

Mr Bat

By

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I had no explanation so I just shouted, "This is your fault!" Mother's face contorted into confusion.

"My fault?"

"I didn't want this party, so I had to do it. I had to get my friend to help me. He's more of a friend than you'll ever be!" I even spat as I shouted it. I half-meant it, half-feigned it. I threw myself on my double-bed and squeezed out crocodile tears. Mother was silent behind me; a frog had jumped in her throat and got stuck. Finally, she whispered.

"I think it's time for you to sleep, I'll get Marie to make you a cup of warm milk."

"Marie!" I jumped up, "That's OK, Mother, I'll just go straight to sleep."

"Fine. God bless you."

I put my sulking face back on, which made me ponder Marie's once pretty face. Then suddenly a scratching from the top of the ceiling caught my ear, I looked toward the noise. The bat! I jumped under my thick covers and started trembling - how I hate bats. It began to cough violently. It landed at the end of my bed, panting for breath.

"What to do want?" I murmured through my trembling teeth.

"I bring a message from the hyena," he heaved from his wheezing chest.

"The hyena? So, he hasn't deserted me?" This news made me anxious to reconvene; hopefully my best friend would help me through this new predicament.

"Do you have the bag?"

"The bag, Mr Bat?"

“The hyena mentioned a bag left behind that he urgently needed.”

“Ah, Marie’s feet.” When I said this, I noticed the bat’s perplexed look. “Don’t worry, Mr Bat, it’s a long story.” I pulled the bag from my secret chest and asked that the bat guide me to my friend. He ushered me to the window. I saw a large climbing plant I could crawl down. I saw a familiar silhouette. The air was dark and had suddenly turned crisp; the hyena’s breath was visible from afar. “Do you have the bag?” He sharply requested as I approached him.

“Yes, but first tell me what happened?”

“Ah, the odour was the problem. They kept complaining and...”

“And?”

“I became too hungry and had to eat the maid’s face, giving away my true identity.”

“Why did you do that? Why couldn’t you wait and feast on Marie’s feet after the ball?”

“Pass the bag and I shall tell you.” I passed the bag, I wanted desperately to know. He looked at me and gave an evil smile, a smile only a cunning hyena could give.

“I am a hyena. I am a scavenger and that is what comes first. I hope this experience serves as a lesson in life. Goodbye.”

And with that he ran into the night with his accomplice, the bat, hovering overhead. I knelt on the dewy grass and, this time, cried tears not of the crocodile kind.