

# A Comparative Analysis of “Cupid and Psyche” and “Kvitebjørn kong Valemon”

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## Intro

This thesis will explore the similarities and differences between the myth of Cupid and Psyche, as displayed in the central part of Apuleius' Latin novel *The Golden Ass*, and the traditional Norwegian folktales "Østen for sol, vesten for måne" (East of the Sun, West of the Moon) and "Kvitebjørn kong Valemon" (The white bear king Valemon). The folktales are both found in the collection of folktales by P.C Asbjørnsen and J. Moe. "Østen for sol, vesten for mane", was the first of the two folktales to be included in the collection. Despite the striking similarities of the two folktales, the second was added somewhat later in volume two of the collection. In this thesis I will focus most on the latter of the two.

The similarity in terms of story patterns and plot was an element that immediately brought to the fore the key importance of marriage, trials marking the bildung of the protagonist, who always qualifies as a young female figure on the verge of matrimony. Through trials and suffering she has to prove herself worthy of the ritual passage of marriage and womanhood. This is also what sets these texts apart from the expected tropes of a myth or folktale. The norm is the brave hero seeking adventure and saving the damsel in distress, as much of written history is focused mainly around narratives about men. It is wrong to say that there are no myths, legends or fairy tales about women, but that they are often not the character that acts, but more the character that has actions done upon her.

To look closer at how this story functions as a myth I will use the book *Myth and Meaning* by Claude Lévi-Strauss. As well as being an anthropologist Lévi-Strauss is also a self-proclaimed structuralist (1995, p.8). I will also be using Vladimir Propp's *The Morphology of the folktale* to have a closer look at the folktale *Kvitebjørn Kong Valemon*. Furthermore, I will look at the structural elements that the texts have in common and what sets them apart.

Finally, I will look at the symbolic meaning of the stories to see what they can tell us about the cultures if which they sprung from. With mainly female protagonists one can assume that these tales would be more aimed towards a female audience. What do these tales tell about what were expected of women and what purpose did the tales serve in their time?

## The Historic Background of Norwegian folktales:

The Norwegian folktales were first collected by Per-Christian Asbjørnsen and Jørgen Moe, who set out during the summer of 1837 (Andersen, 2012, p. 192). The collecting and publishing of folktales was part of the effort to build the basis and identity for Norway as a nation in the first part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It is believed that the folktales have existed since the 14<sup>th</sup> century, mostly as an oral tradition. The black plague ravaged not only Norway but the whole of Europe in the mid-1300s, set a blank place for literary history in Norway. Most of the people who knew how to write died. This became the period where the Norse language disappeared and was more assimilated to Danish and Swedish, and became what we today call middle Norwegian (Andersen, 2012, p. 173). Even though the written language disappeared, it is still believed that the oral tradition of literature endured and that fairy tales from the time was passed on from generation to generation. The folktales used in this thesis might have existed since the 14<sup>th</sup> century, but their collection in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century might show some influence by the cultural situation at the time. (Andersen, 2012, p. 74). The gathering of folktales was special because they were published, not in Danish as would have been the common practice, but in a Norwegianised version of Danish that was closer to the way people actually spoke. This way the folktales are still experienced as completely Norwegian (Andersen, 2012, p. 193).

## Myths according to Levi-Strauss and a consideration of the source of the myth of Cupid and Psyche.

The myth of Cupid and Psyche appears in the second century novel by Apuleius, the golden ass. It takes up a considerably large portion of the book, and is presented as a story told within the story, told by an old hag to a beautiful young lady. The myth is told as an “old wife’s tale” to distract the young lady from her unfortunate circumstances (Apuleius, 1994, p. 74). One could then argue that the myth is told much in the same way as a fairy-tale would be. This is supported by the overall narrative of the myth which ends with a happy ending that differs from most Greek myths. In the myth, Psyche is born so beautiful that she is a target for Venus’s wrath. When Psyche starts being worshipped for her beauty, Venus sends her son Cupid to enamour Psyche to a most wretched man, and to enter a degrading marriage. This in connection with the prophecy that Psyche will marry someone even Jupiter fears, makes the reader, and Psyche’s family, think Psyche will marry a heinous beast. Instead Cupid takes her to his palace and makes her his wife, this fits with the prophecy because Jupiter has fallen for countless

women after being stung by Cupid's arrows. When Psyche abuses his trust, Cupid flees to his mother's house and Psyche is forced to carry out several tasks for Venus to prove her worth, and as an extension, to make herself worthy of her marriage to Cupid.

What is a myth, and what makes the myth about Cupid and Psyche seem more like a fairy tale than a myth? In the general sense, Lévi-Strauss defines a myth in his book *Myth and Meaning* (1995) as the way a pre-scientific society tries to find a total understanding of the universe (p.17). We can easily find examples of this when we look at how natural phenomena are attributed to gods and these can often transverse mythologies. The god of thunder can both mean Zeus of the Greek pantheon or Thor from Norse mythology. The goddess of love could be the Greek Venus or the Norse Freya. The physical aspects of the most important phenomena to a given group, are the ones who are attributed to gods. This might be why the god of the sun in the Egyptian mythology, Ra, is the most important in his mythology. In the Greek and Roman mythology, the sun is important, but less so than in the Egyptian. The god of the sun in Greek mythology, either Helios or Apollo, is widely known but the goddess of the sun in Norse mythology, Sól, is not really known at all. As we move further north the sun has a lesser impact on people's lives, and when it comes to the regions furthest north in Norway the sun doesn't even rise for large parts of the winter.

Does the myth of Cupid and Psyche function as a real myth in the sense of giving the believer an illusion of how the world operates, or does it work more like a fairy tale where the main contribution that is offered is entertainment? If we apply this notion of what a myth is to the myth of Cupid and Psyche it is clear to see that it does not quite fit the description. If the function of a myth is to give the illusion of understanding the universe, we need to look at the function of the myth of Cupid and Psyche or to see if there is a real function at all. The story is the depiction of how Cupid got his wife and how the child they conceived is pleasure. It is the function of the myth to explain pleasure as it is much longer than it actually has to be to get this message across. Compared to the natural phenomena that inspired the god of the sea, the god of the sky and the goddess of love, the creation of a goddess allocated to something as tangible as pleasure seems mildly unjustified.

To understand how this can still be considered a myth it is prudent to look at the source of the myth. The version of the myth retold in the *Golden Ass* is the primary source of the myth. Apuleius who was originally from a Roman colony in modern day Algeria and studied Greek culture in Carthage and Athens, and he later travelled to Egypt. The themes of this are evident in *The Golden Ass* with the inclusion of both Greek and Egyptian religions (p. xii). Lévi-Strauss illustrates the problems with collecting myths in his chapter "How myths become History" (p.

34-44) as some myths are collected as fragments that have no relation to other myths while some myths are found in a coherent narrative. Are the fragmented myths the more authentic ones, or are coherent myths more valid, given that they have been reshaped by natives to the cultures they sprung from (Lévi-Strauss, 1993, p. 35)? Because Apuleius grew up in a colony it is likely that he did not have the same associations with the Roman myths in the same sense as a native Roman might have. In this case Apuleius might reshape the myth to accommodate his own narrative. This is also something Lévi-Strauss briefly looks at when he discusses the differences between myths collected by outsiders and by members of the culture as if they were outsiders. In the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century myths were collected mainly by anthropologists and locals under the guidance of anthropologists with a certain order of myths to be organised (Lévi-Strauss, 1995, p. 35-36):

So it is extremely important to find out if there is a difference and, if there is, what kind of difference between traditions collected from the outside from those collected on the inside, though *as if* they were collected from the outside” (Lévi-Strauss, 1995, p.36-37)

This is not only something to consider when we look at Apuleius as the primary source of this myth, but also the practice of collecting folktales. Asbjørnsen and Moe were known to collect several similar folktales and combining them. The folktale I will be focusing on in this thesis is in fact one of two similar tales that are both included in the collection of folktales. If these tales had been collected before the first volume was published the two folktales might have been recounted as one.

*Kvitebjørn kong Valemon* as a folktale using the functions described by Propp.

In Propp’s *The Morphology of the Folktale*, he offers a guide explaining how the study of folktales can be described. In this he sets up four examples of events from folktales:

1. A king gives an eagle to a hero. The eagle carries the hero (the recipient) away to another kingdom.
2. An old man gives Sucenko a horse. The horse carries Sucenko away to another kingdom.
3. a sorcerer gives Ivan a little boat. The boat takes him to another kingdom.
4. the princess gives Ivan a ring. Young men appearing out of the ring carry him away into another kingdom and so forth (Propp. 2015. p. 18).

These are set up to illustrate how certain functions of the folktale are the same regardless of the characters performing them, or the means of how the events play out. This is interesting to look at for comparison as well, what functions can we find in the myth that resonates with the folktale in question. (With the term “function” forward in this thesis I will mean these narrative instances if not explicitly stated otherwise. These are also called motifs and elements in Propp’s book.) Propp comments on this link when he claims: “just as the characteristics and functions of deities are transferred from one to another, and, finally are inherited by Christian saints, the functions of folktale dramatis personae, in quite the same manner, are transferred and adapted mutually” (Propp, 2015, p. 19).

To analyse this folktale according to Propp’s functions we will begin to look at what the opening of the folktale is. Propp instigates that every folktale begins with a type of enumeration of the situation (that is to say some sort of “once upon a time there was a...”). Each function has their own sign in Propp’s theory, although this initial situation is not a function on its own, it has the symbol  $\alpha$  (The symbols for the functions will from this point be shown in parentheses). In the case of this particular folktale there are two different enumerations available to look at. The first is tells of a poor father with many pretty children where the youngest daughter is the prettiest. The second enumeration, which I focus more on, goes like this:

“Så var det en gang, som vell kunne være, en konge. Han hadde to døttre som var stygge å slemme, men den tredje var så ren og blid som klare dagen, og kongen og alle var glade i henne.” (Asbjørnsen & Moe, 1983, p.132)

“So, there was once, as well as might be, a king. He had two daughters who were mean and ugly, but the third was pure and happy as a clear sky and the king and everyone loved her.”(my translation)

Though the opening line is a deviation of what one might expect of a fairy tale it still accomplishes the function of what a folktale should open with. The more used opening would be “det var en gang” which is comparable with “once upon a time”. There is an establishing of family and relationships between the characters.

The next functions described by Propp are not functions that are featured in every folktale, but when included are preparatory functions to the plot. The eighth function, which is described as the most important, is villainy (A) and it is this function where the onset of the plot is found (Propp, 2015, p.29.). The only exception to this rule is the function “lack”(a) a function described by someone in the family lacking something. According to Propp there is no other conflict possible for a folktale (Propp, 2015. p.32).

In the case of this folktale the conflict is the function of “lack” (a). The princess dreams of a golden wreath and is convinced that she cannot live without it. Though this is the initial function, outside of the narrative a witch has cursed the king. He has to bear the skin of a white bear during the day but sheds his pelt in the night. This does not constitute the initial function because the tale follows the narrative of the princess and not the king. If it had followed the narrative of the king this function would be of villainy (A).

The princess is what Propp calls a “victim hero” at this point of the tale because she does not fall within the category of a seeker hero (Propp, 2015, p. 34). She is by definition “kidnapped” (B) by the white bear, because her father does not want to honour the agreement that she will go with the bear if he gives her the wreath. The king then tries to stop the bear from taking her. First by giving him his eldest daughter, and when she fails his test, he offers the second oldest daughter. Only the youngest pass the test. Because she is a victim-hero she does not have her own function (C) for counteraction. This would be the part of the folktale where the seeker hero would decide to seek out adventure. The bear interrogation the princess on the ride to his castle, and this is in fact the next function: the first function of the donor (D). In this case the donor is the white bear. The interrogation (D<sup>2</sup>) is considered to be a weakened form of testing. The bear asks all three princesses if they have seen clearer or been seated more softly, and only the youngest tells him yes. This is where we find it hard to continue with Propp’s functions as the next function is the hero’s reaction (E) as none of the subcategories (E<sup>1</sup>-E<sup>10</sup>) fit with the return to home. In this case we can refer to Propp’s explanation for tales not conforming to the thirty-one functions:

Sufficed it to mention that there are several actions of folktale heroes, in individual cases, which do not apply to, nor is defined by, the functions already mentioned. Such cases are notably few. They are either forms which cannot be understood without comparative material or they are injected from folktales of other classes (anecdotes, legends, etc.). We define these elements, therefore, as unclear, and designate them with the sign X (Propp, 2015, p. 58).

If the return home for the princess and the return to the castle do not comply with the morphology we would come to expect, we can then see the potential influence other stories might have had on the tale. This is part of the folktale that most resembles the myth. In the same way Cupid lets Psyche see her sisters, the white bear lets the princess see her family again. Both parties warn the girl not to heed the advice of their family and both princesses disobey their lover and shines a light over them. One can actually assign two functions to these actions: Interdiction ( $\gamma$ ) and violation ( $\delta$ ). These are two of the functions Propp defines as preparatory to the main plot, and therefore they should have come before the initial act of villainy (A) or

lack (a) (Propp, 2015, p. 29). If we were to analyse the rest of the folktale this would be the beginning of another folktale within the same text. Propp explain this in chapter IX A. “The Ways in Which Stories are Combined”:

Morphologically, a folktale may be termed any development out of villainy (A), or lack (a) through intermediary functions to marriage (W\*), or to other functions used in the capacity of the denouncement [...] Each new act of villainy, each new lack creates a new move. One folktale may have several moves; and one must first of all determine, when analysing a text, the number of moves it consists of (Propp, 2015, p. 83).

The betrayal of the white bears command releases the potential of the curse the witch put upon him and he has to go to the witch to marry her instead. This is an act of villainy (A) and the schematics of the functions can begin again. This time the princess is a seeker-hero who laments over the loss of her lover (B<sup>7</sup>), feels called to action (C), and is tested on her quest to reach the king (D<sup>1</sup>). From here the folktale fall right into the schematics Propp gives in his study of folktales. This means that there is a strong chance that the folktale has been influenced in one way or another by, for example the myth of Cupid and Psyche. This part in the second folktale is also nearly identical with its contemporary meaning it is the part of the tale that we can see the smallest change of narrative elements.

What signs can we then find of the folktale in the myth of Cupid and Psyche? There is a case for enumeration at the start of the myth with “In a certain city, there lived a king and queen with three notably beautiful daughters...” (Apuleius, 1994, p. 75) (α), and the initial act of villainy (A) where Venus sends her son to curse Psyche. Psyche who is abandoned on the mountain by her family (B) can be regarded as a victim-hero in the same way as the princess in the folktale. There is no call to action (C) or test (D) and then we reach the same point of Interdiction (γ) and violation (δ) as mentioned earlier. Here we can start again with lack (a), this time for her husband, she regrets her betrayal (B) and is called to action (C). Similar to the folktale Psyche is now a seeker-hero who goes out on her quest by her own will to seek Cupid. This shows us that even if this is a myth it shows a striking resemblance to the structure of the folktale, and especially this particular folktale.

## The Journey to Womanhood

What does it mean when stories produced by cultures separated by time and space can show this degree of similarity? To find this out I will look closer at what purpose the text has and what we can interpret from the texts themselves.

Both the myth and the folktales concern themselves with the life of a young girl on the verge of womanhood. Firstly, we have Psyche who is too beautiful to have any suitors and when Cupid joins her in her bed, she is frightened of losing her virginity, and rightly so as he “makes her his wife” (Apuleius, 1994, p. 81). This leaves little room for speculation or symbolism. The text explicitly tells us that the girl grows accustomed to it and in time even likes it. However, having sex is not the same as being ready for sex. Psyche is only Cupid's wife in the night-time and from this we can draw the conclusion that she is only half woman. She keeps her innocence and decides to trust her wicked sisters despite of the warnings Cupid gives her. Betraying her lover is still something Psyche has to do to become a woman:

The *beata culpa* or “fortunate guilt” for the sin of disobedience is an archetypal theme found throughout mythology, from Eve eating the fruit, to Pandora opening the forbidden box, to Prometheus stealing the forbidden fire. The adolescent sin of disobedience, represented in myth as Man's disobedience to god, leads to pain, but throughout this pain comes wisdom or spiritual enlightenment (Indick, 2012, p. 79).

Through the pain she is suffering for her own foolishness, her eyes are opened to the mindset of a grown woman. After she has been enlightened, she goes to her sisters to punish them for deceiving her, making them throw themselves off the mountain. It is hard to imagine Psyche doing this with the mindset she had before her betrayal.

We can find the same elements in the folktales. In the first folktale of the two included in the collection, “Østen for sol, vesten for måne”, is about a girl from a poor background. All the members of her family are poor, and the bear (this time he is only referred to as the bear or the prince) speaks to the father of the family and tells him that if he gives him his youngest daughter, the bear will make him rich. This speaks to the unfortunate reality of a patronymic society where the only way a woman could increase the value of life for her family or status was through marriage. In the second folktale, “Kvitebjørn kong Valemon”, the protagonist is already a princess by birth. This is where it is interesting to look at the golden wreath mentioned earlier. She is convinced she cannot live without it. In connection with the other golden

instruments in the tale that will be discussed later, this can symbolise the princess's wish to hold onto her girlhood and innocence. "...the flower a symbol of the virginity of a pubescent girl, who has not yet been 'deflowered'" (Indick, 2012, p.66). Her father, who desperately tries to find her this golden wreath, shows that her father tries to keep her innocent as long as he can. The bear arriving with the golden wreath and the father trying to stop him from taking her shows how he knows what he really is out to do, to make her a woman. When the princess arrives at the king's castle and lies with him every night, she is allowed to keep her innocence even though she is his lover. Like Psyche, she is a half woman. This is further stipulated by the fact that when she gives birth to three children the bear runs off with them. She is still partly a girl and therefore not able to take care of children.

In both folktales she is visited by the prince/king at night, but we know that it is the bear who has become a man unlike the myth where the identity of Cupid is still a secret. In both folktales she laments to the white bear that she is lonely and wishes to see her family, and he accommodates her wishes much in the same way as Cupid does in the myth, with a warning about, not her sisters, but her mother in this case. He tells her that she is not to speak with her mother alone, for it will bear them both a big sorrow if she does.

Unsurprisingly, the mothers in the folktales attempt to speak to their daughters alone and manage to do this. In both cases, the plan of seeing who her lover is, there is some ambiguity if this is malicious or not. The sisters of Psyche deceive her out of jealousy and spite while the mother of the princess might be trying to do awaken the same sexual maturity in her as the relationship itself. By looking at her lover, she would in effect become more mature or "enlightened". It does then lead to the punishment that and the pain that initiates enlightenment.

After punishing her sisters, Psyche wanders around and soon realises, that Venus is looking for her. Finding shelter with no one she resigns herself with her fate and travels to meet with Venus. Upon reaching Venus' house Psyche is dragged before the goddess by her hair. Venus, after having her servants Melancholy and Sorrow torture Psyche, rips Psyche's hair out and beat her severely (Apuleius, 1994, p. 104-105). This is an effort of removing Psyche's sexuality, or at least her beauty that got her into this predicament to start with. A woman's hair has long been a symbol of her sexuality, exemplified by the witch in the tale about Rapunzel where she cuts all her hair off when she finds out Rapunzel had premarital sex (Indick, 2012, p. 69). This is where the main difference between the folktales and the myth is. In the myth, the conflict is between Psyche and Venus as she doesn't see her as worthy of her son as well as the bitterness she harbours for Psyche's beauty. In the folktales, the witch taking the place of Venus,

is hardly aware of the princess until she shows up at her castle with golden instruments the witch needs for her wedding.

When the king wakes up from the tallow dripping on his forehead, he tells the princess that he is now damned to marry the witch (the real word used in the fairy tale is Trollkjerring which does not have a real translation in English. The definition of the word is a smaller version to the big trolls that are found in Norwegian folklore but also indicate an intelligence high enough to use magic, as trolls are usually depicted as enormous and stupid. This also shows the reader that the witch is not considered human). The witch he speaks of here is the same one that cursed him to be a white bear at day and man at night, and if the girl had just waited to the end of the month, he would have been free of the curse. Now he has to go to the witch's castle and marry her instead. This is where both the myth and the folktale depict the trials that Psyche and the princess has to go through to be with their beloved. Psyche with her tasks set by Venus and the princess' journey to the witch's castle.

The princess sets out for the castle and her lover. In both folktales she meets three women on the way and at every stop she receives a golden instrument. In "Kvitebjørn kong Valemon", the symbology of these three instruments are much more straightforward than the instruments in "Østen for sol, vesten for mane", but they both signify the same thing. First we will look at the instruments in the folktale mentioned first. This is also the version that has the strongest moralising tone.

In the first house she finds an old woman and a child playing with a pair of sheers. These sheers are magic and the finest silks appears out of thin air whenever the child cuts the air. The old woman directs her in the right direction of where she saw the white bear take off and the child takes pity on her and gives her the sheers. At the next house she meets another old woman and a little child, but this time the child is playing with a bottle that can pour any liquid you could desire. The tale repeats itself and the child gives the princess the bottle. This happens a third time but this time it is a tablecloth that makes the most wonderful food when she lays it down. The sheers, the bottle and the tablecloth are all placeholders for the abilities a wife "should" have, and she is given the opportunity to show off these new womanly virtues when she reaches the fourth house.

Here she finds a house filled with starving children and a desperate mother warming heating rocks to imitate cooking. She uses her magic items to clothe and feed these children, and as a reward the mother makes her husband make a set of claws she can use to climb the mountain, and in that way reach the castle. When the princess shows her ability to feed and clothe the children it shows how she is no longer a child pretending to be a woman but has now

become a full woman. It is not coincidental that she receives the instruments from her own children, the ones that the white-bear has taken away from her, linking womanhood with motherhood. At the end of the folktale the question is asked why did he take the children away? And the answer was that they were set out so that they could help her reach him. We can elaborate on this link with motherhood and womanhood that they were also set out to help her become a woman.

In “East of the sun, west of the moon” there is also a set of golden instruments. This time they are given to her by the old woman as she does not have any children in this version. The instruments are a golden apple, a golden spinner’s weasel, and a golden spinning wheel who are all symbols of femininity in their own way:

“The sexual connotation is firmly established in the biblical story of Adam and Eve, in which the forbidden fruit (typically depicted as an apple) represents sexual temptation” (Indick, 2012, p. 76)  
“The spindle and spinning wheel is a worldwide symbol of femininity and especially of motherhood, mothers in olden times spent much of their day spinning flax and wool to make clothes for their children.” (Indick, 2012, p. 73)

In this version of the folktale the girl gets help from the cardinal winds to carry her where she has to go to find her lover. This is similar to the myth where Psyche is helped by supernatural creatures when Venus is testing her.

Venus gives Psyche impossible tasks. Tasks not even she could think she would possible to complete and then she berates Psyche when she accomplishes them. The first is the test where she mixes the lentils with the peas and other small grains and tell her to separate them. In the next she is told to fetch a golden fleece from a flock of monstrous sheep, to fetch water from a stream out of reach, and to fetch beauty-preparation from the goddess of the underworld, Proserpina. All these things Psyche accomplishes with help from various supernatural sources.

## Conclusion

Looking at the myth of Cupid and Psyche and the folktales “Kvitebjørn kong Valemon” and “Østen for sol, vesten for måne”, and similar tales we can start to see how the culture behind each story has changed the story.

Although one is a “weak” myth, (in the sense that it does not enhance the believer’s understanding of the universe as a whole), and the other one is a folktale that is “contaminated” with influences from outside the characteristics of the folktale, this is still a tale that has fascinated humans for centuries. More than one fairy tale is known to have been inspired by the

myth of Cupid and Psyche. One of them is Cinderella where the trial of the lentils and beans repeat themselves with the evil stepmom (Indick, 2012, p.68). The most notable example, however, is the tale of Beauty and the Beast, which have seen many different adaptations to screen and different literary workings. The original tale of Beauty and the beast by Gabrielle-Suzanne Barbot de Villeneuve from 1740 is almost forgotten in the grand scheme of fairy tales. The more well-known version that we still refer to today, is the later shortened version by Jeanne-Marie Leprince De Beaumont from 1756 (which was published without any mention to Villeneuve). Though the most famous version of the fairy tale is undoubtable the Disney movie from 1991 where Beauty has to fall in love with the beast for him to turn back into a man. This is not the case in the first version of the tale and neither the second. The curse is lifted when the girl agrees to marry the beast, even though she is in love with the prince visiting her in her dreams. In these examples we can see the cultural forces that shaped the fairy tales. In the fairy tale from the 18<sup>th</sup> century there is an emphasis on marrying for duty and not for love, while the modern version shows us the emphasis modern culture lays on love as the primary source of marriage.

If we look for the emphasis on marriage in the myth of Cupid and Psyche it is found in the convention that marriage should be between people of equal standing in society, easily described by Venus when Psyche enters her house:

But what a fool I am, mistakenly calling him a [grand]son, for the wedding was not between a couple of equal status. Besides it took place in a country house, without witnesses and without a father's consent, so it cannot be pronounced legal. The child with therefore be born a bastard...(Apuleius, 1994, p. 105)

In the folktale, there is the emphasis on what is required of a wife. The folktale princess has to accomplish the trials on her own and when she reaches the castle and tricks the witch into letting her see her betrothed, the King, the folktale is essentially over and the witch bursts and dies. She is a woman now and therefore she is worthy of her husband.

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