

A Ducky Day at Rype & Readi

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It was a bright and sunny day... exactly anywhere else in the world *except* at the Rype & Readi Farm Market in Saint Augustine. Or Saint Augustine in general for that matter!

No, the weather that Saint Augustine was experiencing was the exact polar opposite of bright and sunny. Rather, the skies high above the Farm Market could only be properly defined by two words: dark and stormy.

In recent times, day after day after day, Saint Augustine found itself getting *ravaged* by what felt like a single continuous storm, whose intensity ebbed and flowed with the wind. To be fair, it wasn't like the storm was truly damaging the city like a full-blown hurricane, but it was certainly soaking every which where it possibly could and making life absolutely miserable for all the residents of the Farm Market.

All the residents, that is, save for a certain avian of the waterfowl variety. Or, in plainer English, save for the duck known as Drake Mallard, who was currently splashing through the numerous puddles that had formed in the Market's road with glee.

Drake was currently felt like he was treading water on Cloud Nine, humming pleasantly to himself as he strode through the deluge that was pouring down around him. "Ah, what a most glorious day!" He quacked to himself happily. "The winds are howling, the rain is pitter-pattering, it's all just so wet and wild and *wonderful!* Ah, if only there was a way that this day could get even better!"

He barely made it two more puddles before he stopped with a gasp, a 'brilliant' idea occurring to him. "But wait! I *do* know a way I can make this day better: any day can easily be made better by including friends! Hahaha, it's brilliant!" And so, the duck swiftly waddled off, eager to find his friends and enjoy the wonderful wet day together.

-Five Minutes Later-

"QUAAAAAACK!" Drake charged through the puddles in the Market's road in a panic, sending water flying as he scrambled for safety. The reason for his terror was quite simple, really.

"THERE HE IS!"

"GET HIM!"

He was currently being pursued by all his friends, who were all soaked to the bone and, if the way they were shouting and stomping after him was anything to go by, were all *quite* displeased with him for some reason or other.

Poor Drake couldn't *conceive* at what he'd done wrong! All he'd done was find them hiding in the barn, and then he'd come up to them *politely* asking them to share in the wonders of a rainy day! And then, without a hint of warning, they all went ballistic on him! Sheer madness!

Still, whatever the reason, there would be time to contemplate it later. Presently, it was far more important that Drake escape with his tail feathers unplucked... and an opportunity for just such an escape presented itself when Drake rounded a corner and located an empty stall!

Moving fast, the duck dashed inside and hid behind the door, holding his breath in panic as he heard the other animals charge by... and then heaving said breath as a sigh of relief when they passed him by none the wiser.

"Oh thank heavens..." he wiped his brow thankfully.

"Hiding from someone?"

"QUACK!" Drake leapt in panic, wheeling around in preparation to beg his aggressor for mercy... and then sagging anew when he realized who it was. "Oh, thank heavens it's just you Paprika. For a moment I thought you were-!"

"One of the *other* animals on the Market, who all want to tar and..." The wet chicken trailed off as she gave Drake's downy hide a once over before coughing into her wing. "Well, you get the idea."

"Yes!" Drake ruffled himself frantically as he started to pace back and forth. "Oh, I don't know what went wrong! I just wanted us all to enjoy this fine day together-!"

"And that's where you went wrong." Paprika cut him off.

"Eh?" Drake blinked at her in confusion. "What are you-?"

"*You* think it's a good day out, Drake," Paprika informed him firmly. "The rest of us, however? We *don't* like the rain. We're sick of it, and we can't wait for the sun to come back. So when you waltzed in all chipper and invited us to come out and 'play'..."

Drake slowly paled as he saw what she was getting at. "I... suppose I must have seemed quite the insensitive lout, didn't I?"

"Little bit, yes," Paprika sighed before putting a wing to his shoulder. "Look, I know you meant well Drake, but in the future, do keep in mind: just because *you* enjoy something..."

“Doesn’t necessarily mean someone else will enjoy it nearly as much, quite right,” Drake sighed wearily before glancing back outside. “Well, I suppose I’ll just have to wait for all the rain to die down before I make my apology then.”

KRAK-A-THOOM!

Drake gazed blankly into the sky as lightning forked across it, heralding a redoublement of the storm’s fervor.

“Oh *poppycock*.”