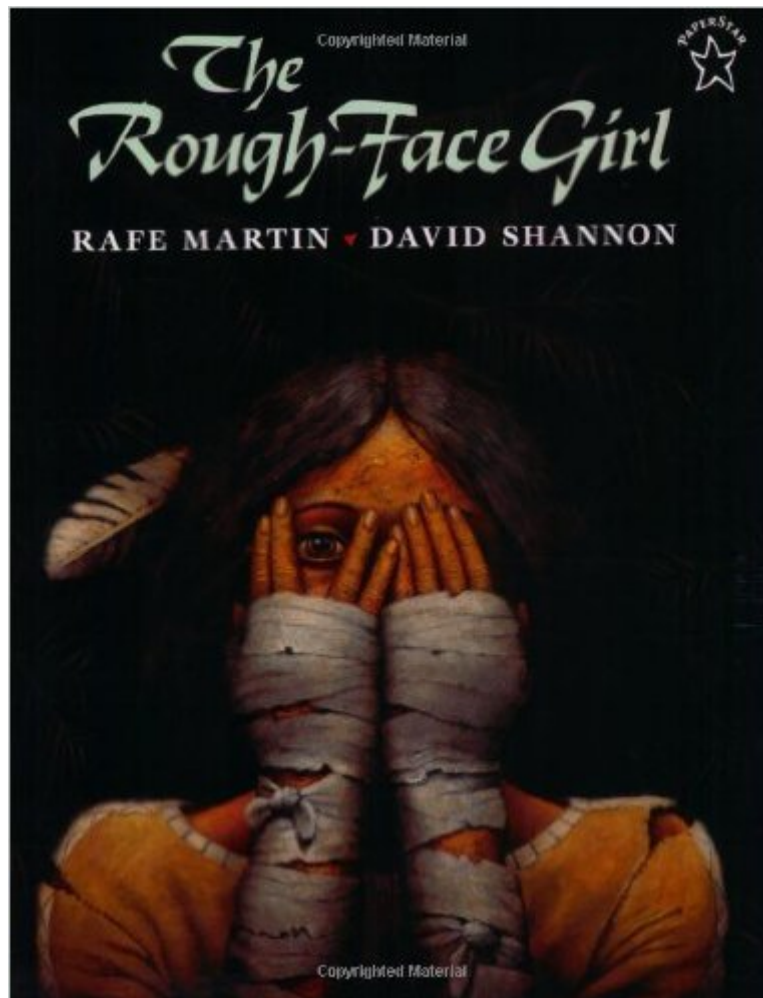


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The Rough-Face Girl



Synopsis

From Algonquin Indian folklore comes one of the most haunting, powerful versions of the Cinderella tale ever told. In a village by the shores of Lake Ontario lived an invisible being. All the young women wanted to marry him because he was rich, powerful, and supposedly very handsome. But to marry the invisible being the women had to prove to his sister that they had "seen" him. And none had been able to get past the sister's stern, all-knowing gaze. Then came the Rough-Face girl, scarred from working by the fire. Could she succeed where her beautiful, cruel sisters had failed?

Book Information

Lexile Measure: AD540L (What's this?)

Paperback: 32 pages

Publisher: Puffin Books; Reissue edition (April 13, 1998)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0698116267

ISBN-13: 978-0698116269

Product Dimensions: 8 x 0.2 x 10.3 inches

Shipping Weight: 4.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (113 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #9,162 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #8 in [Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Multicultural Stories > Native North & South Americans](#) #9 in [Books > Children's Books > Fairy Tales, Folk Tales & Myths > Multicultural](#) #15 in [Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Social Sciences > Folklore & Mythology](#)

Age Range: 4 - 8 years

Grade Level: 3 and up

Customer Reviews

I first read a version of the Algonquin Cinderella story in the collected folktale book, "World Tales", compiled by Idries Shah. The version repeated in that book and then retold in "The Rough-Face Girl" is almost perfectly identical. In a way, this proves the entrancing nature of this tale, and its capacity for retellings. With Rafe Martin's book, one of the best Cinderella stories from around the globe (if not THE best) is accompanied by David Shannon's fabulous illustrations. The combination is incredible. In this tale, once an Algonquin girl lived with her father and cruel older sisters. These girls forced their younger sibling to feed their fires, causing her arms and face to become burnt and scarred. Her hair became charred and lifeless as well. Also in this village was an invisible man who

was rumored to be rich and powerful. One day the sisters decide to wed the Invisible Being (I guess they both figured on sharing him). When confronted by his sister, the girls are asked to describe his bow and the runner of his sled. Unable to do so, they are sent away. The next day the rough faced girl goes to do the same and she too meets with the sister of the Invisible Being. You can probably guess the rest. As Cinderella tales go, this one gives its heroine more of an active role than the European Cinderella ever had. Where Cinderella relies on a magical fairy godmother and a prince to track her down, the rough faced girl fashions her own clothing and sets out to meet the Invisible Being despite the taunts of the villagers that doubt her. True, this is a fairy tale and therefore subject to the idea that for women, fulfillment comes with a good marriage. But honestly, most tales rely on this conceit. This tale has elements of the Cupid/Psyche stories, Beauty and the Beast, and many others, while at the same time remaining a true and accomplished original. Shannon's accompanying illustrations are very interesting. Most artists that depict Native Americans in storybook form (like, say, "A Boy Called Slow") don't draw characters that display much in the way of emotion. Call it a different kind of racism, if you will. Shannon, however, seems to have taken heart from the fact that this is a fantasy and not a piece of non-fiction. His evil sisters sneer and flounce. As they parade through the village in their new clothes their noses are held quite high. His rough faced girl is never viewed directly, so long as she remains scarred and unhappy. The closest moment we get is when she is crouched beside the fire, the shadows playing on her face and bandaged arms. When at last she bathes in a lake and is revealed to be beautiful the moment, while nice, is accompanied by an odd illustration that conjures up the word "pin-up" more than anything else. In my favorite illustration, we see the Invisible Being towering over his new betrothed, obviously a really good looking dude. Shannon has a way of playing with light and shadow in this book that conceals as much as it reveals. I was particularly taken with the clever picture that displayed the Invisible Being astride the milky way, his waist made up the three stars that represent Orion's Belt. Truthfully, I am not well acquainted with the Algonquin way of life. I therefore cannot vouch that this book is perfectly faithful to the mode of dress and lives of its people. What I can ascertain is that the book is respectful to its subjects as well as its subject matter. It's a fabulous looking and sounding creation that every child, teen, and adult should be well-acquainted with. Worth a gander.

"Wretched" might be the biggest difference between the Algonquin Indian Cinderella and European Cinderellas. Over 1500 versions have been collected throughout the world. They have in common the themes that justice will prevail and evil will be punished. These are the common denominators,

no matter where the story may be set. "The Rough-Face Girl" takes place along the shores of Lake Ontario. She wasn't born with a rough face--her older sisters make her sit beside the fire and feed the flames. When the burning branches pop, sparks hit the girl, scarring her arms, her legs, her clothes, her face and her hair. She is a mess and is too embarrassed to go outside her wigwam. It is a wretched situation. One day the two sisters ask their father for all manner of dressy clothes because they plan to propose to the Invisible Being who lives in a giant wigwam across the village. Their father gives all he has and the two strut through the village, certain they will marry the Invisible Being. His sister awaits them at the door. The only requirement to marry him is to see him first. His sister quizzes them and learns immediately that they have not seen her brother. No, we don't know what his bow is made of. And, no, we don't know what his sled runner is made of? After foolishly strutting TO the wigwam, they have to drag themselves home, carrying shame and disappointment. The Rough-Face Girl wakes up one day and says she is going to marry the invisible Being. She has seen him. Her father has little left to give her, so she makes some things out of bark and reeds. People laugh at her as she walks to the giant wigwam. She describes the IB's bow and his sled runner. When the IB claims her, she has bathed in the lake, rejoicing when her scars wash off. "They live together in great gladness and were never parted." Evil is punished and justice triumphs. It's a happy-ever-after story, one of the "most magical, mysterious, and beautiful of all Cinderellas," (Author's note). As a footnote, I must comment on David Shannon's glowing, romantic artwork. He is the same illustrator of the David series. Click on one of these titles to see a difference in style just on the covers alone. No, David! David Gets in Trouble Alice The Fairy

I highly recommend the book Rough Faced Girl. I liked the book because the pictures are wonderfully detailed and expressive. The words are very descriptive and quickly paint a picture in my mind. For example, "...and truly she alone, saw in these things the sweet yet awesome face..." Or when her father describes his moccasins: "... my own old, worn, cracked, and stretched-out pair..." I liked the book also because of the message. The message says have courage to believe in yourself - even if no one else does. It stresses inner beauty not outer beauty or material things. I really enjoyed the imagery in this book.

I first heard of this book while watching reading rainbow on pbs...i had to have this book being of Cherokee Indian blood I am a mom and this book...once again was for myself...the artwork/illustrations are so compellingly beautiful that I tore three pages out and put them on my wall...the depiction of the American Indian 'Cinderella' emerging from the water hangs in

mybathroom...and the gossiping sisters hang in my foyer/hall by front door of my home...books like these make you feel so glad to be alive to experience little invaluable treasures such as these...this particular version of the classic European story of Cinderella is also an award-winning book...it is hard to find positive stories especially for the children/family like 'The Rough-Face Girl' I let my mother read it and she loved it also...

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