



Sebastian

Sam Evans
Retold Fairy Tales

Beep. Beep.

Sebastian paused. He took a long slow breath and kept sweeping the kitchen floor. It was already 2 o'clock and he knew that he still had to fold the laundry, cook dinner and decipher the cryptic science homework he'd been given. The beeping from the cupboard could wait.

Sebastian was beautiful and captivated everyone he knew with his kind eyes. Well, almost everyone. He was tall for his age. 5 foot 8 inches in the eleventh grade. He had to hunch over the stubby broom handle to get the right leverage. His brothers and Aunty were much shorter than him, so the house always felt a little too small for Sebastian. When his own mother and father died in an accident, he was sent to live with his Aunty. Sebastian often remembered his mother fondly. She spoke softly and read to him every night as a child. He could hardly believe that his Aunty was the sister of his mother. Sebastian often daydreamed about a better or different life. Sometimes he simply imagined that his Aunty was once a small troll like creature that his grandparents found under a bridge and took pity on.

Sebastian presumed that other kids his age were daydreaming about Nintendo switches and Virtual Reality headsets. He dreamt of the day he'd be given an electric Hoover and steam mop. He also dreamt of being swept off his feet by Prince Charming. Or Princess Charming. Really, anyone who didn't make him scrub the house every single day would be fantastic. Sebastian once tried training a squirrel to help pick up the leftovers from dinner, but that was a catastrophic failure. According to his dear ol' Aunty, having squirrels inside the house

was “barbaric, unhygienic and tedious!” She always said tedious when she had no clue which word to use.

Beep. Beep.

“Ugh” Sebastian moaned to himself. He put the broom aside and bent down with the dustpan and smaller brush to scoop up the rest of his daily misery off the floor. As he knelt down he winced, remembering the consequence of the last time he was ‘tedious.’ “No. it’s not worth it.” He said to himself. “If I take it back it won’t be worth it. It’s probably just Tom anyway, sending stupid selfies.” All of Sebastian’s friends would be eating chips in the park, playing football or sneaking into pubs. Tom would send selfies to try and cheer Sebastian up. At least, that’s what Tom would say. Sebastian knew better. He knew he was trying to convince him to sneak out of the house like last time. It was certainly a fun night. Tom, Sebastian, Eliza and Ali all managed to get into the pub just down the road from Tom’s house. It turned out that Ali’s older sister’s girlfriend was the owner’s cousin. Or something like that. At any rate, Ali’s sister’s girlfriend snuck them in through the back and sat them in a corner booth. She sat with Ali’s sister across the room, but they both snuck everyone drinks all night. First it was cider. Then ale. Then vodka somethings and sour somethings. Sebastian’s favourite was the this dark ale. It came in a gigantic glass and smelt vaguely of his Grandfather’s house from when he was a child. It tasted awful, but it felt oddly warm and familiar. All he needed was chewy toffee candy and a pack of worn out playing cards, then that pub would have felt like a step back in time. Sebastian imagined that no one would ever notice he’d left. Then he could live in that place. Nevermind his Prince or Princess Charming, he could just hang out with his friends, drink ale and eat chips. He could even study since over at the small corner table. There was only one chair and a little outlet where he could plug in a phone or a computer. He was slowly working it all out. All the while giggling.

That was until his Aunty somehow found him. She screamed like banshee on a hunt when she saw him. Sebastian’s Aunty dragged him from the premises. The whole time his Aunty was screaming about her sheets and towels. (Apparently he’d forgotten the fabric softener). He knew she’d grabbed him quickly and rushed off, but it felt like slow motion, leaving all his friends behind. He could feel the tears forming in his eyes, as he panicked about not being able to see them again. He didn’t even care about the beating that was yet to come. He didn’t even notice he’d somehow left a shoe behind until the next day. And Aunty, well, of course, she wasn’t even mad about the under age drinking.

Beep. Beep.

That was it. Sebastian knew he'd got himself stuck daydreaming. He wouldn't get anything else done today as long as he could hear that phone. "Dirty old bat." He mumbled to himself and he walked purposefully towards the linen cupboard. "Shouldn't have given me a phone if she wanted me to stay locked up in here every night." Sebastian slid the locks aside and spun the little numbers on the padlock.

Clunk! It fell to the floor, just missing his bare toes. Sebastian's pet rabbit went scurrying out of his room. "Sorry Poppy" he mumbled to the creature as it ran back out into the garden, where it usually lived. Sebastian waited. Hoping that no one else in the house heard the thud. Just as he was about to open the cupboard and snatch back his phone, he heard footsteps.

"What was that!?" Yelled a deep voice.

"I bet it was the idiot!" Screeched a response.

"Ooo! He's so busted" Replied the first voice.

Sebastian heard the all too familiar thundering of his brothers' footsteps down the stairs.

"Ready or not baby bro..."

"Here we come!" Echoed the other ogre-esk brother.

“It’s *step* brother!” Sebastian yelled back. He could hear them laughing and, with barely a moment’s pause, knew he’d be spending the rest of the day and night either locked in his room hiding from them, or locked in the linen cupboard because of them. Sebastian quickly bolted to his room at the back of the house. It was tiny and cold, but in the summer the warmth of the sunlight through the window kept him cheerful in the summer. There was still a few hours left of sunlight. And he had the phone now! Sebastian scurried to his room and slammed the door shut. With practised ease, he shuffled the old bookshelf in front of his door, bolted the window and collapsed on his bed.

He closed his eyes and imagined that pub again. The old pumkin? The pumpkin’s head? He couldn’t remember what it was called, but it didn’t matter.

“Open up the door!” He heard his step brother yelling.

Sebastian gave the bookshelf another shove and slumped himself against it, just to be sure. He unlocked the phone and checked the source of all that beeping. It was Tom.

I dont care wha u say. Comin ova.

“Shit” Sebastian mumbled to himself. Well, it’s not like anyone will answer the door, even if he did knock.

Thump. Thump.

Sebastian didn’t look up from the phone. He closed his eyes and imagined the colour of the pub seats and the small rips in the corners. He licked his lips and pretended he was drinking that green, sour drink. (It was actually a lot better than the ale). He thought about how much he laughed with his friends.

Thump. Thump.

Sebastian’s not-brothers were thumping on the window this time.

“Seb!” called a voice. “Seb, open the window!”

Sebastian looked up. It wasn’t his evil, ugly step-brothers. It was Tom. His curly, ginger hair somehow seemed golden in the sunlight outside. He was grinning from ear to ear and clearly balancing precariously on something. “I’ve come to rescue you!” Tom was almost singing as he yelled. He was waving something in one hand and was actually, wearing glittery fairy wings. Sebastian rushed over and unbolted the window. He

managed to catch Tom and pull him through the window before he fell of the flimsy deck chair he'd been balancing on.

"Ta da! I am your Fairy and I'm here to save the day!" With that Tom handed Sebastian his shoe. Sebastian must have looked confused. "You left this behind at the pub last week." Tom replied.

"Thanks Tom" Sebastian said as he took the shoe. Tom was busily picking pieces of foliage from his jumper.

"You're not exactly Prince Charming." Sebastian said as he shook his head.

"And you're no Damsel in Distress Sebastian, but you need help."

"It's not so bad." Sebastian said as he scooped his pet rabbit out from under the bed and began patting her.

Tom looked around the room. "Bring Poppy. We'll tell my mum it was injured and we found it on the way."

"On the way to where?" Sebastian asked.

"On the way home." Tom said as he stood up from the floor. "You're living with me and my Mum now. Grab what you can. I'll carry your clothes, you carry the bunny. We can work the rest out later."

And with that, Sebastian, Tom and Tom's mother lived together happily. For a while. Sebastian's step Mum didn't come looking for him this time and Tom certainly wasn't a Prince Charming, although he did make a pretty good Fairy Godmother after all.

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