

## Andy's Story:

### The Birthday Party

Rufus emerged from the bottom of his newest creation, covered in grease and paint.

"There she is Ruff!" he smiled proudly as he polished the front of the speed boat.

"She's all ready for a test drive!" he said smiling. Ruff rubbed his hands together and grinned. They had been building the speed boat all summer in the hope to have it finished by their birthday. Their plan was to have a quiet day by the Lake testing out the newest addition to their great treasury of mechanical things. But Leechie had other plans!

She burst into their workshop sending a flurry of "how-to-build-a-speed-boat" instruction papers whirling into the air.

"Now I know it's your birthday tomorrow and I know it's short notice but try and look your best as I've arranged a birthday party for you!" she bubbled.

Rufus scratched his head. Ruff gulped.

"Well actually Leechie," Rufus began, about to tell her of their plan to spend a quiet day at the lake testing out their speed boat.

"Yes, yes, no need to thank me, I needed to do something special for my friends." She smiled warmly.

"The party is tomorrow, in your back yard. All of Acersville will be there! But don't worry I've arranged everything!" she blurted as she grinned happily and then burst out of the workshop as violently as she'd burst in.

Rufus was taken aback, Ruff was unimpressed.

"She's ruining our birthday plans." whined Ruff later that evening as the two brothers were getting ready for bed.

"Now now little brother, a party won't be that bad, we can always test the boat another day. Cheer up it's going to be fun!" encouraged Rufus.

Ruff sat sulking a while until eventually he fell fast asleep.

The next day he was awoken with a bump! As a heavy table fell over in the back yard. He jumped out of bed and peered out of the window. It was

Leechie, beginning with all of her birthday plans! The two brothers brushed their teeth and went down stairs to see what she was up to.

Leechie had arranged everything, from the decor to the food. There was a huge ice cream cake with hundreds of birthday candles and even an ice sculpture of a figure skating Loopie.

"Um Leechie" asked Ruff, as he walked up to Leechie, who was busily scolding a waiter for wearing a purple waistcoat.

"Don't you think this is a little, um, over the top?" he asked quite concerned as another waiter carrying a highly polished silver tray whisked past him and into the kitchen.

"Oh nonsense!" she replied, waving her hands in the air to dismiss such a notion.

"You and Rufus deserve to be spoilt for your birthday! Sit back relax and let me take care of everything!" and with that she scurried off to find another waiter to scold.

Ruff felt lost amongst the waistcoats and the waiters, ice sculptures and food. He would have preferred a simple birthday party, not a stiff fancy affair! But once Leechie had got something in her head there was no stopping her! She had even arranged a brass band to play "Happy Birthday" for the brothers!

Eventually everyone had arrived and Leechie had been right, all of Acersville was there, for the "Party of the decade" as Leechie had called it.

Once everyone had arrived, they all gathered around the birthday cake, which by this time was almost aflame because of all the hundreds of candles Leechie had used.

The fat Loopie with the immensely big tuba blew very hard to begin the tune to the Happy Birthday song. But he was standing right next to the cake! His big blast of air caused the candles to flare up violently. Dot Mayor Piney's wife who was sitting next to the birthday cake had taken in a big breath of air to begin singing, but instead yelled, "Aahhhhhhhh!!!"

She shrieked as her hat caught fire! She tried fanning the flames out but only managed to make it worse! Mayor Piney's wig was the next thing to catch a light. He ran around the yard yelping and shouting for help!

"Someone call the fire brigade!" yelled a Loopie from the crowd.

Leechie gasped, this was not going at all how she planned! Soon the entire yard was a light, complete with yelling Loopies that were on fire! It was a disaster! But not for long!



"Did someone call the fire department?" called a familiar voice above the mayhem. It was fireman Andy. The Loopies were so relieved to see him!

"Let her rip boys!" he shouted as he instructed the Loopies from the fire department to turn the hose on to full blast. He sprayed the garden, the brass band and the cake! Everything got soaked through, wet balloons, soggy sweets and waxy birthday candles littered Rufus and Ruff's garden. It was a mess! Leechie burst into tears; her perfect party for the brothers was completely ruined. The garden lay in tatters. And the fire hose kept spraying!

"You can turn her off now boys the fire's out!" said Fireman Andy desperately.

"Sorry chief, it's no use, the valve is stuck!"

Try as they might, they couldn't switch the hose off and gallons and gallons of water kept pumping into the yard. By this time Leechie was reduced to a sobbing mess of tears while the brothers looked on in delight as their yard was transformed into a mini lake!

"Now I can test out my speed boat!" said a thrilled Rufus who smiled triumphantly and gave a thumbs up to fireman Andy. Ruff grinned with glee.

"I'll get the skis!" he said happily.

The Loopies who had come to the party began bobbing up and down in the watery playground as Rufus and Ruff powered up the speed boat and whooshed past spraying everyone with a wave of water as they sloshed around the garden.

The Loopies spent the day enjoying themselves immensely! Fireman Andy had saved the day! What a grand birthday party all thanks to fireman Andy!



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