

## Fairy Tale - A Long Ago Tale of Woe

Once upon a time in a kingdom not so far away there lived an evil old woman named Kyra. She was a sly and controlling woman who loved to prey upon unsuspecting peasants of the kingdom. In a little village not far from the kingdom there lived a dear man and his wife (Tatar & Tirana). They were not very well off but they were a happy couple because they had learned the joy of giving what little they did have to those who were less fortunate. Tirana soon bore a baby girl. This girl was so sweet and beautiful that they called her Angel. Angel was their pride and joy. Not long after Angel they had another girl and then a boy. With 3 children to feed things became a little tough so they decided to move to the town where they were originally from. So they packed up their meager belongings and headed to the kingdom. That was a fateful move for the evil woman Kyra spied them and began immediately scheming a plan for their ruin. She began by being a helpful neighbor – bringing homemade goods, offering to baby-sit, and helping with the everyday chores. Tirana soon became very fond of Kyra and felt as though she were the answer to all her prayers. What more could a new mother ask for? But in time Kyra convinced that Tatar was sneaking behind her back and cheating on her. She would send out spies who would pretend to spy on him and then come back and fill Tirana's mind with lies. Tirana still loved Tatar though and was not certain he was really guilty. But the day came when Kyra told Tirana that she must leave Tatar because he was not good for her or her children. When Tirana protested, Kyra told her that the king had ordered it, and she must obey or be punished. Kyra promised Tirana that she would always be there to help her and that she would find someone who would be better for her in the long run. So Tirana told Tatar to leave and never come back. Tatar didn't understand what was going on and by the time he realized that it was the old woman who was causing all the trouble, it was too late for Kyra had already spun her web of lies around Tirana and she was helpless to resist her. Tatar fought for his wife and children but to no avail. He finally left the kingdom destitute and without Tirana and the children.

It was not very long before Tirana found another husband and together they had identical triplet sons. Kyra wanted full control of these boys so she began again to spin her web of deceit and convinced Tirana to leave her 2<sup>nd</sup> husband. Tirana listened to Kyra and soon she was without a husband again but this time with 6 children. Kyra offered to baby-sit for Tirana for a fee while she went to work so she could feed her children. Little did Tirana know that the price was more than she would be able to pay. And Kyra never let her forget it. Kyra moved in with Tirana and her children and from then on she had full control of the household. The home was run like a Prison camp. The oldest daughter, Angel, was the spy and 2<sup>nd</sup> in command when Kyra was not around. The oldest son was stubborn and tough. Kyra decided to have him be and locked him in a big room with lots of reading material to keep him occupied. The triplets were her pride & joy as well as a good conversation piece. She loved to parade them around the kingdom and brag about them to all who would listen. Though they were somewhat of a novelty, they were also a thorn to many because they became so arrogant and rude. The 2<sup>nd</sup> daughter, shall we call her Jaypha, soon became the object of Kyra's cruel nature. No one dared defy or even question the authority of Kyra; no one except the triplets. Everyone else including Tirana did as she demanded without questioning.

In time Tirana married a 3<sup>rd</sup> time and had another baby girl. She was the most perfect baby girl in the world but something happened to her. When she was only 6 months old she got sick and her fever became very high. Kyra and Tirana would not call the doctor to come and give her medicine because Kyra told Tirana that the king wanted them to trust him and she would be okay. So they did and let the beautiful little girl suffer with a very high fever for over a week. The little baby girl was in so much pain that she would have seizures from the pain. Her eyes would roll back in her head and she would start to swallow her tongue. Finally she passed out into a coma. Tirana was afraid that she was dead so she rushed her to the doctor. She was not dead but she would never be the same because they allowed her to have a fever for too long and it fried her brain. Kyra told everyone that this happened

because of Tirana because she did not completely trust the king. Many people of the town talked, so after that Tirana moved her family to another town far away.

Thus the years went by with the evil Kyra ruling her little kingdom. Some days were better than others but for the most part life was pretty rough for Jaypha. Kyra had Jaypha under her thumb so tight that she had to report to Kyra for everything. She was not allowed to go to the bathroom, eat, sleep or even get out of bed in the morning without Kyra's permission. Not only was Kyra impossible to please, but she delighted in playing mind games with Jaypha. She would hide something and tell Jaypha that it was missing and that she had an allotted time to find it. Jaypha would be beaten and deprived of food and drink for the day if she did not find it. Or Kyra would tell Jaypha that she could go to school only if she accomplished a long list of chores to be done before school. This was nearly impossible so many days Jaypha would miss school. Kyra wanted to keep her thumb on Jaypha all the time and was afraid that she would tell people what was happening at home. So Kyra took Jaypha out of school completely when she was only 10 and told her that she was too stupid to learn anyway and that public school was evil. She never let Jaypha go back to school again. Kyra decided that anything Jaypha needed to know was in the Bible. So Kyra would make Jaypha stand for hours at the foot of her bed and read the Bible out loud to her while she was napping. Jaypha had to read it just right for if she read it too loud or too soft or did not enunciate well enough she would get whacked on the bare feet with the wire handle of a flyswatter. Jaypha was not allowed to read all of the Bible because books such as Song of Solomon were too explicit for young ears to hear and eye to see, so Kyra chose passages that suited her needs best such as "Beat them with a rod and they shall not die, for if you beat them you will save their souls from hell" or "Children obey your parents". These and many more Jaypha would have to read for up to 4 hours at a time while standing. Sometimes she would have to stand outside Kyra's bedroom door and read the Bible while Kyra was watching her daily soap operas.

Over the years Kyra would experiment with different forms of torture for Jaypha. She would lock her in the smelly bedroom and make her dip the dung from the toilet every day because the toilet was broken and she didn't feel like fixing it. Or Kyra would make Jaypha stand for hours in the corner and sometimes all night just because she felt like it. Sometime Kyra would blindfold Jaypha and put a gag in her mouth and tie her hands behind her back while she was in the corner so she couldn't talk to or see anyone or sneak to go to the bathroom without permission. Kyra beat Jaypha with everything from belt buckles and boards to tree switches and wire flyswatters. Kyra didn't care where she hit and often would beat Jaypha 100 strokes at a time. It was nothing to get several beatings a day. Kyra spied on Jaypha constantly trying to catch her doing something that she could beat her for and Kyra would accuse Jaypha of doing things that she didn't do and make Jaypha say that she did so Kyra could beat her for them or punish her somehow. Kyra always punished in more ways than one for each crime and she never forgave even after she had punished. Jaypha never got to play with or even associate with her other brothers or sisters. She was too dirty and ugly to be around them. Her dirtiness might rub off on them. So Jaypha had to watch from afar while they played games together. She was given only rice every day for breakfast and beans for supper every day her whole life while the others ate steak and chicken and ice cream. Kyra would pretend like she was going to give her food and then she would think up something the Jaypha had done to deserve punishment and deprive her of food and drink. Jaypha was only allowed to go to the bathroom twice a day and would be beaten if she peed her pants. She only got to bathe once every three or four months and even then she had to bathe with the door open for all to jeer so the Kyra could keep an eye on her. She had to wash her clothes out by hand because her clothes were too dirty to be put in the washer with the family's clothes.

Jaypha always took what ever came her way without arguing or protesting because she knew better than to defy Kyra. Besides Kyra always told her that the King was ordering her to do these things to her because she was a bad, ugly, stupid little girl and she needed to be broken of these traits or she would someday be locked away in the dark dungeon of fire forever. So Kyra got away with doing

whatever she pleased. Kyra was not the only who abused Jaypha. Her triplet brothers were cruel and heartless to her daily. They did everything they could think of to aggravate Jaypha. She could never stand up for herself because no one ever believed her. Jaypha's mother, Tirana was hardly ever around and when she was, she also did whatever Kyra told her to do. She always believed the worst about Jaypha and never once asked to hear her side of the story.

Every day Jaypha would wait for her instructions and carry them out as best as he could all the while in constant fear that she would not be able to complete it in time or that she couldn't do it good enough or the Kyra was spying on her somewhere waiting to catch her doing something that she could beat her for. Jaypha lived in constant fear of certain and daily torture. To help her survive she would often retreat into her own little imaginary world where flowers were lollipops, the sun was pineapple juice, the clouds were cool whip and when it snowed it tasted like ice cream. She was the only one in her world so that no one could hurt her or make her beautiful world go away. Days, months and even years went by with no one to rescue her or even let her know that someday things would be better. Several times she tried to run away but had nowhere to go because she had no friends and was afraid no one would believe her. So she just survived. Every year on her birthday she would hope that Kyra would decide to be nice to her and let her play or enjoy something special. But alas, sometimes birthdays were the worst days of all. It was as if Kyra knew that Jaypha wanted to feel special and would purposely make things worse for her. Jaypha would often be very hurt and confused by the end of the day and even though she would have known that it would always be that way she hoped and got hurt in the end. Many times no one would even say Happy Birthday to her.

One day around Christmas time when Jaypha was 18 the whole family took a long trip. For Jaypha, trips were always miserable because she would either have to ride on the floorboard under Kyra's legs, or stand on her knees behind Kyra's seat for the duration of the trip. This was a painful 12 hour trip. They were all going to see Kyra's long lost son whom she hadn't seen in years. Tirana and Kyra were mad at each other because Tirana had found another husband to marry and Kyra was losing control over her. So they fought the whole trip there. Since Kyra was mad at Tirana anyway, she decided to do something that she had been forbidden to do for years – let her children meet their father. Kyra only did it out of spite but it turned out good for them because Jaypha's father was overjoyed to see her and wanted to spend some time with her and get to know her so he took her to live at his house for a couple of weeks. That was the first freedom Jaypha had ever experienced in her life and she was wide eyed with wonder at the amazing things she was allowed to see and do. Two weeks were over way too soon and Jaypha was on her way back home to the dreaded life she had lived before. Her Dad and Stepmom begged her to stay with them and make their home her own but she was afraid of Kyra and did not believe that they really cared about her so she went back to the security of the only life she had ever known. Things were better by then because her mother had remarried for the fourth time and she offered to let Jaypha live with her and her new husband away from Kyra but Kyra told her that the king would one day find her mom and punish her dreadfully by putting her in a dark dungeon of fire eternally for her adultery and that whoever was living in the house with her would suffer the same torture for supporting her sin. Jaypha was scared of the king and his horrible laws so she went back to live with Kyra without her mother. Life was miserable though and because Jaypha had learned that there was a better life out there she was no longer content to live with Kyra, so she packed and left for a country far away when she could be free from everyone – mom, dad, brothers, sisters and especially Kyra. Kyra tried to place an evil curse on her for leaving but Jaypha figured whatever she said even if it happened could not be worse than what she was living in so she went away. Kyra hated her all the more after that and only spoke evil and wished evil of her from that day on.

Jaypha went on to try to pretend to be normal in a world that was so different that she had ever known that she hardly knew how to survive. Several kind people took her under their wing though and even though she never really trusted people, she appreciated what they did for her and was always kind and

grateful to them. She spent several years trying to sort stuff out and figured out what happened to her and why. She never could quite understand things and always felt ugly, unwanted, stupid and like she never fit in no matter how many friends she had or how many people encouraged her she never believed them and she never believed in herself. She spent many years trying to make up for all the things she had lost such as childhood, education, love, acceptance, self confidence and worth, but no matter what she achieved it was never good enough to make her feel that she was anything but a loser.

Many years have passed since that once upon a time long ago. Many lessons have been learned, many tears, joys, accomplishments, poor choices, new beginnings and the list could go on. Jaypha leads a pretty normal life on the outside, but on the inside is a war that rumbles over so slightly on the other side of the brick wall that separates that life from this. Questions unanswered are the torture of her days. Feelings unresolved are the nightmares of her dreams. She has a husband and two beautiful children who deserve everything that she always dreamed of but never got. Will she find the strength and determination needed to be healed of the past and move on to make their dreams come true? Or will she bury it even deeper because she can't face the pain and fear of the unknown and drag her family with her through the mire of a hell that should never have been lived? That is a question that will only be answered with time because that part has not yet been lived. Some people may wish me to end by saying "And they lived happily ever after" but I am glad that I cannot say that because trials bring strength of character, wisdom and the ability to empathize with the hurting world we live in. So even though Jaypha deserved much more than she got in life she has since realized that a perfect world is no more desirable than hell on earth because life lived without challenge would give us nothing to look forward to in Heaven.

THE END