

The Sneezing Wizard



Yavuz DEMİRKIRAN

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In a cozy village at the edge of a whispering wood lived Wizard Wobble. He had a bushy white beard, a bulbous red nose, and a purple robe covered in stars. His pointed hat flopped when he walked. Everyone knew him for his kind heart and his clumsy magic. But lately, Wizard Wobble had a terrible magic cold.



Wizard Wobble's nose twitched. His eyes watered. "Ah... ah... ah-CHOO!" A sparkly sneeze burst from his wand. Across the meadow, a brown cow turned bright purple. The cow blinked and mooed in surprise. Wizard Wobble sighed and blew his nose into a crumpled handkerchief. "Oh dear," he said. "My magic cold is making everything silly."



Just then, a young apprentice named Pip skipped up the path. Pip had short curly black hair, freckles, and a cheerful gap-toothed smile. "Hello, Wizard Wobble!" Pip said. "I'm here to help you get ready for the magic competition." Wizard Wobble sneezed again, and a nearby tree grew fuzzy pink slippers. "Oh no," he groaned. "This is going to be a bumpy day."



Pip looked at the purple cow and the tree with slippers. "Don't worry," Pip said kindly. "We can fix this. But first, let's try to keep your sneezes calm." Wizard Wobble nodded, but his nose twitched again. "Ah... ah... ah-CHOO!" This time, a little house grew two enormous ears. The ears wiggled. "Oh dear," said Wizard Wobble. "Now the houses can hear us!"



Pip pulled a tiny practice wand from behind one ear. "Maybe if we practice a simple spell, your magic will stay steady," Pip suggested. Wizard Wobble tried to focus, but his nose itched. "Ah... CHOO!" A flock of sheep turned into bouncing beach balls. They boinged across the road. "This is not going well," Wizard Wobble said, blowing his nose again.



Pip was patient. "Let's try something else," Pip said. "Close your eyes and take a deep breath. Imagine your magic is a calm lake." Wizard Wobble closed his eyes. He took a slow breath. But then a feather floated by and tickled his nose. "Ah... CHOO!" A scarecrow grew a big red nose and started dancing. "Oh, bother," Wizard Wobble sighed.



The village was getting sillier by the minute. Cows were purple, trees wore slippers, houses had ears, and sheep bounced like balls. People laughed and pointed, but Wizard Wobble felt embarrassed. "I'm making a mess," he said. Pip patted his arm. "Mistakes happen," Pip said. "But we can learn from them. Let's keep trying."



Wizard Wobble nodded. He wanted to fix everything before the magic competition. "I'll try again," he said. He raised his wand and tried to focus. But just then, a big gust of wind blew pollen into the air. Wizard Wobble's nose wiggled. His eyes squeezed shut. "Ah... ah... AH-CHOOOOOOO!" The biggest sneeze yet shook the ground.



The sneeze hit the village fountain. The fountain bubbled and twisted. Its stone basin popped up, and eight wiggly teal-blue tentacles curled out. Big round eyes blinked open. A wide smiling mouth appeared. The fountain had become a giant dancing octopus! It balanced the stone basin on its head like a hat and spun around, spraying water everywhere.



The dancing octopus fountain wiggled and jiggled. It tap-danced on its tentacles and splashed water on everyone. "Whee!" it burbled happily. But its dancing knocked over flower pots and made puddles everywhere. "The competition is tomorrow!" cried the mayor. "We can't have a dancing octopus in the square!" Wizard Wobble felt his cheeks turn red. "I did this," he whispered.



Pip took Wizard Wobble's hand. "We can fix this together," Pip said. "But first, you need to calm your sneezes. Let's practice calm focus." Pip led Wizard Wobble to a quiet bench. "Sit here and breathe slowly," Pip said. "Think of something peaceful." Wizard Wobble sat and closed his eyes. He thought of a quiet pond and soft clouds.



Wizard Wobble breathed in and out. The tickle in his nose faded. "I feel calmer," he said. Pip smiled. "Now try a small spell to change the fountain back." Wizard Wobble raised his wand slowly. He focused on the dancing octopus. He imagined it as a plain fountain again. He took another deep breath. "Here goes," he said. He waved his wand gently.



A soft golden light flowed from Wizard Wobble's wand. The dancing octopus fountain slowed its wiggling. Its tentacles curled up and shrank. The big round eyes closed, and the wide smile faded. The stone basin settled back down with a gentle splash. The fountain was a fountain again! Everyone cheered. "You did it!" Pip shouted.



Wizard Wobble smiled. "We did it," he said. "You taught me to stay calm and focused. And I learned that mistakes can be fixed with patience." The purple cow mooed, still purple but happy. The tree with slippers waved its branches. "I'll fix those later," Wizard Wobble laughed. "For now, let's celebrate!"



The next day, the magic competition began. Wizard Wobble performed a perfect spell, and everyone clapped. But the best part was when he told the story of his sneezing cold. The crowd laughed and cheered. "Mistakes can become opportunities to learn," Wizard Wobble said. Pip stood beside him, beaming. And the fountain burbled peacefully in the square.



Back at his cottage, Wizard Wobble made a cup of tea. He looked at his wand and smiled. "A magic cold taught me a big lesson," he said. Pip nodded. "And now you're an even better wizard." Wizard Wobble's nose twitched, but this time he took a deep breath. "Ah... ah... achoo!" A tiny sneeze turned a teacup pink. "Well," he laughed, "some mistakes are just silly fun."