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Supernatural Aid in Folktales: Examining the Universal Presence and Purpose of Divine Intervention

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Abstract:
This study aims to examine the ubiquitous presence of supernatural aid exploring its universal significance and role in global folktale tradition by analyzing a selection of folktales from diverse cultures. The fundamental purpose of supernatural aid is to ensure both safety and success of the protagonist in heroic journey. This mystical alliance , be it in the form of some magical tool, advice, mentorship or tangible help, plays an instrumental role in preparing the hero on physical as well as mental grounds to cope with the existing and upcoming challenges . In numerous folktales, deities, mythical creatures, mystical birds and animals, magicians and wise old men appear to support, guide, encourage and facilitate the protagonist especially in a critical time. Indeed, no hero can handle his adversaries single handedly and his ultimate boon owes to the help and encouragement he receives from his allies. The concept of widespread supernatural aid within folktales from diverse cultures symbolically conveys man's belief in supernatural powers. The findings unfold that the supernatural aid is a vital and recurring universal motif within the folktales from diverse cultural landscapes. It plays a crucial role in the progression of the tale, heroic journey and the protagonist's ultimate triumph and transformation. Furthermore, it facilitates the hero in overcoming the challenges and combating against the evil forces thereby contributing significantly in the psychological growth and the self-discovery of the protagonist.

Keywords: Supernatural Aid,Folktales, mystical alliance, adversaries, cultural landscapes-

INTRODUCTION

The supernatural aid, a ubiquitous and pivotal archetype in global cultural narratives, plays a crucial role in the hero's transformation (Campbell, 1949; Propp, 1928). This recurring motif, often characterized by the provision of magical or exceptional assistance to the hero, serves as a catalyst for the progression of the tale and the protagonist's triumph (Vladimir, 1928). The supernatural aid, as a fundamental

element within the folk and fairy tales, facilitates the hero in overcoming the challenges and obstacles of the journey thereby laying emphasis on the significance of external guidance and support in the pursuit of success (Luthi, 1982).

At the stage of separation, the hero encounters a wise old man or a seasoned and experienced traveler who willingly extends help to the hero and thus becomes his mentor and protective figure. He offers him some advice, magical tools, weapons or amulets to combat and defeat the evil forces, " for those who have not refused the call, the first encounter of the hero-journey is with a protective figure (often a little old crone or old man) who provides the adventurer with amulets against the dragon forces he is about to pass" (Campbell, 2004, p. 63). Thompson, a well-known folklorist, declares the help from allies to be the most enchanting part of the journey, "the most striking part of this tale is undoubtedly the specially endowed companions and the way in which they perform the tasks set for the hero" (Thompson, 1946, p. 54). So, magic in folk tales appears to be an integral part, " In a very large proportion of the folk tales wherever they may be found magic plays a considerable part and it is almost universal in some form in all those stories we know as wonder tales" (Thompson, 1946, p. 67). Thomson further explains the magical help, "A special kind of magic object which appears very frequently in tales is magic remedies. The belief in things endowed with such healing powers is practically universal" (Thompson, 1946, p. 79). Such magical help owes its existence in the folk tales to the actual belief in magic, " a very important part of this background of imagination is dependent upon the belief in magic that the world is filled with objects which defy all laws of nature and which obtain miraculous results without ordinary labor" (Thompson, 1946, p. 253).The help often is rendered to the protagonist who has stepped into the adventure by accepting the call, " The hero to whom such a helper appears is typically one who has responded to the call" (Campbell, 2004, p. 67). The help may come from a physical person, a logbook, a map or hieroglyphics. It may be an inner mentor or sense of honor and justice that guides the hero throughout the journey. The hero gains confidence, magical gifts, training, advice, and insight to overcome the initial fears and face the threshold of the adventure. It is wise enough on the part of the Hero to rush into the special world recklessly and to seek essential lessons from someone who knows the tests and ordeals of the Journey. From a physical angle, the mentor represents the power of wisdom and the rational part that resides in the hero's unconsciousness. This is the archetype of the spirit, the wisdom of the unconsciousness; the inner light that directs the hero to move in the right direction. The mentor feels it to be a moral obligation to encourage the hero to accomplish his task. A hero must carry out his journey to get the desired goal. Thus, the help rejuvenates him to enter the special world where he is supposed to defeat the evil forces to restore peace. Campbell explains the essential role of the Mentor for the hero's development thus: "what such a figure (the old crone or old man) represents in the benign, protecting power of destiny. The fantasy is a reassurance _ a promise that the peace of paradise, which was known first with the mother's womb, is not to be lost" (Campbell, 2004, p. 71).

METHODOLOGY

Archetypal criticism is a research tool that examines the use of archetypes in literature to uncover deeper meaning and themes. Archetypes are universal characters, symbols or patterns that appear frequently in the myths, stories, and literature of various cultures throughout history. A central aspect of archetypal criticism is the identification and interpretation of archetypes in literary works. Archetypal criticism and contemporary mythologists assert that the genuine worth of a work lies in its global appeal and universality. It is true that certain situations, images and characters generate identical responses in all peoples regardless of time, culture and geography. These primordial images, recurrent and universal patterns, images, behaviors and situations are called archetypes in the sphere of psychology. Archetypes, according to Carl Jung (1959), are the innate neuropsychic centers which do possess the capacity to control, initiate and mediate the common behavioral characteristics and particular experiences of all human beings.

Archetypal criticism help researchers explore and identify primordial images and repeated patterns. Merriam Webster (2023) Encyclopedia of Literature describes the concerns and aims of Archetype Criticism:

> A form of literary criticism that is concerned with the discovery and analysis of the original pattern or model for themes, motifs, and characters in poetry and prose. This approach to literature is based on the idea that narratives are structured in accordance with an underlying archetypal model: the specific plot and characters are important insofar as they allude to a traditional plot or figure to patterns that have recurred with wide implication in human history.

Merriam Webster's Encyclopedia of Literature (2023) encapsulates the Jungian concept of archetypes thus:

> The varieties of human experience have somewhat been genetically coded and transferred to successive generations . The laurel and olive branches, the snake , whale, eagle, and vulture all are archetypal symbols . Archetypal characters that recur in literature include the blood brother, rebel, wise grand parent, generous thief, and a prostitute with a heart gold.

DISCUSSION

The phenomenon of alliance is a Hallmark in the hero's journey manifested through the tangible help of supernatural forces or guidance and mentorship in the course of the hero's journey. The hero does not combat antagonism single-handedly but rather, the allies, with supernatural aid, appear to assist the hero both physically and mentally (Campbell, 1949). The incorporation of magical occurrences in folktales legitimatize supernatural intervention as a valid human experience. The fundamental purpose of the Supernatural Aid in folktales is to ensure the safety of the protagonists (Zandelin, 2019). At times, allies assume the role of mentors, offering advice, guidance, and warnings to the hero, thereby preparing them for imminent challenges ahead. The Mentor prepares the hero both on physical and mental grounds to wrestle with the upcoming ordeals in his journey. The guidance is there to serve as a beacon that may come even from the soul of the protagonist. The ally is the true counterfoil to the

enemy in cultural narratives. If the rivals, enemies and villains are there to depress, disapprove, discourage, threaten, halt, oppose, and hurt the hero, the allies too are there to support, abet, assist, heal, facilitate, relieve, encourage and endorse the protagonist. Alliance is not limited to human companionship, it can be manifested in the shape of tangible support or guidance by birds, animals, angels, gods or other mythical creatures (Zandelin, 2019).Allies play a crucial role in resolving conflicts providing essential aid to the primary hero when required (Hikmatova, 2022). In 'The Feathered Monster' (Calvino, 1961), the hero is guided and helped by monks in bringing the Monster's feathers which will heal the ailing King. The Monks encourage and alarm the protagonist to make him ready to handle the perils of the adventure: "Ah, my brave man" said the head monk," but if you aren't aware of all the perils involved, you'll never come out alive" (Calvino, 1961, p. 113). The Monk directs him regarding the exact location of the Monster to minimize his mental and physical exertion, "When you reach the top of the mountain, count all the holes, and the seventh hole will be the hole in which the Monster lives" (Calvino, 1961, p. 113). The ally archetype closely resembles the sage archetype, as the ally can't help the hero unless and until he, like the sage, has wisdom and knowledge. Here, in the tale under discussion, the monk, having awareness about the baffling darkness of the cave, assuming the role of the Sage or The Wise old man, rendering a tangible help to him, guides him, "It will be dark at the bottom of that hole and you won't be able to see a thing. So we will give you a candle and some matches" (Calvino, 1961, p. 114). He guides the hero even about the appropriate time of entry," Then, go down into the hole exactly at noon because at that time the Monster should be away. His wife will be there, and she is a good girl; she will tell you everything" (Calvino, 1961, p. 114). The Monk warns him, " If you meet the Monster before you see her, he will surely eat you up in one mouthful " (Calvino, 1961, p. 114). As calculated by the insightful Monk, the hero finds the wife of the Monster to be a cooperative lady. It is actually the very wife of the Monster who plucks off the feathers from her husband's skin for the hero, "I'll make believe, I'm dreaming and then pluck a feather from his back " (Calvino, 1961, p. 115). In ' Three Orphans '(Calvino, 1961), the hero, during his hazardous journey, gains spiritual and inner strength from his unwavering religious beliefs. The hero, riding on a galloping horse, is to cross an oceanic river to deliver the letter to the concerned one. First, he shows reluctance, a phase named Refusal to Call by Campbell, " I will surely drown " (Calvino, 1961, p. 189) but the memory of the Lord bestows an instant energy upon the horse rider, " But what can I do, I must obey. Besides, no matter what happens, everything rests in the hands of the Lord" (Calvino, 1961, 189). So the heavenly help makes the water part and the faithful rider crosses the river (Calvin, 1961). In the folk tale ' The Young Calf With Two Golden Horns'(Calvino, 1961), the young prince sends two adept sailors to rescue the heroin, who, thrown into the sea by her stepmother, the villain, was captured by a bloody shark. Similarly, a stepdaughter is helped by The Mother Cat in ' The Fable of the Cats'(Calvino, 1961). The Mother, seeing the poor barefooted girl dressed in rags, offers her "the loveliest silk dress, a big beautiful kerchief and a pair of delicate silken

slippers" (Calvino, 1961, p. 227). To make her more charming, she advises the girl to put her five fingers into the magical holes in the wall looking up in the air, " When she pulled them out each finger was encircled with a diamond ring, one more beautiful than the other. Then she looked up in the air and a star fell on her forehead. And she went home looking like a beautiful bride" (Calvino, 1961, p. 227).

It is true that a hero, in folktales, is presented to be a paragon of courage, iron-will, bravery, determination and perseverance yet his victory owes to many of his allies, both human and supernatural beings, who offer him aid that helps him fight his enemies he encounters at the different phases of his heroic journey. The tale 'The Faithful Prince' (Steel,1917) is a fine example of supernatural aid and it would not be inadequate to remark that no aid no victory. The tale depicts a series of supernatural aids without which the task seems impossible. In the tale under discussion, a marvelous golden deer gives the hero a ride for seven days and nights all over the world and ultimately drops him in demonland previously unknown to the hero, "It is true you are in Demonsland, but no one shall hurt you, for I am the demon Jasdrul whose life you saved when I was on the earth in the shape of a golden deer" (Steel, 1917, p. 25). He not only renders support to the protagonist but also escorts him to his abode in great protocol. Having reached there, he entrusts him a bunch of keys to have access many palaces and gardens loaded with amenities to serve him. The hero, roaming here and there in different palaces, happens to see a magnificent garden stretching seven miles in length and seven miles in width wherein he falls asleep on a wonderful cozy bed all spread with silken shawls. There, an enchanting fairy named Princess Shahpasand, in the shape of a pigeon, happens to catch sight of the splendid young prince and falling in love with him gives him a kiss. The prince awakens and finds her in the shape of a beautiful fairy, and he too expresses his love for her at first glance. The prince, being a fair and honest man, seeks his host's permission to marry the fairy and take her back to his real home. The demon takes pity on him and thus bestows upon him the desired permission and also offers his assistance to the hero, " Take this hair with you, and when you need help, burn it, then I will come immediately to your assistance" (Steel, 1917, p. 27). He comes back but finds that both his parents have died and the throne has been usurped and the usurper has issued the decree to kill the young prince Soon after his entry into the kingdom. Fortunately, the prince, in his looks and appearance, has undergone transformation rendering him unrecognizable. Having sought sanctuary in the humble cottage of his devoted former servant, he finds great solace heaving a sigh of relief. The servant, informing his former master about his mother's sightlessness, assures him that no one can pose a threat to his privacy and security within the residence (Steel, 1917). But when bad luck overtakes someone, as a Punjabi proverb says, he is bitten by a dog even when on a camel-ride. The fairy, on the garret, washes her enthralling golden hair and at that moment she comes to the notice of the chief constable of the town who happens to pass by the home. Enticed by her charming looks and hair, the constable knocks at the door to find out whether it is his hallucinations or a reality. The blind mother of the huntsman informs him that it must be his whim as no young lady resides in her

home. The fairy, in fear of being watched and caught by the constable, makes a hole in the ceiling, guises herself as a pigeon, flies to the blind woman, and whispers in her ears, that she is going to her father's home in Emerald Mountain and flies away. The poor prince comes back and finds her nowhere. The blind woman informs him about the heard voice that mentioned Emerald Mountain. Knowing not what to do, the prince suddenly remembers about the magical hair. He burns the hair and the demon Jasdrul appears at once asking him the task for him. Whereupon he, from the demon, learns the way that leads to Emerald Mountain. The demon explains the life-threatening dangers involved in the intended journey and tries to prevent the prince from going on the adventure. But the prince tells him that he not willing to give up the idea, rain or sunshine. The demon, impressed by his constancy, carries him to demonland; offers him a magical wand and commands him to travel to the country of the demon Nanak Chand (Steel, 1917). The prince arrives at Nanak Chund's house, but, he, after awakening from the sleep of twelve years, and being hungry, thinks to make a morsel of the prince as soon as he casts the first glance over him. But, on seeing the wand in the hand of the prince, he restrains himself from doing any harm to the guest sent by his brother. He, after hearing the entire story from the prince, offers him a box of magical powdered antimony. Upon hearing the prince's story in its entirety, he extends a box containing magical powdered antimony, instructing the prince to anoint his eyes with it whenever he wishes the bring objects closer or push them away (Steel, 1917). He bids him to reach Safed to seek further help, "Sufed is my eldest brother and if anybody can do what you want, he will"(Steel, 1917, p. 31). Safed offers him a cap that has the power to make someone invisible, " take this yech-cap: whenever you put it on you will become invisible. He shows him the direction leading to the Emerald Mountain, and guides him how to exploit all the magical articles in his favour, "powder on your eyes and wish the mountain near, for it is enchanting hill, and the farther you climb the higher it grows. On the summit lies the Emerald City: enter it by means of your invisible cap and find the princess" (Steel, 1917, p 32). So, he does so and reaches the princess who was imprisoned there by his father in seven prisons. One notable message that one learns from all these supernatural aids is that the people around you can help but to a certain limit and that it is you who has to do your work and none other can perform on your part, what the allies can do is that they can guide and show the way.

Though, the hero, in the tale 'Prince Lionheart and His Three Friends'(Steel, 1917), has gained the title lionheart by demonstrating bravery yet even a man of a lionheart needs allies or friends while embarking on his journey. With his trio of companions, comprising the carpenter, the blacksmith and the knife grinder, he commences his expedition (Steel, 1917). This hero of incomparable valor needs to carry a magical sword with him to cope with his enemies. Prince Lionheart enters a desolate city, deserted by its residents in the fear of a terrible demon, who is now ruling the entire city. The hero faces the demon when it suddenly appears in the shape of a tiny mouse-warrior. Here, the help comes from within which guides him on how to handle the situation. Playing the role of a trickster, he praises the demon's tiny

stature, (Steel, 1917). He asks the purpose of his sudden appearance whereupon the little warrior claims the very food cooked by the hero as his dinner. The hero tells him politely that the food belongs to him though, yet he suggests he has a duel to reach any conclusion (Steel, 1917). At this, the demon grows himself to a frightful size. Instead of getting terrified, the hero laughs to tell him that it is not a just idea to fight someone who is shorter beyond measurement, "just now you were ridiculously small, at present you are absurdly big" (Steel, 1917, p. 46). He asks him to come into a stature that resembles him in height. The inner guidance of the hero works and he, not withstanding the reasoning of his opponent, reduces himself in ordinary size. Both they fight valiantly, but, at the end, the demon is killed by the hero's" sharp sword, "(Steel, 1917,p. 46). The next task to be performed by the hero is to find the giant's secret of life and kill him because he has forcefully imprisoned a maiden as a captive bride. Now, the maiden, through her tricks, helps him in tracing the object that contains the giant's life. When the cruel giant arrives, she starts weeping and when asked the reason, she says that she remains on pins and needles thinking about the giant's safety of life as he is away from the home most of the time (Steel, 1917). He tells her that she should remain calm and satisfied because his life lies in something very safe. The maiden tells him that she is not satisfied until she is told about the exact object containing his life to judge herself whether it is really safe or he is saying so to keep her away from worry. Wheedled by the maiden, he tells that away there is a tree, guarded by a horse and a dog, a golden cage lies hanging there on the top branch, a bird is encaged whose crop has a bee having his life and it is safe. Thus, she helps the hero kill the giant. Interestingly enough, it is the magical sword that keeps the hero alive because his life lies in that sword. A witch, through her tricks, steals the sword and puts the sword on burning coals thus putting the hero to death. Then his faithful friends come for help (Steel, 1917). His two close friends, the carpenter and the goldsmith also arrive to render their help to their friend Prince Lionheart. They come and find their friend lifeless, "all burnt and blistered" (Steel, 1917, p. 57). Well-acquainted with the magical properties of the sword, the blacksmith moves forward to mend the sword that too was lying burnt "he blew up the fire, forged a river, and fastened the hilt to the blade. No sooner had he done so that the prince's head grew to his shoulder "(Steel, 1917, p. 58). Next, the knife grinder steps forward to make his contribution, skillfully spinning his wheel until the sword becomes immaculate. As a miraculous consequence of his action, the burns and scars vanish from the prince's body restoring him to life once more Having come back to life the first question he asks "where is my princess?"(Steel, 1917,p. 58). The carpenter goes to bring the princess back to his friend. The princess has been abducted and kept in a tower by a king and no one is allowed to enter there save the water-carrier and the woodman. He, disguising himself as a woodman, enters the tower, builds a magical flying wooden palanquin, makes the maiden seated in the palanquin and thus, by flying the palanquin brings the maiden to Prince Lionheart.

When none from human lineage comes up to help the orphaned girl abducted by a trickster robber taking the girl away by telling her that he is her uncle and is going to orchestrate her marriage with his son, the birds along her way approach to warn her against the trickery of the robber. In the folktale 'Bopoluchi' (Steel,1917), while Bopoluchi and the robber are on the way, a crow, sitting on a branch, croaks informing her that it is not her uncle but a deceiver who has captured her sense of understanding (Steel, 1917). But, the robber tells her not to pay any attention to him as the crows in their country are in the habit of talking nonsense. A peacock, a little farther, on the way, emerges to help the girl and repeats the same sentences that were uttered earlier by the crow and this time too the robber says that the peacocks of the country have developed the habit of talking mumbo-jumbo. And the third time, a jackal halters her way to tell her about the truth.

Anansi, a well-known trickster portrayed in the majority of African folktales, adopts fishing as a profession in the later part of his life. Though he becomes blind after a few years of initiating fishing yet continues it with the help of his two companions, "he continued his fishing _ with the help of two men" (Barker, 1917, p. 73). These helpers come every morning and guide him in catching fish " they led him, each morning, to the beach and into the canoe. They told him where to spread his net and when to pull it" (Barker, 1917, p. 73). In the tale, 'Thunder and Anansi', the hero is helped by Thunder in the time of terrible famine, " He went into the cottage and fetched a fine cooking-pot which he presented to Anansi_ telling him that he need never be hungry again. The pot would always supply enough food " (Barker, 1917, p. 40). In the tale ' Why We See Ants Carrying Bundles As Big As Themelves', a worried farmer is helped by a dwarf. The dwarf, through her magic, causes rainfall on the dry fields, "Rain immediately began to fall, and continued till the ground was thoroughly well soaked . In the days following the seeds germinated and the crops began to promise well" (Barker, 1917, p. 64).

A supernatural aid is extended by a sorcerer to a distressed mother in the tale 'The Laughing Hippopotamus' (Baum, 1901) concerned about the safety of her offspring facing life threats from the human populace. The magician, through his mystical powers, bestows the strength of ten elephants upon him telling that no man or knife can harm him. Moreover, his swiftness is accelerated akin to a storm thereby rendering him unassailable as a beast of burden, "your skin has now become so tough that no man can hurt you. Your strength is greater than that of ten elephants. Your foot is so swift that you can distance the wind. Your wit is sharper than the bullhorn" (Baum, 1901, p. 04). Though the leading figure of the tale 'The Glass Dog' is a magician yet he goes to consult his neighbor to find some solution to get rid of the countless visitors. His neighbor is a glass-blower and he asks him to make a glass dog for him, " one that will bark at people and drive them away. One that will be no trouble to keep and won't expect to be fed. One that has no fleas" (Baum, 1901, p. 11). The glass-blower prepares the desired glass dog and the magician, through his magic, infuses life in it. In the tale 'The Wonderful Pump', a Beetle aids a destitute couple

bestowing upon them a magical pump that dispenses gold coins, swiftly accumulating into a substantial heap of wealth (Baum, 1901). In the tale 'The Magic Wall', the hero along with his army of fairies is attacked by sand fairies in the desert. Their eyes, nostrils and ears become clogged with sand. Then the Shower Fairies come to relieve them of this sudden misery, "the shower fairies arrived, and, with their pellet-like raindrops beat the sand particles down, cleared and cooled the air, and with refreshing waters restored the fain and famished fairies" (Cook, 1925, p. 32).

CONCLUSION

The Supernatural Aid is a recurring and vital motif in folk narratives. Supernatural aid aims at ensuring the safety and success of heroes (Zandelin, 2018). This assistance plays a pivotal role in encouraging and aiding protagonists to overpower their adversaries amidst critical times (Hikmatova, 2022). Supernatural aid is manifested in various forms such as advice, mentorship, guidance or tangible help necessary to prepare the protagonists both physically and mentally to cope with existing or upcoming impediments along the way (Zandelin, 2019). Indeed, supernatural aid plays an instrumental role in helping heroes in achieving their seemingly unachievable goals. The element of supernatural aid evokes a sense of gratitude among audiences for those segments of society that directly or indirectly pave the way toward their success. Alliance in folktales can manifest in the shape of magicians, mythical creatures, birds or wise old men (Hikmatova, ,2021). When no one appears to help, there comes an inner voice to guide the protagonist. The Allies are the counterfoil to the heroes'rivals as they come to support, abet, heal, facilitate and encourage the leading figures of folktales. The hero of 'The Feathered Monster', on his way to bring the Monster's feathers supposed to heal the ailing King, is helped and guided by a God-fearing Monk. The monk offers him a candle and a matchbox to create light in the pitch darkness of the cave of the monster. He advises the hero to seek help from the Monster's wife instead of facing the monster directly. The Monster's Wife, in the latter part of the story, plucks off the Monster's feathers for the hero. The religious beliefs in the tale 'Three Orphans' bestow inner strength and spiritual power when he calls the Lord (Christ) while crossing a hazardous oceanic river on a galloping horse. The sailors in ' The Young Calf With Two Golden Horns' rescue the hero captured by a bloody shark. The ally archetype appears in the shape of an animal in 'The Fable of the Cats' wherein the poor orphan girl, the heroine of the story, is helped by a Mother Cat with her mystical powers who offers precious shoes and clothes to the poor girl. A marvelous golden deer gives a ride to the hero and drops him in the demonland wherein the hero's beloved is captured in seven prisons. The golden deer is actually the demon named Jasdrul. He offers a bunch of hundred keys to the hero telling him that the keys will open the doors of magnificent palaces and gardens wherein he can stay in peace and luxury. There another demon offers him a magical hair advising him to burn the hair whenever he needs help. Impressed by the hero's bravery and commitment, the demon Nanak Chand gifts him a magical wand advising the hero to carry the wand during the journey as none will harm him as long as he keeps the wand with him. The demon, to minimize his physical exertion on

the hero and to safeguard him against any threat, gives powder to rub on his eyes through which he will be able to bring anything either closer or far in accordance with his wish. Sufed, another demon, gives him a cap that will render him invisible whenever he puts it on his head. Three friends, a maiden and a magical sword become allies to the hero in 'Prince Lionheart and His Three Friends'. The above-mentioned allies not only help him in achieving his targets but also bring him back to life when he is put to death by a Witch, the villain of the story. Though the Prince, the hero of the story, is popular to be a man having the heart of a lion yet even a brave man like him cannot fight singlehandedly and the very realization convinces him to keep the magical sword and three friends having magical powers with him in his heroic journey. The life of the Prince lies in the magical sword with him which keeps him vigilant but also alive. When the Witch steals the very sword and throws it in the burning fire, the Prince too, like the sword, burns to death. The blacksmith, one of the Prince's faithful friends, blows up the fire and fastens the hilt to the blade and thus the Prince's head grows to his shoulders. The knife grinder, the second friend, makes the sword stainless and thus the burns and scars on the body of the Prince disappear. His third friend, the carpenter, makes a magical flying palanquin and brings the hero's beloved in it for him. The maiden helps the hero in killing the giant, the main rival of the hero, by searching for the object carrying the life of the giant. The allies, in the tale 'Bopuluchi', appear in the shape of birds and animals to warn the heroine of the dangers. Various birds, a peacock and a jackal halter her way to advise her not to accompany the man who is deceiving the poor orphan girl in the guise of her uncle. Two men, in 'Anansi the Blind Fisherman ', come daily to give a helping hand to the blind fisherman, the hero of the story, in catching the fish. They guide him in spreading the net and help him in pulling it out of the river when it gets some fish. Thunder helps the hero of 'Thunder and Anansi' in the time of terrible famine by giving him a magical pot him telling that it will appease the hunger of his family with its unending cooked food. A dwarf, with his magical powers, helps a farmer worried over his dry fields by bringing rain. The magician, in 'The Laughing Hippopotamus ', helps a grief-stricken mother worried about the safety of her child. He, with the help of his magical powers, makes the child stronger than more than ten elephants together whom neither a man nor a beast can harm. Though a magician is considered to be a powerful being yet he too needs a helper in the story 'The Glass Dog' wherein a glass-blower makes a glass dog for him to keep the trouble-makers away from the magician's home. A Beetle, with his magical powers, helps a poverty-stricken couple in the tale 'The Wonderful Pump'. He offers them the wonderful pump which throws out gold coins and makes the couple wealthier in no time. The Shower Fairies come to help the Prince in the tale 'The Magic Wall' when the prince and his army face the heavy sand storm. The Fairies shower rain to mitigate the sufferings of the heroes and his army who have their eyes, hair and nostrils full of sand.

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