

# Be the Girl of Your Dreams

by Jenny Scoville Walsh

Once upon a time, there were three young princesses. Their parents were very dear friends of neighboring kingdoms and frequently visited one another. The princesses soon became friends. While their parents were discussing boring matters of state, they would play fun games and talk until all hours of the night. By the time this story starts, they were twelve years old and noticing boys. Of course they talked about princes, what else? They would say things like, "When I grow up, my prince is going to be so strong and handsome and look just like Tom Cruise." And they'd say, "When I grow up, I'm going to be the best queen and everyone is going to admire me."

Well, one of those "boring matters of state" that their parents discussed was how fast their daughters were growing. They all decided that it was just about time that the princesses started preparing themselves to become queens. So, each princess was given a book entitled, *Preparation for Queen hood in Six Easy Years* and another one entitled *Noble Attributes for All*. Finally, they gave them a toll free 24-hour tutor line for up-and-coming princesses.

The first princess looked at the covers of the books and thought to herself, "Yeah, yeah, yeah. I've got plenty of time. Besides, romances and magazines are much more interesting." So, she decided not to worry about it. She stuck the books under her bed and didn't even give them a second thought. She never bothered to call the toll-free tutor line and promptly lost the phone number. Her six years went by and the books become unrecognizable from the dust. She, however, was easily recognizable. She wasn't any more queenly than she was when she was twelve.

The second princess looked at the books. "These look pretty interesting." So she read through them. But they had Queenly exercises for practicing queenly things, which seemed pretty time consuming. She was too busy to actually do them. She tried the toll-free tutor line for up-and-coming princesses a few times. She always got the help she needed, but she was too busy to use the number frequently. Her six years went by. The books were read, she had some tutoring, and she learned some exterior queenly attributes and behaviors, but she was not the prepared, polished, refined, and internally queenly person she could be.

The third princess looked at the books. Then she opened *Preparation for Queen hood in Six Easy Years* and read it. Throughout her six years, she tried all of the exercises. She decided which exercises she would work on, made reminders for herself, and recorded what she accomplished. She practiced dancing and eating properly, making speeches, conversing politely, helping others, hostessing graciously, planning parties, and everything else that queens need to know. She developed her talents in singing, sewing, foreign language, art, writing, and playing musical instruments. She even learned how to manage the finances of the castle and train princes and princesses of her own. It turned

out that Preparation for Queen hood in Six Easy Years recommended the other book that her parents gave her. So, she read Noble Attributes for All from cover to cover and daily practiced what she learned from that book. As both books recommended, she frequently used the 24-hour tutor line--at least twice a day. The tutor line proved to be very helpful as she struggled with acquiring various queenly attributes. Soon she became more friendly, happy, smart, wise, loving, thoughtful, beautiful, and kind.

A year or two went by. Then, news came that a prince from a nearby kingdom was on his way home from a two year quest.

"Oh!" said each of the princesses. "I hope he stops by MY castle."

Each of the princesses would get their wish, since their castles were on the very road the prince would follow.

News reached the first castle that a prince was not far down the road and planned on staying the night. It was also gossiped that he was looking for a queen. The princess excitedly put on her prettiest dress and a servant did her hair. A tired but handsome prince knocked at the first castle's gate just before dinnertime. A servant met the prince and welcomed him in. The prince introduced himself and he was led into the dining hall to meet the royal family. Everyone said that they were pleased to meet him, except the princess, who hadn't learned many queenly manners yet and had forgotten the ones she had learned, in her excitement. She merely turned red and stammered out a gruff, "What did you say your name was again?"

At dinner, she forgot that she was with company and slurped her soup and wiped her mouth on her sleeve. Music started playing and the prince asked her to dance, but she danced only a few steps before realizing she didn't know that dance, or any other one they played that evening. All she could do was the more "modern" ones that she and her friends had made up. Her mother and father sang a duet together to entertain their guests, but the princess could do nothing to entertain or to make people feel more welcomed. She went to bed that night totally miserable.

The prince was at the table when the princess arrived downstairs for breakfast. "I'm sorry about last night. I hope I didn't put you on the spot." She smiled. "I guess I'll get over it." She prepared to sit and the prince helped her with her chair. She awkwardly sat down. She wasn't used to people helping her with her chair. "So, tell me something," said the prince. "What kind of queen do you want to be?" "I want to be a wonderful queen. I want to be beautiful, rich, and elegant." "What have you done to become that way?" inquired the prince. The princess' mind flashed back to the dusty books under her bed and the unused tutor line. "Not much, yet. But, I'm planning on working very hard now and I'm sure I'll be a wonderful queen. Just wait and see."

Unfortunately, the prince did not have time to "wait and see." He was leaving that morning and was not planning on returning to the area for quite some time. By then, he hoped to be married. Though the princess was pretty, she simply was not prepared to be his queen just then. He said good-bye and thanked everyone for their hospitality. Then he was gone. The first princess sighed. "That didn't go very well."

While the first princess wallows in her misery, we'll visit the second castle where news of the soon-to-be-arriving prince has turned the castle upside-down in a flurry of preparation. They knew that the prince would be looking for his future queen, so the second princess dressed herself in her loveliest gown and did her hair and prepared to meet the prince. Again, tired but handsome, the prince knocked at the second castle's gate just before dinnertime. Again, a servant met the prince and welcomed him in. The prince introduced himself and he was led into the dining hall to meet the royal family. Everyone said that they were pleased to meet him. The princess even did an impromptu curtsy, which charmed him.

At dinner, the princess spoke with the prince about a variety of issues, but found she knew much less about each subject than she thought. How she wished she had paid better attention to things around her! She was very pleasant until her brother made a face at her and she made a snide remark about him to the prince under her breath. But the prince was not impressed by her clever but rude comment. "Whoops," she thought.

She was a passable dancer after dinner, though not terribly graceful. She also read a poem she had written. But, when the prince complimented her on it, she just made fun of it, making the prince wonder if it was actually a good poem or if his taste was bad.

When the evening had ended, the princess went to sleep thinking that she might have a chance with such a polished and handsome prince. But she cringed at the snide remark to her brother and her reaction to his compliment. She hoped he hadn't noticed.

The next morning, the princess met the prince on the way to the dining room. "Hi," she said. "Did you sleep well?" "Yes, thank you," replied the prince. She prepared to sit and the prince helped her with her chair. She sat down and the prince sat across from her. The servant was slow to bring the food out, even though the princess knew he had seen them enter.

"Pierre! Hurry up!! We're WAITING!" hollered the princess. Then she turned to the prince, "I'm sorry about Pierre. Sometimes he is so inattentive." She smiled.

"So, tell me something," said the prince. "What kind of queen do you want to be?" "I want to be a wonderful queen. I want to be refined, beautiful, and elegant." "What have you done to become that way?" inquired the prince. The princess' mind flashed back to the books under her bed, read but not practiced, and the infrequently used tutor line. "Well, I've read about it and I've thought about it. But, now I'm going to practice what I learned. I'm going to be a wonderful queen. Just wait and see."

Unfortunately, the prince did not have time to "wait and see" about this princess either. He was leaving that morning and hoped that his next trip would be for courting, not to see if a princess had improved enough to be courted. He didn't want to wait the years it would take for her to be a hospitable and worthy queen. Though the princess was pretty and had some manners, she simply was not prepared to be his queen just then. He said good-bye and thanked everyone for their hospitality. Then he was gone. The second princess sighed. "I don't think he's coming back."

While the second princess tries to figure out what to do better next time, we'll visit the third castle where news of the soon-to-be-arriving prince has been heralded to every room. Everyone whispered that the prince was looking for his future queen, so the third princess dressed herself in her loveliest gown and did her hair and prepared to meet the prince. Again, tired but handsome, the prince knocked at the second castle's gate just before dinnertime. Again, a servant met the prince and welcomed him in. The prince introduced himself and he was led into the dining hall to meet the royal family. Everyone said that they were pleased to meet him. The princess ran to his side and asked if there was anything she could do to make him more comfortable. "Here is a fresh change of clothes. Jean-Paul, please show him to his room right away and let him freshen up. Then show him in to dinner. We'll wait for him."

The prince bowed deeply and went off to his room to bathe and change clothes. He noticed that the princess had decorated the room with some lovely sketches and tapestries she had made. Fresh flowers had been set in a simple but pretty vase in expectation of his arrival. He also noticed that a little card welcoming him was placed by his bed.

When he returned to the dining room, the prince was invigorated. The princess made him feel comfortable by asking about where he was from and about his recent adventure. Though she had plenty to say, she did not dominate the conversation and spoke in a sweet voice. She never mocked others and only said kind things to and about those she knew or heard about. The prince was impressed with her knowledge and interest in other lands and customs.

After dinner, they had dancing. The prince asked the princess to dance. She accepted and soon they were wrapped up in conversation and gracefully moving to the music. When they tired of dancing, she sang a song she had written and accompanied herself on the harp. It was getting late, so all went to bed. Before the princess fell asleep, she smiled to herself. "Isn't he wonderful? I had so much fun with him tonight!"

The next morning, the princess met the prince on the way to the dining room. "Good morning!" she said. "Did you sleep well?" "Yes, thank you," replied the prince. She let the prince help her with her chair. The prince sat across from her. The servant was slow to bring the food out, so the princess excused herself and went to the kitchen to see what was the matter. She returned a few minutes later. "I'm sorry, the servants didn't wake up on time. They're getting dressed right now. If you would like, we can wait. But, I can make breakfast, and it won't be a bother at all!" She smiled. "Would you like to join me in the

kitchen?" "Sure," answered the prince, surprised yet pleased by this unusual turn of events.

"So, tell me something," said the prince, as he made the orange juice. "What kind of queen do you want to be?" The princess, cheerfully scrambling eggs, replied, "I want to be a wonderful queen. I want to be refined, beautiful, and elegant." "What have you done to become that way?" inquired the prince, though he could tell that she had done a lot. The princess' mind flashed back to the books by her bed, studied and applied, and the frequently used tutor line. "Well, I've read a lot, but I've also tried to practice what I've learned. I selected goals and measured my progress. Now, most things I just do by habit, though there are many things that I'm still working on." She blushed because she didn't want to brag, but she was pleased with her accomplishments. "Well, I think that you'll make a terrific queen. Look how pleasant you've made my stay here. Thank you," said the prince. "You're welcome. And thank you! Breakfast is served!" It was delicious, and the prince was even more impressed with this princess.

When the prince left, he said, "I really enjoyed being with you. Would you mind if I came back and visited soon?" The princess was delighted, as were her parents. Soon, the prince visited the castle regularly. The princess visited his castle, too, and became good friends with his family. Soon, a wedding date was announced and the two kingdoms rejoiced. They married and started their life's adventure together, and they lived happily ever after.

Though this is the last of our story, their story is just beginning. "Happily Ever After" really means that they had joys and trials, shared their lives, had a family, and did many other things. Marriage isn't the end, but merely the beginning of their story. And so it is with you.

Why did the first two princesses lose out on a wonderful prince and a terrific kingdom to help rule? They were not prepared to be good queens. So, why didn't they prepare themselves? Each of them had an equal chance to prepare, so what happened? Well, maybe they didn't realize just how short their time to prepare really was. Maybe they didn't place the proper value on being a queen. Maybe they didn't realize that you can't cram preparation for being a queen. Maybe they thought that preparation wasn't really necessary for queendom. Maybe they didn't realize their special place as a princess, daughter to a king. Whatever it was, they lost a wonderful opportunity to do what they were born to do, be a queen in a wonderful kingdom with a wonderful king. Now these princesses can change. But, it will take a lot of hard work to make up for all of that lost time. If only they had used the time they were given! Then they also could've have been prepared when a prince came by.

Each of you are like those princesses. You are daughters of a Heavenly King. You have been given books, your Young Women's manual--which will help prepare you for wifehood and motherhood in the six years you are in the program, and the scriptures. If you read and apply the principles you learn from these books, you will be prepared to enjoy your life as a woman, a wife, and a mother. These roles are wonderful and bring happiness and fulfillment. These roles are not easy and require preparation--preparation which takes

years to complete. If you are prepared, you can make wise choices, marry a righteous man in the temple, raise your children in the Gospel, and have a happy life. If you are not prepared, doing those things will be much more difficult or close to impossible to do. The toll-free 24-hour tutor line for up-and-coming princesses is prayer. Use it daily and God will help you become your best self. He will give you the strength, courage, wisdom, and endurance to do what you need to do to fulfill your divine role as a woman. Though marriage is only the beginning and not just a blissful end summed up by the words "happily ever after," it can be a very exciting and happy time for you if you are prepared and make wise choices.

So, Be the Girl of your Dreams. Dream, but also BE!