

WARM FURRY FAIRY STORY

Once upon a time a long, long time ago, there lived two very happy people called Ian and Maggie, with two children called John and Lucy. To understand how happy they were you have to understand how things were in those days. You see in those days everyone was given at birth a small soft furry bag. Anytime a person reached into the bag they were able to pull out a warm furry. Warm furries were very much in demand because whenever somebody was given a warm furry it made them feel warm and furry all over. People who didn't get warm furries regularly were in danger of developing a sickness in their backs which caused them to shrivel up and die.

In those days it was very easy to get warm furries. Any time that somebody felt like it, they might walk up to you and say, "I'd like a warm furry please". You would reach into your bag and pull out a furry the size of a little girls hand. As soon as the furry saw the light of day, it would smile and blossom into a large shaggy warm furry. You would then lay it on the persons shoulder or lap or head and it would snuggle up and melt right against their skin and make them feel well warm and furry all over. People were always asking each other for warm furries, and since they were always given away freely, getting enough was never a problem. There were always plenty to go round, and as a consequence, everyone was happy and felt warm and furry most of the time.

One day a bad witch became angry because no one was buying her potions and salves. This witch was very clever and she devised a very wicked plan. One beautiful morning she crept up to Ian while Maggie was playing with their daughter and whispered in his ear, "see here Ian, look at all the warm furries that Maggie is giving to Lucy. You know if she keeps it up eventually she is going to run out and there won't be any left for you". Ian was astonished. He turned to the witch and said "Do you mean to tell me that there isn't a warm furry in our bag every time we reach down into it?" And the witch said "No absolutely not, and once you run out, that's it. You don't have any more".

With this she flew away cackling hysterically.

Ian took this to heart and began to notice every time Maggie gave a warm furry to someone else. Eventually he got worried and upset, because he liked Maggie very much, and did not want to give up her warm furies. He certainly didn't think it was right for Maggie to be spending all her warm furies on the children and other people. He began to complain every time he saw Maggie give a warm furry to someone else, and because Maggie liked him very much, she stopped giving warm furies to other people as often, and reserved them for him.

The children watched this and soon they began to get the idea that it was wrong to give warm furies any time you were asked or felt like it. They too became very careful. They would watch their parents closely and whenever they felt that one of the parents was giving too many warm furies to others, they also began to object. They began to feel worried whenever they gave away too many warm furies. Even though they found a warm furry every time they reached into their bag, they began to reach in less and less and became more and more stingy. Soon people began to notice the lack of warm furies and they began to feel less and less warm and furry. They began to shrivel up and occasionally, people would die from lack of warm furies. More and more people went to the witch for her potions and salves even though they didn't seem to work.

Well the situation was getting very serious indeed. The bad witch who had been watching all of this didn't really want people to die, so she devised a new plan. She gave everyone a bag that was similar to the furry bag, except that this one was cold while the furry bag was warm. Inside the witch's bag were cold pricklies. These cold pricklies did not make people feel warm and furry, but made them feel cold and prickly instead. But they did prevent people's backs from shrivelling up. So from then on, every time somebody said, "I want a warm furry please", people who were worried about depleting their supply would say "I can't give you a warm furry but would you like a cold prickly instead?" Sometimes two people would walk up to each other, thinking they would get a warm furry, but one or the other of them would change their mind and they would end up giving each other cold pricklies instead.

So the end result was that while very few people were dying, a lot of people were still unhappy and feeling very cold and prickly.

The situation got very complicated because since the coming of the witch, there were less and less warm furies around, so warm furies which used to be thought of as free as air became extremely valuable. This caused people to do all sorts of things to obtain them. Before the witch had appeared, people used to gather in groups of four or, five or, six never caring too much who was giving warm furies to whom. After the coming of the witch, people began to pair off and to reserve all their warm furies for each other exclusively. If ever one of the two partners forgot themselves and gave a warm furry to someone else, they would immediately feel guilty about it because they knew their partner would probably resent the loss of a warm furry. People who could not find a generous partner had to BUY their warm furies and had to work long hours to earn the money.

Another thing which happened was that some people would take cold pricklies which were limitless and freely available, coat them with white fluff and pass them off as warm furies. These counterfeit warm furies were really plastic furies and they caused additional difficulties. For instance, two people would get together and freely exchange plastic furies which should presumably make them feel good, but they came away feeling bad instead. Since they thought they had been exchanging warm furies, people grew very confused about this never realising that their cold prickly feelings were really the result of the fact that they had been given a lot of plastic furies. So the situation was very, very dismal and it all started with the coming of the witch who made people believe that some day when they least expected, they might reach into their furry bag and find no more warm furies.

Then one day a young woman came to this unhappy land. She hadn't heard of the bad witch, and wasn't worried about running out of warm furies. She gave them out freely, even when not asked.

They called her the furry woman, and disapproved of her because she was giving the children the idea that they shouldn't worry about running out of warm furies. The children liked her very much and felt good around her, and they too began to give out warm furies whenever they felt like it and always when asked. The grown ups became concerned and they decided to pass a law to protect the children from depleting their supply of warm furies. The law made it a criminal offence to give warm furies in a reckless manner. The children, however, seemed not to care, and in spite of the law, they continued to give each other warm furies whenever they felt like it and always when asked. Because there were many, many children almost as many as grown ups it began to look as if maybe they would have their way.

The grown ups were very worried and gathered together to decide what to do. They talked and talked and talked but, no one really knew what to do. At last it was decided that, to protect the children they must lock up the furry woman. There was one problem however, they had no prisons. In this happy land they had had no need to lock anyone up as, until the coming of the witch everyone had been happy and had felt warm and furry most of the time. In fact no one had even any locks on their doors. After a long talk it was decided that Ian and Maggie's house would be turned into the prison and that Ian would stand guard.

Ian watched as his beautiful house was changed and the children and Maggie moved out. He was very, very sad as he liked his house very much and would miss Maggie and the children very much. He was so sad that by the time it was all finished he was crying. When all was ready the grown ups went to get the furry woman and, brought her to Ian's house. She was put in and the door was shut and locked behind her. Now because they were not really bad people, they had let her keep her warm furry bag. After this Ian settled down to watch.

The days passed slowly for Ian and although Maggie would come each morning with his breakfast he grew more and more unhappy. The more he thought of the furry woman locked in the house the sadder he became.

As time wore on worry lines began to appear on Ian's face and under his eyes dark rings appeared. Ian looked so sad that the furry woman began to feel sorry for him.

One night when Ian was sleeping outside the window, the furry woman reached into her bag and drew out a warm furry. She carefully lent out of the window and placed the warm furry on his shoulder. The warm furry smiled and blossomed and melted against Ian's skin. As the furry woman watched a smile began to grow on his lips. As his smile grew he made a contented sound like a cat purring. Then the worry lines which had appeared on his face began to melt and disappear and the dark rings under his eyes faded away completely.

When Maggie arrived the next day Ian was wide awake and smiling from ear to ear. Before Maggie could speak Ian had reached into his bag and placed a warm furry on her shoulder. He then went to each of the children in turn and did the same. Soon they were all feeling well warm and furry all over. As they laughed and played in the garden the furry woman sat inside the house and smiled a rather sad smile.

When the grown ups had locked up the furry woman all the children had missed her very much. So when they heard the laughter coming from the garden it was not long before lots and lots of children began to arrive. Ian and Maggie were feeling so warm and furry that without thinking they began to give out warm furies to everyone they could see. Soon some grown ups came to see what the noise was all about. No sooner had they arrived than someone would give them a warm furry. So that by dinner time the garden was full of people, grown ups and children, who were all laughing and playing and feeling well, warm and furry all over.

Far away on the mountain top the witch heard all the noise and decided to investigate. She got out her broom and flew off.

As she came close to the garden and saw what had happened she became very angry and let out a great big shriek. In the garden everyone was so happy and feeling so warm and furry that no one heard the witch's cry. Down she swooped, right into the middle of the crowd. As she landed she spotted Ian going to the door of the house to set the furry woman free. The witch roughly pushed her way through the crowd towards Ian. When she got to the door she reached out a hand to stop him. When Ian felt a hand on his shoulder he turned and without thinking reached into his bag and placed a warm furry on the witch's shoulder.

The witch gave a horrible shout "No, no, no, no" she screamed. At this Ian turned back to look and what a sight he saw. There was smoke coming from where the warm furry had melted against the witch's skin. Before his astonished eyes her back began to shrivel up and she crumpled to the ground as she fell there was an enormous shriek "Aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaagh". At this sound everybody in the garden went quiet and stopped to stare. The witch was shrinking. She got smaller and smaller and smaller and smaller. Until at last there was nothing left but a few wisps of smoke. Just then a gust of wind came along and blew even the smoke away. The witch was gone.

The people in the garden looked around at each other. Slowly they began to smile... and then to laugh. Soon everyone was laughing and giving out warm furries to everyone else. The furry woman was let out of the house and everyone gathered around and gave her lots and lots of warm furries to show how sorry they were.

After everyone had gone home Ian and Maggie and the children were left in the garden. As they sat there in the warm evening sun, they realised that for the first time since the coming of the witch they truly felt warm and furry all over. They all went to bed and slept a long and peaceful sleep.

News that the witch was dead quickly spread throughout the land.

As time passed grown ups noticed that all the cold prickly bags had disappeared and they began to worry less and less about running out of warm furies. So, the children again began to give them out freely, even when they were not asked. As for the furry woman, only the children saw her leave but, so they would not be sad and because only they had not believed the witch she gave each one in turn a great big warm furry from her bag. From that day every time a child remembered the furry woman they felt well, warm and furry all over.

Slowly the land returned to the way things were before the coming of the witch, except to this day grown ups still do not gather in groups of three or four or five and give each other warm furies and they still tend to reserve their warm furies for their partners. Only the children, who remember the furry woman, give each other warm furies whenever they feel like it and always when asked.

THE END