

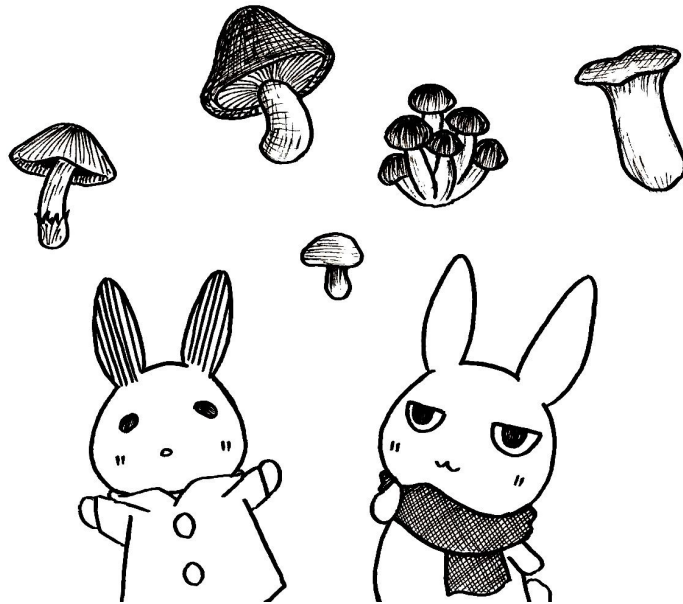
# Funky Bunny Tails: Raincoat's Mysterious Mushroom

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“I’m in the mood for mushrooms. We should go mushroom hunting today.” Bunz stated matter-of-factly.

“Yay! I love mushrooms!” replied his friend, Raincoat.

“After we get some, we can make pasta with them.”

“Yay! I love pasta. But no tomato sauce. It stains my raincoat. Tomato sauce is *evil!*” Raincoat said emphatically.

“Ya, I know you hate tomato sauce. We’ll make an alfredo sauce instead.”

“No! No Alfredo!!”

“Then what kind of sauce do you want?” asked a somewhat perplexed Bunz.

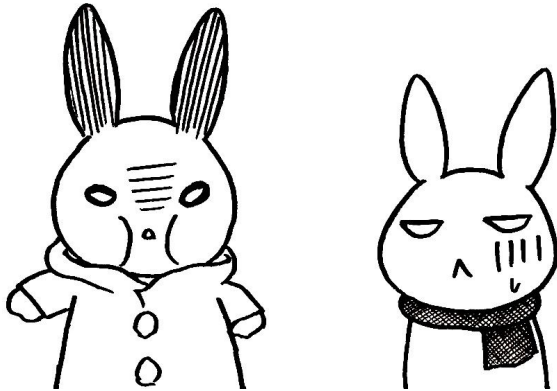
“A sauce with butter, and cream, and cheese sounds good.” Raincoat answered proudly.

“That’s what a alfredo sauce is, you idiot!”

“NO!” Raincoat said angrily. “Not Alfredo. He’s a jerk!”

“What do you even mean? Why is the sauce a jerk?”

“Alfredo is in my class. And he’s such a jerk. So I don’t want Alfredo’s sauce. I just want a sauce with butter, cream, and cheese.”



“It’s not the Alfredo in your class. It’s just the name of a cream sauce.”

“He’s a big jerk. I *hate* Alfredo.”

“Whatever.” Bunz muttered after the exasperating argument. “My life would be so much easier if he weren’t so dumb.”

Sauce semantics aside, the two rabbits set out on their mushroom hunting adventure. When they reached the forest where they planned to search, Bunz made sure Raincoat understood what to do.

“Remember: Don’t eat any of these mushrooms without asking me first. Some of them can be deadly poisonous.”

“I know Bunzy. I went hiking with a dude with a red beard once. He taught me all about mushrooms. I’ll be just fine.”

Completely unconvinced by Raincoat’s confidence, Bunz kept a close eye on him as they fumbled through fungi on the forest floor. After some time,



though, he noticed that Raincoat was actually just dancing around most of the time and hardly picking mushrooms at all.



“Meh, it’s probably for the best. At least this way I don’t have to worry about him picking something deadly.”

As he thought to himself, Bunz picked a couple more mushrooms before declaring,

“We’re gonna have a great pasta dish! Raincoat, I think we have enough.”

“Yay! And look what I found! I picked out a nice dessert ‘shroom for us.”

Raincoat pulled out a red mushroom with white spots on it.

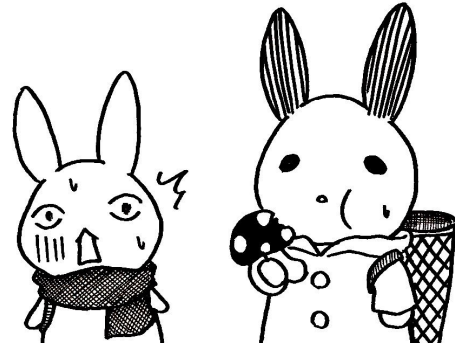
“See, Bunzy. It looks like a strawberry. I bet it tastes sweet.”

Before Bunz had time to realize what was going on, Raincoat took a large bite out of the bright red fungus.

“Moo. It’s not bad, but it’s not sweet at all. No good for a dessert, Bunzy.”

Bunz stood with his mouth open in shock.

“Did you just eat that? That mushroom is poisonous!” he exclaimed before quickly pulling out his mushroom guidebook. He flipped frantically until he found a picture and description of the mushroom that Raincoat had just munched on.



“It’s poisonous, Bunzy? Am I gonna die? Wahaaaaa!” Raincoat wailed.

“Says here it’s called the fly agaric. Apparently it’s very rarely deadly, but it messes with your brain and can cause you to act crazy. All in all, it shouldn’t be too bad. It’s not like it can make you any dumber than you already are.”

“Bunzy, you’re so mean! I’m not dumb!”

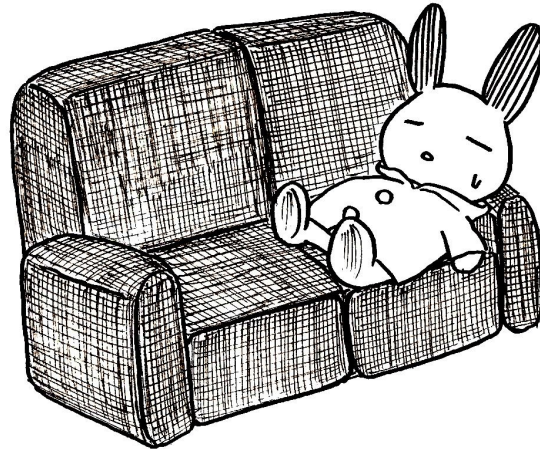
“If you weren’t dumb, you wouldn’t have eaten a mushroom without knowing what it is.”

Raincoat simply whimpered. It seemed even he realized that Bunz had a point. Mushrooms in hand, the two rabbits returned home silently. Bunz began to get a bit worried, but since Raincoat was still walking along fine, he wasn’t too concerned. When they stepped inside, Raincoat slid over to the couch and sat down. Bunz quickly asked how he was feeling.

“I’m feeling kinda tired, but other than that, I’m fine,” Raincoat replied.

“Ok good. You rest here while I make dinner. Eating should wake you up a bit,” said Bunz in an unusually caring tone. He then hopped off to the kitchen and started preparing

the pasta with mushroom cream sauce for their dinner. Raincoat, for his part, quickly fell asleep on the couch.



About forty-five minutes later, Bunz was just putting the finishing touches on the pasta when Raincoat bounded into the kitchen.

“Hey, how are you feeling?” Bunz asked cautiously.

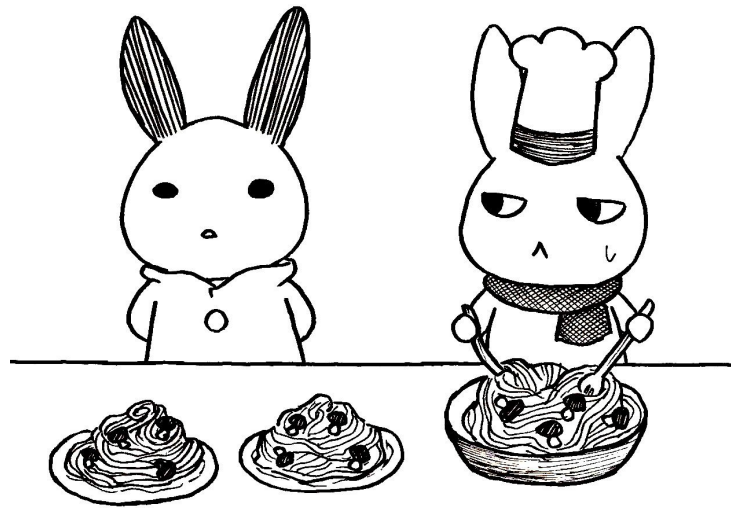
“Quite stupendous, actually.” Raincoat replied cheerfully, “Quite stupendous indeed.”

“Good...uhh, it’s good that you’re feeling well.” Bunz remarked, unable to completely hide his surprise at Raincoat’s correct usage of a word with more than two syllables.

Raincoat glanced at the plates full of pasta before asking, “Are you going to garnish those with basil?”

“Well, yeah I was planning on it. Is there something wrong with that?”

“No that’s good. I’m simply surprised that someone with your meager culinary abilities would think to do so. Well done.”



At this point, Bunz was too shocked to feel angry over the insults, but he knew that Raincoat was not acting or speaking normally.

“What is up with that accent? Did you go to London in your dream or something?” Bunz asked, trying to get a handle on why Raincoat was talking the way he was.

“I don’t know what you’re talking about,” he replied. “This is exactly the way I always speak.”

“No, it’s not. It’s really not. And it’s really weird.”

“I still don’t know what you mean. I’m speaking perfectly normally.”

“Whatever, let’s just eat.”

The two ate their meal in relative silence. Bunz was still trying to figure out what was going on, and Raincoat seemed to think himself above conversing too much with the lowly Bunz. After they finished, Raincoat left the table before returning to ask,

“Have you seen my spectacles? I’d like them for my evening reading.”

“Spectacles? You never wear your glasses. You hate those things. And you never read anything with actual words. What is going on with you? You’ve been acting weird ever since you ate that mushroom...”

Bunz finally figured out the cause of Raincoat’s sudden change. If the mushroom was indeed the cause, there wasn’t much he could do but wait for the effects to wear off.

“It shouldn’t be too long,” he thought to himself. “The guidebook says the effects of the mushroom usually only last a few hours.”

For the next two days, Raincoat continued to bewilder, and greatly annoy, Bunz with obscure facts (“Did you know that some frogs swallow using their eyes?”) and snarky observations (“Your scarf is quite simply the filthiest thing I have ever laid eyes on.”) all delivered in the snootiest of British accents. Finally Bunz couldn’t take it anymore:

“I have got to do something about this. The effects of the mushroom don’t seem to be wearing off, but he cannot stay this smart forever. It’s driving me crazy!”

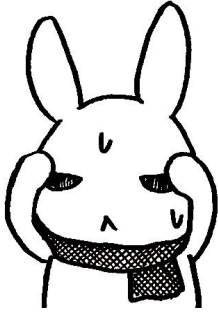
Then he had a genius idea. Who better to ask about how to solve the problem than the bunny who knows everything?

“Hey, Raincoat. Are there any foods that could make you stupid?”





“You don’t need to worry about such things, Bunzy. You’re plenty stupid already.”



Bunz turned pinker than normal with rage, but he knew he had to stay calm to get any answers.

“It’s not for me, obviously. Just in general, you know, are there any mushrooms or something that could do that?”

“To my great knowledge there aren't any fungi that would have such an effect.” Raincoat answered in a most professorial manner.

“Ah, well. That’s too bad. I guess you don’t know everything after all...”

Raincoat twitched nervously at that notion, “Just, just give me some time to do some research. I can surely find the answer to your query.”

Bunz smiled slyly, pleased that his plan had been set in motion. While Raincoat did his research, Bunz would work on the next step of the plan: how to get Raincoat to eat whatever it is that would make him dumb again.

“Luckily, even though he knows a lot of stuff now, he still seems pretty oblivious.”

After a couple hours, Raincoat returned to Bunz, smiling and obviously proud of himself.

“I have the answer to your query. The mushroom with the potential effects you seek (though I still don’t know why you would seek such a thing), is white with red spots.

Interestingly, according to my research, a red mushroom

with white spots can apparently make one smarter on rare occasions..”

“Heh, that’s the one that started this mess in the first place.” Bunz replied with a smirk.

“What ‘mess’ are you referring to?”

“Oh, nothing. Just talking to myself. I think it would be cool to find that white mushroom though.”

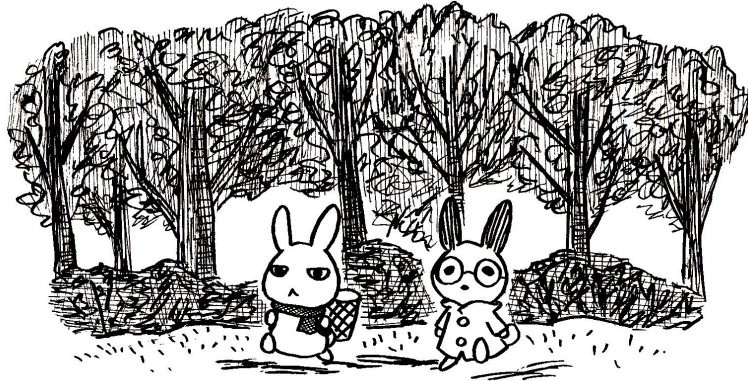
“Dearest Bunzy, as I’ve told you before, you’re plenty dumb already.”

“Anyway, I’m going mushroom hunting. Do you wanna come?”

“I suppose I shall, if only to keep you from making a complete fool of yourself and coming back empty handed.”



Bunz led ‘genius’ Raincoat out to the same area of forest where they had hunted for mushrooms the other day. Although Raincoat remembered that they had been there, he didn’t seem to remember that he had eaten a red mushroom with white spots and certainly did not think that a fungus was the source of his genius. Bunz sought to use this arrogance and lack of memory to restore Raincoat to his normal (relatively) self.



It only took a few minutes of picking mushrooms before Bunz spotted what he was looking for.

“Hey Raincoat, is this the one?” he said, knowing the answer already.

Raincoat approached, pushing his glasses up the bridge of his nose as he looked down at the fungus.

“Yes, that is most definitely a genuine specimen. But once again, I don’t think it’s necessary. You can hardly become any less intelligent than you are.”

Repressing his anger, Bunz answered. “But how do we *know* that this would make someone dumb? I’m too dumb, so it’d be hard to tell even if I ate it. Maybe you should try it. With someone as smart as you, we’d notice if you got even the tiniest bit dumber.”

(Those words greatly hurt Bunz to say, but he reasoned it was for the greater good.)

“Preposterous!” Raincoat scoffed loudly. “I have no desire to even temporarily lower my superior intelligence closer to your pathetic level.

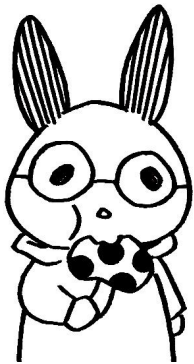
“Then I guess, you aren’t really interested in experimenting to find out for sure. Some scientist you are. You probably made the whole thing up. ”

Raincoat stared at Bunz indignantly.

“How dare you question my credibility as a scientist! I will consume this fungus to prove that I am correct, but you must be ready to notice even the slightest drop in my mental faculties. I don’t imagine there will be much change.”

“Don’t worry, I can do that much at least.”

Finally convinced by the affront to his scientific



credentials, Raincoat ate the white and red mushroom. As soon as he finished chewing, he asked Bunz to test him.

“Alright, Raincoat. What’s the capital of Kazakhstan?”

“Simple. The answer is Astana, obviously.”

“Okay, the mushroom hasn’t taken effect yet. We’ll have to wait for a bit.”

Bunz continued to ask Raincoat a difficult question every five minutes for the next half hour, and Raincoat continued to answer every question correctly without hesitation. Bunz became increasingly concerned with every correct answer. Dejected that his plan had failed thus far, but not yet entirely hopeless, Bunz suggested pizza as a way to fill their stomachs and buy time for the mushroom’s effects to kick in. Raincoat agreed that pizza would be a “splendid idea”, and the two proceeded to the nearest pizza parlor.

As soon as they sat down, Raincoat began showing off his knowledge again.

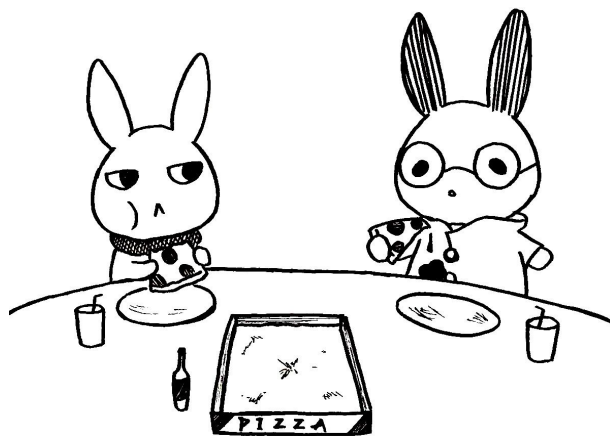
“Of course you know, Bunzy, that *pizza* doesn’t actually mean pie in Italian like some say... And speaking of pi, it’s the ratio of a circle’s diameter to its circumference represented by the number 3.14159265359...”

“Please don’t tell me he’s gonna be smart like this forever. I can’t take it!” Bunz thought to himself.

Their pizza arrived at their table shortly. Bunz was more than ready for a respite from Raincoat’s constant droning and listing of facts, but with each moment, it became clearer that the second fly amanita had not reversed the effects of the first. If anything, it seemed to have made Raincoat even keener to share all the random knowledge he had somehow acquired. They ate in relative quiet, and soon there was only one piece left on the tray.

“Bunzy, do you mind if I have the final piece. A large, functional brain such as mine requires many nutrients to sustain itself.”

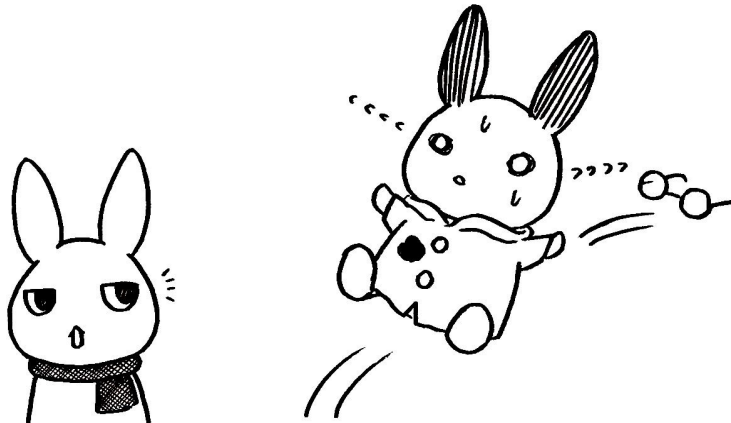
“Sure, go ahead. I’ve had enough.” Bunz replied, at this point overwhelmed by a feeling of failure.



Raincoat picked up the last piece and took a large bite. As he did, a drop of sauce dripped off the pizza and fell onto the yellow garment that lends him his name. Calmly, he took a napkin and dabbed it on his coat to remove the

sauce. The sauce, however, left a small, red stain near the bottom of his jacket. Bunz noticed Raincoat just staring silently down at the stain. Then the silence broke:

“Wahaaaaaaahh!” Raincoat wailed. “I *hate* tomato sauce. Tomato sauce is EVIL!!”



THE END