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## Fairy Tales: A Compilation - Greed

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# Greed

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Languages and Literatures of Europe and the Americas 353 (20th Century Russian Arts and Culture)

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## Artist Statement

My short fairy tale represents greed and corporate malfeasance. It's divided into four parts all overlapping each other. It begins with the eldest sister who discovers the wrongdoings then moves on to the middle sister who tries to come up with a plan that would benefit her. The third part is about the youngest, who is filled with greed, and lastly, the fourth part, the epilogue, ends with the queen who is the embodiment of greed itself. Each character represents a different perspective that people today have. The eldest represents change, the middle represents the statement "ignorance is bliss", youngest corruption, and the queen represents the corporation and greed. I wanted to write this fairy tale to make this issue easier to understand for everyone. I want my readers to relate to one of the characters and decide for themselves who they want to be.

## Part I

Once upon a time, there lived a princess, she was the eldest of three sisters. They lived in a wonderful palace with their mother, the queen, and had no worries in the world. They were surrounded by beautiful scenery and got anything they wished for. The one thing the queen asked of them was to never leave the palace. The sisters brushed this warning aside. They never felt the need to leave anyway, since they got everything they asked for.

One night, the eldest was up late finishing a book when suddenly, a bright light flashed outside the window. She set her book down to take a closer look but could see nothing in the thick fog. So, she did the one thing her mother told her not to do, she put on her coat and went outside. She was curious about what that light might be. She never saw anything like it before. She tiptoed across the palace and out into the cold

night. Her heart was beating fast as she walked further and further from the palace.

The eldest kept walking until she spotted a big, dark shadow up ahead. As she came closer to it, she noticed the shadow was a large factory. The smoke was billowing out of the factory in waves, surrounding the town in thick fog. She slowly approached the door and opened it up to find that there were people inside. The eldest found this unusual as it was almost midnight. As she snuck around the factory, she realized these were not just people, but children no more than fifteen. These children were soaked head to toe in grease, worry lines covered their young faces as they worked mechanically, creating various products.

All of a sudden, the eldest heard yelling. She walked towards it and hid behind empty boxes to overhear the conversation. "What was that?" She heard the fat older man yell at a child. "A part exploded while we were trying to fix it. People got hurt." The child stood small against the giant man, her tiny



I am currently a senior majoring in English and Russian with a minor in philosophy. In the future, I plan to pursue a PhD in English studies in composition and rhetoric. My passion for writing stems from my love for books. Although I will not be pursuing creative writing, I am motivated to write in my free time to continue this passion.

voice barely being heard over the roar of the machines. "I don't care who got hurt, get back to work, and finish packing up the products, by order of the Queen." The eldest gasped as she heard him say those words.

"Who's there!" Yelled the giant man. The eldest quickly ran away, past the children, past the fog, and into the palace. Back at the palace, she was mumbling words to herself trying to gather her thoughts when suddenly she bumped into something.

"Sister? Are you okay?" The eldest looked up and noticed the middle sister giving her a questioning look.

"No," she responded. The eldest couldn't hold it in and told the middle sister everything she saw and how mother tried to conceal this from them.

"I-" The middle sister was at loss for words. "This is why we stay in the palace. Just forget what you saw." The middle sister gave her a stern look and quickly walked away.

The eldest was in shock at her words as she walked to her room. She closed the door and sat next to her window, trying to think of what could be done to stop this. Hours passed and the sun had risen. She still had not come up with a solution, but she knew that no matter what, she would do something about it. A soft knock broke her out of her trance. She stood up and opened the heavy wooden door.

"Sister?" The eldest said questioningly.

## Part II

Once upon a time, there lived a princess, she was the middle of three sisters. She was surrounded by beauty and grace and lived in a palace with her mother, the queen. Her mother had warned them as children never to leave the palace, and they never did. Everything she needed could be brought to her by the servants.

One night, the middle sister woke up in the middle of the night from a frightening dream. She didn't remember what she dreamt about, all she knew was that tragedy befell her and the eldest sister. The middle sister stood up from her soft bed and padded her way to the kitchen to get a glass of water. She didn't want to ask the servants for this because she wanted the walk to clear her head and get rid of the dread that resided in her stomach.

On her walk to the kitchen, she was surprised to see the eldest wandering around mumbling to herself. "Sister? Are you okay?" she asked, concerned.

"No." The eldest responds and proceeds to tell her what she saw.

"I-" the middle sister was at loss for words. Mother would never do anything without a reason. The people must have done something to deserve this, or, better yet, her sister was seeing things. She tried to convince herself of this fact because deep down she knew that if this was true her lavish lifestyle

would change. "This is why we stay in the palace. Just forget what you saw" the middle sister quickly told the eldest, walking away. She remembered her dream and suddenly worried that it was coming to life. Although she wasn't close to the youngest, she still wanted to keep her out of danger.

She finally arrived at the dark kitchen not bothering to turn on the lights. She opened up the cabinets, frantic to find a glass to pour her water in. Her throat felt itchy and dry from the news she just received. Finally finding that glass, she poured herself water and immediately chugged it down. She wasn't sure what to do. All she knew was that if they told their mother, their lives would never be the same. Again, the middle sister worried about her livelihood and the change that would come to it if they decided to stand up for the people. She decided that she and the eldest sister would have to talk to their mother tomorrow and if that didn't work well, there was nothing that could be done. She would feign ignorance and buy more clothes to make herself feel better. Besides, the eldest was known for reading a lot of books which ignited her imagination, surely she was exaggerating to create a big deal out of nothing. After all, the attention from their mother had gone from the eldest to the youngest and she could see the hurt that it caused.

She had to go to the eldest sister right away and tell her of this plan and reassure her that if nothing can be done then she would have to accept this fact. They were surrounded by objects that could bring them happiness and help them forget this night ever happened. On her walk to her sister's room, she wished that the eldest had just kept her mouth shut.

"What are you doing awake?" The middle sister looked up, startled, and realized that one of the servants had spotted her.

"Oh, nothing, just grabbing a glass of water." She didn't want anyone knowing of her objective, to avoid unnecessary panic.

"Princess, we are your royal servants, ask us next time you need anything. We are here to serve you." The servant said in an almost rehearsed way. She decided that she will have to talk to her sister in the morning to ease suspicion. She quickly walked to her room and closed the door.

She shut her eyes and fell asleep. Several hours passed, and she woke up to soft knocking on her door. She groggily opened her eyes, noticing that the sun was beginning to rise, and unlocked the door.

"Sister?" The middle sister said questioningly.

## Part III

Once upon a time, there lived a beautiful princess, she was the youngest of three sisters. She lived in a wonderful palace with her two sisters and mother. Although her sisters were beautiful, she was fairer than both combined. She knew of her beauty and used it to her advantage to gain the attention of their

mother, the queen. And it worked. From her birth, her mother would always coddle her, whispering things into her ear. Of course, the eldest was still groomed to take over the throne one day, but lately, she noticed her mother had stopped giving any attention to the eldest and she couldn't be happier about it. She was never close to her sisters, she viewed them as competition. All she wanted was the attention of her mother.

One night, while she was sleeping, she heard a knock on her door. She opened her eyes and looked out the window, noticing that the sun was starting to rise. She was ready to yell at whoever was on the other side. 'Probably a dumb servant,' she thought, ready to tattle to her mother about it.

She opened the door, mouth wide open, ready to yell, but spotted her mother. Her dark figure took up the entire door frame. "Come with me, my sweet child." Her mother's voice surrounded the youngest in a cold whisper. She quickly followed her, jogging just to keep up with her pace. They came upon a black wooden door that she had never seen before. She thought she knew every part of the palace by heart, but this door was a discovery.

Her mother opened the door and she was met with a dark room, lit only by moonlight shining through the window. As her eyes adjusted, she noticed that the room in itself wasn't big. The only thing in the room was a circle drawn with white chalk on the floor. She thought this was strange, as the circle had three smooth stones placed on each side of it. Her mother glided towards the circle and sat in front of one of the stones.

"Come," she said, gesturing towards her daughter. The youngest quickly came to her mother, not wanting to keep her waiting for even a second.

"The eldest broke my one rule and left the palace today." Her mother said, closing her eyes. "She discovered something that should've been left alone." She opened her eyes and her dark gaze seemed to pierce the youngest's soul. "Do you want to know what she discovered?" She asked.

"Only if you want to tell me, mama." The youngest whispered, wanting to please her mother. She was met with a blank stare. "Children are working in the factories, working long shifts, with no breaks, and often they get hurt with no way to heal themselves back up. Does that bother you?" She asked. The youngest thought for a moment but felt nothing. "No, mama." She replied. Her mother let a grin slip, "I knew I raised you right."

"This discovery cannot be known. Bring your sisters over here and we will make them forget." The youngest did not question her mother's orders and quickly scampered away to get her sisters. She walked to the middle sister's door and gently knocked.

"Sister?" The middle sister opened the door giving her a questioning look. "Come with me, mother would like to talk to you." Worry crossed the middle sister's face, but she followed the youngest without a word. They came upon the eldest sis-

ter's door and once again the youngest knocked gently. The eldest opened the door.

"Sister?" she said, looking at the youngest then at the middle sister who was hiding in her shadows.

"Come with me, sister. Mama is not happy with you two."

The youngest led them towards the mysterious black door and pushed it open with her small hands. "They're here, mother."

"Come, my two sweet children," she said, gesturing towards the eldest and middle sister. "Sit in front of the two stones, across from each other." Their mother's voice sounded sweet, but she could hear the darkness behind that simple command. "Do you know why you're here?" She said, looking at the eldest.

"No," said the eldest stubbornly, while the middle looked frightened. The youngest looked at them in boredom, wondering what their mother is up to.

"Oh, I think you do." Their mother gave them a wicked smile and turned to the youngest. "Would you like to be queen, my dear?"

"Yes, more than anything," the youngest quickly replied.

Her mother turned back to her sisters and said, "Well then, your fates have been chosen by your sister. I know about last night and what you two have been up to. No, that cannot do." Her mother closed her eyes and started whispering words that her youngest could not hear. Slowly, the sisters' faces contorted in pain, and in a blink of an eye, they fell to the ground, dead. The youngest did not expect this outcome but did not feel sympathy for them, only triumph, as she finally got her mother all to herself.

"This is what happens when you defy me. Understand?" The queen looked at the youngest.

"Yes, mother."

"Get cleaned up, we have tragic news to tell the kingdom. Your sisters have died from the flu."

## Epilogue

Once upon a time, there lived a queen. She was happy and kind once, but greed had taken a hold of her heart and she changed. She raised her three daughters to be like her, but only her youngest daughter listened closely to her words, so she started grooming her.

One night, she suddenly woke up feeling like something was misplaced. She quickly ran to her hidden black door and drew a circle with white chalk and carefully placed three stones on it. These stones represented her daughters and their fates. She whispered over these stones and had a vision about the eldest discovering her secret and telling the middle daughter. Suddenly, another vision overpowered her, and she saw a beautiful kingdom, with children laughing and smiling and all three daughters visiting a gravestone with her name on it.

She gasped and knew this couldn't happen. She woke up her youngest daughter and went forth with her plan. After killing her two eldest daughters, she made an announcement to the kingdom.

*"My beloved kingdom", she wrote on the scroll. "Last night, tragedy struck. My two daughters, the eldest and the middle, suddenly died from the flu last night. They will suffer no*

*more."* She sent her servant to carry out this message to her kingdom.

The queen went back to her darkroom, drew a circle in white chalk, placed the three stones, and closed her eyes. She had a vision of the kingdom, as it is now, her youngest daughter had taken her crown and continued her legacy. The queen opened her eyes and gave a chilling smile into the dark room.