

**A Retold Fairy-Tale:**  
**Heroization of Invisibly Disabled Heroines in Dr. Kris Lindbeck's**

*The Faerie Mule*

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## Preface

*The Faerie Mule* is a 2017 English novelle, written by Kris Lindbeck. The author of the book beautifully explores how tough it is for the ‘disabled,’ with no visible impairment, to find their own place in today’s world. It is a simple and powerful take on what is no longer funny. Debutant author Kris Lindbeck’s fairy-tale captures more attention among the present disability literature due to its simplicity and it does not paint its dislikeable heroines as a victim but as survivor and it feels incredibly delightful.

The stories of these kind demonstrate the importance of this type of tales in the present society and to show how disability theory is used in it, the thesis *A Retold Fairy-Tale: Heroization of Invisibly Disabled Heroines in Dr. Kris Lindbeck’s The Faerie Mule* has been divided into four chapters.

The introductory chapter gives insights about the book, the author, the disabilities and the theory. The second chapter titled *Analysing RA as an Invisible Disability in The Faerie Mule* gives an elaboration on the application of medical paradigm of disability theory in the story.

The third chapter titled *Analysing Infertility as an Invisible Disability in The Faerie Mule* attempts to figure out how barrenness has been recognized as a disability through the lens of social paradigm of the disability theory and how it is represented in the plot. The concluding chapter recapitulates the study done and takes an effort to show how these invisible disabilities changes the world of sufferers, how it makes them stand apart but not away from the society and the courage they take every day to just survive and fit in.

# Chapter One

## Introduction

“Every person with a disability is an individual. See the person, not the disability.”

Disability studies is an academic discipline that studies the meaning, nature and aftermath of incapacities in general. It emerged in the West in the late twentieth century as an outcome of the success of the disability rights movement, the influential works of few great men like Erving Goffman and Michel Foucault and the growth of other interdisciplinary identity-based approaches that unveiled compelling new aspects of the humanities while calling attention to their rights.

Recalling it's beginning in the 1960s, several disabled activists in the US and the UK commenced to argue that they were a category denied of their basic rights. They centred their primary focus on the civil rights movement. With protests, marches and demonstrations, activists with different kinds and types of impairments revolted against the traditional misconceptions set against them as despicable individuals suffering from tragic medical conditions. Against the previous method of each impairment fighting alone, all kinds joined together as a unifying force in order to combat the discriminations faced by them.

New-fangled organizations reported protests and several groups offered them hands. The visit of the civil rights icon Julian Bond in 1997 rocketed the reach of the protest. The activists made them collectively visible to the public, unleashing what had been hidden for such a long time. The figurehead Ed Roberts called disabled as “one of the largest minority groups in the nation,” highlighting their new feeling of a shared identity. This not only contributed to consecutive legislative victories that vetoed discrimination and ameliorated

access and involvement but also gave such people pride and a sense of belonging. Through a collective voice and diverting from medicalization of individual bodies to the institution of society, such activism led to the emergence of disability studies.

Numerous influential scholars working inside the 1960s and 1970s furnished intellectual basis for the sphere, although they did not write totally approximately disability or provide a vision of liberation for disabled human beings. In his classic study, *Stigma* (1963), the sociologist Erving Goffman examined social interactions around people, which include those with “abominations of the body,” who differed from the expected norm. In debating and passing other strategies utilized by stigmatized human beings to win acceptance, he implicitly talked about how the significance of disability is socially formed and can vary by means of time and vicinity. He also demonstrated how without problems stigmatized people can internalize in preference to oppose dominant standards via which they're deemed inferior.

The philosopher and critic Michel Foucault additionally wrote about our bodies that distinguished from the norm in his seminal works like *The History of Sexuality* (1976). He defined how, beginning in the nineteenth century, our bodies seen as issues were cloistered, managed, diagnosed, and in any other case socially managed. Foucault's insights about insanity, passive bodies, and the clinical gaze also proved effective for the later disability researchers. For his component, in *Freaks* (1978) literary critic Leslie Fiedler explored the long records of human beings' fascination with non-prescriptive bodies and their show for profit. Collectively with disability activism, such literary efforts organized the way studies in the field of disability.

A very last issue that shaped the emergence of the sphere turned into the rise of other identity-based, rights-prompted methods, specifically crucial race, feminist, and queer theory,

which generated sizeable innovative insights in the humanities. Those endeavours gave disability research scholars' models and parallels to practice and facilitated the field to mature rapidly. They occasionally enforced to disability feminist debates about essentialism versus social constructivism, postcolonial and critical race scholars' evaluation of hybrid identities, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's belief of how a dominant organization often relies on a subordinated institution for its status, Donna Haraway's idea of the cyborg, extending the sector's insights, relevance, and legitimacy. In the meantime, a disability lens regularly gave back by serviceably reviewing or modifying formerly familiar principles.

Such intersectional methods aided disability studies to become a substantial, electrifying intellectual search with an activist orientation. It is certain that the field has had fractures, debates, and problems, but such controversies frequently enhance its richness. The disability studies have given disabled human beings an effective voice inside the institution that they formerly did not have and heightened our knowledge not only of the field of humanities but also of social justice. People's attitudes toward disability are influenced by the way they think about it. Despite the fact that everyone views disability differently; these views can be grouped into three general models of disability: moral, medical, and social. Every model speaks about the alleged causes of impairment, suitable remedies, and deeper implications.

According to the moral paradigm, a person's disability has implications for their character, actions, ideas, and karma. According to this viewpoint, a handicap can be associated with stigma, shame, and guilt, especially if it is thought of as a sign of wrongdoing. Disability can sometimes be viewed as a badge of fortitude, faith, or honour. For instance, a person who practises religion can think that they (Or a member of their family) were chosen to suffer a disability because of God's faith in them. Disability may sometimes be viewed as a triumphant memory of overcoming adversity in life (e.g., a polio epidemic, or stepping on a land mine).

The moral model is widely accepted and frequently portrayed in the media. For instance, some films portray wickedness by using a physical impairment.

According to the medical model, a disability is seen as a pathological impairment of a body system or function. According to this viewpoint, the objective is to bring the system or function as close to "normal" as is practical. The health care model of disability is frequently portrayed in films through a plot in which a disabled person is miserable and hopeless but learns to appreciate life through friendship with an able-bodied person. The belief that persons with disabilities teach people with physical abilities how to be better people is a reversal of this.

The social model views a person's disability as a component of their identity, much like their colour, ethnicity, gender, etc. According to this viewpoint, a person's impairment results from an environment that is inappropriate for them (both physical and social). Not the impairment, but this environment is what generates the limitations and hurdles. According to this viewpoint, the best method to treat disability is to modify society and the environment, rather than people with disabilities.

Barriers to environmental transformation and full inclusion include negative stereotypes, prejudice, and oppression. Multiple disabled characters who make friendships, learn from one another, and develop on their own, independent of an able-bodied character, are more common in works that portray disability in a social context. Other books depict disabled people in a more realistic way: as members of caring families who are not "burdened" by the condition; as members of a society that discriminates; as activists working to change the legislation. Shame as well as renewed faith might result from the moral model. Although it is

paternalistic, the medical paradigm has greatly advanced rehabilitation. Although systemic ableism can be daunting, the social model encourages community. Probably the majority of people hold beliefs in many models. However, as there is currently no way to tell for sure because there is no well specified model to elaborate about this.

Generally speaking, a physical or mental obstacle is typically described as having a disability. This life event could be a hiccup that can be dealt with or a mountain that brings about significant changes and loss. In either case, this phrase shouldn't be used to imply that someone is weaker or inferior to someone else. No matter what obstacles they may encounter, every person has a purpose, a special uniqueness, and value. A person is not automatically considered "disabled" just because they have a disability. Many people who deal with physical or mental difficulties continue to participate in their jobs, sports, or hobbies. Some people with disabilities can work full- or part-time, but they may struggle to find enough energy to complete their daily tasks and need support with care.

Often people think that a person is deemed to have a handicap if they struggle with daily tasks like walking, climbing stairs, lifting and carrying, talking, seeing, hearing, or performing other basic bodily processes. They may also struggle with social obligations like doing their homework for kids or working around the house or at a job for adults. Therefore, the presence or absence of assistive technology cannot be used to diagnose a disability.

The phrase "invisible disabilities" describes signs and symptoms such as crippling pain, exhaustion, light-headedness, weakness, cognitive dysfunctions, learning difficulties, and mental disorders, as well as hearing and vision problems. These can occasionally or always impede daily activities and range from moderate problems to those that are not always visible



to onlookers. It is a medical condition that is not noticeable to others. Individuals who have disabilities or invisible illnesses may appear to be in perfect health. They do not appear to be too ill to work. They don't appear too ill to play with their kids or participate in a carpool. They don't appear too ill to go shopping. They don't appear to need a three-hour snooze to get through the day. They don't appear to need to park in a handicapped space. But this does not mean that the illness does not exist and those people are 'abled'. Some disabilities can appear as unseen and the sufferers cannot be judged by their looks but how they are. Such unseen disabilities are rheumatoid arthritis, infertility, lupus, diabetes, dyslexia etc. The onlookers cannot recognize the bearers of such illnesses.

Rheumatoid arthritis, often known as RA, is an autoimmune and inflammatory condition in which your immune system unintentionally assaults healthy cells in your body, leading to inflammation or painful swelling in the areas of your body affected. RA primarily targets joints, typically a number of joints at once. Hands, wrists, and knee joints are frequently impacted by RA. Joint tissue is harmed in a RA-affected joint because of the inflammation of the joint lining. Long-lasting or persistent pain, unsteadiness (loss of balance), and deformity can all result from this tissue damage. In addition to these tissues, RA can harm other organs like the heart, lungs, and eyes as well as other tissues all over the body. It is found that the fact that rheumatoid arthritis (RA) is an unseen disease to be one of its most nefarious characteristics. This implies that even though you may have RA and that your body may constantly be at war with itself, others might not be able to tell from the way you look that you are fighting a struggle.

The definition of disability should also encompass infertility. Infertility is the failure to conceive despite one year of strategically timed, unprotected sex. It may be challenging to pinpoint the exact cause of infertility; however, it may be due to problems with ovulation in

women and low levels of a few hormones in both men and women. The inability to become pregnant is the main symptom. There are frequently no extra symptoms. It limits one's ability to participate in various aspects of life and may render one disabled. Like any other disability, infertility requires the pair to adapt and incorporate it into their sense of self, making it a serious life crisis. Medically speaking, infertility is typically thought to be caused by a physical defect or a genetic anomaly. Socially, couples are unable to fulfil their parenting or reproductive responsibilities.

Similar to the social paradigm of disability, infertility continues to be stigmatised and taboo in most countries. Due to social stigmatisation, infertile couples may face discrimination. Infertility can result in divorces and separations, which break apart families. It is challenging for people to receive government services and welfare benefits if infertility is not recognised as a handicap. Because of how complex infertility treatments are, they are incredibly expensive and perhaps not covered by insurance or government funding. Given all of this, it is essential to classify infertility as a disability.

Here, in this dissertation, we are going to analyse rheumatoid arthritis or RA and infertility as invisible disabilities through medical and social paradigms through a novella, "The Faerie Mule", by Kris Lindbeck which tells the tale of an ordinary girl who suffered rheumatoid arthritis at the age of twelve and how she turned her life into a fairy-tale and also of the barren mule which changes its life by undergoing challenges that seemed unconquerable and came out as the heroines of the story.

Dr. Kris Lindbeck is a Jewish Studies Associate Professor at Florida Atlantic University. When she was eighteen years old, she spent four months in Jerusalem, which sparked her interest in Jewish studies. She graduated with a master's degree in Talmud and

Rabbinic from Jewish Theological Seminary in 1989, and in 1999 she completed a doctoral programme in ancient Judaism, which covered the period from 500 BCE to 700 BCE and included a small examination on early Christian literature.

She worked as a visiting professor at Trinity University in San Antonio and Tulane University in New Orleans before arriving at FAU. She served as a Lady Davis Postdoctoral Fellow at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem from 1999 to 2000. She was on the Executive Board of the National Society for Scriptural Reasoning, an academic organisation dedicated to the study of scripture and dialogue between Muslims, Christians, and Jews from 1998 to 2003. Elijah Legends from the Rabbinic Era to the 20th Century are examined in her book *Elijah and the Rabbis: Story and Theology*, which was released in 2010 by Columbia University Press. For a book on the understanding of the Binding of Isaac in *Genesis Rabbah*, a Fourth Century Midrash, she has a contract with Gorgias Press.

Dr. Lindbeck is a professor of Classical Jewish Civilization, Jewish Wisdom, Jewish Literature through the Centuries, Women and Judaism, Readings in Biblical Hebrew, and a course on the history of the New Testament at Florida Atlantic University. She is a poet, educationalist and also an author. She has written two fairy-tales available on Amazon Kindle, “The Faerie Mule” and “The Heron Woman”. “The Heron Woman” is a simple fairy tale for adults and teenagers about establishing a connection to magic and imagination despite the difficulties and heartbreaks that affect us all. While some readers may laugh, others may cry.

“The Faerie Mule” is an endearing and inspiring tale about a young Faerie mule who is undesired by the lord who bred him and instead moves in with the local herbwoman and her apprentice, Sorah, is recounted in the manner and spirit of traditional fairy tales. After Sorah starts to experience the debilitating consequences of rheumatoid arthritis, the little girl finds

the mule, named Snowy, to be a loyal but headstrong companion. It is narrated by an unnamed third person, a baby-girl whose life was saved by Sorah's valour. This story's main theme is how people with disabilities or other perceived flaws are frequently overlooked or denigrated and it is autobiographical in nature as the author has been travelling through the dreaded valley of pain and suffering from her childhood.

From Sorah's crippling symptoms to the servant girl who moves in with them and others that Sorah meets, there is a profound understanding of the disregard and even contempt with which society can treat those it sees as different or lesser on display. Snowy, the Faerie pony, turns out to be a lowly mule instead of a noble horse. There aren't many stories about people like Sorah and her mule. Every hero and heroine who accomplishes heroic tasks or finds happiness in life is attractive and courageous. But through their courage and perseverance in contrast to misery and distress, Sorah and her dearest mule, Snowy, demonstrates how any next-door person can become the hero of a story worth telling.

## Chapter Two

### **Analysing RA as an Invisible Disability in “The Faerie Mule”**

“Your pain is unseen, not you; if you can learn to endure pain, you can survive anything”.

Every fairy tale that has been written, said and read about is the tale of extraordinary, healthy, magnificent and likeable heroines involving fairylike occurrences, imaginary creatures, good and bad characters and how she overcomes everything that comes across. It is about how the abled princess faces challenges, gets tortured by wicked people and is helped by either an unreal human or her superhero prince. Though she is adamant, wise in making decisions and astonishing, she feels miserable to accomplish it without a princess who comes by riding a horse, crossing seven seas, being the heroine’s superhero and helping her do complete every dream of her. She has the most attractive features, right measurements and the confidence to do anything. No matter how many times she fails, she will get up despite all difficulties.

The hero is none less than the most flamboyant prince we can ever find in the entire universe. He’s powerful, daring, dashing and the most abled man who also has the selfless mindset to help someone in their dreamy endeavours. He also represents the ‘Healthy’ category of the world. It is not only about him but also all the good characters who are involved in the saga are abled and spirited unlike the bad characters.

Every corrupt character in the plot is either ugly or disabled. They are those people who are judged and cornered by the society by the way they look and behave. Diffidence overpowers their humanity and makes them inhumane. They find no genuine support or

even at the weakest moments which drives them insane and pulls them back while they try to face the world. They are made to believe that they need a mask to stand in front of the world and exhibit extraordinary features like those princesses. They are abandoned in private and public. They are bound to live inside undiscovered towers, corners and unlikely places of the world. They're either mischievous or intolerable. Good things stand away from their way even if they wish so just because of the prejudice of the people around them. Is being extraordinary the eligibility to have a fairy-tale? Won't these disabled women have stories of their own? If so, what will they speak about and how will turn out to be. The answer to all these questions is a one word – Sorah, the protagonist of the fairy-tale, “The Faerie Mule” by Kris Lindbeck.

Sorah is an ordinary child born in the village of Rivermeade. She began to work as an apprentice of the village's herbwoman, Kassia, at the age of ten. She, being a child, maintained a mare and its child, a mule at her house. She went to temple to study scriptures from monks and thus create amulets with verses in order to strengthen her ability to run business as a herbwoman. She was so talented that she learnt approximately of every medicinal herb by the age of twelve. Never did she know that her destiny would turn her as one of those who needed those herbs every moment. It all started with a normal knee wrench. She thought it was okay and she could heal herself with power of her knowledge about medicine but it never helped it. As the autumn began, she became sicker and sicker without knowing the cause. She became more and more tired. From head to heels, pain kept coming along with stiffened joints. Her nights were filled with chilled fevers. Quilts became her overcoat coated by her sweat during every dawn. Coughing and sneezing grew worse and started to hurt. Pain became her regular partner. Either the medicine of herbwoman or the prayers of the monks worked, her condition became shoddier every day. Everyone around her expected her to get better but none knew the will not. She was too young to live like this but there was no choice. The count's

university- trained physician named it 'rheumatism'.

Children are a wonderful aspect of life and have much to teach us about how to live as adults. They think that anything is possible and that magic exists. For them, their parents are superheroes and representations. They can pursue their ambitions of being a rocket scientist, singer, baseball star, or even the president as they grow older. They speak and laugh really loudly in an effort to be heard. They experiment with new things and concentrate on playing with as many toys as they can. They can shout and cry as well as give large hugs and say kind things since they have strong emotions. There is a lot to discover and understand after only a few years on Earth.

Kids are prepared to go after reaching key important milestones like walking and talking. These tiny balls of light are overflowing with enthusiasm and amazement and just want to get involved with everything. They ask "why?" in an effort to comprehend. They will not care about their dirty jeans, the paint on the floor, or the food on their faces. They simply want to get moving and want to run quickly, climb up, jump over, and crawl under. All they wish is a future of being able. But when does the thrill fadeaway? What happens to the magic? Why do they lose faith? The single reason behind all these questions can be the unexpected development of an invisible disability which slows and cripples them for the rest of their lives. While living the magical world, they will not understand that they are going to be disabled. They do not realise that it will be incurable, permanent and will never be able to get back to the life they once rejoiced. It is an utter shock which can alter the future of the child suffering from it.

Unlike most of the invisible disabilities, the cause of rheumatoid arthritis is unknown. It can catch individuals at any age. The sufferers simply fall, develop bruises, sores and aches

over their body. It affects the whole body and not just the joints. It is also incurable because the cartilage that is once lost cannot be recovered but the progression of the disease can be controlled. It develops fatigue and chronic pain. Nights becomes nightmares due to lack of sleep and days will turn them into 'sleeping uglies'. It is just like the aches and exhaustion we get with the fever or how we feel after an intense workout. Inflammations will start to come out in specific places. It really becomes hard to hold a brush or even a pen. It is identical to having flares that make us feel like we have hit by a car. Yet the exhaustion and chronic pain is usually invisible. The pain the sufferers experience from a slight hit is three times that of a normal person. They believe that the fall or the hit was the cause but it is not. The real cause is scarier than a horror story which never ends. The affected ones do not even know what is happening and why it is happening to them until diagnosed by an expert medical practitioner and the more surprising thing is that it varies continuously which makes it difficult to be treated and helped with.

The hardest part after diagnosis is accepting the fact that you have it. Like every birthday girl, Sorah thought her birthday will change her life miraculously. Instead, it came with the life altering news which toppled down her future. The heart-breaking thing is that she was just twelve. At the age when children counted stars, she reckoned the aching parts of her own body. She was the most energetic girl of her village. She was able to handle things easily than the other girls but for once and all, the disease infected her charisma, energy and confidence. No or less confidence takes the steering of life and at times the only thing that silently kills those people is thought of why and how it happened to them. Having no visible injuries but consistent cramps is like living a terrifying. The creepiest thing is that the disease will not slaughter you at once but day by day. It is just like living a perfect life for a while and then it all turn into a never happening dream. That realization hits hard and sometimes what they ever wish is a day



to live like before but it is already done. This bitter truth befriends them till grave.

As winter days went by, she became unable to get out of bed or do the little things of her life. She could not even up from the bed or use the chamber pot. She sprawled, got tumbled in her night dress and collapsed, dampening herself, her apparels, bedding and flooring. After her ninth birthday, it was the first time such a thing happened. She tried to crawl to just move. It hurt her more and she couldn't control her weeps. It grew louder and louder. Her mother tried to comfort her but that did not ease her pains.

The chronic illness involves joint pain and swelling which causes reduced mobility and physical weakness. They quickly appear one day and disappear the other day. These symptoms can critically affect everyday life and overall wellbeing. Living with the chronic illness, rheumatoid arthritis is not always easy. One of the reasons is that it is often problematic to identify or predict the symptoms. They may get better or worse the following day. It is tough to recognize in advance. Having a bad day can be really difficult and make people believe that they fell inside an endless dark hole. This can be made worse by thoughts over future due to inability to predict the rapidity of disease in each person. They become extremely dependent as days pass by and gradually, the doable becomes undoable for them.

Cold climate plays a villain in the life of the sufferers. Here, Sorah's symptoms are becoming worse due to change of environment. For people like them, it is usual to have inflexible and tender joints in the morning making it hard to get up and start the day. Sleeping in the same posture for long hours can increase the agony and arduousness. Everyday activities like cooking, laundry, cleaning, bathing and leisure activities can pose challenge during the progression of the disease. The slightest things that were once easy-to-do has now become the

greatest challenges. It not only hurts externally but also internally. It affects both the physical and mental being. It lowers the self-esteem making it difficult even to stand up or walk down properly. The people who once were independent becomes dependent for even the trivial matters. The sufferers may even lose the will to live and thus generate suicidal thoughts inside them. They need genuine support and care. Though words are necessary, they will not do magic or ease pains. It aches everywhere and sometimes; they do not even know where the pain is because it is all over. The journey is solitary but people around can be those 'horegallus' who ease the trial by providing sincere sustenance.

“Imagine having all your joints slowly pulled apart. Now imagine that you're not imagining it”.

Chronic pain is one of the excruciating factors of this disability. Chronic pain lasts for three to six months or longer, but arthritic discomfort can last a lifetime. It could be ongoing or intermittent. Rheumatoid arthritis patients may have numerous persistently inflamed joints. Inflammation inside the body can cause fatigue, drowsiness, and generalised physical weakness. The term "fatigue" is also used to describe this acute exhaustion. The sense of being fatigued is distinct from regular tiredness. It is described as being overpowering and unmanageable by people. They experience exhaustion and a lack of vitality, and occasionally they even lose interest in everything. It could make you want to sleep more and make it difficult to focus or do anything. Their mood may also be affected by a lack of energy and inability to sustain an active lifestyle. Rheumatoid arthritis patients frequently experience anxiety, irritability, and depression. Others may not fully comprehend these emotions. If their favourite activities turn out to be too demanding, some people stop doing them.

Most people lose their control over their weight and rapidly lose it. Some may also

suffer hair loss. The inner and outer stature of the sufferer undergoes unwelcoming changes and this may completely destroy their self-assurance over their appearance thus, resulting in extreme hopelessness. Each moment these people survive exhibits their courage to live in spite of all the pains and judgements they undergo.

Sorah's parents could not find the right doctor to treat her. The failure of herbwoman to diagnose the disease led them to find support of the count's university-trained physician. They paid him well. His arrival only helped them to realize what the disease was. He did not have the right medicine or the ability to predict the scope of this disease on her body. It may make her crippled for a long time but the extent cannot be understood. Only a medical sorcerer had the slightest chance to cure it but he was at a very long distance. So, they had no access to him.

Getting the right medic is an important part of the invisible disability. One single word of a doctor can literally change the entire perspective of the sufferer about the disease and may act as a positive or negative catalyst in their lives. Like the various clinicians in the story, some doctors cannot diagnose what the disease is or what is the reason behind it. Some doctors can only diagnose but cannot suggest the right medicine to resolve the symptoms. These medical practitioners can only lead to disease progression but also increase the frustration deep inside the sufferers. The not knowing why of the cause of the disease can only worsen the course by pouring harsh words into the hearts of the affected ones which can push them into depression, anxiety attacks and even suicide.

Having finance to treat such disability is also important. The cost of treatment of such disabilities is high. It is that everyone cannot afford the expense. Think about those people, who suffer without knowing why and live with it, unable to treat themselves. Their life remains a

misery and mystery for them. Considering those people, Sorah is lucky to have such supportive parents who does not hesitate to help their child at her weakness. They were ready to try anything which will bring their daughter back to her health. It is essential to get the support and acceptance of family and it is true that the right support they receive can do wonders.

While winters scared her away, summers calmed her. Life and death meant similar for her. Waking up and sleeping in pain became the part of her journey. Her body did not respond to any of the prescribed medicines, the onlookers felt hopeless about her and somewhat concluded that her recovery will almost be impossible. She lost her pace to walk and started limping. She began to redirect herself into stories by telling, hearing and also creating them. Every human who was alive in the village helped her by narrating one or more stories. She believed it was the only remedy no to cure but to forget the pain. Snowy, on the other hand, stucked to her like a loyal dog or like a sister who supports one another in their difficult times. While her father made her feel better, her mother became her backbone.

Another greatest challenge that the sufferer faces is adapting with the disease and to overcome the trials that comes as a part of the ailment. Unlike the person suffering disability from birth, the person who suffers it after a while without their mistake, adapting to the disease is an utmost challenge. They will have to live a different life that departs from them what they have already lived. They are left to live in grief for the rest of their lives. It is not easy and it takes a lot to make it.

As said, nature plays a greater role in everyday life of the sufferers. The quality of performance by them daily is directly proportional to the climate of nature. Some days can go wrong while some can be good. Living in pain drains their energy to move on from second to

second and step to step. The terrifying moment of losing the ability to do little things that they did everyday puts them in darkest horizons of dilemma. Those little things need not be the herculean tasks. It can be activities such as getting out of bed, brushing, using washroom, walking, eating food, writing, studying etc. They just cannot do it suddenly and it seems impossible. Even if those things can be done, it is not just like before. Everything has changed. The way they walk, the words they talk and the things they do has taken a depressing change. They may have lost their will to live. Not even a single individual around them looks them with hope. Every eye is filled with sympathy to a creature who is dying daily. Nor the onlookers or the victim is made to believe that they still have a life to live and lead. Due to this downhearted air that encircles them, the victim's body may eject things that will inspire life just like how Sorah's body do and will feel death safer.

The disease has forced them to be a different human being. They are nothing like before. The hardest part is that only they can realize how they changed. Even if they tell another human, they may not be able to convince people about how they feel actually feel. People can be judgmental. They will not believe what they do not see and the sufferers cannot make them see it. Words become meaningless in these situations but it is the only thing that is left.

People in Sorah's story are really adorable. Though they do not know what is left for her or what could comfort her, they literally give their heart away to support her by narrating stories. Not just one but everyone in the village joins hands together in comforting a little girl in her crucial stage. They mend new stories for her, delivered it and listened to her. They made her feel fine for a while by making her forget the pain. This is another heart wrenching part of the illness. The pain will never wither away. As the disease goes up, it aches every part and every joint of the body. We cannot even recognize where it is. The only thing they can do is

just forget it, at least for a while and that would be kindest thing that can be done to them.

It is a myth that they need sympathy. They need care. Sympathy and care are two extremes for people like them. They need to be cared, to be supported and to be looked after not as a disabled human but someone equal. The people in Sorah's story are just that for her. They never despise of her ill fate but shares the grief and helps her to realize that she is not alone and they have got her. Her parents are also outstanding. They do not consider or make her feel that she is a burden. They provide every ample support to make her feel 'normal'. They give her new things, moral support and everything that they could do for her as before. They feel her pain and stands with her. Snowy is also distinguishable. From a hot-blooded animal, it transformed into the synonym of loyalty. The mule thus is never less than a human who possess humane qualities. She becomes her biggest support system and literally gives her whole as the story goes on. For every person who suffers invisible disability, they need people who consider them, support them and mostly, believe in them. These little acts of kindness and love that is done to and for them means and makes a lot.

Every story she heard was only about healthy and beautiful people of the world. Never did she hear a story that spoke about the sick or the disabled characters. And if it was heard, they would portray the sick and disabled as small, twisted, witches, ugly and bad in character. They may be wicked, half-fae, trouble makers and also possess the mind to destroy or disrupt the lives of healthy people. They are not from royalty or nobility. They are left undiscovered and will be slayed in the end.

This is the strongest notion put forward by each fairy-tale from the time they evolved. No room was there for the crippled, weak or disabled characters to narrate their chivalry. They

were always portrayed as someone with the weirdest character and the meanest mindset. They were never kind nor respectful. They had no space in the room for the good. This diction was injected into the heads of children from the time they could hear. As they grow, when they meet such people, they would not mind to shame or insult them. Such people are cat-called, bullied and degraded. They are met without mercy. People will not have concern for them. They are even seen as a burden or a curse. And if sympathy was ever given, it will be for the visibly disabled ones. The invisibly disabled ones are never on the ground. The saddest thing is that they too are humans, they have minds, hearts and feelings. They too have stories to reveal and realized. They too can be heroes and heroines of their own stories. They can be as gentle as the abled hero. Their incapability to do some activities do not belittle them. They too have really memorable tales to tell. But because of these written stories, it makes them difficult to open up. Hence, their stories remain untold and unheard.

The death of Sorah's mother completely dismantled her life. Her mother was her biggest support system. She was someone whom she could rely on anytime without inhibitions. Her mother does not even once embarrass her or yell at her condition. She understood her like anything and was always on her side. She always made sure that Sorah is feeling safe and easy. Until death, she gave the most selfless love and care for her disabled daughter. Her demise was blatant blow on Sorah. Sorah fell into grief which gradually turned into depression and increased her stress, anxiety, pain and fatigue. The stress that came along with the expiry of her mother worsened her disease. She was also bound to be more responsible and engage in household chores than before. Sometimes, she does not even have the energy to get up but she had to. The sudden stress, responsibilities, sorrows and pains that came in her life increased her exhaustion and made her weak every day. She found herself vulnerable but lacked people to tell how she felt and failed to convince people whom she already has. Her overruling anxiety increased the effect and rapidity of the disease on her. Her only solace was her herbwoman,

Kassia.

The loss of a loved one can overturn your entire world and have an impact on both your mind and body. When you're grieving, you can find yourself distracted with thoughts, memories, and pictures of your friend or loved one, struggle to accept the loss's certainty, and go through waves of pain and longing. Chronic stress, which is frequent during severe mourning, can cause a range of medical and psychological problems, including sadness, difficulty sleeping, feelings of resentment and rage, anxiety, appetite loss, and general aches and pains. Men may attempt to suppress their sadness, but it is crucial to pay attention to these signs since persistent stress can increase your risk of heart attack, stroke, and even death, especially in older people.

Grief might prevent you from receiving the rest your mind and body require. You can have problems such as falling asleep, frequent night-time awakenings, or even an excessive amount of sleep. Grief's emotional toll can drain your strength. Sleeping well and maintaining relationships with family and friends are beneficial. Additionally, a support group or a mental health professional could be able to provide you with a sense of community as well as strategies for getting through your sorrow. There is some evidence that grieving, especially if it lasts a long time, can have an adverse effect on your body's capacity to fight disease and infection.

Your body's tissues enlarge as a result of your immune system reacting to what it perceives as a threat. Heart disease, arthritis, diabetes, asthma, and perhaps even cancer may be affected. There is data that shows inflammation and grief are related, and some studies demonstrate the inflammation gets worse the more profound the grief. You can manage it by



getting enough exercise and eating well. Grieving circumstances can give you the impression that you are powerless over your life. You can be worried about your financial situation, loneliness, or the potential loss of another person. While some anxiety is common, if it persists for more than a few months or interferes with your daily activities at home or at work, it may be time to seek help from a mental health expert. Your body may release more of this substance than usual into your bloodstream six months following the loss of a loved one. It is sometimes referred to as the "stress hormone."

Long-term exposure to elevated cortisol levels can increase your risk of developing heart disease or high blood pressure. You might stop eating regularly or binge when you're grieving. Stress hormones can also give you the flu or irritate your stomach and other parts of your digestive system. You can get ulcers, irritable bowel syndrome, diarrhoea, constipation, and stomach cramps. Your doctor can assist you in locating treatments if you are experiencing persistent stomach problems. You may be more susceptible to headaches, back discomfort, or joint pain if you're grieving. The muscle strain brought on by the stress chemicals your body produces in response to grieving may be a contributing factor. This ought to get better with time, but if the discomfort persists, discuss pain management strategies serious grieving might cause your heart rate to remain high for up to six months.

Your risks of developing cardiac issues may increase due to this quicker rate, which may be brought on by stressor the production of cortisol. A shock of high emotion and hormones that produce significant chest discomfort and difficulty breathing might be brought on by the unexpected death of a spouse or other loved one. For a while, your heart may not pump blood as efficiently. Even while it normally doesn't harm your heart or obstruct your arteries, it can feel like a heart attack. The majority of people recover in a few days or weeks

with your doctor. Your risk of suffering a heart attack is more than usual on the first day after losing a loved one. They decrease throughout the course of the first week, but over the first month, your odds can remain greater than usual. Sleep as much as you can, and keep an eye out for heart attack symptoms including chest discomfort, stomach pain, cold sweats, nausea and dizziness.

Another heart-breaking event is the marriage proposal time in the story. Sorah's friend who was fond of stories young princes had already started to find her groom. Sorah was sure that with the magnificent features, her friend can win any man she wishes. Like every girl, Sorah also believed that she will get engaged and married a year or two later. She was also dreaming to have a family and a baby. Looking onto herself, she was certain that no man will ever be going to marry a woman like her. She always believed in the stories she heard and none told such tales of healthy princes tying knots with disabled woman. She will never have a family of her own like the girls in the village and her dream of marriage will remain incomplete.

There's a social perspective that the disabled people cannot lead a happy and usual married life. It can be any kind of disability; here, arthritis. People who are suffering or losing their independence may feel dissatisfied, angry, or melancholy, which may have an impact on other family members. Disclosing the problem's chronic nature to the other person is more crucial than keeping the diagnosis, a secret. Such people have life expectancies than the overall population. However, a lot of sufferers with various types of chronic ailments have been contentedly married.

It is important to recognise that taking medication will be necessary for the rest of one's life and to talk honestly about this. A joyful sex life is not significantly hampered by

this condition. It is true that being pregnant will put some burden on them. Because of the impact of the hormones, many rheumatoid arthritis sufferers actually experience improvements during pregnancy. However, worsening is also possible, and many medications are stopped when a woman is in her pregnancy. It is really advised that drug levels be checked and proven to be below a certain level before pregnancy is allowed. Pregnancy can put a great deal of strain on both the mother and the unborn child, and some types of arthritis, like SLE, can significantly worsen at this time.

Considering all these things, it is true that married life is slightly difficult for the sufferers but that does not imply that it is impossible and will never work. They too can lead wonderful lives if they are married off with the partners who are ready to adapt with them. Sometimes, it can be distressful to be with them, take them for appointments, understand and pamper them. When the partner is a normal healthy person who has not gone through any of these conditions or met such people before, it is really difficult for them to learn and adjust with their partner and especially with an invisibly disabled person. When they look at their partners, they will not see anything that makes their partners look sick or distressful. They feel like it is ok and try to engage in engaging with them. When they are denied because of the pain and agony, they feel stressed out and even feel detachment with the suffering partner.

Only proper education about the disease and its consequences will help the partner to deal with the affected one. Then only they will help and support each other in their lives. It is important to care of each other and assure that they will there for their partner, no matter what. Married life is not a difficult life if lived with truth, love and kindness. There will be more bad days than good ones but there will be no room for distress in the presence of mutual understanding and care.

Breaking the belief of Sorah that no one will come into her life, a pixie named Peddler came. He tries to give her hope and be supportive. He attempts to make her blush and wins it but he is unable to earn her heart. She feels insecure and doubtful. She blushes and shyly asks him why he likes her. When he praises her inner beauty, she does not feel good. She asks him again. He compares her to his cousin Birdie who is the hybrid of the king of crow and pixie. He says that he has not yet seen her body, so what attracts him is beyond and which is basically, her character and the way she is. He tries to make her realize compatibility is everything and if they have it, they can lead a really delightful life together as a couple. Though she likes kissing and flirting, she does not take a right move with him. She chooses his age as an obstacle in uniting with him. She is also in the disbelief given by the herbwoman that she is maiden and cannot bear children for her whole life. She believes she cannot be good partner with these insecurities. In the midst of uncertainties, she does not compromise her love life with someone much older than her. She wants someone who could at least match her age. He understands her mind but still sticks on. He is in love with her and is even ready to wait for her, even if it means infinity.

It is not her disability that makes him fall in love with her. It is not what she is less of that attracts him. It is not the sympathy that builds a connection between them. It is simply the belief and the understanding that these things do not prevent a person to lead a happy married life unlike what is told to her by the herbwoman. Peddler presents all those supportive partners who makes their partner feel secure and safe with them. What holds inside their eyes is untainted love. Sympathy is replaced by empathy and support. When he says that he will wait, it is true and he does. Sincere sustenance and selfless affection are provided to her. It is beyond conditions and ages and it does not expect anything in return.

Being supportive in a relationship is crucial because it is one of the most crucial elements in creating a long-lasting one. When two people join together, they each bring their own set of dreams. They may grow and develop into the best version of themselves when they have a lifetime partner who supports each other's goals. On the other hand, if their partner is not supportive, this can cause bitterness, low self-esteem, and feelings that they are not worthy of their love.

Having a supportive companion makes it easier for someone to handle life's problems. They will feel sure that they can handle whatever life throws at them. If they know that they can rely on their spouse to be there for them when they need each other or to listen to one another rant after a challenging day at work. Being dependable on each other in all circumstances help two people develop trust in a relationship. It is crucial to have a supportive spouse who will be there for each other through both the good and the bad moments in life because life is full of ups and downs. In difficult circumstances, a relationship's emotional support becomes even more crucial. Significant amounts of irritation, anxiety, exhaustion, and other undesirable effects can be brought on by stress.

It manifests in their behaviour, behaviours, and verbal and nonverbal clues, and it inexorably has an impact on the connection between the partners. However, how their relationship develops over time may depend on how supportive they are, especially during frustrating moments. They can develop a deeper level of love when they frequently provide their spouses the emotional gratification, they require by being helpful. As odd as it may sound, their partner needs them the most when they are more irritable, argumentative, or distant due to stress. Acting as a stress reliever can ultimately bring about a variety of unanticipated benefits, both to the person acting as the stress reliever and to the person they are acting on behalf of the partner and the relationship.

Here, Peddler tries to be the supportive half of her but fails due to her disagreement. As said earlier, the single word of the medic can bring great impact on the life of the one who go through the chronic illness. She is made to believe that she will remain like this for the rest of her life which makes her develop philophobia or the fear of falling in love. She thinks that no young prince or hero will choose a woman like her. She has also never read such stories. She detaches herself from the love of Peddler. She makes him uncomfortable by talking sharply about his seducing approach and also his age. Though, he tries to give a good reply and provide assurance to wait for her, she declines. She may have pictured herself as a mismatch in matrimonies and nothing makes her beautiful to be a wife like the girls in her village.

She does not believe the power of inner beauty and the efforts she takes each day to prove life that she is undefeatable. This unconquerable nature is what makes her one of a kind and attracts him. She is not satisfied with that. She does not appreciate herself or realize her worth even when told by someone who claims that he loves her. Though he shows his love through his actions and words, that did not replace her insecurities hovering over her mind and fixated by the herbwoman, Kassia, whom she trusted the most. If she saw herself through the eyes of the supportive partner, Peddler, she would have realized that she is a gem of a person. She would have realized how brave, hospitable, kind, briskly and lovely she is. If she ever did that, she would not have dared to leave him on a cold edge. She represents every person who suffers silently. She also defines the beauty of being brave in the midst of challenges life offers her. She is unready to accept defeat and shows how courageous a human can be in the most uncertain moments.

Until now, we read about people who supported her during her difficult journey. They meant everything for her during her good and bad days. They were healthy and abled unlike

Sorah. They are independent and are able to live better and feel better. They have not experienced catcalling, bullying or insults because of their disability unlike Sorah. Here, we are going to see someone similar to Sorah and they are Venno and Lily.

Venno is a young man who lost one of his legs to an accident while he grew. He is one of the warmest characters in the play. He is the male version of Sorah. His disability does not put him back in the saddle. He does not quit and still holds kindness and love in his heart all the while. The point is highlighted because it is really difficult to even smile after life does such a crime by putting these people into the disabled category after showing them how it is wonderful to live 'abled'. It is difficult to carry kindness after suffering all the harshness and to love again after going through all the hate. He became a part of Sorah's family through his gentleness. He was a kind brother to Sorah and to the people around him. He found his love, started his own family and created a new world for himself. It's a wonder to see such strong people like him.

Disabled people are of two kinds: innately disabled and born abled but get disabled as they grew. Unlike the people who are born disabled, it's much difficult for people who become one on the way. For the people born such a way, it is how they are placed on Earth and how they start their first steps. It is not that there is no pain but from the day of birth they are adapted to live with how they are born and what they have. That innate acceptance and adaptation lessens the agony as compared to the latter. The latter experiences an inevitable pain. Losing a limb is losing a part of yourself. It can never be brought back or replaced. It is just like walking miles with both legs and at a point, when you look down, one is lost. That is horrifying which can put you into darkest days of grief. But, Venno does not quit, he fought with what is left and found himself live and living. It takes a lot to be a Venno when we realize the magnitude of the fall.

Lily, on the other hand, was born harelippped. Disability was innate to her and it became the prime reason for her family to abandon her. She was mistreated in her own house. She was never heard. Every single person she met teased, bullied, judged and even abused. For instance, when her stepsister came to Sorah's home to drop off her belongings, she scornfully mocked her "A catmouth belongs in a house of cripples". That meanest tongue which people always used to hurt her became her mother tongue. Even the basic necessities like education were denied to her. Her birth was considered shame by her family. She grew up as the unkindest and unworthiest person in the world. She was made to believe that her life was only meant to be lived as someone's servant and no one will ever accept her. She really thought that she will never be loved, cared or respected. Her family made her lose her self-esteem and gradually, she started hating herself for being born in such a way. She wanted to lean on a shoulder to cry out but the people around her silenced her voices and she was left with nothing to be proud of not even herself. She considered herself contemptible. She was all alone inside the four walls of her house. All she wanted was love, care, kindness and mostly, acceptance. Her family never gave her that and she supposed that it will all be pointless dream but it was not.

The union with Sorah's family became the life changing phenomenon of her life. It marked her all-good beginnings. She was accepted by Sorah's family. Though she came as a servant, she was given the status of a family member. She was treated with gentleness and she returned it back by becoming the backbone of Sorah's mother in her last days. She did the finest help to support Sorah's mother and Sorah in their bad days. She did everything best for everyone in the house except Sorah. For her, Sorah was the first ever person she met who was weaker than her. Instead of supporting Sorah in her weakness, she used the meanest language ever to tease her whenever she can. She always found chances to pin Sorah down and she almost won in that. She called her ugly, nagged at her, accused her of being lazy in bad days



and even complained that it's difficult to look after her.

It was then Sorah went to the herbwoman to complain against her. Instead of telling the truth, Kassia convinced Lily that Sorah loved, respected and appreciated her and her talents. Kassia even told her Sorah viewed her much more than a servant with great insights. It was the first time in her life she heard that someone believed and accepted her the way she is. She felt guilty of her acts and felt happy to receive the kindness of Sorah in spite of all the mistreatment she gave her. That changed her. Sorah's kindness became the alchemy of her life. She cried in the lap of Sorah and apologised. Sorah didn't say the truth but accepted her. She taught her first lessons and helped her to grow up as an individual. Lily never dared to look back. She became the gentlest woman of her age and slowly started believing in herself. She started liking what she was. When she started to fall in love with herself, her world changed and gradually, she became the wife of the brave hero Venno and mother of their little princess. In short, she found her home.

Lily's life in the story shows us how acceptance and kindness can act as the positive catalyst of someone suffering from disabilities, whether visible or invisible. Life of these people are not meant to be frowned upon or mocked upon. It is with gut wrenching pain that Lily lived her part of life in her home. Being all alone in one's own home is most tragical experience an individual can encounter in their lives. Her own people showed her the ugliest part of life which is more than her disability. People assume that they pretend to get sympathy. They are abandoned as attention seekers and burdens. It is too late to realize that all they need is the tiniest acts of kindness and love. People kill them using their judgements. The moment they see that they are accepted the way they are, they will start to grow and they need to.

This is where Sorah's family stands apart. They not even once blamed or estranged Sorah for her weakness or the invisible disability. They understood her pain without even being told and helped her to overcome the challenges by doing everything to empower her. Not just the family but a whole village stood for consoling, comforting and supporting her. That really worked for her and in a way to get better due to lesser stress and various pressures. Sorah's village and family not only welcomed her but also Snowy, Venno and Lily. Her home became the wonderland of these people through their heartfelt kindness. They transformed the disabled into self-esteemed people. Sorah's family stand as the epitome of kindness and also symbolises how kindness and acceptance can act as an alchemy in the life of the disabled.

In the midst of all these people there was a mystery land which was covered with medicinal herbs and winds which healed cuts and sores faster. It seemed scary for the people of Rivermeade due to its anonymity and strangeness. There were also some instances that people who went inside either returned faster or never but it did not scare Sorah. She was brave enough to handle that fear and went inside every time to explore the land deep enough to kill the unusualness. She found the wonders of her life such as medicinal herbs, Oak woman, Birdie and especially, her Peddler. She felt comforted and strengthened by the wind blowing from the land. Only there was she free of her pains. She always found reasons to be there and it brought out the heroine inside her.

The time when Venno's and Lily's daughter (the narrator) suffered severe whooping cough and met the brim of death, Sorah gave herself to save the child. There was also a saying in the village that parents should not get attached to their new-borns as death can carry them anytime in a remote place like Rivermeade. Kassia's information about the power of Evandine flowers inspired her to fetch it. There was no hope at all. Sorah's health also made the purpose

worse but she could not risk the life of a child. In spite of all the negativities that pronounced the coming of a misfortune, Sorah took the chance and went in. She was accompanied by Snowy.

They went through the strange land to get the potion of life for the baby girl. It was weary, tiring and hurtful. Sorah felt sore, stiffened and wounded. She sat like a doll firmly holding Snowy. She could not hold more. She felt like giving up. But then, Snowy didn't let her fall apart. Snowy took her all the way to Elfland through the unkindest hours and pricking paths. Reaching Elfland does not decrease her sufferings. She was hit and pinned down by a Knight. The Knight hurt her mercilessly. She fell but still dared to get up and found the evandine flowers. Birdie, Peddler's crush, helped her in the most wondrous ways. Birdie took her up, fetched evandine with her and facilitated her to get back to her home the same day she left and thus, she saved the baby-girl of Venno and life. She proved the statement of Kassia that even a ugly witch can turn into a skilful mediocre and restore lives. She became a wonder to the villagers by bringing back the life of the new-born. She broke all the conventional beliefs and proved the village that the Elfland was not a scary inn but the healing home.

Her bravery became the trait that broke all the myths fairy-tales gave to its readers and made her a heroine. Her rheumatism crippled and bent but she was actually 'crippled'. She did not settle down before the setbacks. She walked, crawled and finally, flew. Her chronic illness, RA, did not cease her or it is that she did not let it. Her courage became her wings. She went to every place and did everything that scared the villagers. She was already accepted and respected but after that she was admired for all that she got and did. She became a real saviour and a hope to all those who suffer invisibly. From an invisibly disabled woman, she transformed herself into a visible hero. It was never easy and need to be done every minute,

every hour and every day. Though she felt tired, she picked herself up every time. It is true that some heroes don't wear capes and still becomes one.

## Chapter Three

### **Analysing Infertility as an Invisible Disability in “The Faerie Mule”**

“Infertility is this huge emotional roller coaster. If you want in your heart more than anything to have a baby, it’s the hardest thing you will ever go through physically, emotionally and financially.”

Disability is a complicated phenomenon. It depicts the connection between physical characteristics of an individual and social characteristic of the society in which they reside. The International Classification of Functioning, Disability, and Health (ICF) emphasises both a person's functional and structural issues. All definitions of disability include conditions affecting the endocrine and reproductive systems. Therefore, infertility and impotence should be considered disabilities as well. It limits one's ability to participate in various aspects of life and may render one disabled. Like any other disability, infertility requires the pair to adapt and incorporate it into their sense of self, making it a serious life crisis. Medically speaking, infertility is typically thought to be caused by a physical defect or a genetic anomaly. Socially, couples are unable to fulfil their parenting or reproductive responsibilities. Similar to the social paradigm of disability, infertility continues to be stigmatised and taboo in most countries.

Due to social stigmatization, infertile couples may face discrimination. Infertility can result in divorces and separations, which break apart families. According to the ICIDH, an individual's physical condition is their "impairment," their incapacity to engage in certain activities are their "disability," and their ability to perform certain socially acceptable tasks is their "handicap." When an organ is impaired, it means that it has a structural or functional defect. When closely examined, all of the aforementioned criteria encompass both reproductive and endocrine system problems. Why infertility and impotence not considered to be

disabilities?

Infertility is defined as the “failure to obtain a clinical pregnancy following twelve months or more of regular, unprotected sexual intercourse” by the International Committee for Monitoring Assisted Reproductive Technology and the WHO. Is impotence in men or infertility in women not a form of impairment? It undeniably influences how one participates in various aspects of life. These illnesses have an impact on a person's private life. Infertility in women and impotence in men fall under the three categories of disability recognised by the ICF: body structure and function (and their impairment), activity (and activity constraints), and participation (and participation restrictions). The term "main living activities," which includes "major bodily processes," is included in the AADA's definition of impairment. The reproductive and endocrine systems are also important biological processes that have a big impact on "main life activities." As femininity and motherhood are typically intricately linked, infertility can negatively affect a woman's sense of herself. The couple must adjust to and integrate infertility into their sense of self, just like with any other disability. A couple's lives can be dramatically and permanently changed by infertility, which is a major life crisis. Chronic sadness can result in childlessness.

The medical model sees impairment as a trait of the individual, directly resulting from illness, trauma, or another health condition, necessitating expert medical care delivered in the form of individualised treatment. So, in order to "fix" the problem with the individual, according to this concept, a person needs medical or other treatment or intervention. Infertility requires therapy if we consider it a disability from the standpoint of the medical paradigm. Similar to how it does in other types of situations, assistive technology is crucial in this one.

The social model of disability, on the other hand, sees disability as a socially generated issue. According to this theory, disability results from how society treats those who have limitations. It takes into account how their social isolation and oppression are often caused by the health and welfare systems. Disabled persons are prevented from participating in a variety of activities by barriers of all types.

The essential design of a woman's body is that of a child bearer. As a result, female reproductive health may frequently be the most crucial aspect of her overall health. It's common knowledge that a woman's health is correlated with her ability to procreate. Her ability to menstruate and have children is the key concern with regard to her health. Her body's inability to accomplish these duties is viewed as flawed, abnormal, or incomplete, and it turns into a type of impairment for her. As a result, the social pressure to have children has caused infertility to be medicalized.

Society oppresses infertile people, especially women. Infertility is therefore a disability, even from the perspective of the social model. On a social level, infertility continues to be stigmatised and taboo in most countries, exactly as the social model of disability. Due to social stigmatisation infertile couples may face discrimination. Infertility can even cause divorces and separations, and in all of these situations, the female is typically the one who suffers the most. Every element of a person's life can be impacted by the stigma of infertility. She faces discrimination if she is viewed as unlucky, and in certain cultures she would not be permitted to attend social events or participate in rituals or celebrations. Consistent rejection, physical abuse, and even suicide can result from infertility. As a result, it may potentially turn into a human rights issue.

Stress in a marriage and marital and sexual dissatisfaction inside a marriage can both be brought on by infertility. Being infertile is known to leave sufferers with a sense of inferiority and exclusion from the "fertile world." Couples are under more pressure to procreate and behave normally as set forth by society. Couples who have not had children believe they have failed to live the typical life that society has set as the standard. It is considered to be abnormal and against social norms. All of this has made infertility into a medical issue.

In general, the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities states that "persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which, in interaction with various barriers, may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others." The convention avoids listing specific conditions and severities and acknowledges that "disability is an evolving concept." Therefore, this notion of disability can very well include infertility.

The influence on women's life is tremendous and the number of infertile people is still high. There are still few options for getting care, and the public sector's offerings are woefully inadequate. Major obstacles to quick and adequate treatment seeking include stigmatising views, low male participation, cost, poor quality of care, and a lack of services in the public sector. The state would take more actions for its prevention and treatment the more broadly the term "disability" was defined.

Infertility is a medical condition that results in improper functioning of the reproductive organs, such as blocked fallopian tubes or low sperm counts. It is brought on by a variety of medical conditions. It can make starting a family difficult and pose a severe threat



to the institution of marriage. This causes full destruction in relationships for couples. Thus, the desire to have children stays unmet and unfulfilled, which causes significant tension and anxiety in a marriage and puts a person, a family, or a relationship in danger of breaking apart. Being infertile has to do with not being able to have children, which would also entail losing some potential that would have otherwise been a part of this world or mankind.

This is attributed not only in humans like Sorah, who is infertile due to her illness, and animals like her companion, Snowy, the faerie mule. The whole emotions that a human feel and suffers in the world is attributed not just in a human but also through an animal, a hybrid organism. A mule is a cross between a male donkey and a female horse. Because they have an odd number of chromosomes, mules are sterile. Mules are the epitome of versatility. A mule has the robust build of a horse and the muzzle and powerful stance of a donkey since it is a cross between a female horse and a male donkey. With all these best qualities a mule cannot reproduce even though it resembles its parents very much. It is infertile by its nature of birth. Hybridity in birth made her infertile or at least people assumed like that.

Snowy is a faerie mule, daughter of a faerie mare and strong donkey. She was born in the palace of a count and in the womb of a pure faerie steed. She was born milk-white and well-bred. Just when she fell into the lap of the Earth, the son of the count made the first look. No sooner did he look at her than he attempted to slaughter it using his knife. The only reason was that she was an infertile mule. Just because she was born in such a way, she got the meanest birthday present from her house or where she was meant to live. She lost her royalty and the fortune to live in the wealthy stable of the count. She lost all the worldly pleasures she would have enjoyed if she was a fertile mare. She was disrespected at her moment of birth itself. She got separated from her mother. Not only did they did not accept her but also

abandoned. They did not want to spend on someone who was infertile. For them, infertility symbolises misfortune. Thus, they condemned her birth itself. They never ever looked beyond or her inside. If they did that once, they would not have just left her so easily.

The word and idea of the herbwoman, Kassia, became the lucky tongue of Snowy. The herbwoman took major hand in rescuing Snowy from the hands of the ruthless count's son. She was sure that Snowy will be slaughtered if left behind. She bought Snowy from the count and made her a stable in Sorah's home. Again, Sorah's family became a healing home to another poor creature.

Though, Sorah's father was reluctant at first, she convinced him. They accepted and took care of her and even made her a stably which was nothing luxurious like that of a count's horse stable but comfy enough to live gleefully and peacefully. She named the mule, Snowy, due to its snow like hair and thus became its godmother. It became her duty to guide, train and nurture Snowy and she won in that. Though Snowy was disobedient at first, she became timid due to Sorah's good treatment. Snowy followed her everywhere like Mary's little lamb. Gradually, they became the best cohorts. Sorah also loved her the same. It was the purest relation that we can happily read in the story.

Snowy showed her human vibes when Sorah was pinned down due to RA. Suddenly, she changed her mischievousness into companionship. Snowy became obedient, loyal and stayed close to her in her good and bad days. Snowy was as brave as Sorah and dared to cross the forest to Elfland together. Nothing scared them or put hold onto them. It was only that Snowy could not talk but she understood Sorah better than anyone. When the count's son mocked Sorah and Lily by calling them, Snowy kicked him away and broke his limb. Such

was her love for her godmother. Snowy would even sacrifice herself for her Sorah. This is proved when she takes her trip along with Sorah to Elfland in the rescue mission of the sick daughter of Venno and Lily.

If Sorah was the hero, Snowy was her backbone. Snowy took her all along to Elfland. Her disability did not stop her. She galloped through the valleys along with Sorah in the unkindest hours to the place that changed her destiny. She went so fast but gentle enough to keep Sorah in her place. Sorah was so sore she pleaded Snowy to give up. It was really difficult to carry on. When they reached Elfland, a Knight attacked Sorah and Snowy replied back in fashion like she did to the count's son. Under any circumstances, she never let Sorah feel down or ashamed. Even in the midst of unusualness and terror, she did not step back but stepped into her life changing race of her life which she won successfully. She met a pure faerie steed black stallion there. They met and became one. It removed her from the curse of infertility and gave her the status of a mother.

Mule is a hybrid animal. It possesses the power of a horse and the strength of a donkey. It is a one in two animal and much more beneficial than its parents. Snowy was also a milk beauty and likeable. That means there was no reason to abandon it. The only reason that resulted in its abandonment is the assumption that mules are infertile. The pain of having it and being accused that you have it is equal and unfathomable. It's interesting to note that there is anecdotal proof of female mules becoming pregnant and occasionally giving birth to a mule foal. Many of these instances involve ingenuous mistakes. Actual births by female mules are quite rare. Rare doesn't mean impossible.

The perception of infertility as a curse or misfortune as it's a bodily defect took away

all the grace that she possessed. The family in which she was the part of took it as a shame and ready to throw her away as soon they got the news. It even posed danger to life. It took away her right to live that the count's son dared use his knife against its neck. They did not understand that it was not her crime to be born in such a way. Just because they are animals doesn't imply that they lack emotions. It is only that they cannot express it in the way we do. They too experience the pain when they are hurt or mistreated. That feeling of abandonment maybe the reason why it behaved disobediently in her first years. Even though, Sorah. Her family and the villagers gave her all the love, she may be in a sense of doubt about its validity. When she realised it, she changed and became the best like Lily. When she became her best, even the world united together in the form of adventure to Elfland where she got her salvation and the joy of motherhood through a mighty black stallion.

It doesn't matter whether an animal or human, its inhumane to leave all them all alone and to consider as sinners or the symbols of misfortune. It's our duty to support them and make them understood that its normal and nothing to be ashamed of. They need sincere sustenance. The important thing to be noted is that they don't want to be considered special but normal. That sense of acceptance is what motivates them to live and cross all the hurdles of life.

If misconception due of hybridity in birth was Snowy's infertility or invisible illness, Sorah's was the aftermath of her chronic illness. She cannot be pregnant or have a baby. For the same reason, she cannot get married off. This was brought into her mind by the herbwoman, Kassia. She believed it to the core that she could not dare to cross the risk. She rejected Peddler's love for the same cause. All the day of her life, she grieved of this unbearable fact. She could not do anything rather than to live with it.

For thousands of other people, infertility is that raging fire. We kind of know that cousin or aunt who loves kids, and we kind of see the sadness in her eyes at baby showers, but we don't really know the depth of her pain. We see how our co-worker lights up whenever other people talk about their children, but we don't really know why he and his wife never had any. We read something once upon a time about recurrent miscarriage, and we felt sorry or sad, but we couldn't picture anyone we knew who had lost multiple consecutive pregnancies.

Fire can leave serious damage behind. Because it can be hard to fully grasp what infertility involves unless you've dealt with it personally, many people believe that it's all about the end game, a baby - that if you could just get to that prize, the pain of infertility would fade away. But infertility is bigger than babies. I say this often, because I want people to get it. It truly is. It can affect our physical and mental health in insidious and sometimes enduring ways.

Adding oil to the fire, the teasing of Lily cut her into two halves. Lily told her that she will be barren just like Snowy and would never even rejoice the barren pleasure of a woman. It was the meanest statement someone could ever shower to a suffering woman. Her body is not able to perform the way she wants it to, or the way the world expects it to, but that is all actually more normal than we realize, we just don't talk about it. 1 in 8 individuals experience infertility. 1 in 4 women will experience a miscarriage. It just seems unfair and unreasonable to me to make women (and men) bear this burden alone. The feeling is already bad but worsens when somebody close affirms it to the face.

She was like a lotus. These teasing did not engulf her goodness and kindness. She has

a heart of a mother. The way she takes care of Snowy is its fine example. She knows the value of child more than the sick child's own mother. That someone who lacks that fortune will never let anyone to lose it in front of their eyes. When Lily's daughter got severe sickness, she realised that it was the time of adversity. Likewise, if Snowy stepped back, the little kid would have embraced death like all the poor kids in the village who receive no proper help and thus are forced to hug death. Lily's daughter's story would have been the same. Snowy's willingness and Sorah's courage changed the whole story into a heroic one by overcoming the challenges and finding solutions.

## Chapter Four

### Conclusion

“Don’t be ashamed of your story, it will definitely inspire others.”

The world we live can be seen as a double-sided coin, where one side is populated by the abled and the other by disabled. Beyond that, there is mid-line that gives room for the less cared people who appears visually abled but are actually disabled. They cannot be recognized by eyes but it doesn’t mean that they are not there. It is tough to elaborate to someone who has no clue. It is a daily scuffle being in pain or feeling sick on the inside while looking fine on the outside. Feeling pain, unwell and awful by the inner self whilst being perfect in visibility is pressurizing. People always assume that such people are lazy when they have no idea about how much effort it takes to just be out of bed and go on. They are not visibly disabled which validates a statement that a person’s disability cannot be judged by its visibility.

The moral paradigm holds that a person's disability has an impact on their morality, actions, beliefs, and karma. This point of view contends that having a disability can lead to stigma, humiliation, and guilt, especially if it is perceived as a sign of wrongdoing. Disability may occasionally be seen as a badge of courage, conviction, or honour.

An incapacity is viewed as a pathological impairment of a physical system or function in accordance with the medical model. This point of view states that the goal is to restore the system or function as closely to "normal" as is practically possible. Through a scenario in which a disabled person is miserable and hopeless but learns to love life through friendship with an able-bodied person, the health care model of disability is frequently portrayed in movies. The opposite of this is the idea that people with physical abilities may learn from those with impairments about how to be better people.

According to the social model, a person's handicap is a part of who they are, just like their skin colour, race, gender, etc. This perspective claims that a person's handicap is caused by an environment that is not suitable for them (both physical and social). The obstacles and limits are produced by this environment rather than the handicap. This argument contends that changing society and the environment—rather than just the lives of those with disabilities—is the best way to address disability. Disabilities are not always seen. Some are invisible and they are called invisible disabilities.

The term "invisible disabilities" refers to physical and mental manifestations such as debilitating pain, weariness, dizziness, weakness, learning challenges, mental disorders, as well as hearing and visual issues. These can sometimes or constantly make daily tasks more difficult and can include modest issues or issues that are not always obvious to outsiders. It's a medical ailment that nobody else can see. People with invisible illnesses or disabilities may seem to be in excellent health. They don't seem too sick to work. To play with their children or take part in a carpool, they don't seem too sick. They don't seem too sick to shop. To get through the day, they don't seem to require a three-hour nap. They don't seem to need to park in a spot designated for the disabled. However, this does not imply that those persons are "abled" and the illness does not exist. Some disabilities can go unnoticed, making it impossible to judge the suffering only on their appearance. Rheumatoid arthritis, infertility, lupus, diabetes, dyslexia, and other such invisible disabilities include these. The sufferers of such ailments are invisible to onlookers.

The autoimmune and inflammatory disease rheumatoid arthritis, often known as RA, causes your immune system to accidentally attack healthy cells in your body, which causes inflammation or excruciating swelling in the affected areas of your body. The main area of focus for RA is the joints, frequently several joints at once. The joints of the hands, wrists, and



knees are frequently affected by RA. In a RA-affected joint, the inflammation of the joint lining damages the joint tissue. This tissue damage may lead to long-lasting or persistent pain, shakiness (loss of balance), and deformity. Various organs like the heart, lungs, and eyes as well as other tissues all over the body might also be harmed by RA in addition to these tissues. One of rheumatoid arthritis's (RA) most pernicious qualities is that it is an invisible illness. This suggests that other people might not be able to tell from the way you look that you are fighting a battle, despite the fact that you may have RA and that your body may be continually at war with itself.

Infertility should be considered while defining disability. The inability to conceive despite a year of planned, unprotected sex is known as infertility. The precise cause of infertility may be difficult to determine, but it may be brought on by issues with ovulation in women and low levels of a few hormones in both men and women. The primary symptom is the inability to conceive. Often, there are no other symptoms. It restricts one's participation in several facets of life and may cause one to become incapacitated. Infertility is a significant life issue because, like any disability, it needs the couple to adapt and integrate it into their sense of self.

Infertility continues to be stigmatised and taboo in the majority of nations, much like the societal paradigm surrounding disability. Couples who are infertile may experience prejudice as a result of social stigma. Families can be torn apart by divorce and separation brought on by infertility. If infertility is not recognised as a disability, it is difficult for persons to get government services and welfare benefits. Treatments for infertility are extremely expensive and may not be reimbursed by insurance or government financing due to how complex they are. It is imperative to categorise infertility as a disability in light of all of

this. It's difficult to cope with infertility. Having saying that, sometimes we make life more difficult for ourselves. Of course, not consciously or intentionally. We might not be aware that there are other options. Or we simply are unaware that we are harming ourselves

Many of us are unsure of what is meant when we hear the term "chronic disease." But most importantly, a person should never be unfairly stereotyped or defined by a chronic illness. Chronic sickness serves as a daily reminder of your battle, but it may also serve as a reminder of your strength and optimism thanks to quotations about chronic illness like the ones we've collected here. People frequently have very different perceptions of how these people think, feel, and live each day of their life since I have a rare disease. They may be ill, but that is not their illness. It's only a little piece of them. A significant factor in defining who they have chosen to be is the lifestyle they have chosen and the way of thinking they have chosen to adopt.

Young people and those who appear healthy who have invisible disabilities frequently get accused of lying about their illness or trying to take advantage of the system, and they must fight to get their struggles recognised. Invisible disabilities may be invisible even to those who are affected by them. Many women claim they have heard comments like "you're too pretty or attractive to have a disability." People who have hidden disabilities may feel intense bodily or psychic suffering that is difficult for others to understand.

Dr. Kris Lindbeck, through her story has thus brought out two unfamiliar heroines who are despicable due to disability. They are the herbwoman's apprentice, Sorah and her pet mule, Snowy. While Sorah suffered both RA and infertility, Mule suffered a while of the latter. They overcome abandonment, teasing, mocking, insulting and even took the risk of going into an unfamiliar land to save the life of a child and they accomplished it successfully.

Though they faced many unkindest minutes in their life, they were not ready to submit before the invisible monster residing in their body and killing them internally and externally.

They did not play the victim card but fought each second and came out as warriors. They broke all the stereotypical conventions set by the village, inspired many and received the admiration of whole village which lasted a lifetime. They made the decision to remake their life when many people let their disease define them and drop anchor. They led a life that had meaning and purpose. They showed us that the way we let things defined us, what we let dominate us, and what we decide to control, makes a difference in life. They proved us that we can live lives filled with meaning, strength, and purpose if we make the decision to do that. For them, it was not the magic of Elfland but their inner courage that moved all the mountains and registered them as unconquerable. They proved the real message behind every fairy-tale that every monster that rises can be engulfed forever with the intensity of the courage and the will of the heart. They stand us immortal symbols of strength possessed by every sufferer who fight silently every hour of the day

“There is always a place in the heart of the world that heals all your wounds and turn you scars into stars and that’s what we call ‘home’”.

For Sorah, it was Elfland, for Snowy and Lily, it was Sorah’s home while for it is this fairy-tale which inspired me to live in enough rather than die in fear. RA is also my companion. There were moments when I felt miserable and repressed. The diagnosis was enough to kill my soul but I didn’t want to. I cannot sit in my silence looking and wondering how other people made wonders in their life. I was never ever like that. This story taught me that there are much more things to be done. There is nothing we can do to by being the victim, I chose to be a survivor like Sorah and then my life changed. For every eye who read

and for every ear who hear these pages, this is just a mere piece of dissertation but for me, it's my life and the way I live every second, every minute, every hour and every day.

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