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Dr. McGee

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Journal 2

*A Tale Dark and Grimm* was a very interesting fairy tale. I found that it took all the parts of Hansel and Gretel’s tales and put it into one story. I like that the stories all made sense with one another and flowed easily. It did not seem like the author had to try to make the stories fit together. I also like the narrator interjecting throughout the story. His parts made me laugh and took away the fear I was having. I get scared very easily and without the narrator interjecting, I probably would not have finished the book. I plan on putting this book on the shelf in my classroom. I found that the scariness is not too much for a child. I also feel like if a child does not want to read it, they will put it down and find something else.

The book itself seemed very readerly, except the parts where the narrator interjected. The whole book was very easy to read and everything was already work out for the reader. The narrator took it to writerly, because the comments made me feel like I could also create my own commentary to what was happening in the book. It also made the reader stop and think about what was happening at that part in the story.

For some reason, the first story in the book sticks with me the most. It starts off not even with the main characters and goes through how their parents meet. When the narrator says, “Allow me to warn you now that, under any other circumstances, stealing a girl is about the worst way of winning her heart you could possibly cook up.” The narrator seems to have read my mind, because I think about that sort of thing when reading about weird things. It also shows that the women seems to have had very little agency in choosing a path for herself, except Johannes assured her that she could leave if she wanted to. I still do not think she had much agency, because throughout the book, she seemed to just go with whatever the king told her. The book does not allow for much agency in females, because when Gretel was giving the speech to the townspeople, they would not listen to her. It was not until Hansel got up and started talking that the townspeople started to listen. The story continues on to how the king and queen would come upon three obstacles that they had to get over in order to marry. In fairy tales, it always seems to be three. I am unsure about why it is the number three, but it is always three. Johannes hears about the three obstacles and how to avoid them, so he does. The king is faithful to Johannes until the last obstacle. After that he accuses Johannes of treason. Johannes had been faithful to the family for many generations. He under-stood the family. I still am unsure of what that means, but it is very important to this family. Johannes turns to stone when he tells the king why he was doing what he was doing. The king finds out the only way to release Johannes of the stone is to cut off his children’s heads and smear the blood on the stone. So the king does. The children’s heads get put back on and Johannes is set free. At the end of the story, Hansel and Gretel decide to run away. I think this speaks about the agency they have throughout the book. They had the agency to make that decision and carry it out. Hansel and Gretel’s agency will follow them throughout the book, because they basically live on their own, until they come back to the Kingdom of Grimm to defeat the dragon.

The entire book gives Hansel and Gretel a ton of agency, but it also allows them to keep it at the end. They are crowned King and Queen as children. The book speaks to the agency of children and how they are smart. It also speaks to how adults are bad. Most of the adults in the book are terrible to children. The ones that are not bad, still cannot protect the children from bad things. The adults in the story talk to Hansel and Gretel like they are equals, and not adult speaking down to a child.