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Maram AlTurky
Wayne State University, gv4274@wayne.edu

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Coping With COVID Through *Tangled* and Social Media

Maram AlTurky

Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program (UROP)
at Wayne State University

Throughout history, fictional stories like fairy tales have been used as a link between the fantastical and reality as a form of escapism from the tragedies and traumas of life. With the progression of time, consumers of fiction have utilized technology and various forms of media to continue to reimagine original stories in order to find comfort in hardship through escapism. In the last few years, a new tragedy that was experienced worldwide was the COVID-19 pandemic. Isolation became a necessity for safety and with this seemingly endless period of solitude, people began to turn to fairy tales to escape the hardship around them. Due to the unique conditions of this period of isolation, people began to find correlations between their own life and the life of Rapunzel in Disney's retelling of the Rapunzel tale, *Tangled*. This new-found connection between fantasy and reality prompted social content creators, such as YouTubers, to create videos that merged Rapunzel's life with their personal experiences of isolation. While these videos fall under the category of fan fiction, they also have a deeper purpose as they help the creators grapple with their reality while simultaneously bringing hope and comfort to their audience. The use of fairy tales to cope with tragedy and trauma has been a topic of research for

many years, but with the emergence of the pandemic, the link between fantasy and reality became even more pronounced as the YouTubers created videos that merged their experiences with Rapunzel's. This study aims to explore the use of fairy tales as a coping mechanism during times of tragedy and trauma, particularly in the context of the pandemic, and to investigate the unique role of social media, specifically with the creation of fan fiction by YouTubers that merge their personal experiences with the narratives of Disney's *Tangled*, to provide comfort, hope, and joy to both the creators and audiences.

COVID and Escapism

To begin to understand the unique similarities between the COVID-19 pandemic and the *Tangled* storyline, one must be familiar with the pandemic itself. The coronavirus, also known as the SARS-CoV-2, was declared a global health emergency by the WHO Emergency Committee on January 30, 2020 (Velavan and Meyer 278). Given the severity of the virus, countries across the globe had to shut down public spaces and required their citizens to isolate for their own safety as well as the safety of others. As weeks turned into months, the hope of freedom from isolation began to dissipate and what at first seemed to be a chance to enjoy free time that would not regularly exist pre-pandemic, became a long string of monotonous days. The need to cope with the boredom of isolation grew and according to Dixit et al., people turned to readily available forms of entertainment. A study of 541 participants found that 52.6% of participants binge-watched shows to escape boredom, 25% binge-watched to relieve stress, and 15.7% binged to overcome loneliness. It was also mentioned in the study that although it is an unhealthy way to cope, people tend to substitute their unacceptable reality with fantasy through web series and television shows (Dixit et al. 1). Previous studies such as those by Donald Haase and Jack Zipes also reveal this trend toward escapism. Much like how people used media to cope with reality during the pandemic, people turned to fairy tales during times of war and exile (Haase, "Children" 361). Haase discusses fairy tales and escapism in the context of the Holocaust and World War II, while Zipes discusses the utopian function of fairy tales in a more general sense where fairy tales are used to imagine a utopian version of one's reality. With more people turning to media to avoid boredom, Disney's *Tangled* was one piece of media that viewers found especially relevant. Particularly, they found themselves relating to the

rather tragic beginnings of Rapunzel.

The Traditional Rapunzel Tales and Theme of Isolation

The theme of isolation that was recently experienced by the world because of the pandemic has been a core theme of Rapunzel tales since the 1600s. The tales have been adapted and retold in several ways leading to the modern-day version of the story in Disney's adaptation, *Tangled*. The premise of the traditional tale follows a young woman who was kidnapped at a young age by an evil woman (a fairy or sorceress) and placed in a tower from which she cannot escape. Rapunzel grows up on her own in the tower, completely isolated from the rest of the world; leaving the evil woman as the only person in her life until she escapes the tower and gets her happy ending. While the different variations all follow this general outline, it is only in Disney's *Tangled* that we see the details of what she did during her isolation to keep herself occupied.

In *Tangled*, Rapunzel is kidnapped as a baby by an evil woman named Mother Gothel who locks and isolates Rapunzel in a tower for eighteen years, following the traditional theme of the Rapunzel tales. When a man visits her and presents the opportunity of escape, we learn that she has been taught to fear the outside world as a dangerous and painful place. Though she was tempted to leave the tower and begin her life in the outside world, her fear kept her locked in. With nowhere to go and not much to do, Rapunzel had to keep herself busy to avoid succumbing to boredom. It is through these themes of fear and isolation that people began to connect *Tangled* to their lives during COVID. Just like Rapunzel, people were locked in their houses to avoid the dangers of the outside world, and during that time they had to find various ways to keep themselves entertained. Even when there were temptations to leave the house, just as Rapunzel was tempted to leave her tower, most people understood that it was safest to remain home.

While in their homes, many social content creators; such as Micarah Tewers, The Carnahan Fam, ajsmithmusic, Ayden Sng, and wolfsrule100, drew inspiration from the film and created YouTube videos visually showcasing how Rapunzel's life looked a lot like theirs. While specific examples will be discussed

later on, all of these social content creators played on viewers' emotional connection to the film to find ways to both soothe anxieties and generate hope.

Participatory Media and Intermediality

Through participatory media and intermediality, content creators actively interacted with *Tangled* through the creation of fan fiction. According to Black, fan fiction can be defined as fan-authorized stories based on existing media and repurposed by fans to create their own narratives (75). The existence of fan fiction links to the concept of participatory media, which purports that rather than being passive receivers of media, viewers end up taking the different forms of media they consume and engage actively with it (77). Participatory media allows for the line between producers and consumers to fade since the general audiences are allowed to take what already exists in media and do what they want with it (76). In the context of the YouTubers, they actively engaged with the media they consumed, *Tangled*, by taking certain aspects of the movie that matched up to their own lives and adapting them into YouTube videos that fit their life narratives. This form of engagement with media, according to Lamerichs, is known as intermediality, which is a combination or transfer of content that relates one media text to other media texts of the same or a different medium (22). In addition to adapting certain narratives from the movie to accommodate life under the pandemic and confinement, the YouTubers also utilized video instead of film.

The Utilization of Transmedia Storytelling

When discussing fan fiction, it is important to note that while there is fan fiction designed to further the plot and/or storyline of a piece of media, other forms of fan fiction take certain narratives from a piece of media to fit the narratives of the creator. This is known as transmedia storytelling (Lamerichs 27). According to Lamerichs, transmedia storytelling is the extension of different narratives across various platforms (27). An example of transmedia storytelling is the *Star*

Wars universe, in which there are a variety of movies, shows, video games, etc., where similar narratives are used but with different plots and storylines.

Micarah Tewers, YouTube content creator, uses transmedia storytelling in her video by repurposing the song “When Will My Life Begin?” where Rapunzel sings about the daily activities that she accomplishes in the tower while longing for a life outside it. In Tewers’ version, “Rapunzel’s Song but Quarantine Style,” she also sings about her daily activities but within the context of being quarantined due to the pandemic. At the beginning of the video, she lists off a set schedule of what she does to curb her boredom, such as playing games, binge-watching a show, going for a run, and scrolling through social media. All the while she is wondering, “When will this whole thing end?” She asks this same question again near the end of the video. Despite filling her day with activities, she is still visibly bored with no end to her isolation in sight. The narrative of being locked inside a space and having to fill the burden of time exists in both the movie and the video. Rather than attempting to further the plot, Tewers used transmedia storytelling to fit her own experiences with boredom and the pandemic to the pre-existing narrative of *Tangled* (Lamerichs 27). This exact narrative style—drawing from the film but not extending the narrative of the film—was also used by The Carnahan Fam, ajsmithmusic, and Ayden Sng in their videos.

In The Carnahan Fam’s video titled “COVID 19 Tangled Parody | When Will this Virus End?” the same song and narrative episode from the film are used. This time, the purpose was to fit the song to the experiences of a mother and how she deals with her time locked in. Much like Tewers did, she lists off what she does in the day, (which centers more around filling the time with chores) while repeatedly asking, “When will this virus end?” Ayden Sng’s and ajsmithmusic’s videos also follow the same narrative, showcasing and explaining how their day-to-day lives play out while waiting for the pandemic to end; both by asking the same question—“When will my life begin?” Another commonality that these videos share with Rapunzel’s life in the tower is that despite the number of activities they fill their time with, it seems as if time is moving slower than normal. Like Rapunzel does in the beginning of the film, Sng, The Carnahan Fam, and ajsmithmusic begin their videos by expressing that they start their day at 7 a.m. They proceed to list off all of the activities they do and eventually reveal their shock that despite how much they had done, when they looked back at the clock it was only 7:15 a.m. Tewers does this as well but uses 11 a.m. and 11:15 a.m. to show the slow movement of time while in isolation.

Wolfsrule100 uses a different narrative that exists in *Tangled* in her video titled “Quarantines best’ Tangled parody Covid-19.” The song she sings is a repurposed version of the song “Mother Knows Best” sung by Mother Gothel at the beginning of *Tangled*. In the song, Gothel lists all the dangers of the outside world to turn Rapunzel away from wanting to go outside of the tower. Wolfsrule100 does the same in her video by warning the audience to stay inside and away from the dangers of the pandemic by quarantining. Just like the previous videos discussed, this video was not designed to further the storyline of the movie but to take the narrative of a dangerous outside world and use it to fit her narrative about life with the pandemic. When watching the videos, it is easy to look at them from a surface level and say the creators were just having fun with the connections between their lives and Rapunzel’s, but on closer inspection, the videos take on a deeper and more emotional meaning.

Using *Tangled* to Cultivate Comfort Through Emotional Connections

These videos can have more than one meaning for viewers. Evident in their comments under some of the videos, viewers felt that these adaptations of *Tangled* were grounded in feelings of comfort through emotional connections. Under Micarah Tewers’ video, Sonya Cruz commented, “This was surprisingly profound. Came for Micarah, stayed for the feels.” Commenter Caity Cupcake wrote, “I just found your channel, and I wanted to say thank you. My dad isn’t the happiest person, but when I was younger, *Tangled* was one of the movies him and I would watch on repeat, and we had pretty much all the lines memorized. I just showed him this and it made him smile pretty big for the first time in a while. So thank you for that.” Lamerichs explains that being a fan includes admiring texts that connect one to others and the world as well as an “experience that is grounded in feeling” (18). For Sonya Cruz, they ended up connecting with the content and message of the video at an emotional level that they were not expecting which aligns with Lamerichs’ idea of fans engaging with texts that connect them to others and the world through an emotional experience. The same can be said for Caity Cupcake who found an emotional

connection through the familiarity of *Tangled* and the shared positive memory that they have with their father who reacted positively to the video. Under Sng's video, suparmeowcat commented, "This was basically my life . . . relate 100%" and Maryann Nguyen remarked, "Ah... this is funny to work. Totally relatable." These comments express a sort of emotional resonance with the content of the video which they found relatable to their experiences with the pandemic. For Maryann Nguyen, they seemed to find a more humorous and lighthearted connection to the video. Though it is not certain that everyone who watched the videos related or connected to the content creators, the common themes of the videos and comments reveal the shared experiences between each YouTuber and their respective audiences and points to the comforting effect of the videos, which invoke emotional responses. This ability to shift and adapt different media forms to fit different life experiences is typical of the fairy tale, which has long been adapted to contexts such as war and trauma, and in our case, life under the pandemic.

The Adaptability of Fairy Tales

The process of using fairy tales to convey hope amongst tragedy is not a foreign one. It is due to the bendable nature of fairy tales that readers can apply them to their lives and situations. In his article "Children, War, and the Imaginative Space of Fairy Tales," Haase explains that even though most fairy tales are written for the specific time and space in which they are told, the power of interpretation and imagination allows for fairy-tale narratives to be taken out of their context and become applicable to new readers, thus making them both timeless and indifferent to space (362). This idea that media forms can be altered at the will of their audiences is better understood in Stuart Hall's reception theory, originating from the work of Hans-Robert Jauss. Hall explains that messages are encoded by the creators of different media forms and then are decoded by its audiences whether that be intentional or not ("*Reception Theory*"). In terms of the physical space in which fairy tales take place, the setting of a tale is not always made to confine the tale to that specific setting. Instead, it is used to develop and further plot by expressing, for instance, the idea of separation, exile, and isolation (Haase, "Children" 363). It is the fairy tale's malleability that

lets audiences relate their own experiences to the tales they read.

Haase proceeds to discuss the idea of fairy tales becoming interpretive devices by citing the work of literary critic Elizabeth W. Harries. In “The Mirror Broken: Women’s Autobiography and Fairy Tales,” Harries wrote about post-war women writers and their use of fairy-tale devices to interpret their childhoods. Harries states that fairy tales became “stories to think with, stories that do not necessarily determine lives but can give children (and adults) a way to read and to understand them” (qtd. in Haase, “Overcoming” 101) and “a way of reading and even predicting the world” (qtd. in Haase, “Overcoming” 103). Haase also goes on to discuss Carolyn Kay Steedman’s *Landscape for a Good Woman: A Story of Two Lives* and her personal experience with stories becoming interpretive devices. Steedman revealed that “fairy stories” were her first devices for interpreting her childhood post-war (qtd. in Haase, “Children” 361). Fairy tales can be interpreted in various ways, but researchers like Haase are interested in the more tragic interpretations of fairy tales, specifically in the realm of children who have dealt with war and used fairy tales to interpret their traumatic experiences. In his article “Overcoming the Present: Children and Fairy Tales in Exile, War, and the Holocaust,” one common theme Haase discusses is exile, which he explains was a genre that played a significant role in German literary history (86). Though my research does not focus on how children coped with war and exile by using fairy tales, the concepts of defamiliarization and storytelling as “a space of refuge—familiarity—linked to protection, security, and the return to a meaningful life” relates to how today’s generation coped with COVID (Haase, “Children” 366).

The Adaptability of *Tangled*

The malleable nature of fairy tales is present in the social content creators’ interpretation of the beginning of *Tangled*. In the context of timelessness, *Tangled* is said to be set around the 1700s, but the narratives deployed by the content creators were not defined or reliant on the actual time period of Rapunzel’s story. This allowed for the linking of Rapunzel’s life to their own experiences in 2020. While the creators did not specify, we might imagine that the film’s Kingdom of Corona is a German or European city. But since a fairy-tale space

can be viewed as indifferent and adaptable, this allowed for social content creators from all over the world to frame the retelling of the story within their own homes. One can note that while the narratives alone are not directly reliant on the tower that Rapunzel lives in, the tower represents what Haase describes as a place that signifies alienation (“Children” 363). Despite the different physical spaces, Rapunzel’s tower as a place of alienation was mirrored in the YouTubers’ use of their homes as the place of alienation. Except for wolfsrule100, each content creator expressed their desire to resume their pre-pandemic lives outside of their homes without the fear of potential danger.

The Alteration of a Home Space Theme

As is common in fairy tale structures, familiar and comforting places transforming into places of discomfort and danger was also present in the experiences of many during the pandemic as showcased by the YouTubers. Most of the YouTubers highlighted a constant desire to fill their days with activities to prevent themselves from succumbing to the boredom of quarantining. Though the daily activities of different YouTubers differed slightly, the need to cope with the repetition of day-to-day life was present in each video. The places that these YouTubers inhabited changed from being places of comfort to an uncomfortable, almost prison-like structure where escape seemed unlikely, similar to how Rapunzel viewed her tower. In Rapunzel’s case, the tower she was locked in was a place of comfort from the outside world even if she longed to leave it due to the fear of the supposed danger she would face if she left. It was not until she ended up escaping the tower that what was once her home shifted into being understood as a place of confinement.

As discussed in the previous paragraph, the idea of comforting and familiar spaces becoming distorted is a common fairy tale narrative. Haase explains that “even familiar locations—including home—can become defamiliarized and threatening, as in ‘Hansel and Gretel’” (“Children” 364). In tales like “Hansel and Gretel” that deal with exile due to danger, Haase insists that the “home itself becomes an ambiguous location, embodying both the danger of violence and ultimate security. When violence upsets their familiar environment, the children are physically dislocated and forced into exile, into a defamiliarized

perception of home” (364). He relates these tales to children in war and how the dangers they experienced led to their perception of home becoming altered. In the case of the YouTubers and many around the world, quarantine was either strongly advised or enforced, and while they did not deal with the exile that Haase discusses, the feeling of imprisonment and needing to cope with the boredom that came with it also led to altered perceptions of their homes.

In the videos created by Tewers, Sng, The Carnahan Fam, and ajsmithmusic, they all explain what their lives look like during quarantine while emphasizing their dissatisfaction with the repetition of day-to-day life. Actions such as watching TV, using social media, and sewing became coping mechanisms rather than leisurely activities. Before the pandemic, being able to spend time at home and do leisurely activities was the reward for many after a long workday or week. With the pandemic and confinement, however, home as a space of escape from the demands of the outside world no longer existed. Home was altered to become one’s whole world. In each video, the creators expressed their wonder about when the pandemic would end and allow them to freely go back outside; home thus became an imprisoning structure like Rapunzel’s tower. In *Tangled*, Rapunzel began to view her tower as a place of threat after she experienced freedom, and while I cannot for certain say that all who quarantined perceived their homes as threatening, the freedom taken away necessarily changed their perception of home. The transformation of home as a space of leisure into one which met the seemingly desperate need to cope with boredom is evidently negative, but the hope of a better future was present in each video just as it was in *Tangled*, which helped bring about some positivity.

The Use of Fairy Tales for Cultivating Hope

While fairy-tale narratives can be relatable to war, exile, and the concept of defamiliarization, the happy endings that exist within these tales are just as noteworthy. Zipes explores Ernst Bloch and J.R.R. Tolkien’s ideas of the utopian functions of fairy tales. He discusses an essay written by Bloch in 1930, which states that “the fairy tale narrates a wish fulfillment which is not bound by its own time and the apparel of its contents” (qtd. in Zipes 151). This wish fulfillment is expressed through the desires of characters that are manifested in their

“happily-ever-after” endings. As Bloch states, wish fulfillment being unbound allows readers to insert themselves into the tales they read. In times of hardship, this gives the reader the ability to cope with their reality and transport themselves into the realm of the marvelous where they can indulge in their desire to escape reality. Haase adds to the notion that fairy tales can be used as coping strategies by stressing that “the fairy tale’s potential as an emotional survival strategy [is] based on its ‘anticipation of a better world’ and its ‘future-oriented’ nature” (“Children” 361). Fairy tales can be used in this way by taking one’s reality and providing it with a narrative structure where readers can find solace in the hope of a happy ending despite the challenges they face. Haase provides an example of this strategy in the work of Ingrid Riedel, a psychotherapist who explained that she used fairy tales as allies in the chaos she experienced during war (366). In *Das Böse im Märchen*, Riedel describes how fairy tales granted a sort of structure to her life. When danger was near, she overcame her fear by remembering the fairy tale structure and the idea that the evil she was experiencing was only temporary and did not have the last word (qtd. in Haase, “Children” 366). While Riedel’s case deals with war, the idea of “evil” in a fairy tale having its time and place can also relate to the uncertainty that came with the pandemic. An example of this is presented in Tewers’ video.

Near the end of Tewers’ video, she sings to the audience words of encouragement by saying, “But it’s alright, we’re doing our part. Soon life as before will once again start . . . so someday when you look back, you’ll be proud of how you served.” The evil, in this case, would be COVID and the need to quarantine because of it, but Tewers reassures the audience that if they do their part to stay safe, things will return as they once were. As Riedel explains, this “evil” will not have the last word. This resonated with commenters such as Nate, who commented, “Okay, but why did this make me spontaneously burst into tears when it got more serious near the end?” It also motivated some, such as commenter xxsapphirexx_ who said, “Why did this actually motivate me to stay home more than anything else.” These connections made between the audience and Tewers relate to Lamerichs’s idea that “fandom is a way of making sense of the world through felt and shared experiences” (18). Tewers made the connection between her life and that of Rapunzel by echoing Rapunzel’s hope to experience normal life after she escaped the tower. Though it is not a guarantee that all who watched the video are part of the *Tangled* fandom, many viewers connected Tewers’ experience with quarantine to their own.

Zipis embraces Bloch’s belief that fairy tales thrive on the hopes and wish

projections of a protagonist who is usually the underdog and either discontented, deprived, or both (158). He notes that “Bloch places special emphasis on dissatisfaction as a condition which ignites the utopian drive” (158), which we can relate to audiences who are dissatisfied with life and crave the utopian version of their lives that fairy-tale characters usually get in the end. For a utopian version of a dissatisfactory life to be achieved, Bloch states that fairy tales serve as indicators that action needs to take place, which does not mean that tales are substitutes for action (Zipes 157). Instead, they can help shape it.

In the context of *Tangled*, Rapunzel had to act against her dissatisfaction with life to eventually reach her happily ever after, which started with her decision to leave her tower despite Gothel’s wishes. The YouTubers, specifically Tewers and wolfsrule100, highlighted this need to act, and their main motivation for taking action was due to their belief that things will eventually get better, something that Bloch coins as anticipatory illusion (Zipes 149). Bloch explains that anticipatory illusion is a sort of stimulant for one to act towards their utopian wishes even if they seem irrational. An end to the pandemic seemed far from reach as time had gone on, but wolfsrule100 and Tewers provided hope for the possibility of a better future.

In wolfsrule100’s case, her video centers around her dissatisfaction with the lack of care that people were taking during the pandemic. She focused mainly on those breaking quarantine rules, and her video served as a warning and a guideline for the actions that needed to be done to reach her version of utopia, which was the eventual end to the pandemic. In her video, she sings, “gullible, naive, going to a party is ditsy and a bit well, vague. Plus, I believe that we’re finally winning, I’m just saying let’s keep going. I understand, but staying inside will help you. All I have is one request: please don’t ever ask to leave this house again.” To wolfsrule100, she was certain that things were finally getting better due to people taking precautions, but those who were breaking quarantine rules were actively risking the progress that was being made. As the pandemic lasted longer than expected, people began to break quarantine rules, as they felt locking themselves up was not changing anything. Those like wolfsrule100 and Tewers genuinely believed that things were going to get better if everyone played their parts, and while some felt it was delusional, others like them kept their hopes up that this happily ever after could be achieved through confinement.

The Use of Fairy Tales for Cultivating Joy

Given the severity and length of the pandemic and quarantine, it is no surprise that many began to give up hope. While fairy tales have been able to provide hope and stimulate illusionary thinking for some readers throughout time, for others, their harsh realities trumped their ability to use tales as wish fulfillment to cope. An example of this is seen in Haase's inclusion of Magda Denes' work and her recounting of what it was like to be a Jewish child in wartime Hungary. Denes explains that "over the years of these whispered fables, I realized that my brother loved to tell them as much as I loved to listen to him. I also realized, with a thorn, that as the years passed, I believed the substance of these stories less and less. And then, less yet" (qtd. in Haase, "Children" 369). Unlike Riedel who found the fairy tale structure helpful in looking forward to a happy ending, Denes believed less in a utopian outcome as time passed. Instead of hope, the fairy tales that her brother told her brought her comfort. Haase adds that Denes did use aspects of fairy tales, like different fairy-tale landscapes, to connect her experiences with having to leave home and find a new one, but the idea of hope was not present (369). Just as the fairy tales brought Denes the feeling of comfort instead of hope, a few of the YouTube videos aimed to provide their audience with a fun way of relating their lives to the events in *Tangled*, to bring some joy to those who were struggling to find hope.

Ayden Sng, ajsmithmusic, and The Carnahan Fam all express that one of the reasons that they created their videos was to bring joy to those who were watching during hard times. Like Rapunzel at the beginning of *Tangled*, it was evident that the creators were having a hard time keeping themselves entertained while being stuck at home. But, they decided to take the similarities and make fun of their situations to entertain themselves and those watching. In his description box, Sng writes, "the song was done in jest and hope it brings some laughter and amusement to you during these trying times!" In the ajsmithmusic video description box, he too writes that the video was made to "bring a little Broadway joy into your life." At the end of The Carnahan Fam video, the singer explains that she hoped that the video had brought a little joy to those watching during the uncertain times that they were living in. Though the concept of hope was not highlighted, it did not mean that the videos had no purpose to being made, as they had specified that the reason for the videos was to

bring joy. Under The Carnahan Fam's video, commenter Lauren Hulme wrote, "Love it! The hand aching part especially!!!" and under Sng's video, commenter Tsunshine Gal wrote, "Creative, hilarious, & relatable! Wow theatrical quality! Bravo." Under ajsmithmusic's video, Brian Johnson commented, "Love it !!! This is hysterical !!" These comments reveal that for some viewers, the videos did not necessarily give them hope or help provide them with an idea of a utopian future, but rather it was something fun for them to watch that they could relate to at the moment. The idea of bringing joy to a rather difficult situation allows the YouTubers and their audiences to look at their situations through a new lens. Though their home spaces became a place of confinement where they had to fight their way through boredom, being able to bring back joy grants them a way of re-establishing their homes as a place of comfort.

Conclusion

YouTube videos linking the creators' lives to Rapunzel, who also dealt with isolation as seen in *Tangled*, have become an additional way in which fairy tales have bridged the fantastical to reality. Like fairy tales throughout history, *Tangled* has been used as a coping mechanism for difficulty in life and provided an escape and a structure to people waiting out the isolation of the pandemic. The creators were able to reimagine the beginning story of Rapunzel in *Tangled* and create videos as a form of media to bring both hope and comfort to their audiences as well as a sense of togetherness through shared experiences. Fairy tales have always been used to deal with trauma, and these videos show how fairy tales are still being used to wrestle with traumatic experiences, specifically the COVID-19 pandemic, with a much wider reach made possible by social media and the creation of fan fiction. Though the videos become less relatable as time passes, the comments left and the feelings that existed back then when watching the videos will live on.

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