



STORY: THE WORD WIZARD

An Original Story Puzzle by Dianne de Las Casas

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Author's Note: In this story, there is a one-word palindrome, two idioms, a double entendre, onomatopoeia, a word spelled backwards, a lot of alliteration, two spoonerisms, two homophones, and several rhymes. Can you find them?

Long ago, there lived a wizard named Drow. He was the Word Wizard. When the King needed a new word, Drow would magically create one. The King knew that words were more powerful than swords and that if the words escaped, the people of the kingdom could become as powerful as him. So all the words were locked in a box and kept in a tall tower, guarded by the Word Wizard.

Drow had an assistant, a young boy named Bob. Bob was absentminded. When Wizard Drow gave Bob instructions, he often bungled them. "In one ear and out the other," Drow said with a big sigh.

One day, the wizard was on royal business at the castle. Bob was left in charge. Bob looked at his list of chores: sweep, sort, stack. Bob said, "I'll write down one more: snack! Now it's sweep, sort, stack, snack!" Bob laughed as he snacked on a snickerdoodle. He started sweeping when he spotted the Word Box.

On the front of the box were the words, "Do Not Open." For a boy like Bob, a sign like that is an invitation! So guess what Bob did? Yes, that's right. He opened the box. When he did, sparks flew! Bob cried, "Oh no!"

The words whizzed and whirled. They tumbled and twirled. They skittered and scattered. They pittered and pattered. They jumbled and jumped. They thrashed and thumped. Bob tried to catch them but the wily words wiggled and wandered away.

Some of the words slinked and slithered down the stairs. Some of the words lunged and leaped out of the window. Still, other words flew up the flue. The words danced and dipped. But worst of all, the words began to mingle. They created new words like flibbertygibbet and readalicious. Bob felt helpless and hopeless. What would the Word Wizard do?

It was then that Bob realized he had the power of the words. Bob said, "If I find the right words, I can start spelling!"

With dogged determination, Bob darted and dashed around the tower gathering words. Both arms laden with words, Bob began chanting,

"Pocus Hocus
By like flirds
Bounce into the box
All wandering words!"

Back into the box, words jostled and jaunted. Back into the box, words flapped and flipped. Back into the box, words rocked and rolled. Back into the box, words tilted and tipped. Bob shut the box as the last word shook and shimmied inside. But alas, though Bob was able to catch and capture a herd of words, some of the words escaped.

Just then, the Word Wizard appeared at the top of the tower stairs. “Bob, what happened? I just tripped over my words!”

Bob stammered, “I, I accidentally set the words free. But most of them are back in the box now!” Bob hung his head.

The wizard laughed. “I thought as much. Words are floating and flying all over the kingdom.”

“I’m really sorry, Wizard Drow. I was just curious.”

The Word Wizard smiled. “It’s okay, Bob. I think the world is enhanced by words. With the right words, you can make a world of difference. In fact, I think everyone should be able to use words whenever they want. Words should be free.”

Bob said, “Really?”

Drow grinned. “Really. Come on. Help me set these words free.”

Bob and Drow lifted the lid of the box. Once again, the words whizzed and whirled. They tumbled and twirled. They skittered and scattered. They pittered and pattered. They jumbled and jumped. They thrashed and thumped.

The wise Word Wizard grabbed a few words and chanted. A pair of pears appeared in his hand. Drow handed one to Bob. They munched and crunched on their sweet snack as they watched the wily words wiggle and wander away.

Since then, words have remained free and everyone has the power to choose the right words and make a world of difference.

