

She immediately agreed to be his bride. Together they ran back to her castle to tell her father. He looked at Tufty and saw how kind and gentle this young prince was, and also how clever. This made him very happy indeed.

Since the preparations had already been made, the wedding took place the very next day.

Tufty took the princess home to his castle. There they lived happily ever after.



TUFTY RIQUET



An Old Fairy Tale



A LearningIsland.org
15 - Minute Book

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Tufty Riquet/An Old Fairy Tale

Summary: An tale of whether it is better to be beautiful or smart.

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“Except for my ugliness,” said Riquet, “have you anything against me? Do you object to my birth, my character, or my manners?”

“Not at all,” replied the Princess, “I love those things in you. You are the kind of man any woman would love, except for your looks.”

“If that is so,” answered Riquet, “I shall indeed be made happy. You can make me one of the most handsome of men if only you will desire it.”

The princess looked at him in surprise. “How is that so?” she asked.

“Madam, the same fairy came to both of our births. She gave to me the power to give cleverness to whoever I should love.

“She gave you a gift also. You have the power to make beautiful the one who you love.”

“If that is the case,” cried the Princess, “I desire with all my heart that you might be the most handsome and pleasing Prince in the world.”

No sooner had the Princess spoke these words than her wish came true. Though some say that no change really took place in Tufty, the Princess loved him so much that to her he was the most handsome of men.

The Princess was more surprised than ever. All at once she remembered. It was just a year ago that very day that she had promised to marry the ugly Tufty Riquet.

The reason that she had not remembered her promise before was that she was foolish when she made it. When she became smart she had forgotten all the stupid things she had done.

She had only walked on a few steps further, when Riquet appeared before her. He was magnificently dressed, as a Prince about to marry.

“Here you see me, madam,” said he, “keeping my word. I have no doubt that you also came here to keep yours. By giving me your hand you will make me the happiest of men.”

“I frankly confess,” replied the Princess, “that I have not yet made up my mind. I do not think I can ever do as you wish.”

“You surprise me, madam,” said Riquet.

“I can believe that,” said the Princess. “If you were not a good and clever man, I should not know how to act. But you are well aware that it was when I was stupid I promised to marry you. Now, as you may imagine, I am not so easily pleased.”



TUFTY RIQUET

Once upon a time there was a Queen. She had the ugliest little baby you ever saw. It was so ugly that it was almost impossible to believe he was a little boy at all.

A fairy, however, assured his mother that the little baby would be very good and clever. She said that she was also giving him a gift which would allow him to make the person he loved as good and as clever as himself.

This made the Queen feel better, but still she was very unhappy. Her son was still very ugly. However, no sooner had he begun to speak than he could talk about all sorts of things. He also was so kind that people were charmed with him.

I forgot to say, that, when he was a baby, he had a funny little tuft of hair on his head. That's why he was called Tufty Riquet, for Riquet was the family name.

When Tufty was seven years old, the Queen of a nearby kingdom had two baby girls. One girl was so beautiful that the Queen nearly died of joy when she saw her.

The same fairy who had given Tufty his gift of cleverness appeared. To keep the Queen from getting too excited, the fairy told her that this little Princess would not be at all clever. Instead she would be as stupid as she was beautiful.

The Queen became very sad. She felt even more troubled when she saw her other daughter. The second Princess was very ugly.

“Do not be too sad, madam,” said the fairy. “This second daughter will be so clever that it will hardly be noticed that she is not beautiful.”

“Well, if it must be so, it must,” said the Queen. “But I would have liked the older one, who is beautiful, to be just a little bit clever too.”



**“TO THINK IT OVER SHE WENT
INTO THE WOOD.”**

However, one prince finally came. He was so powerful, rich, clever and handsome, that she could not help liking him.

Her father saw this and told her she was quite free to choose any man she wished. The Princess thanked him, and asked for time to think about it.

Then, to think it over, she went by chance, into the wood where she had met Tufty Riquet.

While she was walking, deep in thought, she heard a loud noise beneath her feet. It sounded like many people rushing back and forth.

She listened carefully and she heard a voice say, “Bring me the saucepan.”

Another voice cried, “Put some wood on the fire.”

At the same time the earth opened up. The princess looked down and saw a big kitchen full of cooks. They were preparing a magnificent banquet, and everyone was hard at work.

The Princess was astonished at this sight. She asked the men who for they were working for.

“For the Prince Tufty Riquet,” answered the head cook. “Tomorrow is his wedding day.”

“I can do nothing for her mind, madam,” replied the fairy. “But for her beauty I can. As there is nothing I would not do to please you, I will give her a gift so that she can make the one who wins her heart beautiful too.”

As the Princesses grew up, their gifts grew with them. Everyone spoke about the beauty of the one and the cleverness of the other.



But the princesses' defects grew also. Soon everyone saw that the younger one grew uglier every day.

The older one also became more stupid. She either said nothing in reply to a question, or something quite silly.

She was so clumsy that she could not set four china pots on the mantle without breaking one. She could not drink a glass of water without spilling half of it on her dress.

It is a great thing to have beauty. However, the younger one almost always got more attention than her older sister.

At first, everybody would gather around the beautiful one and admire her. But before long they would leave her for the clever Princess. They wanted to listen to her pleasant conversation.

After only fifteen minutes; the older one would be left alone, while the other would be the center of a group.

The older sister noticed this, in spite of her stupidity. She would gladly have given all her beauty for half the cleverness of her sister.

Sometimes the Queen, although full of kindness, would reproach her daughter for her foolishness. This caused the Princess to almost die of grief.

Word of her change was soon spread abroad. All the young Princes of the neighboring kingdoms asked for her hand in marriage. But she found something wrong with each of them.



“If that is all that troubles you, I can soon put an end to your grief,” said Riquet. “I have the power of giving cleverness to the person whom I love the best. If only you will marry me, you shall become as clever as you can wish.”

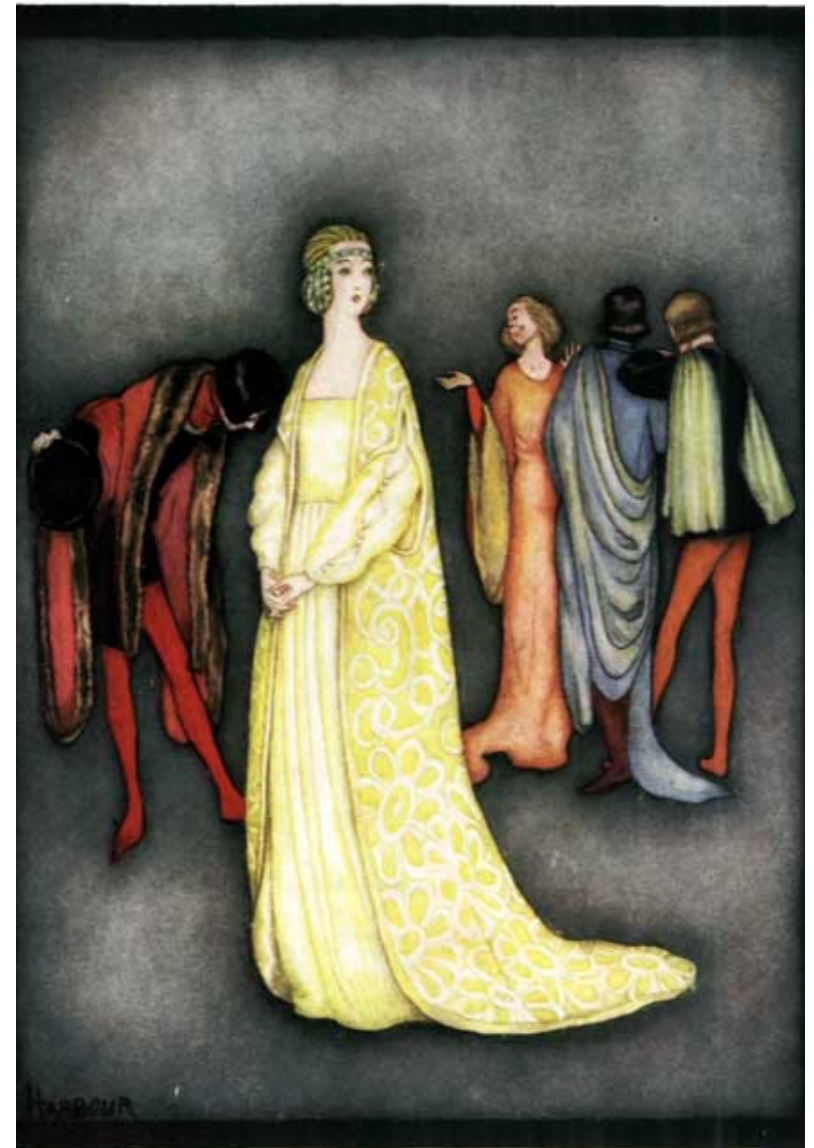
The Princess was greatly astonished, but stayed silent.

“I can see,” continued Tufty, “that this proposal has not made you happy. I am not astonished. I will give you a year to think about it.”

So great was the longing of the Princess to be clever, that she quickly promised to marry Tufty in a year's time. No sooner had she made the promise than a great change took place in her. She found she could say all sorts of pleasant things, on all sorts of subjects.

At once she began a conversation with Tufty. She made such brilliant remarks, that he almost thought he had given her all his cleverness and had kept none for himself.

When the Princess returned to the Palace, everyone was astonished at the sudden change. Instead of saying stupid things, or nothing at all, she was now full of beautiful ideas. And she could talk easily on many subjects.



THE BEAUTIFUL PRINCESS

Painted by Jennie Harbour

One day she had hidden in a wood to feel sorry for herself. Suddenly she saw a little man coming towards her. He was very ugly, but he was very richly dressed.



It was the young Prince Tufty Riquet, who had fallen in love with the pictures he had seen of her. He had left his father's kingdom to try and find her.

He was delighted to meet her alone in the woods. He politely introduced himself and began to talk to her. Soon he noticed how sad she was.

“I cannot understand how anyone as beautiful as you, can be as sad as you seem to be;” he said.

“Although I have seen many beauties, not one of them has ever been as beautiful as you.”

“Thank you, sir,” replied the Princess. Then she fell silent again.

“Beauty,” Tufty said, “is so delightful that one would give everything for it. If anyone is beautiful I can't understand how anything could trouble you.”

“I would rather be as ugly as you,” answered the Princess, “and be clever. It would be much better than to be as beautiful as I am, and be stupid.”

“To think you are stupid is a sure sign that you have some smarts,” replied Tufty.

“I don't think about that,” said the Princess. “But I am quite sure that I am very silly, and the grief of that is killing me.”