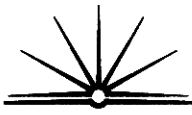




Yolen helps the reader to accept that "happily ever after" is possible in her novel "Briar Rose" through her unique prose fiction techniques. She uses the allegorical fairy tale genre of 'Sleeping Beauty' as a metaphor for her horrific past during the Holocaust, multiple <sup>narrative</sup> voices, setting and language to convey this message to readers.

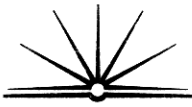
Yolen effectively presents that "happily ever after" is possible through the parallel story of 'Sleeping Beauty' and Becca's quest. These dual chapters run simultaneously against each other, gradually revealing the truth of Gemma's past. The italicised chapters occupy a different time frame as they glimpse into Becca's childhood. Gemma uses <sup>the universal fairy tale</sup> ~~the fairy tale~~ language of "once upon a time" and



"they lived happily ever after" to remind that happy endings can be achieved.

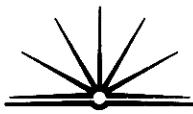
The archetypal characters of a princess, bad fairy and happy ending also portray this. It is also evident of the symbolic archetype of Becca as a journeyman / quester, Josef as the Prince and Gemma as a survivor. This further radiates that happy endings do occur as Gemma, similar to the symbol of the rose endures on and survives. "happily ever after means just that. And with one child in her arms, the others at her heels, she went directly upstairs", her dialogue emphasises her <sup>positive</sup> ~~nature~~ nature and the audience comes to accept that "happily ever after" is achievable.

Tolen uses the horrors of the Holocaust and Gemma's past experiences as a



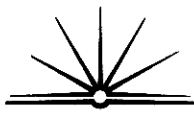
backdrop for Gemma's endurance and survival. Josef is a prime voice of this horror as he recounts the events.

He starts with first person yet switches to third person omniscient to authenticate his status as a narrator. "Faggot... Filth... Buttsticker... Later he found out this was the usual greeting given to prisoners by the cultured citizens... wars do not make heroes of everyone". This understatement highlights the harsh attitude towards prisoners. "... better to go down fighting ... than be thrown away like an old rag into a vast, unmarked grave", this simile represents Aron's endurance and dignity during times of bleak. This endurance, particularly of the partisans is shown throughout the novel as they told stories to forget "the many ways of dying. Many of the stories they told were



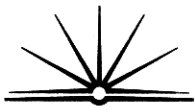
about experiences "never mentioning that each ended in death". Tolen uses contrast to highlight such horror, "sun, birds singing," "seemed like Eden", "as if the world were as sweet and pure as the first morning in God's paradise" the visual imagery and simile represent such beauty yet Tolen uses this ironic beauty to shock not only the Partisans ~~readers~~ but also the readers.

"a naked woman tumbled onto the ground ... the corpses had been mangled for the ~~gold~~ <sup>gold</sup> in their teeth". Word choice of "screaming", "hellish pit" and "stench" further convey the brutality of the Holocaust. This bleak imagery, however seems to strengthen the positive aspects of human spirit. "It is our sacred duty to fight... to avenge what they have done to our Germany" with the word choice of "our" highlights the strong



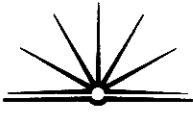
will of the Partisans. They will not surrender and will fight all the way. "We save one, they kill one thousand... still - one is enough", the juxtaposition of "one" and "one thousand" serves to show human diligence and the hope of the Partisans. Although they all die within a chapter, Josef lives and aids Gemma to a safe escape, "I will never forget the Prince who kissed me awake" her parting dialogue to Josef is authentic and ~~gent~~<sup>genuine</sup> as ironically Josef is indeed a real prince. The irony is further complicated by the fact that Josef is a homosexual, Yolen uses this to remind to viewers that happy endings are in fairytales but nonetheless achievable.

As Ralph Harper states in the beginning of the novel "everyone likes a fairytale because



everyone ~~likes~~ wants things to come right in the end", this is particularly palpable through Becca as she embarks on an emotional and physical quest. She is criticised many times, "don't count on happy endings... this is the real world" Stan's words seem to echo the reality.

Becca's first meet is Harvey Goldman, "The Nazi's were the curse... for you they are dead... not for me... Kulmhof! he said 'My God'... it was simply a place of... extermination. no woman escaped from Kulmhof alive", the metaphor of the Nazi's not being dead emphasise the horrific events of the Holocaust that has imprinted him for life. The word choice and literal meaning of "extermination" convey the bleak message of a not-too-happy ending. However, Becca is determined and she is confronted by Fr Stasha, "I cannot



forgive them...but I can love them". Fr. Stashu acts as a conscience for the <sup>citizens</sup> of Chelmno who have not been able to erase the past. The setting of Chelmno in its present state convey the continued nightmare, "as if the air became the same colour as the buildings," "dun village", "greyness of the day", "rotted buildings", "some looked rotted through" these visual imagery convey of the burden of the Holocaust. Also, the ~~te~~ fact that Magda and Becca arrive in a drawn horse and carriage cart emphasises that this is a town lost in the past. "Sometimes in the confessional will they cry to me... sometimes in their deathbeds... fear of dying... confront the dead souls of the murdered Jews..." his tone is ~~etree~~ <sup>eiree</sup> and highlights the extent of the horror, ~~"I will etc"~~ "it is my mission to stay... cleanse their souls", Fr.



Stashu's dialogue represent the hopeful tone ~~of the~~ contrasted with the horrific setting.

It is through this journey that help the reader to accept that 'happily ever after' is possible' through the figure of Fr. Stashu.

Becca, in her quest to find out Gemma's past and her prince, ironically finds her own prince - <sup>Stan.</sup> ~~Stance~~

"lets start with Once upon a time.. we'll get to happily ever after eventually" Stan's dialogue represents the desire for a happy ending in the

novel and Becca realises that the

story of Gemma does end happily,

"~~It~~ it ends happily you know... <sup>although</sup> ~~even~~

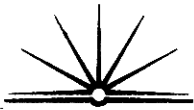
~~the~~ it's awfully sad along the way",

"Did she have a good life child?... I think

so. She had the one daughter and three granddaughters.. we all loved her very

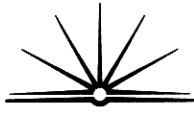
much" her dialogue to Josef is a





positive one, concluding that Gemma indeed lived "happily ever after". Yolen contrasts many things to heighten the aspect that happiness is achievable. Chelmno and ~~Berlin~~ Bzchow forest is contrasted with the promise of refuge in America. The Berlin house is contrasted with Poland and its memories and illusion is contrasted with reality. Yolen gradually reveals the horror of the Holocaust ~~to~~ then juxtaposes this against hope, human endurance and faith to balance the overall tone of the novel. To provide a clear message to readers that "happily ever after" is possible

Yolen's Briar Rose effectively convey the message to readers that "happy ever after" is achievable through her ~~use~~ use of prose-fiction techniques.



Tolstoy heightens the aspect of "dark" and "evil", especially the symbol of ~~the~~ the "angel of death" as the horrific spectre of Dr Mengele to ~~help~~ radiate the human spirit and survival of Gemma. This helps the reader to indeed accept that "happily ever after" is possible.