

THE SAGA OF FREDERICKA, THE CHICKEN

Fredericka first came to the sewing shop of some very strange people who insisted on making clothing unlike anything being worn on the streets today. Fredericka knew these people were a bit behind the times fashion-wise. In fact, she knew they were about 500 to 1000 years behind. You see, they were making clothing you might have seen before the birth of Jesus of Nazareth or as lately as QE-1's reign in Merry Olde England. Lord knew why they were doing such a thing, but Fredericka was suddenly kidnapped from the perfectly nice fabric shop where she'd been happily roosting with the other white, muslin girls, rudely thrown into a plastic bag, and taken back to this messy, dirty shop where these strange folks worked.



She heard the younger of the females say she was going to dress Fredericka up in garb like that they were making for their human companions and Freddie quaked at the thought of being trussed up that way. Time passed, however, and no strange clothing was forthcoming for Fred. In fact, she was left stark naked and sitting about, bored and feeling pretty worthless.

One dark and stormy night, the two females were bickering even more than normal. The young male who sometimes kept them company, pretending he was also working at some type of crafty thing, suddenly grabbed Fredericka, wrapped a piece of gold-colored cord around her neck and tied it into a hangman's knot. The next thing poor, innocent Fredericka knew, she was hanging by the neck from a long pole that also held several costumes made by this strange trio of humans. She heard the male human say something like, "If you two don't stop arguing, I'm going to..." She couldn't understand the rest of his garbled

speech since by then circulation to her brain had been effectively cut off.

Amazingly, even though Fred was hanging thus from the cord around her neck, she survived. Freddie stayed there in that shop for, oh, maybe a year or so more until one day the humans began packing up all the clothing and fabric and other assorted items, including – woops! yes, they threw Freddie into a bin along with other odd things and slammed the lid down tight.

Freddie lost all track of time, shut away as she was in that bin with the things rattling around her. The cord was still wrapped around her neck and she frequently tried to squawk for help, but it was futile. A day came when the bin began moving violently to and fro. Bouncing and jouncing it went, reminding Fredericka of the trip from the fabric store in the plastic bag. More time passed after the horrendous movement stopped. Then, one day, Fred was pulled out of the bin and – yes, hung once again from a bar.

This time, however, the view was very different. She saw a set of shiny, white appliances that from time to time made various noises and seemed to be associated with the cleaning of human clothing. She saw a huge, brown dog and several cats of various sizes, ages, and colors traipsing through the room where she was hanging. It alternated between warm and freezing cold in that room, depending on what time of year it seemed to be when Freddie could catch a glimpse out the window. Would these humans ever realize she was still hanging there and take her down? She was beginning to think not.



Several years passed this way. Then, one day – voila - Fredericka's cord was taken off the bar and she was stuffed into a plastic bag once again. This time, Freddie thought she was headed for the trash barrel. She just knew this was the end for her. But, no, a short time later she was taken out of the bag in another room she'd never seen before. A beautiful, white-haired human gently – oh, so lovingly! – held Fredericka The Chicken in her hands and caressed her. She removed the horrid cord from around Fredericka's neck and smoothed out the ugly wrinkles it had caused. She heard words spoken that sounded like "party dress" and

“biking outfit”. Oh, what were these humans up to now?

Over the course of the next several days, Fredericka’s new human frequently picked her up and fondled her. Then she began stitching things onto Freddie’s face. Fred acquired bright, black eyes and long, lovely black eyelashes. Next came a wonderful, bright yellow beak and pink edging on her comb that looked just like a pretty bow. The white-haired woman started tucking various pieces of cloth up around Freddie, mumbling things like, “Nope, too slippery! Ah, yes, that’s just right for her biking top. Oh, this pink is perfect for her party dress.”

The next thing Fredericka knew, she was dressed! And soon, the first female human – the older one of the original pair – came and saw how lovely Freddie looked all gussied up in a new pink dress and lace-trimmed underpants. A day later, Freddie was again stuffed into a plastic bag, along with her new clothes and off she went. Things were happening fast and she didn’t know what to expect next.

At last, Fredericka The Chicken was taken out of the bag by the original female human and held up to a crowd of other humans. Much laughter and clapping took place and an entirely new human took Freddie gently and lovingly into her hands and held Freddie up next to her face.



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Fredericka The Chicken knew this woman was to be her new companion. She felt the warmth and joy with which her new human beheld Freddie’s loveliness. This time, when she went back into the bag and began moving she knew she’d be traveling along with this new human on some sort of epic journey. Moreover, she knew that this time, she’d be given the



respect and love she had deserved all those long, lonely years hanging by her neck and languishing in the dark, crowded bin.

Never again would Fredericka be alone, cast aside and spurned. She was beautiful in her new clothes and would occupy a position of influence and grace alongside this new human. The hard years were behind her, now. Fredericka The Chicken had finally achieved the home she longed for and would prove her worth as she and the human shared the journey together. Fredericka had found her place in the sun at long last!



Megan Timothy vows to cherish and protect Fredericka from the elements and marauding bands of foxes and other chicken thieves as they ride together around the great United States of America on Megan’s book tour promoting her book, *Let Me Die Laughing!*

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