

SAMPLE of FAIRY TALE WRITING
for
A FUTURE MAJOR CHILDREN'S BOOK SERIES



WRITING SAMPLE

A SEASON OF FLIGHT

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The thunder of the butterflies' wings awoke her.

Princess Marigale ran to the castle window. In the distance, she could see the migratory horde vanishing in the distance, a dark cloud

that seconds ago was a fabulous, fluttering carnival of color. Had she missed the final flight? A tear formed in her eye as she contemplated months of long silences and drabness of sky and field.

Why had her Uncle Sascha built the castle in the midst of the migratory path of these fabulous beings?

The noise during the Season of Flight was deafening and somewhat unpredictable. You could take a pillow and pile it on top of your head and there would be no diminishment of the noise. Why would the Royal Architect subject his brother and her new bride to this crazy cacophony of sound?

The answer was simple. Uncle Sascha knew that the fairy affinity for butterflies, their delight in their very presence, their love for these amazing creatures- would over-ride any sense of inconvenience. In fact, those who became jaded or complained about the butterflies' rumble usually found themselves removed to the outskirts of the village, behind the Fairy Mountain, gaining the peace they sought at the price of royal favor.

It was at that moment that her mentor, Gillie McDhun walked into her room, unannounced.

“Are you up, dear girl?”

“Very much so. Why are you up so early, Gillie? Did the butterflies wake you as well?”

“No, I was up hours before, waiting for them. I have never missed the last flight in all my years in fairyland.”

“I fear I missed one- a few minutes ago. They were miles away before I got to the window.”

The tear that had been forming in Marigale’s opulent, gold-specked eyes now fell down on her quilt, speckled with quaintly-shaped patterns of lilacs, daffodils and wild mulberry leaves.

Gillie saw the tear but pretended not to see it. How could she miss it? Were her pixie chimes asleep? Did she not know the Royal obsession with the flights? What if her mother found out?

“Ah, what a pity!” he exclaimed mutedly. “There weren’t as many as in the Earlier Times, but there were many robust butterflies amidst the flock. One, I swear, was five times as large as the others- but he got lost in the all the clamoring to reach cloud level before I could look a bit closer. Why should they be getting bigger?”

“I don’t know. Everything would bode against it, Gillie. Their food is quite less nourishing when they crossover during the Great Migration.”

“As far as we know, Marigale, that’s very true. Life is so full of mysteries.”

He had barely finished his observation when a loud fluttering was heard beyond the antechamber of Marigale’s bedroom. In a moment, more than two dozen of her cousins tumbled into the room. They had all

stopped together in such a rush, they crashed into each other, each rolling into ten different directions as a cloud of fairy dust filled the air.

“Strike a fairy and you can powder your face for a week,” Marigale’s Auntie Beatrice used to say, in jest, of course. But there was truth in it, the bright powder so coveted by humankind did, indeed, have all kinds of semi-miraculous uses- like charming animals and calming fevers- but it did so much get all over the place if you let yourself be pumped around. Fairy dust could be a burden.

So in the midst of this powdery dust cloud, little Katrina, her third cousin, coughed out, “There is bad news, Marigale. Your cousin, Vanella- is very sick. She has asked you to come to see her.”

“Oh, no! What’s wrong?”

“She drank from Farmer Millwood’s pail, after she had milked the Cow Demon, Greenwater.”

“But mother had told all of you, time and again, never to go near that Millwood’s cows,” Marigale said crossly. “They are all brooding monsters these days and there are poison in the pails. She said it- again and again.”

“I know, but unfortunately, there is a strong attachment between Millwood’s farm and our fairy kingdom, going back generations.” Bellwood, one of her older cousins said, his deep voice echoing throughout the antechamber. “Not only do we know all the humans in Millwood’s family- his wife, children and grandparents, but we also have

known his cows, like Greenwater, who you are calling a monster- and the other cows, Tamara, Abby and Dauphin for many years. Those three cow-beings fed our entire fairy kingdom for generations.”

“When changes started to be made on the farm- even when our favorite cows began to grow unnaturally and when the Millwood family became ill, many of your mother’s family refused to believe it. Since there was no formal prohibition from the Royal Family- just a warning- they kept returning to the farm. Even your mother acknowledged the debt we had to these fine people and we were allowed to keep up our visits to them.”

Marigale nodded at Bellwood. The Millwood family was special.

“After all, although Farmer Millwood and his family have never seen us, their belief in us is deep- and, for many, heartwarming and flattering. There is not a fairy in this kingdom who has not tasted a drop of food from their tiny, fairy platters they would leave out day in or day out or the milk can they reserved exclusively for us. That was before the changes began to occur, of course.”

“Vanella’s parents were specifically the appointed fairy guardians over the Millwood children,” Katrina added, “and they were somewhat blinded to the changes in the farm.”

Marigale hoped that Katrina would not defend Vanella too much because she may become a bad example through her bad judgment. Vanella and her brothers and sisters were often there to help with the

Milkwood children. Of course, because of the Royal Ordinance, they were told not to drink their milk or eat from the fairy platters anymore.”

“So Vanella was there with official permission when she saw Millwood going to town with his giant pails right beside his fresh bails of hay. One of the pails spilled over and it was so white and so creamy- so much more delightful and fresh than the average fare we dine on these days- that she felt an urge to sample it and followed the farmer home, as we did in the old days.”

“But it’s not supposed to happen-”

“No matter, Marigale. You’d better go. Your cousin calls you and she is ailing and fading fast. You can barely see her flesh tones anymore. Her bed seems only half occupied.”

“Oh, no-” said Marigale, rising on her, compact, golden wings. Her mentor ponderously flapped his heavier, older wings- and they prepared to join with the throng.

Like most fairy castles, the architecture was considerably different from human or dwarf architecture. Humans and dwarfs were sadly earth-bound. They had only two legs to get them from one place or another. Otherwise, they needed a mechanical contrivance or an animal. Fairy castles, therefore, did not place an emphasis on staircases or steps, but rather created room for fairies to fly in small groups along tubular corridors, great pipe like affairs carved out of the same sturdy stone that governed the entire architecture of the castle.

So, as fairies are wont to do- Marigale, her cousins and Gillie McDhun all went together in a storm of fairy dust- down the stony corridors of the palace.

When Marigale and Gillie reached Vanella's room, they were surprised to see a small crowd had assembled. Ronella, the Queen of this fairy kingdom and Marigale's mother, kneeled by the small bed. Her hair was unusually disheveled, her robe obviously hastily put on and probably one worn just prior to entering into sleep. It was unusual for her mother to be the least bit untidy but it was a tribute to her concern for her young niece. When Marigale came in, Ronella nodded and slightly smiled. She was obviously preoccupied but her warmth filled Marigale with confidence that the best would be done for her cousin.

"Is this a Transition Ceremony?" Marigale whispered to Gillie

"I don't know, my dear," he said. "But it may very well be."

Marigale wished now to be anywhere but here- watching poor Vanella fade out of the fairy world- into the Great Unknown. There was quite a crowd of Vanella's substantial little family of friends and relatives when Marigale's mother summoned Gillie to speak with her.

They whispered together for a few moments. Then Gillie flew up until he hovered right beneath the chandelier and said to everyone, "Will you children please join me in the Lesson room?"

"But what about Vanella? Should we not be here?"

“Your Queen believes that there are too many of you here and that Vanella must have room to breathe. The Doctor is coming here from West Wind River and he must be able to observe her vapours.”

“Is she dying, Gillie?” Katrina asked.

Gillie looked at Ronella, who sighed and stood up.

“Children, children- must you use that awful world. We do not speak here of dying, which implies an end to things, a blackness- but to transition. It is true that many of us do not know what lies beyond this point in life, where the fairy body fades and another smiling face is gone, but still, since we fairies live in mystery, we can live with mystery- can we not?”

“Yes, but Vanella is so young.”

“Vanella drank from a poisoned milk pail- against our wishes and against the Royal proclamation. We hope the dear Doctor from West Wind can save her, but she broke a law and her little body may not be able to recover. Right now, we have another problem, dear children. Prince Seymour has not come back from the Dark World yesterday. We know approximately where he is- but we must find him quickly. I am asking dear Gillie to tutor you once more on the fairy presence for all of you may have to go to find him.”

And so the children left the room dutifully and flew en masse to the Lesson room.

The session started with a question.

“Was not Seymour tutored on the ‘Fairy Presence?’” Marjesy, a fat little fairy, asked with an almost sarcastic tone.

“Yes, I gave him many lessons myself,” Gillie responded. “But his head was always popping out the window watching the meadowlarks play.”

“I’m not surprised,” Marjesy sneered. “Seymour never pays attention to anything.” Seymour had ignored her too many times for her not to feel a tiny bit of satisfaction well up in her heart. She knew it was wrong to feel this way, but she had been hurt too much and indulged herself with her rightness.

Gillie cleared his throat and motioned for the children to gather around him. “Queen Ronella has asked me to speak to all you children this morning. She is concerned that you children are making too many incursions into the Dark World. She believes that Seymour may have been trapped that year for want of understanding of the mechanics of the ‘Fairy Presence.’ And since we may have to all go looking for him shortly, she has asked me to review ‘the Presence’ and decide which of you are capable of going and which may have to stay behind.

“ ‘Presence’ is a quality of fairy life unknown in the human realms. Where it is also a factor in the lives of dwarves, goblins, sylphs and giants, it is not focused on. The quality of presence, in the fairy world has much to do with the fairies interaction with human beings. Whereas other creatures in the vast kingdoms of the universe were aware and

sometimes interacted with the human world, fairies did not have the luxury of even relative isolation. They needed interaction with the Dark World, the world of humanity, in order to survive.”

“How did this come about, Gillie,” Bellwood asked.

“It had happened a long time ago. Once all worlds were one- and all beings lived together in relative harmony. Then came the Great Chasm, splitting the one world into many. But whereas the giants, goblins, sylphs, and dwarves were given a world to themselves, the fairies were not so lucky. They lived on the edge of the Dark World, the human world, and they needed the nourishment of the denser herbs, the fresh cream of the humans’ cow and the pollen of the Dark World’s flowers to survive. So, since time immemorial, the fairies had to move into the Dark World to explore, excavate and feed on its nourishing larder.”

“So that is why we must travel back and forth between the different realms,” pronounced Marigale. It is a necessity, not just a pleasure.”

“Quite right. Long ago, we learned how to do this through a special fairy power called ‘Presence.’” A fairy, from a very early age, was taught how to focus on the substratum of different worlds, particularly the Fairy World and the Dark World. Advanced students of “Presence” could go into the world of sylphs or even giants, but it took great concentration and navigational dexterity.”

“Dear, dear children. This is a very special lesson because today we will discuss how you can effectively improve your navigation between the human world and the fairy world.”

“Why do we have to even bother? Even the very best cream is now terrible. I don’t see why Vanella would even want any. I’ve tasted it myself recently. You can hardly find milk thistle or hazelnuts anymore,” said little Pigthorn in his squeaky, childish voice. Gillie never paid it any attention although his demeanor and his shrill voice annoyed his cousins.

“Yes, it is true that their milk tasted fresher and sweeter when I and your parents were young. Some say it is what the cows eat now- the quality of the grass is lacking; others say it is the special feed they are now given. There are all sorts of strange talk about what they do about to their cows. But one thing is certain- their cows are growing faster and much, much bigger.”

“Then why even bother with them, Gillie?”

“We go there for we need sustenance from both worlds. If we don’t take nourishment from the Dark World, then we die. And finding nourishment is getting more and more difficult.”

“I don’t understand.”

“Do you understand there is a fairy world and a Dark World?”

“Yes.”

“Well, each of these worlds is made up of tiny clusters of energy called atoms. The energy of the human world is heavier or denser than the Fairy world. Humans live in the dark world because their bodies are made of exclusively of atoms from the dark world.”

“We fairies actually have two bodies- one is heavy and one is light. We can therefore live in both worlds.”

“Is that why we can see them, but they can’t see us?”

“Yes, but as you know, Madeline, we can’t always see them either.”

“For most of you, it is a matter of accident. When you visit the human world, it is almost like magic. You kind of wish your way there. Sometimes it works. Sometimes it doesn’t. But today I am going to show you how-”

Suddenly, the room was flooded with happy voices. Without exactly knowing why, Marigale found herself back in Vanella’s room. The Doctor was there and the air was thick with the aroma of Apple Blossom and Lavender. Magical vapours wafted through the room, circling around the radiant Vanella, now completely opaque and filled with life. Marigale looked around. Her mother was gone.

The Royal Magistrate flew into the room, resplendent and fearsome in his somber robes. He announced to everyone, “In honor of Vanella’s return to health, Queen Ronella is throwing a royal banquet tonight.”

“Ah,” said Marigale to herself. “How like her mother, to quickly vanish and begin immediate preparations to throw a giant party.”

The little fairies, in their jubilation, flew every which way, colliding into each other, doing triple and quadruple somersaults in the crowded space above the little room, careening madly into the chandeliers and sliding down the walls when their efforts proved a bit too boisterous.

Marigale left the room quickly and retired to her room to dress. She would wear the beautiful, maroon dress her mother had given her. It was ankle length and covered with lace and tiny fairy bells and was perfect for a formal dinner.

It took her a long time to put it on and even longer to put on the faint make-up permitted her in the Royal Court. She applied it delicately and carefully, trying to shape her eyebrows like perfect little arches. Then, she walked back and forth in her room, trying to figure out how to get Bellwood to dance with her all evening, since he was her only male cousin that could dance at all. Then, after that, she closed her eyes and pretended it was all happening around her- and she danced with Bellwood in the courtyard, the moon streaming down over the gardens- until she finally got quite bored.

After all, Princess Marigale was quite young and, after all this romantic fantasy, her tomboy ways took over and she decided to go outside and see Mirth, her pet butterfly.

Fairies, of course, flew many times on winged creatures, particularly on butterflies- but this was for pleasure and to prevent fatigue. For short distances, they had their own wings to propel them.

Her favorite steed was Mirth, of course. She planned on riding her later on in the afternoon, but first they would play.

They began with hide-and-seek and this turned out to be a whole lot more fun than pretending to dance with Bellwood.

Caught in the excitement of the chase, she began to fly furiously in ten directions at once.