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Riquet with the Tuft

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Once upon a time, there was a queen who had a baby boy. Now you would think she would be over the moon and she was, but there was one problem. You could say that this was the ugliest baby ever born. A good fairy assured the queen that she didn't have to worry. This baby had a beautiful personality. In addition, he was smart and funny, so he would be loved by many.

The good fairy also said that she had given the boy a gift that would make him able to make the one he loved most as smart as him. The queen noticed that the boy indeed knew a lot and made everyone laugh with his funny jokes. The boy got the name Riquet with the Tuft, because he had a funny little tuft on his head. And Riquet was a family name.



Seven years later the queen in a neighbouring kingdom had twins. The first born was a beautiful girl. The queen was visited by a fairy who congratulated her on the beauty of the child, but also told her the baby was dumb. The queen got very sad, but it got worse when the second baby was born. She was extremely ugly.

'Don't you worry,' said the fairy. 'The youngest will be so smart that no one will notice that she is not pretty.' 'Ok let's hope so,' sighed the queen. 'But is there something we can do that the oldest will be a bit smarter too?' 'I can't help her wits,' said the fairy, 'but I can give her a gift that she can make whom she loves pretty too.'

Everybody was impressed by the beauty of the firstborn and the cleverness of the youngest. But the stupidity of the eldest started to get noticed more and more over the years. At first the beautiful eldest daughter would get all the attention, but it didn't take long for the attention to go to the younger, smarter princess. Because everyone was captivated by her interesting stories.

One day the eldest ran into the woods, very sad. There she met a little man. He was unusually ugly, but dressed nicely. It was the young prince, Riquet with the Tuft. He fell in love with the princess from photos and wanted to meet her. He was happily surprised to see her in the forest, but he soon noticed that she was very sad.

With all his charm and jokes he eventually made her laugh. She was so amused that in an impulse she said she would marry him.

Immediately a big transformation occurred. She discovered she could suddenly say interesting things. 'Because you want to marry me, I have given you my cleverness,' said Riquet to the princess. 'But I will give you one year to think about it.' The princess promised to marry Riquet in one year.



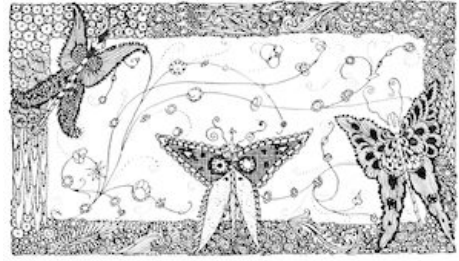
The change in the princess was noticed soon by others. Princes from all over the world came to marry her. No one was suitable, she thought. Until one day a gorgeous, rich and smart prince arrived. She couldn't help but to approve him and her father said she was free to choose who she wanted to marry.

The princess walked through the forest to think about if this was the right prince to marry. At that moment the earth split open and a big kitchen was revealed with dozens of cooks, busy preparing a feast. The princess asked for who it was. 'For prince Riquet with the Tuft,' answered the chef, 'because he's getting married tomorrow.'

The princess suddenly remembered that one year ago she promised prince Riquet to marry him. She had forgotten, because she had forgotten all the foolish things she had done in the past. A little further she ran into Riquet. 'I'm sorry,' said the princess. 'At the time I made stupid judgment. I know you are kind and smart, but I hope you understand that I have changed and that I won't settle down for just anyone.'

'Except for my ugliness,' said Riquet, 'Is there anything about me you don't like? Is it my personality or my manners?' 'There is absolutely nothing wrong with those,' answered the princess, 'those are the things about you I appreciate highly.' 'If that is the case,' said Riquet, 'then you can make me the most gorgeous man of all. Because the same fairy who gave me my gift of sharing my intelligence, has given you a gift too. You can share your beauty with the one you love.'

‘If that is true,’ called the princess, ‘then I wish with all my heart that you are the prettiest and best prince of the world!’ Immediately her wish was answered...though some say that Riquet hadn’t changed at all. But the princess loved him so much that she saw his ugliness as prettiness. Yes, she wanted to be his wife. And because the preparations were already done, they married the very next day.’



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