



Off With Their Heads

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Fable, Retold Fairy Tales

Not all stories begin with a “Once upon a time”. Some begin with a sadness so melancholy it’s nearly impossible to imagine; others start with a sugary sweetness like the birth of a princess, beautiful and sweet. A few wake up to lilting lilac dreams and the sounds of giggling children and gurgling babies. But only one begins with a death.

On the eighteenth of November at precisely 11:34 AM in the afternoon, Elizabeth Ida Fèlicie, known to some as Elizabeth, to some as Lizzy, and to the kingdom of hearts, as Queen, became part of our small world. When she came into the world she cried like most babies do. However, no one heard her, for her mother had died at childbirth. This is where our story wakes up from its slumber, raising its arms to welcome the morning.

A few hours after her birth, a young man who happened to be passing by heard her wailing and stopped by her house. Curious to what could be happening inside, he knocked on the door, probably expecting some ill tempered mother teaching her misbehaving child a lesson... no one answered. He tried using the old fashioned bejeweled doorbell... no luck. He even gave a try at rapping the window, but to no avail. Finally, as a last ditch attempt he climbed the water pipes on the side of the house and stomped on the roof. Yet no matter how much noise he made, no one would let him in, and the wailing simply wouldn’t stop! Eventually, he went off the roof, and on his way.

The next day, when the man was passing by, he heard the wailing, louder than the crack of a bell, louder than heaven or hell. Still curious, he knocked on the door again. No reply. After contemplating his options, he went ahead and tried the doorknob. The door slid open like butter on a warm slice of sourdough bread. Inside, he found a holy mess of a house. Throw pillows and feathers were scattered across the blackened carpet of the sitting room. Books, ripped papers, and quills covered the mahogany desks and scratched up hardwood floors. In the dining room a slashed table cloth was half off the dining table. Overturned chairs were hazardously

thrown all over. There were stains on the pale pink wallpaper. After tripping over several chairs and a dead pigeon, the man finally identified where the wailing was coming from.

The wailing was coming from the master bedroom on the second floor down two corridors to the left, and one long daunting hallway to the right. As the man inched closer to the room, the wailing grew more and more unbearable. Unable to stand it any longer, the man broke into a crazed sprint. He sprinted across the hallway and into the room where he saw a most melancholy sight. Inside the master bedroom, on the elegant canopy bed, lay a once beautiful woman. She had silky ebony hair that seemed to shine under the dim lighting from the barred windows. On her neck was a faded crimson ribbon. On the ribbon were the words "here lies Idaliz Fèlicie". They were scrawled in a midnight black ink with other little dots scattered around the words. Idaliz's baby blue nightgown was tattered, torn and covered in dirty gray stains. In her hands was a baby.

Over the course of the next few years, the man brought the baby up by himself. He named her Elizabeth Ida Fèlicie. He chose to give Elizabeth her mother's last name. Elizabeth soon grew to be a pretty little child. She had her mother's ebony hair and gorgeous crimson lips. One peculiar thing about Elizabeth was that whenever she was curious about something, her sapphire blue eyes seemed to grow bigger and little red flecks danced around her irises. Elizabeth had always thought of the man as a father. Though they were poor, they always had enough food to survive. Because Elizabeth was usually preoccupied with her friends or schoolwork, she never questioned how they got food and money. One day, Elizabeth arrived home from school early. She quickly finished her schoolwork, then started cleaning up the table for dinner. Suddenly, she had a brilliant idea. To repay him for all his kindness to her, she would cook a meal. But to cook meal you need food. To get food, you need money. So, Elizabeth emptied out her school bag and slipped on her shoes to go get some money from the man.

The only problem was, she didn't know where the man worked!

Elizabeth looked all around the village in which she lived. Soon it was getting dark and she was feeling disappointed because she wouldn't be able to make the man a meal. Sighing in defeat, she started home. That's when she heard a loud yelp from across the street. Worried that someone had been hurt, she scampered over and found one of her friends yelping at the top of her lungs "PICKPOCKET!!!THIEF!!!!" Upon asking her friend what had been stolen, she noticed a swiftly moving shadow running away. After Elizabeth finished talking to her friend about what had been stolen (a loaf of rosemary bread and some coins), she continued on her way home.

When she arrived, the man cheerfully greeted her and asked her to set the table while he finished cooking. Once she had finished setting the table, the man smiled and said, "Tonight I have a special treat! Rosemary

bread...and I even have a few coins to spare!”

Suddenly Elizabeth realized why the who the shadow that ran was ...it must of been the man.

“Well? What are you waiting for, dig in!” Exclaimed the man.

“I’m sorry,” said Elizabeth, “But I cannot eat this food.”

The man frowned, “Why not?”

“Because it was stolen.” The man froze. Elizabeth just looked sad. “Sir,” she began, “you have always been kind to me and provided me with food...but if the way you get the food isn’t right, then it isn’t right to eat the food. I’m sorry...I just can’t.”

The next day on her way to school, Elizabeth stopped at the constables office to turn the man in. She had figured that he would simply get a public warning or perhaps a small fine. She just hoped he wasn’t mad at her; she wished for anything but for him to be mad at her. For about a week after she had turned him in, nothing happened...until a cold February day. When Elizabeth had arrived home there was a note on the table.

Wondering what it could possibly be for, she put down her school bag, and picked up the note. The note said: “Your presence is requested at the village square” curious, she went to the village square where a most fearsome sight greeted her. The entire village had gathered around a wooden stage in the middle of the square. On the stage was a long pole. Tied to the pole, was the man. Next to the man was a large ax. Elizabeth stifled a scream as she realized what his punishment was. Just then, the constable walked onto stage, his footsteps echoing around the square. Once he was at the center of the stage, he cleared his throat and said, “Mr. Heart Alice Rebut, you are here charged on thievery.”

There was a collective gasp. The constable waited a moment for the crowd to soak in the news. Then, he continued. “Mr. Heart Alice Rebut, the time has come for you to pay for your villainous crimes...”

There was a loud applause. Elizabeth was elbowing her way to the stage.

“As for your sentence, we have decided on a death penalty,” the constable stroked the ax thoughtfully.

Elizabeth was almost at the stage...almost...

The constable smiled, “Off with his head.”

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