

Meerfus Fights with Magic... Sort Of

Story By: Andrew Frinkle

Meerfus the wand-making magician was a pretty easy-going fellow. He didn't often raise his voice. He didn't try to teach by shouting. He didn't even like to argue with people about prices, but his job made that a necessity. All-in-all, he was a pretty even-tempered guy. Duncan had never even gotten yelled at by him. Oh, Meerfus *had* ways to let you know he was displeased, but he didn't need to yell to do that.

So, when the two of them were walking to go get some supplies for a new contract they had to make a couple wands, and three tough guys were waiting on the road for them, Duncan didn't know what would happen. It was obvious that these guys were the sort that would give them trouble. They had a look about them that said they would either try to bother them, take their money, or both. Duncan figured both, and he began to get really nervous when Meerfus didn't pay them any attention as they grew nearer and nearer.

The three of them could be described as the tall one, the big one, and the fat one. The tall one was skinny and bony, with a hawk-like beak of a nose and greasy hair. The big one was burly and huge, with furry arms and a bulb of a nose. The fat one was average height, but quite heavy, and he had beady eyes like a rat. They were a mean-looking bunch.

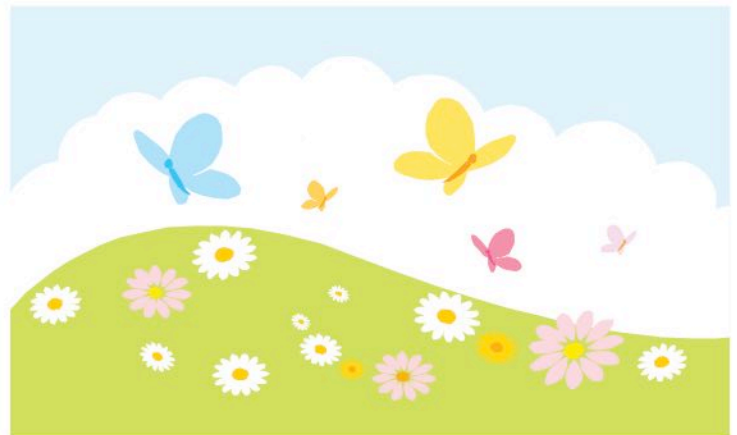
"Hey, old-timer, how about you let us look in that bag of yours?" The biggest one suggested. It wasn't so much of a suggestion as a demand though.

The tall one grabbed at a wand that poked out of Meerfus' backpack. He stuck his hand on a sharp edge and hissed in surprise. He sucked on his cut thumb and waved the wand at Meerfus. "You did that on purpose!"

Meerfus frowned at the man. "It seems to me that you grabbed something that didn't belong to you and got what you deserved."

Duncan's eyes widened in surprise, and he felt a sick feeling in the pit of his stomach. Hadn't Meerfus ever been bullied before? This wasn't how you dealt with bullies, or you got hurt.

The tall one shook the wand at Meerfus. "We'll see how you feel about that after I burn you with this wand!" A cloud of butterflies appeared in the air around them, and the tall guy's two buddies started laughing uproariously. He shook the wand again, hoping for something else, but nothing happened.



Growling at his embarrassment, the man tugged open Meerfus' backpack and pulled out two more wands. He pointed the first at Duncan this time. Duncan cowered, but Meerfus stepped in front of him with a smile. The tall one shook the wand threateningly, and Meerfus' beard fluffed up, all neatly groomed. The tall man had just used a grooming wand. It cleaned hair.

"Thank you, sir. I was feeling a bit unsightly." Meerfus' teeth gleamed whitely as he smiled, and again the tall man's friends guffawed in laughter.

"This is your last chance." The man waved the last wand threateningly at Meerfus, but Meerfus actually stepped aside for this one to reveal Duncan, still cowering. The tall one laughed and shook the wand. Duncan's eyes grew wide as the arms of his shirt ripped. He suddenly felt amazingly strong.

"Duncan, please retrieve our wands." Meerfus said calmly. "We're moving on to complete our errands."

Duncan stepped over to the men, amazed at what was happening but also confused. He just followed orders and took the wands from the three mean men. They cowered in fear of him and he was only thirteen!

"Shake their hands and bid them goodbye." Meerfus suggested.

Duncan shook each of their hands, watching them wince in pain as his powerful grip nearly crushed the bones in their hands. Actually, something as simple as the shake of his wrist threw them to the ground. He mumbled an apology as they landed in a heap beside the road.

Meerfus smiled and waved at them, shaking a fourth wand in their direction. The weeds and grasses grew terribly tall around them, entangling them all in a mess of green and a riot of colored flowers.

Duncan shook his head as he handed back the wands. His strength had returned to normal. His new powers had only lasted a minute or less. It had been amazing to be so powerfully strong, if only for a short while. "I never want to get on your bad side." Duncan muttered. "You could have hurt them a lot more with the magic wands you have in your bag."

Meerfus winked. "There are always those who want to pick on people. It is important to stand up for yourself, but remember that causing great harm only causes greater malice. If we'd seriously hurt them, instead of just giving them something to think about, they would want revenge. Hopefully, they have learned their lesson about picking on people."



Meerfus Fights with Magic... Sort Of

Story By: Andrew Frinkle

Use the information in the story to answer the questions below.

1. How many tough guys confront Duncan and Meerfus?
 - A. 1
 - B. 2
 - C. 3
 - D. 4
2. How are the tough guys described?
 - A. the tall one, the fat one, and the heavy one
 - B. the tall one, the fat one, and the big one
 - C. the big one, the fat one, and the heavy one
 - D. the huge guy, the ugly guy, and the mean guy
3. What effect comes from the first wand the bully tries to use on Meerfus?
 - A. super strength
 - B. grooming
 - C. butterflies
 - D. plants growing
4. What effect comes from the second wand the bully tries to use on Meerfus?
 - A. super strength
 - B. grooming
 - C. butterflies
 - D. plants growing
5. What is the BEST reason why Meerfus doesn't use his magic to beat up the bullies badly?
 - A. He doesn't want to fight.
 - B. He doesn't need to.
 - C. He wants the bullies to learn a lesson without getting too hurt.
 - D. He is afraid to.

Meerfus Fights with Magic... Sort Of

Story By: Andrew Frinkle

Use the information in the story to answer the questions below.

1. How many tough guys confront Duncan and Meerfus?
 - A. 1
 - B. 2
 - C. 3**
 - D. 4
2. How are the tough guys described?
 - A. the tall one, the fat one, and the heavy one
 - B. the tall one, the fat one, and the big one**
 - C. the big one, the fat one, and the heavy one
 - D. the huge guy, the ugly guy, and the mean guy
3. What effect comes from the first wand the bully tries to use on Meerfus?
 - A. super strength
 - B. grooming
 - C. butterflies**
 - D. plants growing
4. What effect comes from the second wand the bully tries to use on Meerfus?
 - A. super strength
 - B. grooming**
 - C. butterflies
 - D. plants growing
5. What is the BEST reason why Meerfus doesn't use his magic to beat up the bullies badly?
 - A. He doesn't want to fight.
 - B. He doesn't need to.
 - C. He wants the bullies to learn a lesson without getting too hurt.**
 - D. He is afraid to.