

# DANCING WITH DAISY

By Cindy Taft

Daisy was a dragonfly who loved to dance. She waltzed when she woke up in the morning. She tapped her way to breakfast. She boogied when she brushed her teeth. She even danced in her dreams while sleeping peacefully on her cattail next to Lilac Lake. Dancing made Daisy happy.

Daisy had always wanted to open a dance school. If dancing made her happy, why not share her happiness with others? She decided to give it a try. In a shallow part of the lake she found a big, flat rock that was perfect for her dance floor. Soon she was open for business.

Across the lake lived a little bullfrog named Barnaby. Barnaby loved to swim. In the water, he was as elegant as a swan. He glided beautifully around the lily pads and moved smoothly between the rocks. Out of the water Barnaby hopped and plopped all over the place. He longed to be more graceful. One day, Barnaby heard a grasshopper talking about a dance class he was taking on the other side of the lake. Barnaby decided to check it out. What did he have to lose?

The next morning, Daisy was finishing a waltz lesson with Samson the Spider when Barnaby splashed out of the lake and landed on the rock, soaking Daisy and Samson.

“Well, good morning,” said Daisy, fluttering her wings to dry them. “What can I do for you?”

Barnaby looked embarrassed. He had not made a very good first impression. “My name is Barnaby,” he croaked. “I would like to learn to dance.”

“Why that’s wonderful!” Daisy replied. “I’m Daisy and I think you would make an excellent dancer.”

“Well, I don’t know about that,” replied Barnaby, “but I’d like to try.”

“That’s the spirit!” Daisy said enthusiastically. “When would you like to start?”

“The sooner the better,” answered Barnaby.

“How about right now?” Daisy could tell that Barnaby was nervous and she wanted to calm his fears.

“What dance would you like to learn, Barnaby?” Barnaby had never danced before. What would he be able to do?

“Shall we start with ballet?” Daisy asked. Barnaby nodded. Daisy did a few simple ballet moves very slowly and asked Barnaby to try them,

but his webbed feet made it very difficult to get up on his toes. Daisy could see the determination in Barnaby's face, but ballet wasn't going to work.

"That's ok," Daisy replied. "Why don't we try a waltz instead?"

Daisy flew next to Barnaby and took hold of his front flippers. "Now, just count to three and follow me." Barnaby tried not to step on Daisy's tiny feet, but with every count her dainty toes got squished and squashed.

"I'm sorry," Barnaby said. "I'll never be any good at this."

Daisy's heart went out to Barnaby. She could see how much he really wanted to dance.

"Don't give up, Barnaby," she said encouragingly. "I know you can do it. We just need to find the dance that's right for you." Her big smile warmed Barnaby from head to flipper. This beautiful little dragonfly really cared about him. At that moment, Barnaby felt like he could do anything. Someone believed in him!

"Okay," he said with confidence. "Let's try again."

Daisy thought for a moment. Then she had an idea. "Try this," she said as she slapped her little foot on the rock. Barnaby slapped his flipper on the rock. "Good," Daisy replied. "Now, see if you can do this." Daisy did a couple more tap slaps, this time using both feet. Barnaby copied her moves perfectly!

"That's excellent, Barnaby!" cheered Daisy. "You're tapping!" Seeing the joy on Barnaby's face made Daisy very happy. Before long, she had Barnaby slapping and tapping rhythms all over the rock floor. He soon became her star pupil.

By the end of the summer, Barnaby was ready for the big dance recital. Daisy was so proud as she watched Barnaby perform for all the lake creatures. Her love of dance and sharing of her talent had made all the difference in the life of one very happy "tapping" bullfrog.

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