

WATER PARK
TALES

Tobias the Tufted Duck



Tobias the Tufted Duck decided to have a party.

"You can invite all our friends" he said to his cousin, Travis
"while I get the food ready. It'll be great fun."

Tobias collected molluscs, insects and plants for the
tufted ducks.

He gathered plants, seeds and snails for the coots

He brought seeds, acorns and berries for the mallards

He caught fish for the grebes.

And he found plants, insects and snails for the swans

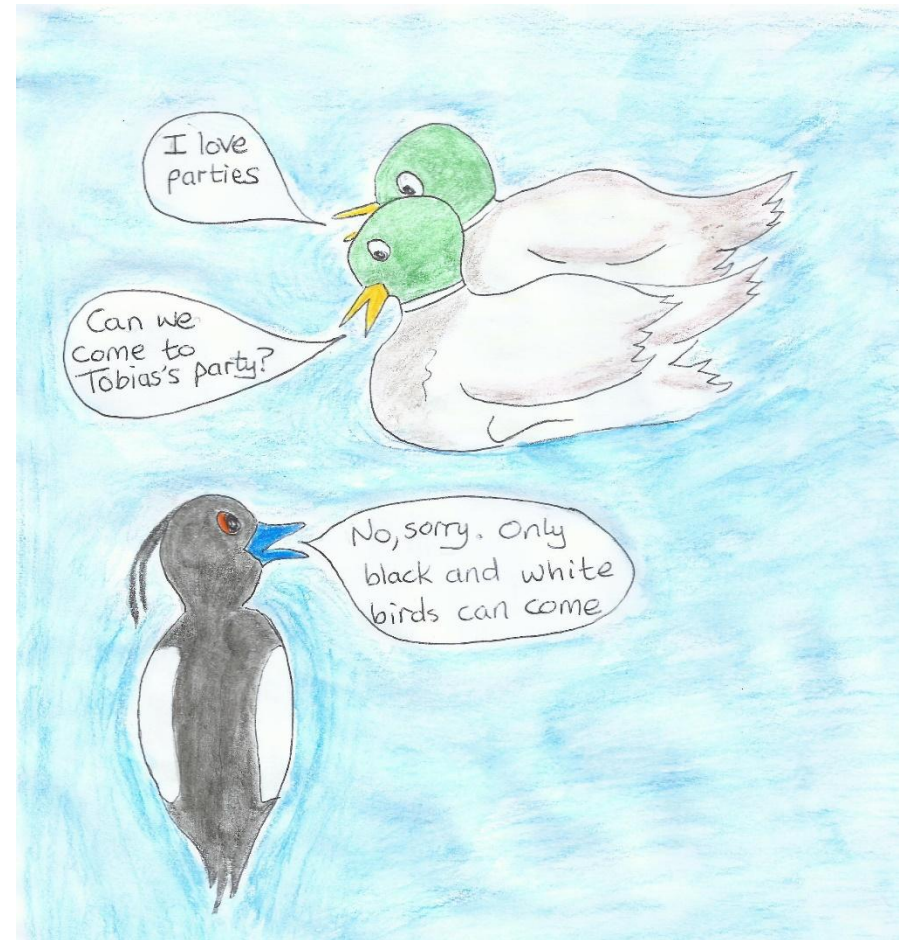


"Can we come to Tobias's party?" the mallards asked Travis.

Travis shook his head. He was hungry and he didn't want to share the food with anyone else.

"No, sorry" he said "you're not allowed to come to the party because you're not black and white. Only black and white birds are allowed to come to the party."

"Oh dear" said the mallards and they swam sadly away across the lake.



"We're black and white" said the coots. "Can we come to the party because we're black and white?"

"No, you can't" snapped Travis. "You might be black and white but you haven't got a tuft on your head like us tufted ducks. Only birds with tufts on their heads can come to the party."

"Oh dear" said the coots and they swam sadly off to join the mallards.



"We've got tufts on our heads" said the grebes. "Can we come to the party because we've got tufts on our heads?"

"No, sorry, you can't" Travis shook his head. "You might have tufts on your heads but you can't walk very well on dry land. How can you reach the food if you can't walk on dry land?"

"Oh dear. We don't know" said the grebes, gloomily. They turned away and swam sadly across the lake to join the mallards and the coots.



"We can walk on dry land" said the swans. "We can come to the party because we can walk on dry land."

"Oh, no you can't" huffed Travis. "You're don't have blue beaks like us tufted ducks. Only birds with blue beaks can come to the party."

"Oh dear" said the swans, shaking their heads. "Travis is right.....we don't have blue beaks."

Wistfully, the swans turned away and swam across the lake to join the mallards, the coots and the grebes.



Tobias had been busy decorating the island with flowers from the meadow, tree branches from the woods, fruit from the orchard and weed from the lake.

"I'm looking forward to the party" he said excitedly "I can't wait for my friends to arrive."

He waited.

And he waited.

And he waited.

But no one came to the party.



“Where is everyone?” asked Tobias when Travis arrived home.

“I don’t know” said Travis. He was looking at all the food and feeling very hungry. “I think we’d better start without them.”

“No, no, no! Definitely not” Tobias protested. “We can’t start the party until all our friends arrive.”

Tobias looked through his telescope.

On the other side of the lake he could see the mallards, the coots, the grebes and the swans.

Quickly he swam to join them.



"Why haven't you come to my party?" he asked his friends.

"We haven't come because we're not black and white" said the mallards.

"We haven't come because we haven't got tufts on our heads" said the coots.

"We haven't come because we can't walk very well on dry land" said the grebes.

"We haven't come because we don't have blue beaks" said the swans.



Tobias was puzzled.

“Who said you couldn’t come because you weren’t black and white?”

Or because you didn’t have tufts on your heads?

Or because you can’t walk very well on dry land?

Or because you don’t have blue beaks?”

“Travis did” they all chorused. “Travis said we couldn’t come.”

“HMMMMMM” said Tobias.



Tobias was very angry.

"I told you to invite *all* our friends to the party" he said to Travis, crossly.

"I'm so sorry, Tobias" said Travis.

"What if I said that you couldn't come to my party?" Tobias asked. "How would *you* feel?"

"I would be very sad" said Travis, miserably and a small tear rolled down his cheek.

"You know what you need to do now, don't you?" Tobias said, sternly.

Travis nodded.



Travis went to find the mallards, the coots, the grebes and the swans.

"I'm sorry" he said to the mallards. "Would you like to come to Tobias's party?"

"I'm sorry" he said to the coots. "Would you like to come to Tobias's party?"

"I'm sorry" he said to the grebes. "Would you like to come to Tobias's party?"

"I'm sorry" he said to the swans. "Would you like to come to Tobias's party?"

"Yes! Yes! We'd like to come to the party" they all shouted with excitement.



So the mallards, the coots, the grebes and the swans all went to Tobias's party.

They had lots to eat.

They had lots to drink.

They played lots of games.

And they all had a great time.

By the time the party was finished they were all very tired.

Especially Travis!





Male tufted duck

The male tufted duck is black with distinctive white flanks while the female is brown and less easy to identify. However, both male and female have the same bright, orange/yellow eyes and the same brilliant blue beaks.