

how to write a fractured fairy tale

How to write a fractured fairy tale is an exciting endeavor that allows you to creatively reimagine classic stories while adding your unique twist. Fractured fairy tales take familiar narratives and distort them, often injecting humor, modern themes, or unexpected outcomes. This article will guide you through the steps of crafting your own fractured fairy tale, from brainstorming ideas to finalizing your story, with tips and techniques to help you along the way.

Understanding Fractured Fairy Tales

Before diving into the writing process, it's essential to understand what fractured fairy tales are. These stories take well-known fairy tales and alter them in significant ways. They may change characters, settings, or plots to create a fresh perspective or an unexpected twist.

Characteristics of Fractured Fairy Tales

- Subversion of Expectations: The most notable feature is the deviation from the original plot. For instance, what if the wolf is actually a misunderstood character rather than a villain?
- Humor and Satire: Many fractured fairy tales incorporate humor, often poking fun at the clichés and tropes of traditional fairy tales.
- Modern Themes: They may reflect contemporary issues, such as gender roles, social justice, or environmental concerns.
- Unique Characters: Familiar characters might undergo significant changes, such as a princess who rescues herself or a fairy godmother with ulterior motives.
- Inverted Morals: The morals of these tales may be twisted or completely different from the original.

Steps to Write Your Fractured Fairy Tale

Writing a fractured fairy tale involves several steps. Here's how you can get started:

1. Choose Your Original Fairy Tale

The first step in writing a fractured fairy tale is selecting the fairy tale you want to reimagine. Popular choices include:

- Cinderella
- Little Red Riding Hood
- The Three Little Pigs
- Snow White
- The Gingerbread Man

Consider the fairy tales you are most familiar with or have a personal connection to.

2. Identify the Core Elements

Once you've chosen a fairy tale, break it down into its core elements. Identify the following:

- Main Characters: Who are the protagonists and antagonists?
- Setting: Where does the story take place?
- Plot Structure: What is the beginning, middle, and end of the story?
- Theme/Moral: What message does the original tale convey?

Understanding these elements will help you know what you can change or exaggerate.

3. Brainstorm Your Twists

Now comes the fun part: brainstorming how to alter the original story. Consider the following prompts to spark your creativity:

- What if the villain was the hero?: What would happen if the wolf in Little Red Riding Hood was trying to save her from an even worse fate?
- Change the setting: How would the story change if it were set in a futuristic city or a different culture?
- Mix genres: Consider blending the fairy tale with elements from other genres, such as mystery, science fiction, or horror.
- Character swaps: What if the roles of the characters were reversed? Imagine if the princess was the one saving the dragon.
- Add modern technology: How would the story unfold if the characters had access to smartphones or social media?

Make a list of potential twists and changes. Don't be afraid to get wild and imaginative in this phase!

4. Develop Your Characters

Once you have your twists and ideas, it's time to develop your characters. Here are some tips:

- Give them depth: Create backstories for your characters, even if they are humorous or exaggerated. For instance, what are the motivations of the 'big bad wolf'?
- Create relatable traits: Adding modern quirks or relatable flaws can help connect the audience to your characters.
- Change their dynamics: Explore new relationships between characters. For example, imagine a friendship between the princess and the dragon rather than a conflict.

5. Outline Your Story

With your characters and twists in mind, outline your story. A typical fairy tale structure includes:

1. Exposition: Introduce the characters and setting.
2. Conflict: Present the main problem or challenge.
3. Rising Action: Show the events that lead to the climax.
4. Climax: The turning point of the story, where tension reaches its peak.
5. Falling Action: The events following the climax, leading to resolution.
6. Resolution: How the story concludes and what happens to the characters.

You can deviate from traditional structures, but having an outline will help keep your narrative focused.

6. Write the First Draft

Now that you have your outline, it's time to write the first draft. Here are some tips for this stage:

- Embrace your voice: Write in a style that reflects your personality. Use humor, sarcasm, or whimsy as it fits the tone of your story.
- Show, don't tell: Use descriptive language to bring your characters and settings to life. Instead of saying, "The princess was sad," show her emotions through actions and dialogue.
- Keep it engaging: Use dialogue and action to maintain the reader's interest. Avoid long descriptions that might slow down the pace.

7. Revise and Edit

After completing your draft, take a break before revising. This allows you to return with fresh eyes. When revising:

- Look for clarity: Ensure your plot makes sense and that readers can follow along.
- Check for consistency: Make sure character traits and story elements align throughout the narrative.
- Refine your humor: If your story is humorous, read it aloud to see if the jokes land. Adjust any punchlines that fall flat.
- Seek feedback: Share your story with friends, family, or writing groups to gain different perspectives.

8. Polish Your Final Version

Once you've made revisions based on feedback, it's time to polish your final version. Pay attention to the following:

- Grammar and punctuation: Ensure your writing is free of grammatical errors.
- Flow and pacing: Read through the story to check if it flows smoothly from one scene to the next.
- Consistency in tone: Ensure the tone remains consistent throughout your story, whether it's humorous, serious, or whimsical.

Publishing and Sharing Your Fractured Fairy Tale

After crafting your fractured fairy tale, consider how you want to share it with the world:

- Self-Publishing: Use platforms like Amazon Kindle Direct Publishing to publish your work as an eBook.
- Blogging: Start a blog where you can share your stories and engage with readers.
- Social Media: Share excerpts or illustrations on platforms like Instagram or Twitter.
- Writing Contests: Look for contests that focus on short stories or fairy tales and submit your work.

Conclusion

Writing a fractured fairy tale is a delightful way to explore creativity while offering a fresh take on beloved stories. By following these steps—from selecting an original tale to sharing your final piece—you can craft a unique narrative that entertains and engages readers. Remember to embrace your voice, inject humor, and have fun with the process. Happy writing!

Frequently Asked Questions

What is a fractured fairy tale?

A fractured fairy tale is a reimagined version of a classic fairy tale that alters key elements, such as characters, plot, or setting, often adding humor or a modern twist.

What are some common characteristics of fractured fairy tales?

Common characteristics include subverting traditional roles, introducing unexpected plot twists, and using contemporary language or themes to engage modern audiences.

How can I choose a classic fairy tale to fracture?

Select a fairy tale that you enjoy and identify its core elements. Consider how you might change the characters' motivations, settings, or outcomes to create a fresh perspective.

What techniques can I use to add humor to my fractured fairy tale?

Incorporate witty dialogue, absurd situations, exaggerated character traits, and playful wordplay to create comedic moments that resonate with readers.

How can I develop original characters in a fractured fairy tale?

Reimagine existing characters by giving them new backstories, motivations, or flaws. Consider how traditional characters can take on unexpected roles or relationships.

What role does setting play in a fractured fairy tale?

Setting can significantly impact the story's tone and themes. Changing the setting to a modern, unusual, or fantastical world can enhance the story's uniqueness and relatability.

How can I ensure my fractured fairy tale appeals to both children and adults?

Use layered storytelling that includes simple themes for children while incorporating deeper messages or humor that adults can appreciate, creating a multi-generational appeal.

What are some popular examples of fractured fairy tales?

Examples include 'The Stinky Cheese Man' by Jon Scieszka, 'Shrek' by William Steig, and adaptations of classic tales in various modern films and books.

How can I effectively convey a moral lesson in my fractured fairy tale?

Embed the moral subtly within the narrative, allowing characters to learn lessons through their experiences. This approach makes the message feel organic rather than preachy.

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