

MUDDY MADDIE

by Dreyer

The witches of the Elvale Archives each possessed a wondrous power. Alma, for instance, was a Fire Witch, who could summon roaring flames in the palms of her hands, and could walk through a blaze without as much as sweating. Suki was a Water Witch, and she could command the rivers and lakes to move where she willed. The Cat Sisters, Neve and Ciaran, could talk to animals, and even take on their traits, granting themselves claws and fangs and eyes that could see in darkest night. Their Matron, the Librarian, knew where every single book and scroll in the archives was stored, and could pull from the wisdom of any document in her sight as easily as she could from her own brain.

Madeline could move mud around.

Worse, she couldn't even control her powers very well. When her magic first awakened, her neighbors had found her half-sunken in a mud pit of her own making, and her control over it had only marginally improved since then. It seemed that her magic was most likely to activate in times of danger; and a shy, nervous girl like her saw nearly everything as a danger. When the Librarian first welcomed her with a handshake, she got so anxious that she summoned a load of mud right between their palms. The first time she tried to use her magic on purpose, a dozen witches gathered to see, and she got such stage fright that she unthinkingly summoned mud to splat into each one of their faces. Once she was reading a book in the library, and she was so drawn into it that when her partner walked up to her and simply said "hi," it gave her such a spook that she ended up soiling three entire volumes of the *Saga of Ernesto Furioso*. She's had her fair share of embarrassments, to say the least.

But the witches of the Elvale Coven were patient with her. She was given a familiar, she was given a partner, and she was even given jobs to do outside of the library. After a while, she even got to go on jobs by herself, helping out the people of Elvale wherever the services of a mud-mover were needed. And though there were little hiccups from time to time, she felt like she was really starting to getting a handle on her magic.

That's why Maddie was horrified to wake up in her bed one morning, to find that she was laying in a puddle of mud.

The moment she felt the squish, she sat up with a start, and it took all her willpower not to scream at the sight of what happened! Her sheets, her pillow, her nightgown — they were all half-submerged in a murky, mucky pool in the middle of her bed, and the wet earth was even dribbling off the sides and onto the floor! Her familiar, a squat little toad named Bufo, was sitting in the muck at her side, headbutting her haunch and nipping at her in urgency.

She shooed him away, then hopped off the bed and started gathering the dirty sheets in her arms. She looked back over her shoulder and saw that her partner, Alma, was still lying in her bed across the room, undisturbed. Thank goodness.

And of course that's when Bufo decided to start *squealing*! "*Meeee! Meeee! Meeee—!*"

"Shhh-shh-shh-shh shhhhhh!" Shush as Maddie might, Bufo kept on making a racket — and so she pulled the sheets up around him, wrapping him up in a muddy bundle to muffle him! Panicking, she looked back at Alma — still asleep. While Bufo carried on inside the ball of sheets, jostling it back and forth, Maddie quickly changed out of her mud-spattered nightgown and into a fresh shirt and bloomers,

pulling her hempen robe on over them. She lifted up the pile of soiled cloths, ready to carry them off — only to discover that some of the mud had already soaked into the mattress. Groaning in frustration, she plopped the bundle of sheets onto the floor and tossed a blanket over the mattress to cover it up — then snatched the bundle back up before Bufo could find a way to wiggle out of it!

Out of the room she went, to the end of the hall and down the stairs, hoping there was no one else awake for her to pass on her way out to the yard. She realized quickly that the bundle in her hands was dripping, leaving a trail of mud spatters behind her, and even dribbling on her robe — but she didn't have time to think about it.

The sun was only barely up when Maddie exited the dormitory, and she felt wise for remembering her robe as she stepped into the cool morning air. Her bare feet tromped across the grass toward the laundry area, where she dumped the bundle into an empty tub and dragged it over to the spigot. She pumped as much water into the tub as she could, then grabbed a coarse brush and knelt down to try and scour the mud out of the sheets. Her familiar managed to wriggle his way out into the water, and paddled about gently as he continued to screech — "*Meeee! Meeeee! Meeeee!*" Maddie winced at the harsh sound, but at least they were far enough from the dorm that he wouldn't wake the whole coven — perhaps they'd just think it the sound of a wild frog instead.

Maddie scrubbed the big dirty spot in the middle of her bedsheet over and over, dunking it in the water and then scrubbing again, dunking and scrubbing, dunking and scrubbing... as hard as she did it, though, the dirt just wouldn't come out! There had to be a way to do this faster... Her eyes lit up. She had magicked the mud into the sheets — maybe she could magic it back out?

With a determined nod, she stood up, and she held her hands over the tub. She shut her eyes, and she focused her attention on the brackish water. She felt a pain behind her eyes as she channeled her magic, but she could hear the water churning slowly — she could feel it, even. She muttered a silent mantra to aid in her concentration... which was broken as she felt a sharp pain in her ankle! "*Owwh!*" She opened her eyes and looked down to see her own familiar, his froggy mouth clamped on her calf!

"Bufo, stop it!" she scolded under her breath, stamping her foot to shake him off! "I just need to do it a little...!" She huffed and focused her magic again, while her familiar puffed up his throat and hopped off. Squeezing her eyes shut to brace herself through the strain, she urged the sheets to swirl around in the water, while she did her best to ignore the insistent angry squealing of *mee-mee-mee* as her familiar hopped frantically through the grass.

When the strain became too much to bear, she stooped down to pull up the sheet and see her work. The muddy splotch had faded only slightly, and in fact it seemed to have spread a bit. The water was so filthy she couldn't even see the bottom — she would have to dump it out and pour in a fresh tubful if she wanted to make any progress on this at all, and neither scrubbing it out by hand nor working it out by magic would be very easy, or quick. She could see the sun rising higher; soon the rest of the coven would be awake and someone would come out to find her, and start asking questions.

There was no time. She'd simply have to bury the evidence.

She grabbed the rim of the tub, and let out a hard grunt as she tipped it over onto its side, dumping sheets and water out onto the grass. Soil and water — she was in her element here. She gave the water a moment to seep back into the earth, and then she held her hands out and took a deep breath.

She shut her eyes, focusing her thoughts on the sheets and the nightgown sinking deep, deep into the ground, where no one would ever find them. She could hear the mud before her churning, swirling, gurgling. Her magic was working...! Deep breaths, to keep herself steady, as she willed the earth to pull her sheets down deeper, deeper, deeper — something cramped in her back —

Splortch!

Maddie opened her eyes and looked herself over, suddenly feeling cold and wet. The briefest moment of distraction, and some of the mud decided it would no longer be churning around in the ground, but that it would spatter out from around her, and soak her fresh shirt and bloomers in the process — not to mention the inside of her robe! This was terrible — she'd have to change — but that would mean running all the way back to the dorm like this — and the sun was coming up — what was she going to do —

"*Ahem.* Are you having some trouble there, dear?"

Maddie's blood ran cold. She turned around slowly, to see the Librarian — her Matron, standing in a simple hemp robe, arms folded across her chest, a giant paper-white moth perched on her shoulder and flapping its wings idly; and beside her, Alma in her own simple robes, looking quite worried.

"Umm..." Maddie's word caught in her throat, and she started to tremble, mud dripping down her legs and pooling at her feet. "Umm..."

The Matron turned to Alma. "Did you take care of her when she came back from the job last night?"

Alma swallowed. "No, ma'am," she answers, gently shaking her head. "She hadn't come back by the time I went to bed... and when I woke up, there was nothin' on her bed but that dirty spot."

"Hmm. She must be terribly overdrawn. Poor girl." The Librarian cautiously approached the mud puddle, and she reached in to pinch a corner of sheet sticking up, and she started to hoist it up — but seeing how soaked through it was with mud, she sighed and let it drop again. "We're going to have to give her plenty of care right now, for sure."

Madeline flinched — she knew what that meant. "...I'm sorry!" she croaked. "It was... it was an accident..."

"An accident." The Librarian huffed and flicked some mud off of her fingers. "Madeline, can you tell me what an accident is?"

Madeline hesitated, an uneasy look on her face as she shuffled her feet. "Umm... it's when... something happens that's not your fault...?"

"An accident," the Librarian corrected, "is something you've done that was beyond your control."

"...R-right," Maddie said. "That's what I—"

"I know you were out late on your assignment yesterday," the Matron interrupted, "helping the masons salvage the remains of those sunken houses. Did you ask them to give you a treatment before you came back?"

Maddie pursed her lips, averting her eyes from the Matron's gaze. Treatment. The usual word for the regular spankings that witches like them needed to get, to push back the corruption that came with using their powers. Without it, the magic would start to take over their minds, and they would soon turn to mischief, and then wickedness — but sometimes it would start with simple incidents like this.

"...I figured I would get it taken care of back home..." Madeline confessed.

The Matron frowned, clearly unsatisfied with that answer. "And did you?"

"...By the time I got back, everyone was in bed already..."

"Well, I don't think we would have been in bed long. You could have woken up Alma or someone if it was an emergency — but if you had gotten your spanking at the job site, you wouldn't have had to. Besides, the Cat Sisters would have been up on the broom landing, on night watch. Did you ask either one of them to help you?"

"...No."

"So in other words, you came back home all magicked up and in need of a spanking, and you chose not to get one, and you went to bed without anyone taking care of you. And as a result, you surged in your sleep, and woke up in a puddle of mud — something that most likely wouldn't have happened if you'd gotten treated properly last night. So tell me: was it *really* an accident?"

Madeline started to choke up. "...No."

"Then whose fault was it?"

Maddie's lip quivered, and she awkwardly pointed to herself with her thumb. "...Mine."

"Good. I'm glad you understand that," said the Matron. "And then you tried to hide the evidence, and you ended up making a bigger mess of yourself as a result. You understand that that was not the right thing to do, don't you?"

Maddie bit her lip and nodded her head.

"So what are we going to do now?"

Maddie stared at her feet and fidgeted, muttering something inaudible.

"Speak up, Maddie."

Maddie whimpered and scrunched her eyes shut, and a little tear trickled down her cheek. "You're gonna give me a spanking...!" she squeaked.

"That's right. But not before we clean up this mess you made. Alma, lend me a hand, please."

The Librarian took Maddie by the wrist and led her over to the baths, sending Alma to fetch some brushes and soaps. She filled a wooden tub up with water from the spigot, almost all the way up to the rim — sadly there was no time to heat up the water; Maddie would have to endure a cold bath. She helped Maddie strip off her mud-soaked robe, her shirt and her bloomers, and then she gathered some rags to wipe the mud off of her naked body, while she stood there shivering with her hands folded over her lap. Once the bulk of the mud was wiped off, she took Maddie by the shoulder and ushered her toward the tub.

"I know it's going to be cold," said the Librarian with a sympathetic smile, "but don't worry — we're going to warm you up plenty afterwards!"

Maddie took a careful step into the water, and she let out a little gasp — it was even colder than she thought! She shivered as she hugged herself and sunk into the water, which quickly turned brackish. Alma soon arrived with brushes and soaps in hand, and the two of them crouched down on either side of her and got to work scrubbing her all clean! They worked the soap around her neck and all over her face, and over her shoulders too; they lifted up her arms and scrubbed her pits, which made her snicker and squirm; they scrubbed her back and belly, and the Librarian wiggled some suds into her navel with her fingertip; they stood her up in the tub so they could scrub her legs, her nethers, and in between her buttocks! Last they had her sit down and lift her feet up out of the water, so they could give her soles a good scrubbing, going carefully so she wouldn't break out in a ticklish fit while they soaped up all over each foot and in between each pair of toes.

Once Maddie was satisfactorily clean, the Librarian helped her up out of the tub and gave her a towel to dry off — and once she was dry, she scooped her right up and carried her over to the laundry table! She laid her down on her back right on top of it, and she grabbed her feet to pull her knees up to her chest, fully exposing Maddie's naked bottom! She beckoned Alma over to stand on the other side of the table, and help her keep Maddie's legs up.

"So, I think you'll need a full set of one hundred, at least, to fix your corruption," said the Librarian. "And a little extra for trying to hide it from us! Now, where's that little frog of yours...?"

On cue, Bufo helpfully bounded over to the Librarian's feet, croaking happily! "There you are!" the Librarian chirped. "Have you got something for me, sir?" She held her hand down, and the frog hopped up into her open palm. He started to flatten and spread out over her hand, and stick out on one end — and in just a moment, the Matron was holding a round, frog-green paddle in her hand!

"Very good choice, Mr. Bufo," said the Librarian, taking the handle and testing its weight with a few test swings in the air. "Alma? Have you got your salamander, or shall I lend you Lexiphagia?"

"Oh— I left Freet back in the room," Alma said. "But, I couldn't possibly...!"

"No, no, it's quite all right." The moth on the Librarian's shoulder fluttered into the air, tracing circles until Alma held out her hand. It landed softly, then leveled out its wings while its abdomen stretched out and widened — and soon Alma was holding a white moth-shaped paddle in her own hand! She pursed her lips as she glanced down at Maddie, who simply looked back up at her with glistening eyes and a deep blush.

"We're going to take turns, Alma," said the Librarian, as she pushed Maddie's heel back to raise her bottom up a little more. "I'll give her a spank, then you'll give her a spank, and we'll go back and forth like that until she's all red." She raised the frog-paddle up in the air. "Are you ready?"

Alma pressed her lips together and firmly nodded, holding the moth-paddle up. "Ready...!"

Maddie trembled as she looked up at the two of them, and she lay her head back and took deep breaths to brace herself...

WHOP! WHAP! WHOP! WHAP! WHOP! WHAP! Maddie's teeth clenched and her face scrunched up as the paddles beat her naked bottom in a firm and steady rhythm! They each felt so different: Bufo was heavy and firm, and each whack squashed her buttocks down and sent a deep puls up into her stomach; Lexiphagia was light and whippy and left an itchy sting all over the surface of her skin! Back and forth they went, heavy and hard, then whippy and itchy, heavy then whippy, hard then itchy, and it was all Maddie could do not to thrash around through it all!

"You make as much noise as you want, Maddie," the Librarian advised her. "But keep that bottom where it is!" She laid down a good hard swat right on Maddie's sit-spot, making the girl bark and jump! "It's a simple fact, Madeline. Fish need water, trees need the sun, and witches need spankings! You know that, Madeline. And those masons should know that too — all those strong men, and not one of them bent you over his knee?!"

"Aaaaah-hah-hah-haaaooowww!" Maddie wailed, the tears starting to flow free. She pumped her feet in a fuss, wagging her reddening bottom! "They didn't ask me if I needed iiiiiit...!"

"They don't *have* to ask you, Maddie!" Alma sighed, as she gave Maddie's butt another *smack!* "If they forget to ask you, then *you* gotta ask *them!*" *Smack!* "You're always so shy, Maddie." *Smack!* "You gotta learn to take the lead on this stuff!" *Smack!* "It's your own magic, you know!"

"Alma's absolutely right, Maddie." *WHOP!* "If you're not going to keep your own magic in check-" *WHOP!* "If we have to worry about this happening again-" *WHOP!* "Then maybe we should bring one of these tubs up to your bedroom -" *WHOP!* "And move your bed out! Would you like that?" *WHOP!* "Would you like to sleep naked in a tub every night?"

Maddie whimpered and sobbed like a baby, her face flushed red as she shook her head hard! She wouldn't do that, would she?! "No, ma'am!" she bawled. "I dun' wanna sleep in a tuh-hub!"

"Then you *have* — to *learn* — some — respons—ibility!" She punctuated her words with driving swats, not even waiting for Alma to take a turn in between each one! Maddie sucked in a deep breath and let out a big, wet, sorry sob, while her spankers started taking turns roasting her rump again. It was all such a racket — the other witches must have all heard by now! Even if they didn't know what she had done, they would all know it was something bad — bad enough to merit a long and hard paddling from the matron!

"And just so you know, I'll be taking my share of responsibility for this, too," said the Matron, speaking up over Maddie's cries. "I shouldn't have sent you out on a job that kept you out so late. I'll be sending a letter to the Mason's Guild about keeping our witches past sundown — and about handling them properly after a job. Honestly, I can't believe the topic didn't even come up once...!"

She gave Maddie's rump another swat, and so did Alma, and back and forth they went again. By the time the Librarian gave the signal to stop, Maddie's rump was as red as a ripe tomato, her whole body was shaking, and her face was drenched with tears. The paddles changed back into a moth and a frog, and Maddie's Matron and roommate helped her back up onto wobbling legs, patting and stroking her shoulders and back to comfort her.

"We're going back inside now," said the Matron. "It's just about time for our breakfast. And after we've eaten, I'm going to send some of the girls out to dig up those sheets so they can be disposed of properly, and they'll see if your clothes can be saved too. You're going to help them — but only with your hands." She wagged a finger at Maddie's nose. "No more magic out of you today. You're taking a rest from it, you understand?"

"Yes ma'am...!" Maddie hiccuped, nodding her head vigorously. "I understand...!"

They brought Maddie back to her room first, so she could put on a fresh shirt — but *only* a shirt. She would be brought out to the mess hall naked from the waist down, so every witch in the hall could get a good look at her glowing red bottom and see that she was properly chastised. There was scattered laughter among them, but no teasing — no one wanted to be next, after all. And after their meal, Suki and Rosa and Millicent brought Maddie back out to the laundry, and they gently chided the silly little mud witch for making more work for them, and they gave her little smacks and pinches on her tender bottom for the trouble!

In time, Maddie would realize that it was for the best. While scrubbing mud out of shirts and robes and mattresses was no fun, spending time with her sisters was. Her croaky little voice would do its best to join in on the songs they sang while they worked, even though she could never maintain the key. And when the cleaning was finally done and everything was left out to dry, Maddie followed the Librarian's orders, and she lay about the library doing nothing, as relaxed and idle as the Cat Sisters are practically every afternoon. She would rest, and let her magic settle, and remember the lessons she learned today.

It would probably be a while before Maddie was allowed on a job by herself again. Until then, she would have Alma to look out for her, just like she did today; and with her at her side, she would do her best to work up the courage to ask for what she needed, when she needed it. As painful and embarrassing as it was, it was a part of her life now. Fish swim in the water, trees bask in the sun — and witches get spankings.