can’t you get down?’ asked Dorothy. ‘No, for this pole is stuck up my back. If you will please take away the pole I shall be greatly obliged to you.’ Dorothy reached up with both arms and lifted the figure off the pole, for – being stuffed with straw – it was quite light. ‘Thank you very much,’ said the Scarecrow, when he had been set down on the ground. ‘I feel like a new man’ (17).

While Dorothy is set on getting home, she can stray from her path long enough to help beings in need.

A lesson she does not learn, or even encounter, is love. The Tin Woodman is the helper who embodies this aspect of her, and although the party becomes a makeshift family, Dorothy never shows any signs of romantic love. She does not meet anyone she could have loved romantically in Oz, either. It might be that she is still too young to think about it, or it could be that the intended readers of the novel are too young and would be unable to connect with her if she had a romantic interest. Either way, her older helper embodies this aspect. He has

already loved, and been cursed into a metal body, making him feel he has lost his heart and every emotion connecting to it. Even so, he cries when he accidentally steps on a few insects, as he “was always careful not to hurt any living creature [...] ‘You people with hearts,’ he said, ‘have something to guide you, and need never do wrong; but I have no heart, and so I must be very careful’” (39), showing that he is capable of love and compassion. He also shows that he is naïve, due to his belief that anyone with a heart “need never do wrong”.

Dorothy has several challenges, which cut into the time she has to digest what each obstacle teaches. Right after the house lands on the Witch of the East, she is thrust into a completely new land, which is very different from her own. She must quickly learn who is friendly, as not all denizens of Oz are good, and from the moment she puts on the Silver Shoes, her quest begins. Her first two obstacles come after she has collected all three helpers, in the form of a deep ditch across the road (42), swiftly followed by another, wider one (44). The first rift splitting the yellow brick road is the Lion’s chance to show off the courage he possesses. When the four arrive at the hole, he does not hesitate in jumping. He could easily have been too afraid to make the jump, which would have forced them to attempt finding a way around. This way, the obstacle provides a lesson on bravery, and how it can be hidden within someone. It can be found in anyone; even cowards. It only needs to be awakened. This, in turn, helps Dorothy when she faces the Witch and the Wizard. She digs deep into her own being to find the courage to talk back to the powerful adults, as her helpers are not with her.

These first four challenges are also a lesson on trust and teamwork. In the first, the three who cannot make the jump must trust in the Lion’s ability to do so. If even one of them refused to climb onto his back, they would have had to decide on whether to find a way around or leave that person behind. This obstacle has no place for being cautious around her new friends, and it ties them tighter together as a group. All humans need to be able to trust, as we generally need a support network. The characters have not known each other long, so the fact

that the Cowardly Lion so easily lets them hitch a ride across the rift, and that they accept, is significant their development. While the first rift was there to test mainly the Lion's resolve, the companions must work together when they come to the second. The Scarecrow comes up with the plan to "'chop [the tree] down, so that it will fall to the other side, we can walk across it easily'" (44), and the Tin Woodman chops the wood. The challenge would have been difficult enough without the hostile Kalidahs attacking them for an unknown reason. The attack adds a time element to the challenge. The third obstacle in the line, the raging river, needs the Scarecrow's intelligence, the Lion's strength and the Tin Woodman's axe. Courage is still encouraged, as they all need to get on the raft and set off down the river. They need to work together to cross the river, and in the fourth lesson, teamwork is even more important. If they do not show courage, teamwork, and intelligence here, the whole group would not be able to continue. The beautiful poppy fields are a dangerous foe, and yet another challenge featuring the environment of Oz. The teamwork aspect comes in when Dorothy and the Lion succumb to flowers' effects, as he is too heavy for the Scarecrow and Tin Woodman to lift. Had they not been able to work together, or had they not been able to come up with a solution, the deceptive beauty of the fields could have been the end of their journey together.

That some things are not what they seem is another lesson that holds great importance. To Dorothy, everything is new, including the landscape, and so the small things can be either a good thing or a threat. Examples of this comes in the form of the Silver Shoes – ordinary objects capable of magical travel – and the fields of red poppies – which carry a scent that puts living beings to sleep, ultimately killing them if they are not rescued. The only two individuals immune to the flowers are the Scarecrow and Tin Woodman, as they are made of straw and tin respectively, although the Lion is more resistant than Dorothy and Toto. These flowers are the clearest example of something looking pretty and innocent, while in it is a silent killer, much like *Stardust's* serewood, as we will see. Even the great Emerald City is

deceptive. Upon entering, the group gets a pair of green glasses locked onto their faces, and everything appears green, yet when they leave, Dorothy's green dress has turned white. Like the Wizard it houses, the colour of the Emerald City is fake. Faced with all this deception, Dorothy learns to see beyond the first glance.

While she does learn it very early on, one of Dorothy's lessons is that she belongs in Kansas, not in the Land of Oz. She accepts the strangeness of the latter almost without thought, yet she is very certain that she can never live there and be happy. Kansas is without magic, and when she has not yet been exposed to the fantastic, she finds it grey and boring, with only Toto to brighten her day. When she comes to Oz, the environment is colourful, yet she immediately wants to get home to the grey prairie. To her, it is not only the looks of the place, but also the people, as she searches for a way to get home to her aunt and uncle. She needs the Land of Oz and magic to learn where she belongs and to give her new perspectives. There is no mention of neighbours living close to her uncle's farm, and without other children to socialise with, she would have been very isolated. Oz pushes her outside of her comfort zone, forcing entirely new experiences on her and making her think. For her to accept the reality on the farm, she needs this push, and to see and feel the unknown. When her time in Oz is done, the unknown is no longer anything to be apprehensive about, and Dorothy is ready to embrace her home world and all its challenges. When she lands on the prairie, the Shoes have disappeared – "Dorothy stood up and found she was in her stocking-feet. For the Silver Shoes had fallen off in her flight through the air, and were lost forever in the desert" (147) – showing she no longer needs them.

Faced with all the challenges she faces, Dorothy learns not to give up, which is the theme of perseverance that I mentioned briefly in Chapter 1, and this is also an important lesson in life. If we wish to get anywhere, we cannot give up at the first sign of trouble. She and her helpers are faced with odds that could make anyone give up and just live out their lives in Oz.



They face challenge after challenge, often with very little time to rest in between – for example when the Wicked Witch of the West sends three swarms of enemies at them, which are easily defeated, before sending the Winged Monkeys. They also hit severe set-backs, such as when the Great Oz is revealed to be a normal person. Despite this, they push on, determined to get Dorothy back to her home; even going as far as the Scarecrow refusing to take up the seat the Wizard left behind in the Emerald City until they get Dorothy to Kansas. Knowing what she wants, having faith in herself, and the determination to succeed is what ultimately gets everyone what they want. Had the Cowardly Lion given up when the Wizard of Oz was revealed to be a humbug, for example, he would never have received his placebo courage, and become the King of the Forest.

The lesson Dorothy learns last is faith. More specifically the power of faith, and how important it is to believe in herself. The Silver Shoes she received from the dead Witch in the beginning are the key to return to Kansas in the end, but to do this, Dorothy needs to tell them to take her back. During their entire trip, she has had to believe in her companions, the Wizard, and the friendly Witch to get where she needed to go next, as well as in herself to be able to push through instead of giving up along the way. Telling the shoes to take her back without the conviction that they will, would likely result in failure, as belief is the key to a lot of events in Oz. The Wizard, for instance, is exposed as a fraud, yet he gives the Lion courage, the Tin Woodman a heart, and the Scarecrow a brain (114-116). If they believe what he gave them is working, it will work, even if they are no different other than in that they believe. This is also a great lesson for the adolescent reader. Believing in ourselves means that we get the courage and strength to push through life's obstacles, and by living through Dorothy's tale, we may be able to see that we need to do what she does.

## 2.2 Changes

The most obvious change in Dorothy is how she feels about her aunt and uncle's home in Kansas. In the beginning, the place is grey, and she is bored there, seeing no redeeming qualities in the little homestead. After travelling through Oz, the only thing she still wants is to return to the desert plains. She is fully human, and does not belong among the fantastic, and she needs to see the other side to realise her place in the world and how beautiful her home really is. She needs to feel that she does not belong among the citizens of Oz, even if some of them become her closest friends.

In his classic text, *On the Sentimental and Naïve in Literature*, Schiller stated that “[a]s long as we were mere children of nature, we were happy and perfect; we have become free and have lost both” (Schiller, 31). This might be why the villain in fantasy novels often has several more years of experience than the protagonist, who – like Dorothy – is frequently a child or teenager. It might be the reason why Dorothy – apart from the obvious genre conventions - has little reaction to the strangeness around her. As she is part of nature, and nature in Oz is magical, she is unconsciously aware and accepting of the unnatural. To her, everything is as it should be. She needs to experience the magic that is absent in Kansas before she is able to move into adulthood.

In the beginning of the narrative, Dorothy has lived a rather sheltered life, and is thus rather naïve and unaware of several dangers. Because she is from Kansas, she is used to tornadoes, but not the strangeness of Oz. As she travels through the region, she loses her naïveté gradually, learning that not all people are good, that not everything is as it seems, and that not all beasts are hostile. She learns – and the reader learns through her – that compassion leads to good things, like her helpers joining her, but that sometimes courage and action are needed – for example when faced with the Witch of the West – as well as faith having power all on its own. All her lessons are geared towards what she will need later on in life, and she is

more mature when she returns, seeing the farm as home. The fact that Dorothy never reflects on the strange qualities of Oz, even when she has returned home, proves that although she has started to lose the naïveté of childhood, she has not yet joined the ranks of the adult world.

Dorothy is still a child when she returns to the farm, instead of the adult that usually returns from this type of journey. She has learnt what she needs, and has put magic behind her, yet she is not physically or emotionally ready to grow up at the end of the narrative. Her goal is constant throughout her journey: to get back home to her relatives' farm. After her trip to Oz, she no longer needs the magic. Her change, however, is so gradual that it is not visible before this point in the novel. It is, in a way, overshadowed by the change her travelling companions go through. Due to the short duration of her journey she does not have much time to change, and this is the primary reason for her still being young and needing the protection of her relatives' farm in Kansas.

Her helpers are all adults, and when they learn something about themselves, Dorothy learns it, too. As she is very young, she does not show much change, yet her helpers do. Their growth is her growth, even if they only began believing in themselves and their abilities after the fraudulent Wizard honoured his promise to them. The four companions were the same when they met. They even hold the same level of selfishness; only joining the group because they have the same destination. It is only after their defeat of the West Witch and the Wizard has flown away in his balloon, that they start thinking of Dorothy's goal instead of their own;

'I shall go with Dorothy,' declared the Lion, 'for I am tired of your city' [...] 'Dorothy will need someone to protect her.' 'That is true,' agreed the Woodman. 'My axe may be of service to her; so I also will go with her to the Land of the South.' [...] 'She lifted me from the pole in the cornfield and brought me to the Emerald City [...] I shall never leave her until she starts back to Kansas for good and all' (124).

They are no longer motivated by self-interest, and put her goals first.

The helpers all receive positions of power. The Tin Woodman becomes the leader of the Winkies in the East after Glinda asks where he wishes to go (144-145), and the Lion, as stated earlier, becomes the King of the Forest after defeating the spider (137). Although they have shed some of their childishness, they still believe that it is the departed Wizard who gave them their brain, heart, and courage. Of the three, it is the Scarecrow who leads the way into adulthood, as he was the only one of the helpers with a stable position when they set out to find Glinda. He is the one who decides to put his position on hold, so he can help Dorothy find a way back to Kansas, instead of letting them go and staying within the Emerald City's walls. None of them made the promise to get Dorothy back to the prairie when they first met. They all decide for themselves that they are going to continue to get their youngest member to where she belongs. It is these decisions that start their true elevation to adulthood – for all that their physical forms are already those of adults – and make them eligible for the positions they gain.

As previously stated, Dorothy still has the shape and mentality of a child at the end of the novel, and her naïveté is the barrier she must get past if she is to become an independent, mature individual. The way she does this is learning the above lessons, and escaping the grey, harsh environment of Kansas for a while. In both worlds, she has adults surrounding her. Her relatives are adults, there is no mention of any other children in the novel, and even her helpers are adults. All her three helpers start out as immature as her, only thinking of their own ultimate goal of receiving a brain, a heart, and courage until they near the conclusion of the novel. It is for this reason I claim the Scarecrow, Tin Woodman, and Cowardly Lion are absolutely vital to Dorothy's success. They are aspects of her Other, a concept I approached in Chapter 1, and it is through them that she learns much of what she needs. Dorothy stands as the heroine of her tale, yet she is not all-powerful. If she had been, she would resemble a

mythical figure more than a young girl. Her flaws make it easier for the reader to identify with her and explore the unknown.

### Chapter 3 - *Stardust*

At first glance, *Stardust* reads like a typical fantasy novel. It has magic, different societies, different species, conflicts, and a solid plot. Then, when we look closer, some parts are almost fairy tale-like with their morals and messages, which leads to some readers – for example Alice Nuttall – classifying it as a fairy tale for adults (Nuttall, 91). In her essay on Gaiman’s use of the fairy tale, Emeline Morin claims Gaiman plays with the fairy tale narrative and uses it much like it was used traditionally, to reflect on “conformity and deviance in our societies” (Morin, 130) and that he “undoes the boundaries between the real and the unreal” (139). According to Gaiman, the novel was written as a sequel to an unwritten story (Gaiman, unpaginated endmatter). In this chapter, I will explore Tristran’s journey through Faerie – not to be confused with Tolkien’s Faërie, which is an umbrella term the non-rational world, while Gaiman’s Faerie is like a country – the lessons he learns, the people he meets and the challenges he faces. These three points then lead to a discussion of how he changes, and if he could have succeeded in his objective without his helpers, or if he would have turned into the man he becomes at the end of the narrative if he had stayed in Wall. I will also compare the narrative to Campbell’s hero-myth as this myth is frequently found in novels with a journey motif.

In *Stardust*, Tristran Thorn has one foot in both worlds, weakening the barrier between the two. He is the son of Dunstan Thorn – a farmer in the real world of Victorian England – and Lady Una – a noblewoman of Stormhold. As he has been raised without fantastic influences, he has a part of himself that has gone unrealised. To discover his other self, Tristran needs to grow up and figure out what is important in life. R. Lyle Skains states in her essay “In the Shadows of Gods” that Tristran’s personality, at the beginning of the novel, is lacking and unrealised in the Victorian village of Wall (Skains, 29). He helps his father on the farm, works as a clerk, and is infatuated with the most sought-after girl in the village. That is really

all there is to him, except for his daydreams of knights, trolls, and princesses (Gaiman, 32), and the reader's knowing he is not purely human. In a way, he has conformed to the standards of his village as that is the only place he knows and, up to this point, has had little contact with the unnatural.

The plot itself is easy enough to understand for readers of most ages: a young man out to win a woman's heart leaves everything he knows behind to find a fallen star to give her – because that is the only token that can make her consider him as husband material. From there he must face trials and danger, and not everything is as it seems. Everything he knows will be put to the test; from his love to his heritage. As I stated in Chapter 1, the journey is quite common in fantasy novels, though with different heroes and goals. It is possible for a reader to experience the journey together with Tristran and to escape reality for a little while. Gaiman's decision to let Faerie be very much like our real world makes it easier to enter; this goes for both the main character and the reader, as they do not have to do too much acclimatising.

However, the novel does not follow only one journey. It follows two. While Tristran's journey is the main one, the other is Dunstan's. Dunstan is different from Tristran. He starts out as a very practical young man and does not seem as naïve as his son is at the beginning of his story. Instead, he seems almost adultlike even down to the fact that his conversations with Daisy, the girl he is courting, centre around the “theory of crop rotation and the weather” (6), which might be a safe conversation topic in Victorian England, but is probably somewhat boring for the book's intended modern audience. Unlike the dreaming Tristran, Dunstan focuses on the practical side of life in Wall. He does admit to thinking of “continuing on through the meadow, of crossing the stream and vanishing into the trees on its far side” (20) for the first time in his life, but he never acts on this. In a way, he refuses to dream of anything fantastical until the day of the Faerie Market, when magic and strangeness can enter

the village. A man with a top hat offers him the promise of “[t]omorrow, you shall attain your Heart’s Desire” (10) as payment for lodging. His call to depart on his journey thus does not come from an evil force, but rather desire, and he sets out without hesitation; much like his son.

Dunstan’s road of trials is very short, as his journey is undertaken and completed within a day. When he is at the Market he hears a soft chiming. Finding out where it comes from is the first challenge he faces, and it leads him to the stall Lady Una is manning. It is unclear if it is Lady Una who is his Heart’s Desire, or if it is Daisy, or if his Heart’s Desire is sex, as he meets Lady Una after dark and conceives Tristran. There can be arguments made for all three possibilities. He buys a glass snowdrop from her for the price of a “kiss, here on the cheek” (16), which is a price he can easily accept. The kiss is his second act of impulse. The first was demanding a wonder and going to the Market because of what the tall man promised him. What makes him more impulsive is the lure of his Heart’s Desire. The magic continues to make him impulsive and romantic after he leaves the Market. He kisses Daisy in public, which is not proper Victorian behaviour, and the villagers decide he is bewitched. This becomes his second challenge, as he breaks convention and is escorted away.

Unlike Tristran, however, Dunstan is not part of Faerie, and after his night-time meeting with Lady Una, she tells him to leave (22). His sulking then becomes the reason his and Daisy’s mothers decide they should marry. Even on his wedding day, he is affected by his trip to the Market; “Dunstan Thorn was married in June to Daisy Hempstock. And if the groom seemed a little distracted, well, the bride was as glowing and lovely as ever any bride has been” (24). However, due to his being fully human, Faerie begins to lose its hold. He slowly returns to his old self. He cannot entirely forget magic and the fantastic, as he has to take care of Tristran after Lady Una pushes the baby into Wall after his birth. Dunstan rejects neither his call nor his return, but the lack of challenges and lessons means that he reverts to the man



he was before after his journey. He does not change much – only becoming more accepting of strangeness – and thus his journey is partially failed. Dunstan does not have magic in his blood the way Tristran does, and this might be the reason why Dunstan does not change when he is in Faerie. It could also be because he refused the temptation to cross the meadow and vanish. Due to the lack of innate magic, Dunstan would likely not have been able to adapt to life in Faerie, but it could also be that he had already left his childhood behind. He was already an adult when this Market was held. This, coupled with his marriage to Daisy, causes him to settle down in Wall, conforming to its standards apart from his view on magic and the fantastical.

The narrative follows Campbell's hero-motif quite closely, although there are deviations early in the novel. This motif, as I stated in Chapter 1, contains a call to adventure, a road of trials, and a return for the hero. Tristran's journey starts without hostile individuals, although the guardians of Faerie could have stopped him had it not been for his first helper, who is also his father. This could be attributed to the fact that Tristran chooses to set out like Dunstan, instead of refusing the call. However, as Dunstan knows the guards on duty, and they in turn know of Tristran's heritage, there is no struggle to get through. After they have settled on letting the teenager past, he receives the first magical object from his father; the glass snowdrop Dunstan acquired eighteen years earlier. This glass flower is the last magical object Tristran uses on his primary journey, as he uses it to hitch a ride back to the meadow outside Wall. The first true obstacle he meets on the road of trials is the serewood. This copse of meat-eating trees makes travellers confused because they lose their way, and thus become easy prey. Tristran, however, has knowledge of where everything in Faerie is and this gains him the next two magical objects from his second helper, the unnamed small, hairy creature, who he only travels with for a brief time.

The novel deviates from both the hero-myth or fantasy genre when it comes to the dark forces or Dark Lord. *Stardust*'s hero Tristran does not fight against any dark force or adversary – except for the time where he stands up to one of the witch queens to save Yvaine. Even then, he escapes with Yvaine, and does not fight the Lilim. However, this links back to what I wrote on fantasy structures in 1.3. Fantasy novels have more room to deviate from the guidelines. His most powerful adversaries are the conventions of the village he grew up in and the inhabitants' expectations of him. At the beginning of the novel, he fitted in with these conventions. After Faerie, he does not. Tristran refuses his return to Wall, but only after ending his first journey. This makes him escape the punishment that could have occurred if he had refused to return at all. That Tristran failed in his primary objective, however, is overlooked because he has grown into a proper adult and sees that people should not be passed around as objects. He has grown enough to let Victoria go. The knowledge of how shallow the Wall community can be, is the reason Tristran embarks on his second journey back to Faerie; back to where he belongs.

Tristran's journey could be compared to a travel novel, albeit with a trip to a fantastical and supernatural land. The description of his travels and obstacles along the road is similar to the ones found in travel writing. The latter focus more on cultural challenges and language barriers, while both the reader and Tristran's foci are more on the challenges of having pursuers and keeping Yvaine at his side long enough to get back to Wall. This is what is interesting to the reader. Of course, the unknown culture does get him into some trouble, but the two worlds are similar enough to stop him from committing a serious *faux pas*. Some of his problems come from Faerie being the polar opposite of Wall in some instances – for example when it comes to the nursery rhymes in Wall being true and holding weight in Faerie. The main reason, however, that *Stardust* resembles a travel novel is Tristran's attitude to it all. He is excited to visit the strange land, although he has a goal he will work towards

even if he must go alone. Like some travellers, he does not take Faerie seriously at first, but walks through the landscape as if he were travelling to London.

Tristran's physical journey through Faerie is just as important as the metaphorical one. He grows while he travels, and the physical challenges determine the changes he undergoes. His journey is more than travelling from one place to another; rather, he travels from childhood to adulthood. He travels to a completely new world. The only place in Faerie that has been seen by mundane eyes is the meadow the Faerie Market takes place in. However, Faerie's landscape is not that different from the landscape found in England. There is no blue grass, flying islands, or anything obviously out of place. This similarity might be deliberate as to not alienate the reader; according to Michael Riley "good fantasy is most about reality; it enables us to perceive the real world in a clearer way" (Riley, 51). In a fantasy novel or fairy tale, the reader expects to find magic and fantastical elements, yet if the environment is too far-fetched, the novel is not believable. As Faerie is not too far from the normal England, the land is recognisable at the same time as it is fantastical.

Despite all the similarities to the mundane side of the country, there are parts that show off the fantastical world Faerie really is. One of the most obvious signs is the serewood. This meat-eating forest is also one of the more dangerous traps Faerie contains because it looks like an ordinary forest. Another sign is the technology. The flying ship is something that is not found in Victorian England, and the Faerie ship is likely powered more by magic than actual machinery. The castle of Stormhold houses the ghosts of family members that have been killed in the struggle for the throne. There is innate magic in Faerie that makes all the little things in Faerie possible. This magic is perhaps most visible in how Yvaine the evening star takes on a human form when she lands in the glade, and spreads across the barrier into Wall whenever the wind blows the right way. Other signs of magic are found in Faerie's fantastical

racers, such as the unicorn, the hairy creature, the fairies, the nymph in tree-form, and the witch-queens.

Magic is also evident in some of the transport methods Tristran uses. I have already mentioned the flying ship, and it is one of these magical modes of transport. It is much faster than walking, and the only thing able to help Tristran and Yvaine down from the clouds they are stranded on after fleeing the Lilim. The other way of transport that is unique to Faerie is the magical candle Tristran receives at the end of his time with the hairy little helper. It is both the fastest way to travel and the rarest. A character cannot simply pick up a candle and expect it to work; it needs to be a specific candle. That Tristran receives one of these candle stubs is either pure luck or destiny, and it enables him to reach Yvaine before her other pursuers. What makes the candle an effective travelling device is its ability to make the holder travel about a month's worth of distance in a single step. Other than this, moving through Faerie is much like moving through England's countryside. Tristran travels on foot for much of the way, as well as with horse and carriage. Both methods can be found in Victorian England and need no magic to be possible. Although there are ways of travelling by magic, the most common ways are still the non-magical ones. Primus and Septimus, who are both Faerie natives, travel by carriage – and Septimus goes part of the way by sea. The witch-queen travels in a carriage drawn by goats, although one of the animals is a cursed human. Only Tristran and Yvaine use magical travelling methods. This might be because the two need it more than their pursuers. They are less able to fight, since they have no magic or weapons, and only have the option of fleeing. It might also be that neither of the two companions have been around Faerie's magic that much. The Lilim and the Stormhold brothers have been surrounded by it their entire lives, which sets them apart from Tristran and Yvaine.

Either of the two reasons mentioned above are plausible. It might even be that both are correct. Tristran needs Faerie to develop his identity, and the candle, ship, and even the unicorn are all parts of the magical land. He and Yvaine are both new to travelling and magic, and they are both defenceless. Had they not been able to use these ways of travel, they would have been at a severe disadvantage compared to their pursuers. By giving their pursuers a handicap, Gaiman makes the reader root for Tristran and Yvaine because they are the ones showing off the magical ways of travelling. They overcome the limitations placed on the Lilim and Primus.

Maria Nikolajeva writes that some “[secondary worlds] are described so that not the smallest hint is given as to their actual positions in relation to the primary world. They may be infinitely far away or they may be just there without our knowing it” (Nikolajeva, 43). Although Faerie is within England, it feels like a different country. The reader only knows this secondary world is within England due to the author’s mentioning that it is possible to travel to London or Dublin. It is spacious, with an ocean to sail on and a vast sky in which to fly. The flying ship is never noticed by the people in Wall, which means it is either hidden by magic or only flown deeply within Faerie’s borders. It is not mentioned if the ocean leads to other countries or if it is contained within Faerie. There are mountains and forests and plains, all located in what could be a decently sized country. Within Faerie, there is at least six months’ worth of travelling distance and probably more than this that has not been explored by the main characters. Tristran and Yvaine never see the Lilim’s dwelling or the castle of Stormhold on their initial journey. Much of Faerie’s topography is still unexplored in *Stardust*, as Yvaine does not fall on the opposite side of the land, but likely more towards the middle or further towards Wall. Faerie’s magic might be why it is unexplored by the non-magical population of Wall, as the strangeness could act as a deterrent, except for the open-minded and adventurous.

The village of Wall acts like a border between the mundane and the magical, and while it does not quite have a foothold in both worlds, it sees enough of the fantastical for it to be aware of it. The very name “Wall” makes it very apparent that the village is a barrier between the two worlds. In a way, the physical wall is unnecessary, as the village itself is the wall that divides the mundane and the magical. Faerie only has one entrance – the gap in the stone wall – and this is Tristran’s portal into the fantastical world. The ocean could possibly lead from other non-magical countries into Faerie, yet this is not explored in the novel. The portal is not magical in and of itself and is a quite unremarkable hole in a stone wall. It is always guarded by non-Faerie natives, rather than any magical creature or force. It is the only obstacle to entering Faerie, yet it is not imposing. The only reason an outsider would know there is something special about this portal is the guards. The meadow beyond looks entirely unremarkable, and so does the environment further inland. The fact that nothing looks out of the ordinary could easily make any non-magical villager confident that nothing is different about the place. With the guards, anyone wanting to enter Faerie would have to either fight their way past people they have known for years or negotiate their way through. It is a two-way portal in that a traveller can get both into Faerie and out of Faerie. There is no need for a second portal that takes a traveller back to England. The portal is there so normal characters have a way to access both worlds. The wall itself is a guardian keeping the village safe; it just needs a bit of help because of the hole. However, the villagers do not block up the entrance. This might be because of tradition and curiosity. They have become used to the Faerie Market every nine years, and although they fear anything out of the ordinary, there is also a great deal of curiosity about how Faerie natives live and their wares. The Market is almost like a zoo. It is a family event, and not many stay within the village whenever there is a Market. When the portal is open, they can see the unnatural, while still being protected from it.

### 3.1 Lessons

The lessons Tristran learns during his journey are the keys to his success. These lessons are some of the ethical life lessons I wrote about in my introduction, although I did not go into detail. Without them, he would not have adapted or changed, and this would then have led to him failing his quest. These lessons are something most children and teens – and even adults – in our own world learn at some point in their lives. While we do not travel through the wilderness in order to learn them, it is difficult to do so without stepping into the unknown and pushing our boundaries. As Nikolajeva writes: “the journey into a second [world] is a test, and its result a moral and psychological evolution” (106).

At the beginning of the narrative, Tristran is a naïve teenager with dreams of knights and princesses, elements usually found in fairy tales, which are his only source for gaining knowledge about the unknown. His only motivation for setting out on his journey is the reward promised to him by Victoria when he returns victorious, and as such he is essentially rather shallow and self-centred. His lessons begin in Faerie, as he needs to find his true self to be able to mature properly and take on his grandfather’s mantle as the Lord of Stormhold. While he starts learning when he meets his second helper, he needs time for it to truly sink in, and after finding the star, he has Yvaine to help him remember. The small, hairy creature that is his second helper starts up the process by telling him “[b]etter keep mum. But never lie” (Gaiman, 63) when Tristran reveals his quest and goal. This is good advice, considering the teenager has known him for less than a day and did not know the country, and was lucky the first native he met was friendly, when he could easily have stumbled onto one of the other factions after the star. However, Tristran will not begin being more cautious until later in his journey, when he has felt what betrayal can feel like.

Trust and caution are important in the novel because Tristran shows no hesitation in telling strangers why he is in Faerie. Tristran needs to learn when and who to trust, and to be

cautious while at the same time being open-minded and accepting. That the hairy creature is not hostile or deceptive may have been pure luck, but Yvaine is not pleased with his plan or her role in it, and she already knows how to be vague, and weasel out of giving a binding promise without the other party finding out. She uses this to make Tristran remove the chain tying them together from his wrist and let her wait alone with the unicorn, only to flee when he is out of sight (103-104). These actions finally hammer the lessons home, as he does not trust as easily after this. In addition, it makes the reader laugh at Tristran's failure, and cheer for the stubborn woman who is not going to accept being objectified. During their pursuit of Yvaine, Tristran only tells Primus of a woman, never mentioning his quest or that she is a star (117-118), which shows he has learned. That he also explains that he is pursuing a woman because he wronged her makes the reader empathise with him and urge him on. It shows the reader that Tristran is capable of unselfish thought and change.

Hand in hand with caution comes cunning. In Wall, he has none, as his plan is to fight his way past the guards if they will not let him past, rather than trying to negotiate. In Faerie, he first fails to extract a binding promise from Yvaine – as he is still not used to the rules there – while he is successful in his meeting with Primus, using the help he got from his tree-helper. This helper felled a tree to stop Primus' carriage, and Tristran uses helping his uncle out as a reason for why he should be allowed to join him. However, this only works because Primus has runestones that tell him the youngster should be allowed to ride with him. It is nevertheless proof Tristran is learning to make his way in the world. Rather than forcing his way through life, he starts thinking on his feet. When he meets Madame Semele, he tries once again to hitch a ride, however this time he partially fails. He does get her to agree to let him and Yvaine travel in her carriage back to the Meadow, yet he does not cover all loopholes. This leads to him spending the trip as a dormouse (151-153). The reader almost expects him to fail here. He has been able to escape every other trap since he entered Faerie and has very



little bad luck, and since he seems to be either be all-powerful or incredibly lucky, the reader knows his streak cannot continue. Fantasy heroes are in the end human – or elves, or other fantastic species – and suffer set-backs on their journeys. That Tristran is not entirely successful in his dealings with Madame Semele is to be expected. She has years of experience compared to his mere months when it comes to making deals.

Along the way, Tristran needs to learn what love truly is. In fantasy, this is more complicated than it is in fairy tales. Fantasy has deeper characters and love needs to be multi-faceted to not feel one-sided or like a parody. In fairy tales, the characters are judged on their actions, but very little else. If they complete the tasks – for example the prince finding his way into the room where Aurora is sleeping in Disney’s “Sleeping Beauty” – they are eligible for marriage. Fantasy goes deeper as love requires feelings rather than just action. *Stardust’s* Tristran starts out thinking he is in love, although he is more infatuated with the prettiest girl in the village and the idea of being with her. She is familiar to him and desired by every other man in Wall. Because she is that popular, it is easy for Tristran to desire her, as he follows in the footsteps of every other male villager. Yvaine, on the other hand, is entirely unknown to him. When he does fall in love with her, it is after he has stopped seeing her as an object, and when he has been away from Victoria long enough for her image to let go of its hold on his heart. The fact that he only sees Yvaine as a means to an end in the beginning does not show his loyalty to Victoria, but rather his infatuation and obsession with the girl. This obsession could have made him succeed in his primary objective, yet it would have made him fail in his secondary one; to grow up properly. He would have continued to be under the influence of the woman he thought he loved. She, in turn, is likely to have carried on with her original plan of marrying Mr Monday regardless of whether Tristran succeeded or not – at least if he had kept that attitude and continued being in love with the idea of her rather than who she is as a person. By being away from Victoria, and in the presence of another young woman who

converses with him – who tells him when he does something she does not agree with, who challenges him and his world view – he learns that love is more give and take than what he had with Victoria Forester. He learns that beauty is more than skin-deep and that it is the personality of the individual that counts. Tristran and Yvaine’s relationship is what makes him the wise Lord he grows into. It gives him someone to discuss his decisions with; someone who is not afraid to call him a “’ninny, a numbskull, a lackwit and a coxcomb” (81), and who is not intimidated in any way, or would try to manipulate him and his behaviour.

Independence and being able to think for himself are also things Tristran learns.

Independence is also a very important lesson in real life. While he does need help in several of the challenges – including help to get down from the cloud they land on when escaping the Lilim’s fake inn – Tristran does a lot of the work on his own. Victoria and her request are what make him depart from the safety of home, and when he returns and hears she is engaged to one of his former employers, it is Tristran who makes the decision to let her go and be happy, instead of trying to hold her to the promise she made him. After the encounter with his hairy helper from the beginning of his jaunt into Faerie, the only times he is completely dependent on his helpers are when the solution to a challenge is something only Faerie residents know, or when he does not have the knowledge to complete it – as for instance when he needs a ride to be able to catch up to Yvaine in time. In short, the lesson is that it is perfectly acceptable to need help yet being completely dependent on someone all the time is not. The physical obstacles he can be helped through, but the emotional ones he needs to figure out for himself. When he speaks with Lady Una in the Meadow after the completion of his original quest, he has shaken off his dependency to Victoria. He is now in love with Yvaine, but he does not seem to need her in the way he earlier needed Victoria. He then shows his independence by refusing to travel with his mother – “[y]ou may travel by palanquin, and elephant, and camel and all that if you wish to, Mother” (188) – and insists he

and Yvaine will travel on foot; he no longer needs an authority figure. Readers who have grown up and moved away from home may recognise this loss of authority figure. Due to their own choices they must now live on their own and figure out what they want from life.

Keeping an open mind is important in Faerie because it is both very familiar and yet unfamiliar. Tristran travels through surroundings that look just the same as they do in Wall and normal England, yet there are several things that are not as they seem on this side of the wall. The serewood looks like a regular copse of trees, yet they are meat-eating, and the star Tristran is looking for is not in the form of a rock, but that of a young woman - and these are only two of many instances. Without magic, Faerie would likely have been no different than Wall. There would have been no fairies or other fantastical races. Had Tristran been a narrow-minded individual as several of his fellow villagers, he would not have set out on his trip, or he would have turned around at the first signs of unnaturalness. He would never have found his true love in Yvaine – instead pining for Victoria in silence – and he would not have found out he was in line for a Lordship because his mother would not have met him. Yet even if he does have an open mind, Tristran never seems to question anything around him – as Skains also comments on in her essay (Skains, 30). All the events seem almost familiar to him. He does not question the candle or chain, or even ask about what his helper is. He does look around Yvaine's meadow looking for a rock, yet when the penny drops, he simply loops the chain around her wrist, while he is more surprised that Yvaine would run away from him than by the supernatural beings he encounters.

This wide-open mind may be part of his naïveté, or it could be that since he already knows Faerie and its inhabitants on an instinctual level, he only needs to rediscover it. The latter is likely because of his ancestry, and he has already shown he has some instinct when it comes to who to trust later in the novel, even though this instinct does not warn him of his blunders with either Yvaine or Madame Semele. However, the surroundings also play a role in why

Tristran does not react to the strangeness. In addition to the possible knowledge buried deep within him, the geography enhances the familiar, as it is not that different from normal England. Other beings such as Yvaine are much the same, yet she has been able to look down at the world and gather knowledge for a long time. Tristran, on the other hand, has ingrained, hidden knowledge of where everything and everyone is in Faerie, and keeping an open mind makes him able to properly accept what goes on around him.

Acceptance is something that comes from keeping an open mind. The residents of Wall deny magic and strangeness, except for May Day every nine years. On this day, the Faerie Market comes to the meadow just beyond the wall, and residents of Faerie can pass into Wall and vice versa. Because Tristran is open to influences on his journey, he can learn and develop instead of remaining stagnant. There are several examples of what might happen had he refused to change. Take for instance the guards at the wall when he returns. They refuse to let anyone coming from the Faerie-side to enter and refuse to believe that the traveller is Tristran – even though one is his former boss, and the other has gone to school with him. Had Tristran rejected Faerie and not set out on his journey, he would have been just as stubborn as them. He would have been unable to recognise a fellow villager if they came from the Faerie side of the wall. Another example is the Lilim. These three witches wish to return to their youth and power, and are prepared to do anything, except change who they are on the inside. Their outer appearance changes if they consume the heart of a fallen star – as the stars take human forms upon landing in Faerie – and they will do anything to get one. Anyone who gets in their way will be eliminated. Tristran could have gained the same mindset as them if he had continued seeing Yvaine as an object and the only thing standing between him and Victoria's love. He could easily have focused on Yvaine being the key to his desires and decided nothing but his goal of marrying Victoria mattered.

Although Tristran must learn to rely on Yvaine – and she to depend on him – the different challenges are not geared towards teamwork. This might be because Tristran does not have a dark force to defeat, like some of the other heroes I mentioned in my exploration of fantasy earlier. He needs to learn how to be independent, yet trusting, and teamwork does not show up before Tristran and Yvaine have left Wall after the Mondays' wedding. In some challenges Tristran has what it takes, other times it is Yvaine who can get them through. However, they do not discuss any solution to an obstacle, or discuss which of them should attempt the challenge. Every challenge is initially faced alone, yet if one of them needs help, the other can step in. One example of this is when the Lilim has lured Yvaine into the fake inn after Yvaine flees from Tristran. It is Yvaine's challenge, as she is the one pursued, yet she does not have anything to fight with, and it is only Tristran and Primus arriving at the same inn that stop the witch queen from attacking. After the witch kills Primus, Tristran grabs hold of Yvaine, and the two of them escape with the help of the magic candle and the lit fireplace. The two travelling companions learn from each other, yet it is only after they travel together after their first adventure and they settle down in Stormhold that they start truly working together instead of just supporting one another. During their journey, teamwork is not necessary as long as they do not work against one another and go off on their own like Yvaine did right after their first meeting.

### **3.2 Changes**

The obstacles Tristran faces shape how he turns out. As Nancy Howard states: “[t]he changes that take place within [the fantasy heroes] are profound, affecting their values, perceptions, the very way they experience life” (Howard, 9). The lesson on trust and caution, for example, makes him more cunning, as I have mentioned in the section above. He thinks

about consequences instead of only results, and this change gets stronger with each obstacle. However, it is only after he starts to learn to think independently that he begins entertaining thoughts of Yvaine being anything other than an object, and that he perhaps should not hand her over: “he could no longer reconcile his old idea of giving the star to Victoria Forester with his current notion that the star was not a thing to be passed from hand to hand, but a true person in all respects and no kind of a thing at all” (Gaiman, 165). Without learning how to think for himself, Tristran would not get to realise his potential self, instead going ahead with the quest purely because Victoria told him to. He would not have been able to get by without orders from his wife, instead of becoming a fair Lord to his people. It is his secondary quest that changes him, not the primary one.

Tristran’s secondary quest on his journey is to find who he truly is. The reason it is not the primary quest is because the one taking on the quest is not aware of it. On a quest, the hero is usually aware of his primary quest and his secondary ones, yet sometimes, the hero has a task is not aware of. His primary quest is simply to retrieve the star and bring it back to his love interest. However, Yvaine is the key to discovering his Other, and he must not only find it, but also accept it. Skains claims that Yvaine mirrors Tristran (Skains, 31), that he can only find his true self by accepting her and moving on from Victoria. She states that Tristran steps closer to unity with his Other the more Yvaine travels with him and the more he falls in love with her. It is true that they are very similar; Tristran is half of each species, and does not belong properly among either, and exiles himself from the world he knew from childhood. Yvaine is also exiled from her home, although she is separated from the sky by force. In a way Yvaine is Tristran’s opposite: she knows how Faerie works and has already gained independence and knowledge enough to succeed.

Another example of Tristran’s Other, Skains claims, is provided by the witch-queens (30). The Lilim represent how he is at the start, and what he could have become had he followed

through with his main quest, and brought Yvaine into Wall. Like them, he initially sees Yvaine as an object, as the means to win a prize, not as a young woman with her own feelings and opinions. In the eyes of the three witches, she is the key to regaining their youth and power. They are all selfish and short-sighted, thinking only about what they need from her in the present. Tristran only meets one of the Lilim, and does so only once, and by that point in time, he has realised Yvaine has her own feelings and goals. Even though he still holds to his original plan, he is more receptive to her opinions. It is only when the pair reach the meadow where the Faerie Market is held and have been turned away by the guards at the wall that he starts to abandon said plan. The final decision not to hand Yvaine over comes when his sister comes to get him, and he tells his travel companion it would be “best if you stay here” (Gaiman, 172). By getting to this point, Tristran has turned his back on the selfish, naïve teenager he was when he set out. As Campbell states: “[t]he hero [...] discovers and assimilates his opposite (his own unsuspected self) either by swallowing it or by being swallowed. One by one the resistances are broken. He must put aside his pride, his virtue, beauty, and life, and bow or submit to the absolutely intolerable” (Campbell, 108). It is only once Tristran has done this that he can figure out who he really is.

Tristran does learn to accept his Other, and this is due to Yvaine. Having her at his side forces him to think about ethics and who he wants to be. Does he wish to see her as an object or a person? He must decide who he is and learn what he should avoid becoming, and Faerie has several people who show him this. Examples include the Lilim and Septimus. Primus would most likely have been much more hostile had he known Tristran was a contender for the throne, but of the two brothers, Septimus is the coldest and most dangerous for the young man. When Tristran figures out that he does not wish to be a villain, and he starts noticing his feelings for Yvaine, he learns that he is not who he thought he was – a farmer’s son soon to marry the prettiest girl in the village. And once he finally accepts that he no longer belongs in

Wall, he accepts the other part of himself, and puts his former village behind him in favour of the world he has just discovered.

One of the main changes in Tristran is his level of naïveté. He goes from being a naïve teenager to a responsible adult. This loss of naïveté is likely due to him becoming more cunning, as I wrote about in 3.1. Schiller stated in *On the Naïve and Sentimental in Literature* that a naïve person cannot be corrupt or deceptive (Schiller, 26), and this means that while Tristran can be selfish, he is not a corrupt person. He is immature, and while he plans on handing Yvaine over to Victoria, he is truthful about his intentions. He does not keep his plans a secret from Yvaine after he chains her to him, and even apologises. He trusts easily until Yvaine flees, then becomes more cautious and suspicious. Although he can survive in the adult world while being naïve, it would have been impossible for him to be the Lord of Stormhold with that frame of mind. As he becomes more responsible, he comes closer and closer to his true self.

It is not, however, before the end of the novel that he has discovered every aspect of the Tristran he truly is. After meeting his biological mother and getting to know he is the next Lord of Stormhold, he chooses to travel first. When he does take up the throne several years later, he is ready for everything that position will bring. While he does not change much from his grandfather's rule or mother's regency, the changes he makes are "wise ones, even if the wisdom [is] not always apparent at the time" (Gaiman, 193). This shows he is no longer the boy who only thought of himself and his goals, but now considers the good of the whole kingdom. He turned away from this selfishness when he let Victoria go, and although he thinks of himself when he leaves Wall behind, he also thinks of Yvaine and her being unable to live on the mundane side of the boundary. With his ascension, he has realised all aspects of his Faerie heritage. He is no longer the farmer's son who dreams of being in a fairy tale or



going to a larger city in England, but the Lady's son who is married to the love of his life and has both the knowledge and experience to reign fairly.

Before Tristran has come to the point where can be the Lord, he must go through everything I have mentioned above. By himself, this would have been incredibly difficult, and the reason for why his journey would not have been successful without his helpers is Yvaine herself. She is the key to getting Victoria as she is the fallen star he seeks. She is also the catalyst for many of his changes. Her human form makes him think about what he is doing, which is basically treating her like something to be sold. Yvaine, as his only travelling companion, becomes the only one he can talk to for parts of the novel, she becomes someone who challenges him regularly when she does not agree with him. She is with him during several of his challenges, although he faces them alone. In addition to this, Tristran falls in love with Yvaine, and this causes him to shift from seeing her as an object to seeing her as a person. Because she opens his eyes, she is the reason for his changes. While he likely could have succeeded in his other challenges, she is the element he needs to become the eighty-second Lord of Stormhold.

Like Skains says in the beginning of her essay, Tristran needs Faerie to learn his lessons:

[t]he protagonists in each tale are brought into contact with their other through magic [...] [They] are generally represented as characters in transition, someone who has lost something or been lost, or longs for something just out of their reach. That unobtainable something comes to them through their acceptance of otherness; while the other is often represented in terms of fear and strangeness (Skains, 25).

He is on the brink of growing up at the beginning of his journey, yet has no idea he is only half human, with the other half coming from Faerie. He needs to accept his true self – including the Faerie side – to become a proper adult. If he had gone to London or Dublin, he

may never have been able to realise his own potential. For this reason, he could not have done without the journey.

## Conclusion

We have come to the end of this thesis, after exploring the genres of fairy tales and fantasy. We have looked at several of the more common aspects within the genres and already explored some of the similarities and differences. Here, we will compare the three texts I have analysed earlier, as well as come back to some of the similarities I have previously mentioned. I will first focus on the two novels, then compare them to “The Snow Queen”, before having a second look at the two genres.

## The texts

There are several similarities between *Stardust* and *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, and several differences. The clearest similarity is, of course, that both main characters embark on a journey. Their journeys bring them into contact with the unknown and help shape them as individuals. They both explore a magical land separate from their own, and they both have to cross a threshold of sorts to enter this land. In Tristran’s case it is a hole in a stone wall – a doorway of sorts – while Dorothy is transported by a tornado; which could be magical in nature. The two fantastic worlds also hold quite a few similarities to our own world. As Rosemary Jackson remarks; “[f]antasy re-combines and inverts the real, but it does not escape it: it exists in a parasitical or symbiotic relation to the real. The fantastic cannot exist independently of that ‘real’ world which it seems to find so frustratingly finite” (Jackson, 20). A fantasy world must keep the real world as a base on which to build. If it strays too far, it becomes unbelievable, and the story will not be enjoyable. When travelling into Faerie from Wall, there is no real difference from England, other than the fact that some trees might try to eat the traveller. There is no red grass, for example, or other major changes to the environment. Oz, on the other hand, is rather different from Kansas, but not other parts of the

U.S.. Dorothy gets there by riding a hurricane, and gets back by flying over the desert, so it is not surprising the scenery is different. The colours are more vibrant, there are sounds of a brook, and there is foliage, instead of the dry, grey place she comes from. Oz is entirely different from Kansas in almost all respects, while Faerie does not invoke many visible changes.

One difference between Faerie and Oz is how advanced the cultures are. As I stated in the section about fantasy, the novels are usually set in a somewhat low-tech world. The authors choose how advanced the technology is and which era they want the novel to resemble. Baum published his novel in 1900, at the end of the Victorian era, and he might have considered this era to be more high-tech than he wanted Oz to be. Gaiman published *Stardust* 99 years later, and set the narrative in the Victorian era, which is rather low-tech in comparison with the world in the 1990s. In Oz, there are four major areas that the reader sees, and it is implied that there is a fifth in the North. With the Emerald City in the middle, the other four are spread in the cardinal directions. Of the five places, the Emerald City is the most technological, with high walls and guards following a strict set of rules. Although the Land of Oz has no cars or other vehicles, the country has come as far as to make a paved road leading to the majority of the areas. Faerie still has dirt roads, although this may be because the novel is set in the Victorian era, and the villages are spread across the land in no particular order. Unlike Oz, Faerie has flying ships, but Stormhold – the major stronghold in the country – has no visible guard rotation. The land the Stormhold family rule is almost medieval. Faerie has one main ruler, while Oz has five – as each Witch and Wizard rule over their own section of the land. Riley writes that “Oz is sparsely populated and contains large uninhabited areas” (Riley, 52). This is also true for Faerie. Although more of Faerie is explored compared to Oz, much of the country is not described. It might be that Tristran and Yvaine visit these places when

travelling through the country for the second time, yet there is no mention of whether or not they explore the whole region.

While Tristran is older than Dorothy from *Oz*, he does not have more difficult or even more challenges than the younger girl. Not only does he have fewer trials on his journey, they are often just as easily overcome as Dorothy's. This might be because Dorothy has three travelling companions compared to Tristran's one, who is only his companion by force. It makes sense for there to be more challenges when there are four characters that have to learn different things than when there are only two. Another reason might be Tristran's age. He has had more time to learn the lessons than Dorothy and has been around more people other than blood relatives. The third reason is that it might be because Tristran is only part-human as opposed to Dorothy who does not have any fantastical heritage. Tristran already has magic and the strangeness of Faerie in his blood. Either of these three reasons can be the explanation for why Tristran has fewer challenges; it might simply be that he does not need them. Of course, it is likely that the authors had different goals when writing their novels. Baum set out to write a non-moralistic fairy tale, and wrote for a younger audience, while Gaiman, as I stated in Chapter 3, wrote his novel as a sequel to a story he still has not written, but that covers Wall's conception. Baum helped establish a genre and followed the guidelines for the fairy tale, while Gaiman followed fantasy conventions.

The two protagonists' ages correspond to the intended audience for the novel. Dorothy's intended readers are children, while Tristran's are teenagers or young adults. The reason Dorothy's challenges are easy might be because both she and the readers are young. If the obstacle seems impossible to overcome, it is likely the reader might put the book down. Children's books are often shorter than books for older audiences due to their attention span. Thus, it is likely that if the group in *Oz* spent too much time on an obstacle or while travelling without incident, the young reader would get bored. Novels for older audiences usually have

more description of the protagonist's surroundings, his feelings, his motivations, and other actions that might be happening somewhere else in the fantasy world. This might be another reason Tristran has fewer challenges than Dorothy; the constant action is not needed to keep the reader's attention.

Similar for them both is that their journeys change them. Tristran changes more because he is closer to adulthood than Dorothy is. She gets closer to adulthood and is more mature than when she was picked up by the tornado, but she is still a child, and thus still immature. Tristran leaves most of his immaturity behind, although he keeps some of the dreams of childhood – “all the wrongs to right, villains to vanquish, sights to see, all that” (Gaiman, 192) – yet his childishness is tempered by maturity as he says it almost in a joking manner. He has a destiny that comes much quicker than Dorothy's, because of their differing age. Although he waits for two years before taking on the throne, it is there for him to take immediately upon receiving the topaz from Yvaine. Dorothy still has a way to go before she becomes an adult, yet after her journey, she knows she is at home on the farm, and can develop from that, while her helpers in Oz have gone on to lead races and cities.

Another obvious similarity is where they both come from. Both start out at a farm owned by their families and are somewhat sheltered. However, Dorothy does not seem to have anyone other than her relatives around her, while Tristran has an entire village. Tristran could also have been exposed to the unknown before his journey, had his father and stepmother allowed him to visit the Faerie Market, instead of sending him to other relatives in order to shelter him from his mother's world. As I mentioned in Chapter 1, villains can frequently be a stepmother or stepsister. In *Stardust*, the stepmother is not evil. She does not help Tristran either, when he decides he is going to find the fallen star. Instead, she is distraught, and behaves like a regular mother. Neither Tristran nor Dorothy has truly seen the unknown, and are thus the same in terms of experience. Both of their starting points are in the real worlds of

England and Kansas, and despite Wall being a boundary, they both have the same amount of exposure to the unnatural.

The main helpers also act as mirrors in their novels, which I wrote about in Chapter 1, as the concepts of mirror and Other are equivalent. Tristran also has a mirror in one of his opposing parties – the Lilim. She reflects what Tristran could have become had he continued with his obsession over Victoria, while Yvaine reflects the man he becomes when he accepts who he is. Dorothy's mirrors all reflect an aspect of herself. The Lion is a coward and represents her fear and immaturity. The Tin Woodman represents her love and compassion, while the Scarecrow represents her cunning and knowledge. Both Dorothy and Tristran need their mirrors to realise themselves and learn what they need along the way.

Another thing Tristran and Dorothy have in common is their reaction to these new surroundings. Both give it nary a glance. While Tristran's lack of reaction can be explained away by the environment being very similar to Wall's, and him having instincts and hidden knowledge of this world due to him being half-Faerie, Dorothy's reactions are not so easily explained. She went straight from the prairies into a lush landscape and did not so much as comment on it. She is, however, young and is probably more resilient and accepting than most adults, so this could be the reason.

In addition to the characters' own reasons for not reacting, the genre and the readership might provide important context here. The fantasy genre is based on a magical world filled with different races and experiences, and so the readers expect to find these. They are not surprised when Dorothy lands in Oz or when Tristran meets the hairy creature. For the reader to be able to experience the alternative world together with the protagonist, these heroes cannot be surprised and question what they see. An exception is if the author intends for the novel to be a parody, where the protagonist is entirely baffled by the strangeness around them. Generally, a fantasy protagonist is either not surprised by the new world around him if he is

originally from our real world, or he is already part of the alternative world and has some idea of what lies ahead.

What the characters do in the end is a key difference. Tristran leaves Wall for Faerie, while Dorothy leaves Oz behind to stay in Kansas. Her whole quest has been about getting back there, while Tristran is very different. He is not fully human like she is, and thus his father's mundane existence is out of his reach – although Wall has some strange happenings as when the wind blows through the hole. However, he only realises where he belongs when he is through with his quest and has returned, while Dorothy already knows from the onset, with the strangeness of Oz merely confirming it. Tristran is tied to Faerie through Yvaine; the girl he has begun to love. Dorothy has no such tether. Her helpers, while close to her, are not enough to tie her to the fantastic realm. They create a makeshift family unit as they travel, but this cannot override the bond Dorothy has with her blood relatives, and the three helpers drift in different directions once Dorothy leaves. Tristran continues to travel through Faerie for a while, before taking up his position as the eighty-second Lord of Stormhold. This is perhaps the biggest difference between the two, as different races usually hold different destinies.

When it comes to the fantasy genre, the two novels show the same main traits. There are two worlds in both novels, plus the real world. These worlds have different portals, a common trait I explained in Chapter 1, with Faerie having a two-way entrance in the gap in the wall, and Oz having two one-way portals in the tornado and Silver Shoes. Neither Faerie nor Oz have environments that differ too much from the real world, although there is magic present. The magic of Oz is located more in the environment and creatures than in magic spells, with Dorothy's three helpers being oddities, as there is only one moving scarecrow, talking Lion, and living tin man in Oz. In Faerie, the Lilim use magic spells for evil, and they and Madame Semele are the only ones being shown as casting spells, while Primus uses divination to tell where he needs to go. Other than this, the magic is more within the fantastical races and



surrounding nature. The two novels are very alike when it comes to which elements have been used, yet while the journey motif is flexible, certain points overlap in nearly every fantasy novel containing a journey.

When we then look at “The Snow Queen” and the two fantasy novels side by side, there is very little difference. One reason for this is that the novels are both fantasies where the authors have taken inspiration from the fairy tales. They are arguably more fairy tale-like than other novels in the genre. However, the similarities between the three texts are strong, and the traits that make up the narratives are ones found in other fairy tales and fantasy novels. While Baum and Gaiman have clearly been influenced by fairy tales, they use the elements in ways which turn their novels into works of fantasy. According to Frow, this is common in literature; “[a]ll texts are shaped by the repetition and the transformation of other textual structures” (Frow, 48). When borrowing from other genres, authors need to update the trait or plot they have borrowed to fit the genre they insert it into. At the same time, Andersen may have written a fairy tale, yet this tale could easily have been a fantasy novel with a few changes. An author could have taken the tale and given Gerda more character; i.e. making her more afraid of the unfamiliar surroundings. The narrative could have been prolonged with more description of the world around, or even shifting the focus to Kay in a chapter or two, so the reader can see him as well. Instead of having Gerda free Kay while the Snow Queen is out of her castle, the author could use this scene to stage an epic battle against winter, for example.

From where the characters end up at the end of their story, we can see their attitudes to the concept of “home”. Dorothy’s attitude is more fixed. She has a home with her aunt and uncle in Kansas, and she is not willing to let that home go. Tristran abandons his old home for a new one in Faerie. He parts with his normal family in Wall with them being on good terms, although they are aware that he will never return. Tristran has Yvaine as a reason to return to

Faerie, while Dorothy has Aunt Em as a reason to return to Kansas. Gerda is fixed like Dorothy. Her home is with her grandmother and Kay, in the city her journey started in. All protagonists' homes are found with their loved ones. This could be the authors trying make the intended reader identify further with the protagonist. A younger reader of "The Snow Queen" or *Oz* would understand Gerda's and Dorothy's reasonings easier than an older reader, who is not as tied to a parental figure. An older reader of *Stardust* could identify with Tristran's break with Wall's conventions to stay with Yvaine.

As I mentioned earlier, "The Snow Queen" is very similar to what Nikki Gamble calls low fantasy; a fantasy story which only takes place in our real world. It is easy for the reader to identify with little Gerda, and especially young readers, as the tale is not very long and does not require a long attention span. For the older reader, the characters may seem a bit flat, like they often are in fairy tales. *Stardust* and *Oz* are works of high fantasy; they take place in alternative worlds. This means that the main difference between the three stories is this division of worlds. If we focus on which elements they share, we find magic, heroes, helpers, villains, changes, and journeys.

Both Gerda and Dorothy are initially children, as well as their intended readers. However, Gerda is more independent than Dorothy from the start due to her setting out on her own – and of her own will – and that she does not need a permanent travelling companion. In fact, Gerda must finish her quest on her own. Both Dorothy and Tristran have their companions close-by when they come to their final obstacle, while Gerda is entirely alone. This difference means that Gerda is pushed towards adulthood instead of having an adult to depend on. Like Tristran, she completes her transition.

Like the other two narratives, "The Snow Queen" contains magic, and as in the two novels, this magic is shown more overtly in the magic-users – who are the sorceress and the Snow Queen – and more covertly in the nature surrounding Gerda. Gerda herself also seems

to carry a bit of magic in her tale, as she can talk to the sun, birds, and flowers. The other fantastical elements are also used in much the same way on the three stories. Gerda learn from the obstacles, often being aided out of difficult situations by her helpers – for example the robber girl giving her the reindeer upon hearing her story. Gerda does not react to the magic surrounding her either, like both Tristran and Dorothy. Again, this is most likely because the tale *is* a fairy tale. Magic and fantastical elements are expected by the reader. In addition, Gerda is the one with the most exposure to strangeness of the three protagonists. She is the only one who can speak with animals and plants, and there is no mention of her being unable to do this before Kay disappeared.

Even the morals we find in the three stories are similar. “The Snow Queen” and *Oz* have the biggest similarity here, with the moral of “you already have what you think you lack”. As I stated in Chapter 2, Dorothy already has the shoes and the power to travel home, and I mentioned in 1.5 that Gerda cannot be given any powers by the Finland Woman because she already possesses the power she needs. This message would tell the reader that whatever power they need is already within them, they just need to find it. Even Tristran has what he needs to complete his quest at the beginning of the novel. In Chapter 3, I stated that he has an inner knowledge of where everything is in Faerie. This knowledge makes him aware of where and how far he needs to go. We know from the introduction to *Oz* that Baum set out to write a non-educational story, yet this ethical message is still clear in the narrative.

### **The genres**

After looking at the three texts, the question remains; what are the most important differences between fairy tales and fantasy? In *The Green and Burning Tree*, Eleanor Cameron attempts to distinguish the two genres:

When we speak of literature of magic, we recogni[s]e that fairy tales are fantasy, but that they are only one kind, and that all fantasies written today are not fairy tales.

When we speak of fantasy, we mean also tales in which humans, usually children, living in the world of reality, are enabled to experience events which are impossible according to the laws of reality. The word magic need never be mentioned, and yet we take for granted that events are happening because of magic. Fairy tales, on the other hand, take place *within* the world of magic, where magic is natural (Cameron, 11).

However, the difference described here is almost identical to the difference between high and low fantasy. So perhaps we need to look elsewhere. The main differences I have found in the three texts are the characters' depths, the length of the tale, the moral, and the structure. Fairy tale characters are not as developed as their fantasy counterparts, and the tale itself is short. The events may take place over several years, but in the stories where this is the case, the narrative might make a mention of how much time has passed, without stopping to show scenes from the missing time. Some tales are like "The Snow Queen" in that the author lets the characters be children until the very end, where they suddenly grow up. Perhaps the biggest difference is the structure of the two genres. As I wrote in Chapter 1, fairy tales are stricter, and fantasy is looser. Because of the erosion of genres, it is arguably now both easier and harder to create a fairy tale, because genre is more a set of guide lines than rules.

William Indick writes that "[m]ythmakers, fairy tale tellers, and fantasists are essentially the same, all weaving worlds of wonder and glory that inspire their audiences with tales of heroic deeds and mystical encounters" (Indick, 2). What we have seen over the course of this thesis is that there are not many distinct differences between the fairy tale and fantasy genres. There are several similarities, however, both in what elements commonly used and how these elements play a role in the narrative. We have seen that both fairy tales and fantasy contain magic, whether the story takes place in the real world or an alternative one. We have seen that a hero is essential in most stories, as he or she is the protagonist who drives the story forward. This protagonist is then thrust into the unknown either by his own will or by force, and the

resulting journey may be both physical and metaphorical, or it may be entirely metaphorical. For the hero to get anywhere on his journey, he needs both helpers and at least one villain.

Fantasy novels can feel like long, more elaborate fairy tales. Both *Stardust* and *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* are arguably more fairy tale-like than many other fantasy stories, and “The Snow Queen” is much closer to fantasy than other fairy tales. However, if we had expanded “Cat Skin”, “Little Red Riding Hood”, or “East of the Sun, West of the Moon” they could easily become a fantasy novel. If we compressed *The Hobbit* or *Homeland* we could get a fairy tale. It is, however, more difficult to compress fantasy into fairy tales due to the novels having more action, conflicts, and the characters being more fleshed out than in the fairy tales. Some authors, have rewritten some fairy tales – Gaiman’s *Sleeper and the Spindle* is an example here – yet these usually contain content that make the stories more like fantasy. In that story, there are not only fairies, but also a dragon and dwarves.

As I wrote in Chapter 1.4, the main difference I find between the two genres is that of structure. Fairy tales have a structure that is not as easy to change. If the hero battles the villain at the beginning of the tale, the whole tale loses its point. The reader has not been given the backstory or explanation for why the hero has to defeat this villain in the first place. The hero has not met his helpers either, and it is these helpers who often help him progress. By changing the fairy tale’s structure, the author makes the tale more like a fantasy story. Fantasy’s structure is looser. There is usually more space in the narrative for descriptions of surroundings and feelings, as well as action. If the hero faces the villain early, or as the first thing he does, the hero is usually defeated, and uses the rest of the narrative to get stronger and defeat the villain. Fantasy quests can be derailed. Both Dorothy and Tristran need to change their plans and think on their feet, while Gerda does not. Dorothy needs to travel to several places in Oz while the plan was to go to the Emerald City and talk to the Wizard. Tristran’s plan was to use the candle to find Yvaine and bring her back, but the flame dying

caused him to take the long route. This is further proof of what we saw in Chapters 1.4, 2 and 3. The fantasy structure is more varied than the fairy tale's.

Other differences are less prominent. Fairy tale characters are flatter than in fantasy, with little real personality. They often seem like images where the readers can superimpose themselves. The moral is only a small part of the fairy tale as it is not found in every tale, and it is found in some fantasy novels. Thus, when we look at the differences between the two genres, it is really the structure that is the biggest alteration.

We have also seen in Chapter 1 that fantasy has two modes: high and low fantasy. Low fantasy is very similar to fairy tales due to the story taking place entirely in our real world, while high fantasy takes place in an alternative world or may have the protagonist travel back and forth between the fantastical and normal worlds. After researching and comparing the two genres, I believe that this topic is one that requires further study. Are fairy tales and fantasy really two separate genres? It is an interesting question, and a topic I hope to see being picked up and studied further at some point in the future.

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