



## Stories of Stuff

**Disgruntled**  
**by Nell Turner**

**From a tale told by Mandy**



The morning of Auntie Lil's wedding squealed with excitement. Small bridesmaids' rags were left in 'til the last minute and shiny boys were wriggle slicked into clean clothes.

The guests sauntered through the lanes to the chapel nestled in the heart of the village, their voices joyously wrapped in the yellow of moorland gorse and the dizzy smell of wild garlic. The sister sewn flowers on the bride's veil bobbed with happiness, her lace train gently floating between mothers and aunts. Warnings to any nippers who got stains on their clothes echoed round the coombe. Boys threw pooh sticks and bridesmaids picked handfuls of lilies-of-the-valley to carry like Auntie Lil.

Charlie fell in the stream of course; he always did. But this time, his charge was more precious than conkers. His father marched him to the granite stones where the women did the washing on Mondays. As he rinsed his son off under the chilly moorland water, his father looked at the soaked parcel in disbelief. 'One thing, Charlie,' he said, 'That's all you had to do.'

Giggly foragers were shushed into seats. Faces were finger-lick cleaned and kisses nestled by grandma's whisper soft powdery cheeks. Charlie's face was very red; his father's hand on him, very white.

Auntie Lil said yes and a new Uncle was made. Feet stamped and hands clapped until they tingled but then slowed when a raucous din was heard from outside. Grandfer strode down the aisle and threw open the chapel door.

In burst Alfie, Susie, Percy and the rest of the drove. Disgruntled at not having been invited, Lil's pigs had made their way down from the farm. Mud-wallowed and over excited, tiny piglets hurled themselves at small bridesmaids, who squealed back in joy. Moments later, Charlie was upturned by an angry Bettie. 'Sow wants her ring back, son!', his father whooped.

Harry and Lil's marriage was stuffed with joy and love. They smiled at their wedding photo every morning: a groom with his glowing bride, her veil stained and smattered with mud. Muddied heart shaped family joy.

*1936 wedding veil and photo on loan from Mandy (Stroke Club at Liskerrett). Ideas for story from Mandy at Stroke Club and also K at Liskeard Library.*