

Gingers Wood
Dr Freckles Frog



By
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*For my mother Mandy,
who has always loved this story,*

I love you Mam.

Gingers Wood.

Dr Freckles Frog.

Dr Freckles sat quietly and nervously one sweet summer morning in amongst the long grass, he checked his old tiny pocket watch once, then once again shortly after.

“1 o'clock, I must be there at 1 o'clock”.

Seeing it was only 11:30, he relaxed slightly when he realised he had time to gobble down his tasty dinner of wriggle worm pie, then he would have to hop off to be part of the biggest day of his life ... his wedding day.



He had spent no less than one whole week drying out his wet slippery skin so his suit would fit perfectly and would not become drenched, at last he was dressed and ready.



“Oh, it doesn't matter if I'm early.”

He said cheerfully before getting up and making his way around the outskirts of the lake towards the waterfall church, suddenly ...

He let out a cry as a little reed warbler flew quickly out from behind the tall reeds causing him to jump back with shock, then ...



SPLASH !

He tumbled down the steep little bank and landed back first into the merky water, First he felt silly, ... then he felt angry, and he soon began to yell and cry out ...

“Oh RERP IT ! ... Rerp it, Rerp it all !”

He said slapping the shallow water with his small clenched fists.

“Aren't you supposed to be getting ready for your wedding and not splashing about in the lake using that language ?”

Dr Freckles looked up onto the bank and saw Hector Hedgehog staring down at him. He then lifted him out of the water.

“I was ready and now my suit is ruined, I'll never make it now !”

“Come on we'll go to mine, I have a warm fire, we'll get those cloths dry in no time.”

Once in Hector's home he made himself comfortable in a arm chair after he had wrapped himself in a spider's silk towel, and Hector Hedgehog put his clothes carefully on the fire grate to dry.

“MY HAT !”

Dr Freckles suddenly shouted, frightening poor Hector.



"I've left my hat behind, I can't get married without it, it's been in my families weddings for generations, it is our tradition to play a pipe and dance around it after the wedding, ... how do I get it back ?"

Just then a knock came at the door and hector left the room to answer it, it was Ruby Red Squirrel, Hector told her about Dr Freckles and as always she was more than happy to help.



She headed straight away down to the lake and soon enough she spotted it on the head of a great crested grebe, he was clearly quite fond of his new hat and Ruby knew right away that it would be difficult to get him to part with it. Knowing that grebes are not the smartest of creatures she decided to make up a story to scare him off the hat, she approached him on the bank.

"Good day sir !"

"Oh hello miss."

He said slapping his long beak as he spoke.

"Oh I see you have the dreaded cursed hat sir"

"The what did you say ?"

He asked becoming quite concerned.

"The cursed hat."

"Good Lord, cursed you say ? ... how ?"

"It is said that whoever wears that hat for more than a day becomes terribly allergic to water."

The grebe quickly tilted his head forward and the hat fell to the ground in front of them.



“Allergic to water ! Oh good Lord, well I never.”

“Shall I get rid of it for you sir ?”

“Yes please do dear, what a most dreadful thing.”

“Good day then sir !”

Ruby picked up the hat and headed quickly back, Dr Freckles then had his hat, and was so very grateful, his cloths had dried nicely so the wedding went on as planned behind the small waterfall.



Dr Freckles loved Lily Lou in her beautiful water lily dress and spider silk veil.



After the celebrations he performed his ancestor's dance around the family hat.



The following summer they had new additions to their family Terry, Thomas and Toby, three baby tadpoles.



They grew into small frogs soon enough of course, and now every Saturday morning Susie Spider delivers a silk bundle of blue bottle flies for them.

And Dr Freckles goes out to collect a few fresh worms.



They then head out onto the middle of the lake for their weekly lily pad picnic, I have not as yet encountered a frog family so wonderfully happy or jolly, I often wave to them as they sit together munching the blue bottles as I pass the lake on warm Sunday evenings, they are never bad tempered or rude, they are only ever pleasant and kind, just a perfect example of a comforting love filled family.



The End.

