

# Story Inspiration

## Inspiration Source

### The Ungrateful Son

**The Brothers Grimm** (Translation by Margaret Hunt, Arrangement by Canterbury Classics Note: The use of this arrangement is not for profit)

A man and his wife were once sitting by the door of their house, and they had a roasted chicken set before them, and were about to eat it together. Then the man saw that his aged father was coming, and hastily took the chicken and hid it, for he would not permit him to have any of it. The old man came, took a drink, and went away. Now the son wanted to put the roasted chicken on the table again, but when he took it up, it had become a great toad, which jumped into his face and sat there and never went away again, and if any one wanted to take it off, it looked venomously at them as if it would jump on their face, so that no one would venture to touch it. And the ungrateful son was forced to feed the toad every day, or else it fed on his face; and thus he went about the world without knowing peace.

## Discussion ✦

- The main elements of the story to understand are the father and the toad.
  - The father is an embodiment of tradition, where you come from, where you draw your identity from
  - The toad represents ambiguous identity. It is neither from the land or the water, but both. It does not have a clear home, and so its identity is confused.
- The ungrateful son chooses to dishonor, reject (not feed) his father (his tradition), and so the chicken (food, potential that could have become something good) turns to a toad and jumps on and covers his face. The face is how we present ourselves, our identity, to the world. By rejecting his tradition, the son disrupts and distorts his own identity with something gross and ambiguous.
- Without a clear identity, the son is now a social pariah, and he is rejected by the world. Remembrance is an orientation towards something. You have to face in the direction you want to travel in order to get there. In order to achieve a goal, you must define a goal and stick to it, ie remember it.

## Leading Questions

- Continuation In Pop-Culture: In the Pixar movie “Coco,” the character Chicharron in the Land of the Dead fades from existence when there is no one alive left to remember him. Here, again, remembrance is what holds identity together. What are some other examples you can think of? (where not actively remembering causes identity to fade)
- Where in scripture do we see this pattern of remembrance and identity (Hint: all throughout! But for a clear example, read the opening chapters of Exodus! “There arose a new king in Egypt who knew not Joseph...” What did Joseph do that was worth remembering? What happened when the new pharaoh stopped remembering?)?)
- Where do we see this pattern manifesting in today’s world climate? (Tearing down statues, rejecting the founding principles of the West, what is taught/not taught in history classes) What are the visible and invisible consequences?

## Takeaways

- *Remembrance is what separates ambiguity from Identity*
- *This is why we remember the departed, ask Christ to “Remember me, Lord, in Your Kingdom,” “May his memory be eternal”*
- *Show honor, respect to that which has been given to us from above, that which is above us (Honor your Mother and Father)*