



CHAPTER FIVE

IT WAS TIME to get up. Chilly Billy knew it was time to get up, but he just didn't feel like it.

In fact, he felt awful. His head was aching, he was hot and tingly, he didn't want his breakfast, and his ears were bright red.

He was altogether rather poorly. There was only one thing to do, and that was call for help.



For moments like this, Chilly Billy keeps a little walkie-talkie next to his bed. He twiddled the dial and tuned in to the special I.C.E. (In Case of Emergencies) wavelength.

"Hello," whispered Billy, "it's me here and I don't feel at all well."

"What happened, Billy?" asked a cheerful voice from the walkie-talkie. "Have you eaten too much chocolate cake? Did you fall off an ice cube? Has there been an avalanche?"

"If you'd stop asking so many questions, maybe I could tell you," said Billy in a grumpy

voice. "Nothing like that happened. I just feel terrible, and I don't know what's wrong but my ears are all red and my head hurts."

"Right," said the walkie-talkie in a leave-it-to-us kind of voice: "Listen. There's a delivery of a dozen eggs due to arrive in your fridge this morning, and we'll have a nurse aboard the egg carton. Over and out."

"Thank you very much and out to you too," said Billy gratefully.

As bad as he felt, Billy struggled out of bed and did his morning chores, because he hates to let his fridge get messy.

Just as he'd finished, and had stopped for a rest, he had to slide down his lightning light pole and switch on the light. Someone was coming.

It was a big delivery. Milk, butter, lemonade, two kinds of fruit juice, half a pound of cheese and yes, there it was, a large carton of eggs.



No sooner had the door closed when Billy heard a voice coming from somewhere among the eggs.

"What do you think you're doing out of bed? No, don't tell me—I know. You're waiting to help me with my bag."

And with that, a big bag like the ones doctors have came sailing out of the egg carton, and Chilly Billy just managed to catch it without getting flattened.

He was getting ready to be very angry when he saw the nurse climbing down from the egg

carton.

She was beautiful. He stopped being angry.

"Come along," she said, "don't just stand there with your mouth open. Let's get you into bed."

Into the bedroom they went, and the nurse started to examine him.

She looked at his tongue.

She felt his forehead.

She looked at his bright red ears.

She took his temperature.

"Hmmmmm," she said thoughtfully.

"Well?" said Billy.

"No—not well at all," said the nurse. "You know what you've got?" She nodded to herself. "You've got a nasty Warm."

"A Warm? Oh dear," said Billy, feeling even more sorry for himself.

Because a Warm for someone like Billy is just as bad as a Cold is for someone like you.

"Now let's see," said the nurse. "We must keep you nice and cold, give you plenty of iced tea, and you must stay in your bed of crushed ice for a day or two."

"Impossible," said Billy. "Who's going to switch the light on and off? Who's going to clean up? The ice cubes will get frosty. The shelves will get sticky. There's work to be done. I can't stay in bed."

"Yes you can and yes you will," said the nurse, looking very stern and waving her thermometer at Billy. "I'll take care of the fridge and everything will be fine. So you just take this anti-Warm pill and stay there and keep nice and cold."

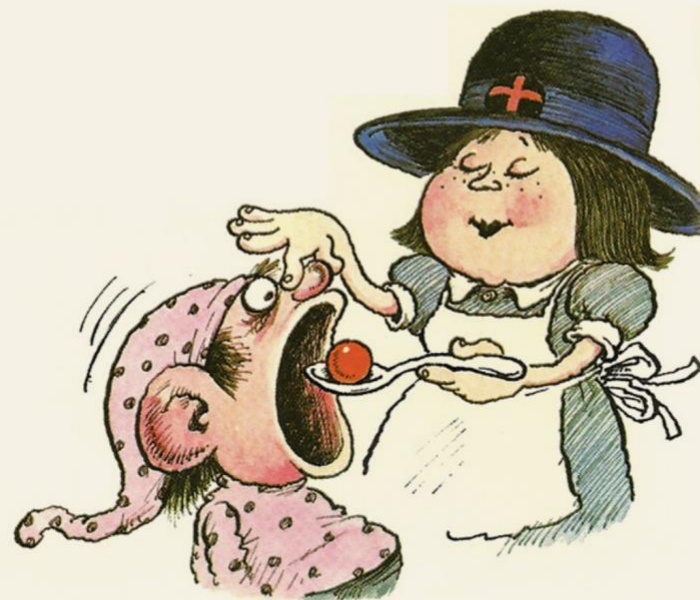
Billy lay down on the bed grumbling quietly, but because he really did feel ill and because the nurse really was very beautiful, he didn't grumble loud enough for her to hear.

And as the nurse went off to see what needed doing in the fridge, Billy went into a deep sleep.

He slept and he slept and he slept. Believe it or not, he slept for a whole day and a whole night.

When at last he woke up, he felt much better. He looked in the mirror, and his ears weren't red any more. He bent down and touched his toes, but his head didn't hurt. It just goes to show, he thought to himself as he

brushed his hair, you should always do what you're told when you feel ill.



As he sat on the edge of his bed wondering where the nurse was, he heard some very busy-sounding noises coming from the downstairs part of the fridge.

"Nurse," he called out, "I'm feeling much better and quite hungry and can I get up?"

The noises down below stopped, and the nurse came up to Billy's room. She was carrying a tray with a slice of fresh strawberry and a glass of milk on it.

She looked at him, and felt his head and inspected his ears. "You're looking *much* better. In fact you're really quite a handsome fellow."

Billy blushed, and was secretly very pleased.

The nurse puffed up Billy's pillow. "Have your breakfast, and then we'll get you up for a walk."

"Do you know," said Billy in between mouthfuls of strawberry, "I felt so ill when you first arrived I didn't even ask your name. What is it? I can't keep calling you Nurse."

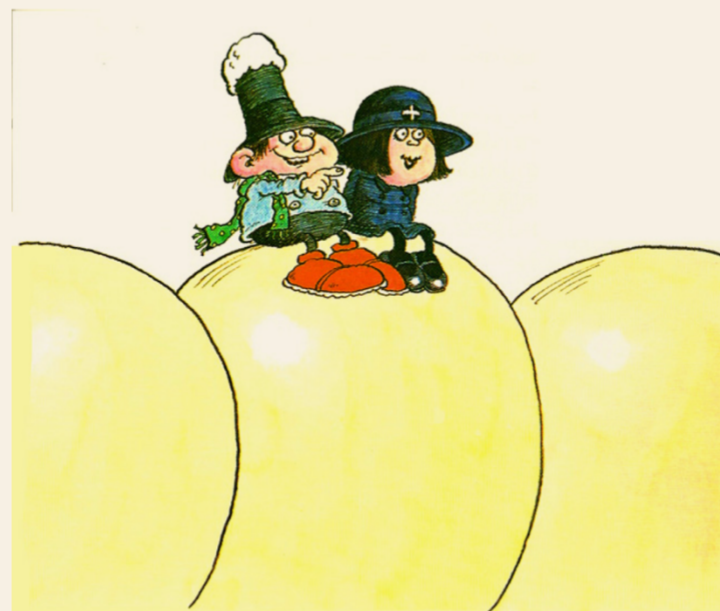
"Well, it's very much like yours; I'm called Lily."

"I like that name," said Billy.

"That's lucky," Lily said, "because it's the only one I've got."

And so they chatted for a while, and Billy finished up his breakfast and felt even better, and the two of them set off on a walk round the fridge.

It looked spotless. Lily had obviously worked very hard. The ice cubes were gleaming. The cartons and bottles were clean and polished. The vegetable tray was cool and green and freshly watered. It was all just as though Billy had done it himself. (And maybe, but don't tell him I said so, just a little bit better.)



They walked over to the egg rack, and sat down on top of an egg to enjoy the view across the strawberries down to the thick yellow chunk of cheese on the bottom shelf.

"It's lovely here," said Lily with a sigh, "but now that you're well again, I must think about going. Do you know when the next packet of peas is due to leave?"

When he heard this, Billy felt sad. He suddenly realised how very much he liked Lily. It was lovely having someone to talk to, and someone to share the good things of the fridge with him.

Billy took a deep breath and got as brave as he could and reached out and took Lily's little hand.

"Don't catch the next packet of peas, Lily," he said, "stay here with me." And then, in a great rush in case she'd say no before he finished, he went on: "You must admit that it's a large and handsome fridge, with plenty of room and we could have friends to stay and parties and lots of fun and besides," (here he had to stop for breath and pluck up his courage and squeeze Lily's hand as tight as he could), "I love you."

Then he went extremely pink and scuffled his boots and looked very carefully at his toes.

"Oh Billy!" said Lily, and leant over and kissed him once on the ear and three times on the nose.

And so, hand in hand, they went up to their home in the freezer compartment very happy, and full of plans for all the things they were going to do together.

And later on, when the evening packet of peas left, Billy and Lily stood at the edge of the freezer compartment and waved it goodbye.