Fairy Tale and Real Life - Enchanted

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I. Introduction

Fairy life and real life interlace a sense of beauty. This is why *Enchanted* catches our eyes. It is mainly adapted from the common fairy tale scenario but blends many new elements, such as the modern New York background, and the male leading character’s having a daughter. It also generates some thought-provoking issues for us the audience to think about. For example, must a princess marry a prince? Are children who contact the reality earlier than others and never read fairy tales sure to win at the beginning line? These questions seem simple, but there are no exact answers.

In addition, we compared *Enchanted* with two classical fairy stories—*Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*[^1] and *Cinderella*[^2]. We found some interesting similarities and differences. We learned that the first impressions are not always right and we shouldn’t let our imagination be limited.

II. Thesis

1. Background

A. New York

New York is not only a brisk city but also an important economical hub in the world. The movie industry there develops vigorously. The city looks wonderful, but has many social problems. For example, people don’t believe each other; they see their interests as the top priority. Nor do they believe the existence of true love. In this movie, Robert, the male leading character, grew up at New York. He was deeply affected by the environment. He didn’t believe in true love. Love is just duty and burden.

B. Fairy tale

In a cloud-built nation, Andalasia, there are many animals that can speak. People there can’t live without animals, because animals are helpful to the housework. And people there like to sing. They convey their feelings

[^1]: Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs
[^2]: Cinderella
and their love to each other by singing songs. Everything is balanced and wonderful. The prince found his dream lover by singing love songs, and he was going to marry her. Unfortunately, the princess was pushed by a black-hearted queen into a place, New York, where there is no happiness.

2. The characters and the plot

A. Fairy characters

a. Giselle:

Giselle was born in the fairy world; thus, her thoughts are very bright and abound with conceit. Her hobby is singing. She not only can talk with animals but also believes in true love. Above all, she is optimistic and she always looks on the bright side when she confronts difficulties. Eventually, she changed Robert into one who believes in true love as well.

b. Prince Edward:

He met Giselle in his world and fell in love with her, which caused Giselle to get into danger because his stepmother was unwilling to give up the throne. When he knew Giselle came to the real world, he came, too. He found her and wanted her to go back with him to their original world. He afterward detected she didn’t love him anymore. Fortunately, later he discovered his true love—Nancy Tremaine in real world. They went back to the fairy world, and they lived without agony.

c. Queen Narissa:

She was Prince Edward’s stepmother. And she was black-hearted. In order to strengthen her power by hook or by crook, she circumvented
Giselle and let her fall into the trap. Her servant, Nathaniel, didn’t finish the task; therefore, she also came to the real world in person. And she disguised herself as a harridan to find Giselle. She meant to poison Giselle. To sum up, she was a scheming woman.

P3
d. Nathaniel:
Nathaniel is Queen Naissa’s servant. He always helped her do something bad. He was assigned to come to the real world to attack Giselle. Because he had troubles all the way, he didn’t succeed all the time. Though he was loyal to his master, she still struck him.

P4
e. Pip:
Pip is a cute and brave chipmunk. When he knew the bad Queen Narissa’s trick, he followed Prince Edward to the real world. He wanted to tell Edward the stratagem about Queen Narissa. But Pip found that he couldn’t speak in the real world. Pip tried to use body language to give Edward a hint, yet Edward always guessed wrong. And Nathaniel also hindered him from telling the truth. After several attempts, Edward finally understood what Pip was trying to say.

P5

B. Real-life characters

a. Robert Philip:
Robert was a handsome man and a lawyer. He divorced his wife. He lived in New York with his daughter. He had a girlfriend who would marry him soon. He was straightforward so he didn’t believe in romantic love in the fairy tales at all. Not until he met and understood Giselle did he gradually realize true love and find his Ms. Right.9.

b. Nancy Tremaine:
Nancy was Robert’s girlfriend. She found that Robert didn’t love her. Finally, she fell in love with Prince Edward and got together with him.10

c. Morgan Philip:
Morgan was a kindergarten kid. She was Robert’s daughter. When she was born, her mother was dead. So she grew up with her father. Morgan’s father hoped she could be a marvelous woman, like Mrs. Marie Curie. However, she just wanted to be a common child, having a happy childhood and a childlike thought. After Giselle appeared in her life, Morgan finally knew what she really wanted in her mind.11

C. The plot
Giselle lived in a fairy world. She is very happy every day. She is close to animals, and likes singing with them. One day, when she was singing, she met Prince Edward. They fell in love at first sight. However, Queen Narissa didn’t want to give up her crown. She disguised herself as an old woman, and hustled Giselle into the wishing well. Giselle arrived in New York actually. There she met Robert, who was a handsome man and just divorced. He didn’t believe in true love and the fairy tales. Before long, Prince Edward also came to the real world. However, it never occurred to Edward that his stepmother also followed him. His stepmother gave a poisonous apple to Giselle, and then Giselle passed out. Only the true love could save her. It was Robert that kissed Giselle and saved her. Narissa angrily turned into a firing dragon and caught Robert to the roof. Giselle fought with Narissa and the latter fell off and died.

III. An analysis of the film Enchanted

A. Comparison of Cinderella, Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs and Enchanted

c. The leading female characters and their families

The three leading ladies have similar personalities. They all are beautiful, kind-hearted and good-natured. They love animals and are fond of singing. Animals enjoy listening to Snow White and Giselle sing and always help them do the housework; Cinderella’s carriage’s horses and carter are transferred from little animals.

Their families are of different types and have different backgrounds. Snow White is a princess and lives with her father, the king and her stepmother, the new queen. Cinderella is the daughter of a businessman; she lives with her stepmother and two
stepsisters. In *Enchanted*, Giselle is a princess, but we don't know much about her family.

b. The leading male characters

In the two classical fairy tales, the leading male characters are both princes and they both believe in true love. The prince in *Cinderella* fell in love after dancing a dance with Cinderella; he married her without looking down his nose at her family background. In *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, the prince came from a kingdom in the distance. He accidentally encountered the sleeping lady and fell in love with her right away without knowing her true identity. Nevertheless, in *Enchanted*, the leading male character is not a prince but a common person. He didn't believe in true love. Besides, he was not a bachelor; he just divorced and had a daughter and a fiancé.

c. Stepmother

The three stepmothers are bad guys. But their aims are different. Cinderella’s stepmother always had Cinderella do a lot of strenuous housework, because Cinderella was not her viviparous daughter. She also resorted to every conceivable means to tease Cinderella. In *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* and *Enchanted*, they both gave pernicious apples to the leading ladies. Snow White’s stepmother was jealous of Snow White’s good looks; she wanted to kill Snow White so that she herself could become the most beautiful woman in the world. In *Enchanted*, the bad guy is the prince’s stepmother; she tried hard to destroy Giselle in order to strengthen her regality.

d. Guardian:
In the three stories, the leading ladies all had their guardians. Cinderella’s guardian was a fairy godmother. It is sure that she used her magic to help her banquet and met the prince. Snow White’s guardian was the seven dwarfs. They let her live in their house and protect her. In Enchanted, the leading lady’s guardian was a chipmunk, whose name was Pip. He told her the trick and helped her to avoid dangers.

B. The leading ladies’ attire

The three leading ladies’ attires are made differently. Cinderella’s dancing party’s dresses and her wedding gown were made by animals and her fairy godmother. Snow White is a princess; she doesn’t need to worry about her wear; the royal tailors would sew a variety of gorgeous dresses and gowns for her. However, in Enchanted, Giselle didn’t have such good luck. She needed to make clothes by herself. Fortunately, she had a pair of deft hands. Whether it was the window curtain or a carpet, she could turn it into a lovely dress.

C. The main plots

In fairy tales, usually, the only main plot is the love between the prince and princess. The princess would meet her Prince Charming, fall in love and has a happy ending, like Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs and Cinderella. But, the film Enchanted is different from the traditional fairy tales. At first, Princess Giselle really loved the prince. She thought the prince was her true love, and wanted to marry him. However, later, she entered a strange place, New York. Since she contacted the real world with her pure mind, she always had trouble. Just as the lyrics she sang “How could I face the faceless days,”13 she could not stand that in this city existed no genuine love for true love belongs to the fairy world. However, she was optimistic and tried hard to affect people around her. One day, she met Robert, who was
indifferent seemingly. Gradually, Giselle aroused his enthusiasm and turned him into a kind person. Robert also let her understand are not so simple as there in fairy tales. And gradually Cupid shot them. They had a happy ending.

Other than love, *Enchanted* also discusses the issue of the relation between parents and children. In the modern society, many parents do not hope their children get in touch with too much fantasy for it is unhelpful. Robert is such kind of parent; he bought his daughter, Morgan, a celebrity’s biography as a birthday gift while what she actually wanted was a fairy tale story book. Just like many parents, Robert had many expectations to Morgan; he hoped Morgan could be a marvelous career woman, like Mrs. Marie Curie. Many parents make the choices for children and asked kids to follow the road they arranged for kids. Well goes the saying, “What is meat to one person may be poisonous to another.” Children may dislike parents’ arrangement and feel they are under much stress and then lose their opinions and goals.

Imagination is children’s treasure. And fairy tales can help children to develop imagination and lead a happier life. In *Enchanted*, Giselle helped Morgan reopen her mind and live a happy life.

D. Some sub-issues

a. In *Enchanted*, animals live in peace with human. How wonderful! However, people in modern society are not friendly toward animals. Some people make use of animals’ fur, organs and meat to make a benefit. What a sad thing! We should learn from people in the fairy tales as much as we can—love animals and live peacefully with them, which can help maintain the order of the mother nature and let the world be much better.
b. Love is the best thing in the world. Many people say love has magic power, which can make us brave. However, to show love courageously is not easy; for many people it may be an annoying problem, but expressing our love could warm others’ heart, improve our interpersonal relationship and make our lives much better and happier. In *Enchanted*, Prince Edward loves Giselle. Even though Giselle didn't love him, he still shows his love to Giselle. Though Edward failed, at least he had tried. Just as a slogan says, “Love should be said loudly.”

IV. Conclusion

We really like the story *Enchanted*. Different from traditional fairy tales, it mixes tradition elements with modern ones. It not only talks about love between loves but lover between parents and children as well. It makes use of the fairy world and the real world as the background, which makes it close to the modern daily life. Besides, we also compare this film with the two fairy tales that we have read. The similarities and differences make it even more charming.

*Enchanted* overthrows tradition and combine modern. It also points out the problem in the modern society. Parents should give children more freedom and space, don’t restrain their thinking and decide their direction in the future for them. Children should have their right to be their own masters and create their future.

V. Reference

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