

## The Not-So-Classy Curtsy

By: Ellie H.

“Recess everybody!” Miss Mandala echoed gracefully through her pearly white teeth. Great! This was my favorite part of the day. Nobody likes being imprisoned in a classroom where all you hear is Princess Vivian, fix your posture, Miss Brookes, be daintier with your curtsy, Princess Vivian, you are far from being a proper queen.

Every day I hear these words pound in my eardrums off the polished school walls. My little sister, Ashlyn Brookes, always gets the highest score on all her assignments and dreams of being queen. I couldn't care less about that. In fact, I dread the day I'll become queen. I also have a fashion show tomorrow which is half as bad. Every 13-year-old princess from the Fairy-Fern Forest region is invited to the Blue Moon Lake Annual Fashion Show to represent their country. Big poufy dresses are not exactly my cup of tea.

My train of thought suddenly comes to a halt when I see the other princesses lining up for recess. I make my way over to the line, but they glide out of the room without me.

“Except for you, Miss Brookes,” Miss Mandala pushed her thin glasses down her pointy nose as she spoke. “You have not perfected your curtsy like the other girls. Remember, it is right foot over left foot, arms extended, then bow. Now practice while I supervise the other girls.” Miss Mandala floated out of the room without another word.

“Ughhh,” I sigh as I try to practice while mumbling under my breath “I'll show her, right over left, COME ON!” I tumble onto the smooth wooden floors. “I can't possibly stay here. I gotta go destroy those girls in some four-square!” My fingers clasp around the door handle and jiggle it until my hand is sore. Locked.

I slump down the wall and plop myself onto the ground. When I am about to give up, my blue-gray eyes go straight to the window. That's it! I can climb right out of here like James Bond or something.

Suddenly I hear footsteps coming down the hall. Out of panic I thrust my body out the window. That is when the imaginary sirens go off in my brain. They escape through my mouth as I scream. The window was TWO STORIES TALL!

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Long story short, I broke my left ankle and got kicked out of the academy. Nevertheless, my mom and dad are still making me do this fashion show. On crutches.

I arrive at my dressing room and I put on a gold sequined dress with a small V-neck in the front and a long train in the back. "I look like a bottle of champagne." I laugh and laugh but am interrupted by an announcement over the speakers.

"Would all of the young princesses report backstage. The show is about to begin!" says a man with a hint of an accent in his voice.

I crutch-walk my way to the stage. I stand timidly behind a red velvet curtain. A large manager pushes me through the curtain and I walk out further on the runway. My eyes catch a glimpse of Blue Moon Lake about two hundred yards away. The nearly full moon's reflection creates a sort of glimmer on top the surface of the water.

Distracted by its beauty my crutches catch on my silky dress and I fall off the edge of the runway. A wave of gasps spread across the outdoor venue.

Surprisingly, I am caught in the hands of a handsome young prince. He looks about a year or two older than I am. I look into his emerald colored eyes and am in awe over his swooped black hair. He asks me if I am alright and I reply with an out of breath yes. His midnight-black puppy licks my toes poking out of my golden stilettos.

"NO Shadow! You stupid dog!" the nameless prince shouts. He kicks the dog out of the way with thunderous force. The puppy's ears fall flat and he lets out a small whimper.

"What are you DOING?" I shriek "He's just a puppy you monster!" Then I get a stupendous idea. This cute little dog simply cannot live like this.

"I mean uh, I uh, I am so sorry for my outburst," I say making sure to choose my words very carefully. "Let me apologize with a sign of the utmost respect." I then attempt to do a curtsy. Making sure to step on his shiny-as-a-button shoes. "Right" smush, "LEFT!" STOMP, "arms extend" (As I say this, I punch the prince right in the gut.) "and bow." I say with a delicate finish.

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The prince is on the ground, wincing in pain. I feel a twinge of guilt but it all goes away when I set my eyes on Shadow. I collect the incredibly soft puppy off the ground. He licks my nose with his tiny tongue, as if to say thank you.

I crutch-walk my way out of the venue with Shadow trailing close behind. We head towards the Fairy-Fern Forest because my family's castle is only a 20-minute walk away. I see an electric blue flower glowing in the evening darkness. A fairy about the size of one of the flower's petals emerges from it wearing a rosy pink dress. My eyes widen and my jaw drops in shock.

Shadow communicates a sequence of whines and barks to the fairy. He can actually talk to them! I think he said that he was rescued by me because the fairy then zooms around my broken ankle and crutches. My cast disappears out of nowhere and so do my crutches! Shadow told them how thankful he was to be rescued and the fairies healed me because of my heroine-like actions. Telling the fairy I appreciate it so much, Shadow and I continue towards the castle.

A few days pass and I am back in princess school. Certainly not my old one for obvious reasons. My parents also figured that a gut-punching, toe-stepping, sloucher probably shouldn't be the figurehead of the country, so my sister, Ashlyn, will one day be queen, which is great for both of us. And Shadow receives lots of chew toys and treats every day. He is without a doubt spoiled rotten! So, everyone lived happily ever after.