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**The Adventures
Of
Billy The Cloud**



by Paul Goodliffe

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Billy The Cloud didn't know it yet, but he was about to have the most exciting adventure of his life. The strangest adventure you can imagine.

Billy grew up as a small, fluffy white cloud, far far out to sea, away from the land, and high up in the sky.

As he floated happily along, he dreamily watched a boat go by.



The sun was shining very brightly that day.

All the fishes were happy.

All the whales were happy.

Mandy The Mermaid was very happy as she sat on her rock combing her long, titian hair. Titian hair is a very soft, golden red colour. It is pronounced “tee-shun”

The sun easily dried her hair while the waves lapped gently on the shore.



Then, the strangest thing happened.

As the sun warmed up the sea, Billy grew bigger and bigger. And Bigger.

Because the warm sea evaporated and the water rose up and joined Billy.

Billy was very pleased and proud about this.

Billy didn't know that this happens all the time, to every cloud, everywhere. Did you know that ?



In fact, Billy grew so big that he covered up the sun.

And the fishes were cross, because they couldn't see properly and kept bumping into each other.

And the whales were cross, because they liked to sunbathe.

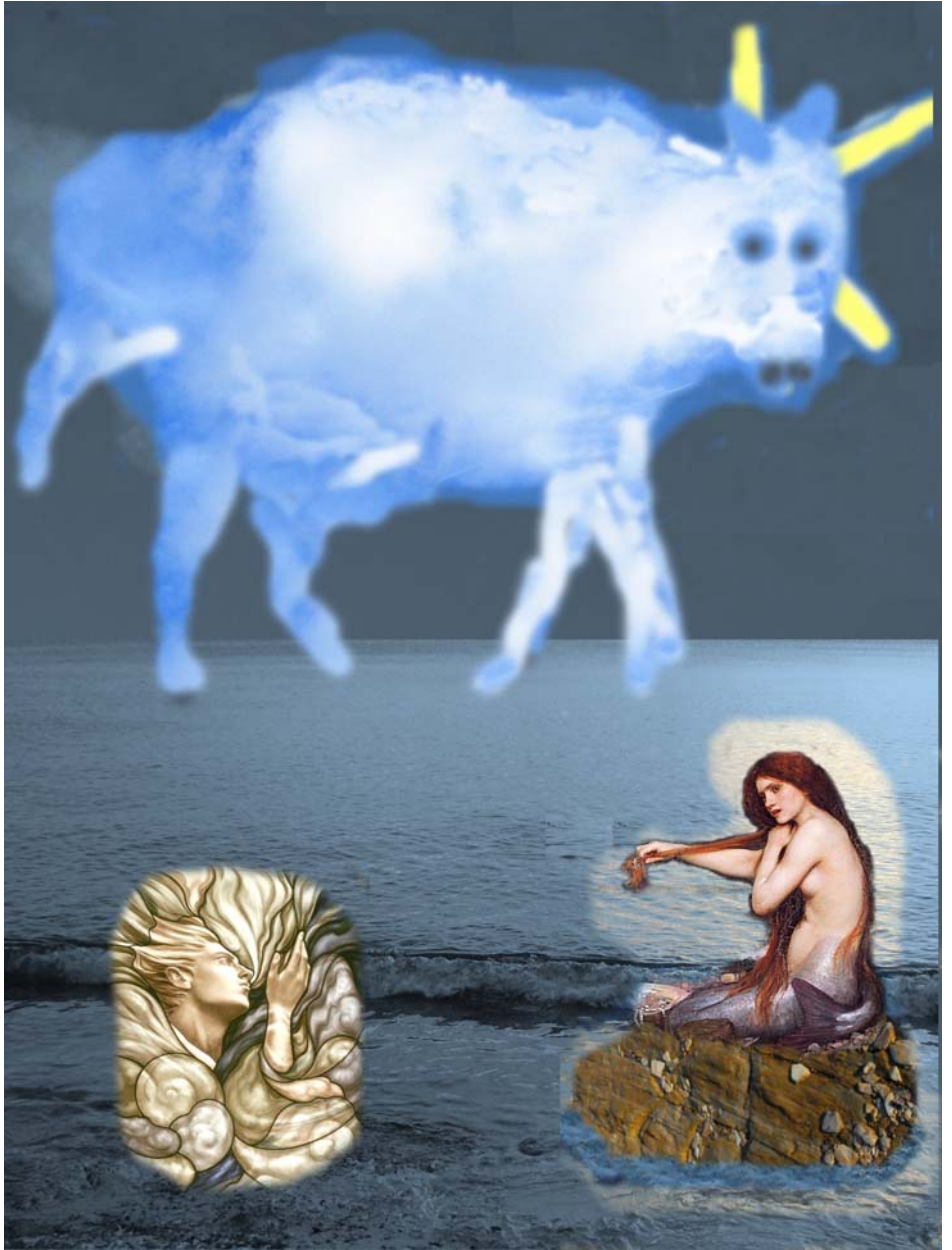
And Mandy was furious, because she had just washed her hair and the sun wasn't there to dry it.



So Mandy asked Wanda The Wind to blow Billy away, so that everybody could see the sun again.

Wanda was very happy to do this. She loved blowing clouds around the sky because she could blow them into such interesting and pretty shapes.

Wanda decided to blow Billy into a sort of lumpy-horse shape, and she started to blow him towards the land.



Billy was very interested to see the land, because he had not seen it before.

He was also very very big by this time. He had lost his lumpy horse shape, and just looked like a big bad black raincloud.

I am sure you know what happens to clouds that grow too big like this. They start to rain rain !



First of all, Billy rained on King Rudolph's garden.

King Rudolph was very pleased, because he was growing vegetables to eat. The rain would make the vegetables firm and strong and healthy.

King Rudolph was safe inside with a cup of tea, watching the rain through the window. He looked at his leeks.

He was going to a fancy dress party this evening, so he was wearing his Bishops costume to fool people.



Can you see that Queen Betsy has left her washing on the line ?

Billy rained and rained on the washing. Queen Betsy was very pleased. She added more dirty laundry to the washing line, hoping that Billy would clean it for her.

Do you think she's right ?

I don't think she's right. What happens in your house when mummy leaves the washing on the line ?



King Rudolph suddenly noticed that Queen Betsy had left the washing hanging on the line, and he went rushing to collect it before it got too wet.

Queen Betsy took the basket of clothes inside and dried them beside the fire instead.

The dry heat from the fire removed the water from the clothes.



While Farmer Goodgrief was digging the fields,
Billy rained and rained on his tractor.

Farmer Goodgrief was not his real name. But
every evening when he came home covered in
mud, his wife Sally said “Good Grief ! Will you
look at the state of you !”

And so that is why he was known as Farmer
Goodgrief.

The rain often brings the worms from deep in
the soil to the surface. Have you ever looked for
worms in a garden after rain ?



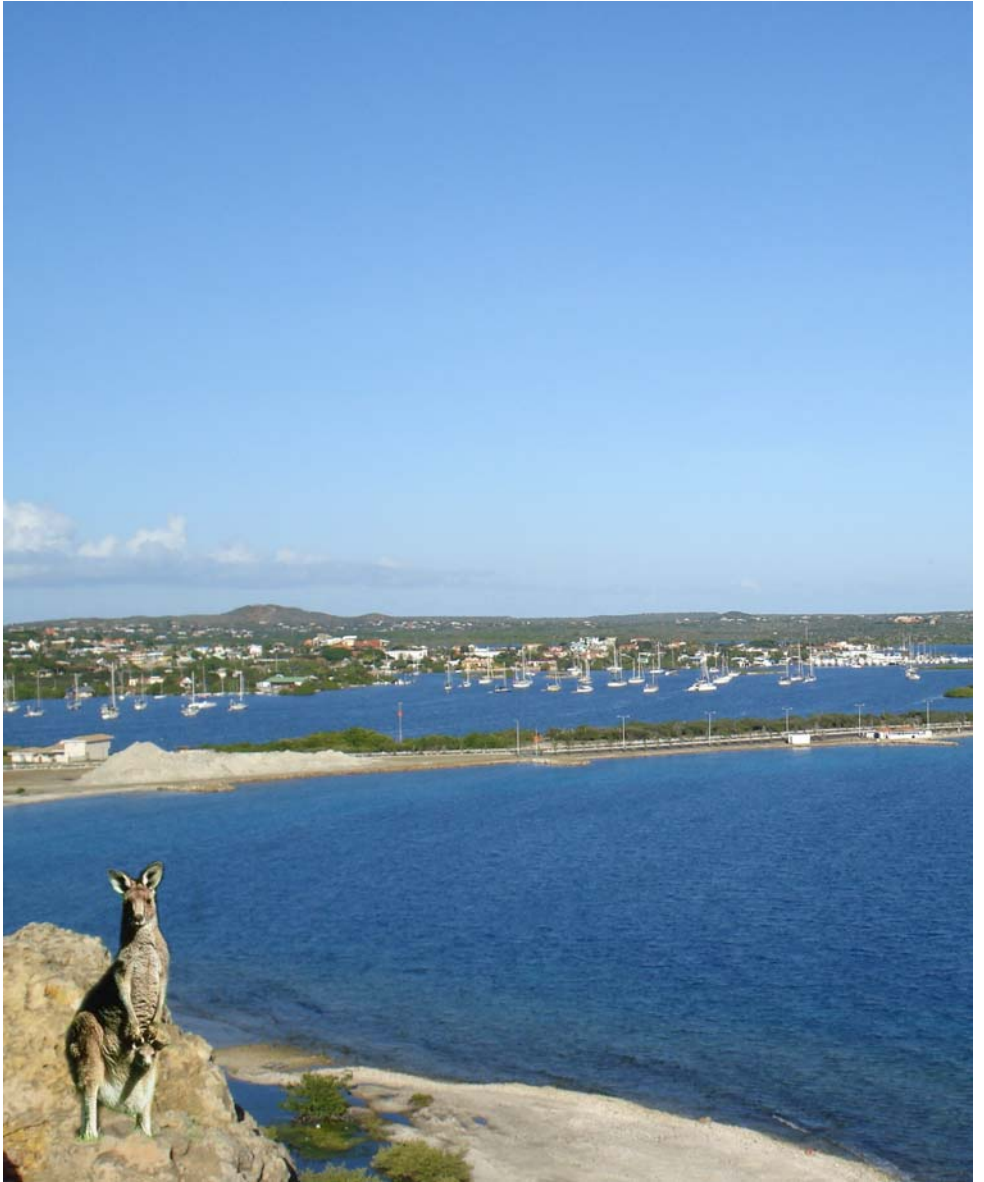
When Billy The Cloud had dropped all of his rain ... *he disappeared*. Just like that.

He became a wisp of cotton wool, that turned into candy floss, that blended with the air until he was no more.

If you stand outside and watch, you will see Billy disappearing.

If you get bored and wet, then keep on turning around quickly to see if a stray kangaroo is watching you.

Billy The Cloud had become Billy The Rain !



Billy The Rain ran down the road and fell into a drain.

A drain is a long pipe underground that someone has put there many years ago.

Billy didn't like the drain. It was dark. There were rats.

The drain took Billy away from the roads, cars, pedestrians, bicycles, and bears that jump out on you when you stand on a crack.

The drain prevents flooding.



After a long time, the drain came to an end.
Can you see how the drain ends ?

When Billy The Rain tumbled out of the drain,
there were beautiful meadow flowers to admire,
and ducks to play with.

Billy The Rain came out of a Drain, and became
Billy The Stream !



Billy The Stream babbled merrily through the fields.

He went under a bridge.

Gordon The Gnome sat on the bridge, collecting stones and playing poohsticks.

He didn't fall in today. Sometimes Gordon fell into the stream and he got cold and wet and surprised and cross, and Mummy had to dry him with a towel.



As Billy The Stream tinkled merrily along, he joined another stream that had been created by Belinda The Cloud. It was nice for Billy to say hello to Belinda!

There are lots of clouds in the sky. They all have different names but they all have the same adventure.

A large frog sat beside Billy The Stream as he joined Belinda.

It was waiting for the postman to deliver a heater, because frogs are cold-blooded animals and need the sun (or a heater) to keep warm.



After a while, Billy split into two pieces. Half of him flowed back to the sea. The other half flowed into the local reservoir.

The local reservoir stores clean fresh rainwater. When you turn on the tap in your house, the water has come from your local reservoir.

Did you know this ? Ask someone where your local reservoir is. Maybe you can go and see it. Often you can walk around it.

The reservoir is kept very clean, and many animals and plants live there happily.



But now comes the strangest part.

All of Billy The Stream that had flowed back into the sea waited for the sun to come out again

And then exactly the same thing happened. Billy The Cloud came back !

Far out to sea, the water started to warm up in the sun, and Billy The Cloud was reborn in the sky, and he started the whole adventure all over again.

The End.



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