

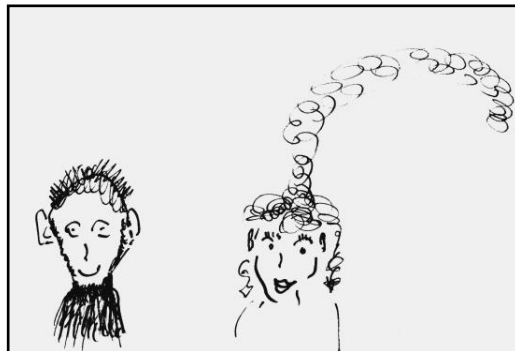
**NOW...**

**IT'S STORY TIME:**

***Cathy's Cloud***

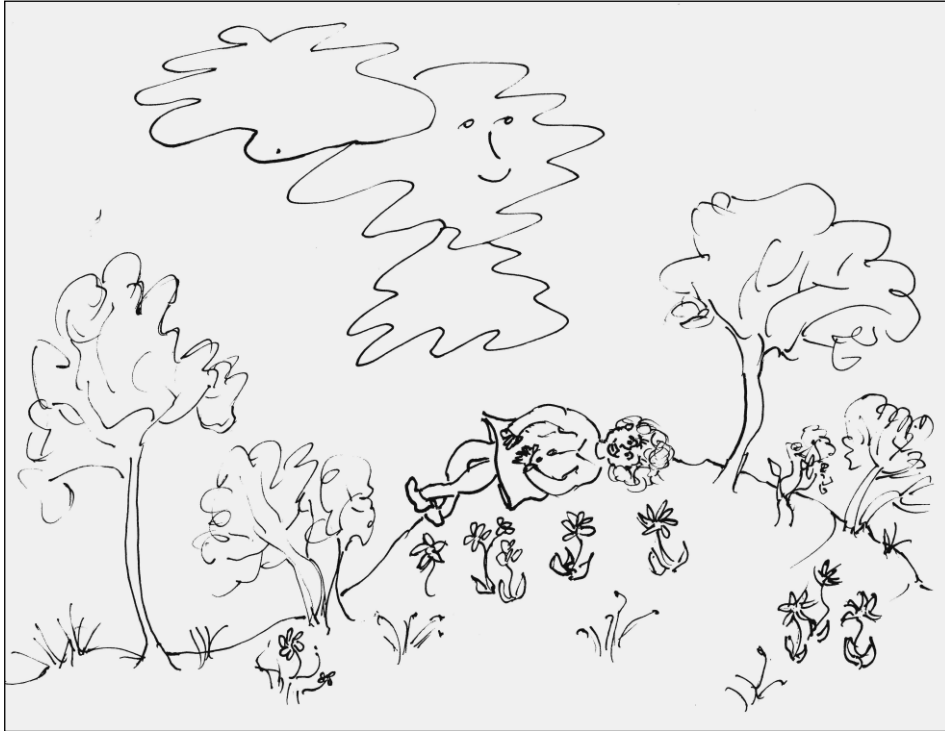


***A Hairy Story***





## *Cathy's Cloud*

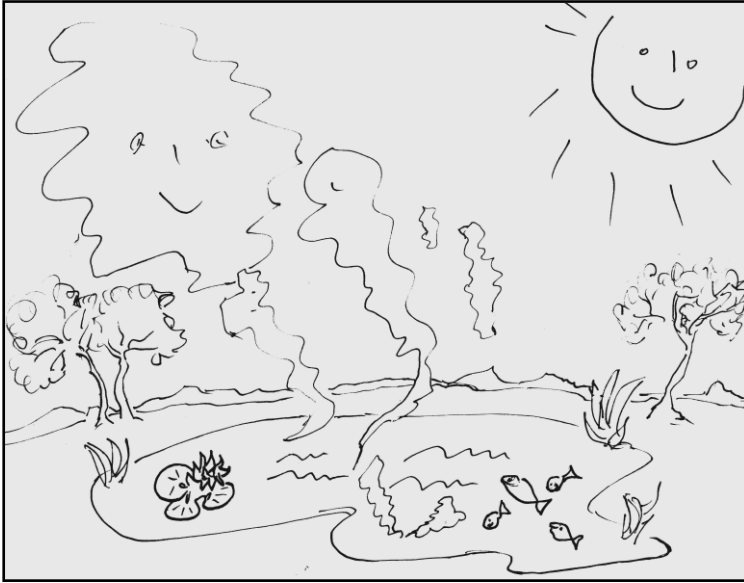


Cathy walked to her favourite place. It was a gentle hillside covered with clover and flowers. She lay down on the grass to watch some clouds. They were all shapes and sizes. Some looked like faces, or islands. Then Cathy saw a small white cloud, which stopped above her head, floated gently down, and smiled.

Cathy sat with the white cloud beside her, weightless on the ground. “Hello, my name is Misty,” said the cloud.

So they began to talk and play, as Cathy walked across the meadows, with Misty floating by her side. As they went along, Cathy laughed when Misty did some silly tricks.

First, Misty changed from white to red, then from blue to yellow, then purple and orange. Misty changed his shape, and became a white towel, with a face smiling in the centre. He became big white arrow, with letters printed on it, which said ‘THIS WAY’...



As Cathy followed the friendly cloud, Misty changed again. He was now a cloud with sails.

It's fun playing with such a silly cloud, thought Cathy.

They reached a nearby lake, and Misty said, "This is where new clouds are born." Cathy watched the lake, where bright sunlight shone on the water. White mist rose up like steam, making baby clouds.

"Let's try flying now," said Misty, who changed his shape again, this time into a big armchair for Cathy to sit in, an armchair with wings.

"Let's go!" said Misty.

They took off together, rising higher. It was a lovely floating this way, Cathy thought, so soft and dreamy. And the view was special, too.

They were soon drifting high above the hills. "This is much faster than walking!" said Cathy and shook hands with a passing breeze.

They floated higher, to the place where rainbows nod their heads.

As Cathy's hair streamed behind her, she met more clouds up there.

One of them said, "Welcome to our big cloud world!"

Some bigger clouds, who looked a bit grumpy, made some very stormy weather. But the rainbows just nodded their wise heads, and winked at each other.

The big clouds puffed themselves up, as their thunder voices filled the sky, and



grumbling shook the air. Then Misty made some lightning, just to join in.

A helpful baby cloud formed into a tiny floating umbrella, to keep Cathy dry.

Then the sun came bursting through, so all the rain and thunder stopped.

\*

Next, Misty asked Cathy if she would like to see more of the world below them.

She said yes, and on the way, Misty did some tricks for Cathy.

First, he floated down, much closer to the ground, where he turned into white fog.

They he floated very quickly, off towards the sunset – and all around the world – then back again, to see the sunrise.

Soon, they floated to a park, where music was playing in a fairground. “Look, there’s a merry-go-round!” said Cathy.

“Would you also like to see some other countries?” asked Misty.

Near the North Pole, Cathy saw people, way below, skiing through the snow. They even rested on a mountain for while, where all the people were throwing snowballs at each other.

After that they floated up again, and went to a very hot place, which Misty called ‘The Equator’. It’s always sunny here,” said Misty.

“I’m getting a good tan,” said Cathy.

Then she said, “But where can we stop for lunch?”

Misty looked at his cloud map for a while.

“Um,” he said, “let’s go to a nice park with picnic tables.”

Soon, they found a good place. “Let’s go down there!” said Misty.

As they swooped through the air, Cathy said, “Wow!” Because the houses she saw looked like little toys.

They had a nice lunch, then floated back up again, where Misty met a very round, jolly-looking cloud. It was shaped like a big, smiling clock. “Oh look at that, it’s time to go back,” said Cathy.

So they floated back to the hillside again, the one where Cathy and Misty had first met. And Misty let Cathy gently down.

\*

“I will miss you,” said Misty, and almost began to cry.

“Hey, I’m going to rain,” he said, as he rose into the sky.

Misty cried more raindrops, though he was wearing a huge grin.

“You see,” he shouted back to her, “all my tears are happy tears, because crying makes the trees and flowers smile. They like a nice cool drink. It helps them grow, and the hills stay fresh and green!”

More rain began to fall, and made everything grow. Soon, Misty rained himself away, growing smaller and smaller. As Cathy watched, a rainbow rose into the sky.

The next day, Cathy looked into the sky again. And there he was! “I’m back!” said Misty. “You see,” he said, “the weather just goes round and round, and I come back with it.”

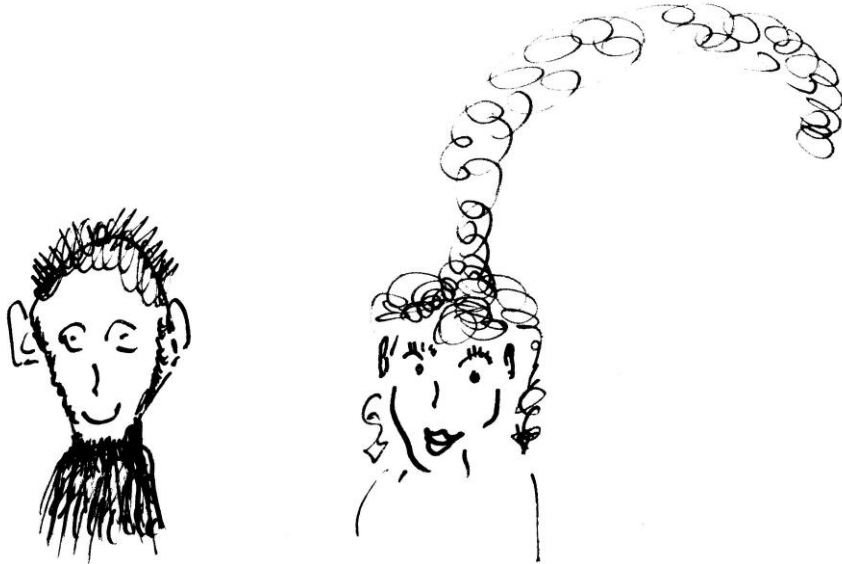
“Hey! Let’s float away again!” said Cathy.

Cathy climbed aboard. And Misty said, “I will make myself into a big, soft armchair for you!”

“Ha ha! Look at me,” shouted Cathy. “Way up here. With Misty again, in the sky! Now, Let’s go!”



## *A Hairy Story*



ONE morning Mark woke up and thought to himself, "I'm going to grow a beard!" He imagined a big white shovel on his chin.

The first thing he did was to tell his twin sister, Vicki.

"I'm growing a beard," said Mark, and ...

"Well, I am too!" said Vicki.

"But girls can't grow beards, can they?"

"She ran out of the room, shouting, "I'll show you!"

In the bathroom, Vicki put some of Dad's shaving cream on her chin. And both fell over, laughing at her joke.

\*

Mark said, "Vicki! I am *really* going to grow a beard, but not from a can!"

"Well," said Vicki, "If you grow a beard... then... I'm going to grow the longest pony tail in the world."

"Then we'll both be known as "The two hairy scary kids!" said Mark.

\*

"Should we ask someone first?" They both said this together, because it seemed like a good idea. Then thought for a while, and agreed. "Yes, Mr. Digby!"

Their neighbour, Mr. Digby, always had answers to everything. In fact, their parents often said, “That old Mr. Digby, he’s a real know-all.”

The twins found Mr. Digby digging in his garden, as usual. “Mr. D., you know everything about plants,” said Vicki. “Do you know about growing hair?”

“I’m better with potatoes,” said Mr. Digby rubbing his shiny head.”

Then Mark and Vicki told him.

He smiled, then said, “Easy! You need a visit from the Hairy Fairy!”

“The what?” said Mark.

“The Hairy Fairy, said Mr. Digby, related to the Tooth Fairy, a cousin I believe.”

“But how?” said Vicki, and scratched her head.

“Well, you have to ask the Hairy Fairy for its help. It does not matter whether that help is for wigs, or beards, sideburns, pony tails or general scalp improvement. And very easy to do?”

“Great!” nodded the twins.

“You do this,” said Mr. Digby. “Just before bed-time, put a pebble under your pillow, and then...When you wake up, it’s *hey presto*, just like magic!”

“*Hey presto?* What’s that?” echoed the twins.

“Well,” said Mr. Digby, “then you simply grow stuff.”

\*

The twins raced off, and looked everywhere for two shiny pebbles. Some rocks along their driveway were far too big. They looked next in some pot plants, then underneath an old wheelbarrow.

Finally, they found two perfect pebbles in a flower bed. They cleaned the pebbles until they shone so brightly, glinting in the sun, then put them under their pillows that very night.

\*

Both Mark and Vicki had lots of dreams that night then.... And then, very early next morning – it happened!

Mark woke up with a long white beard, shaped just like a shovel, and showed Vicki.

“Terrific!” she said. “Now Mark, just look at me!”

Vicki had a very, very, veeery long pony tail, and could swish it round and round, in the air, high above her head.



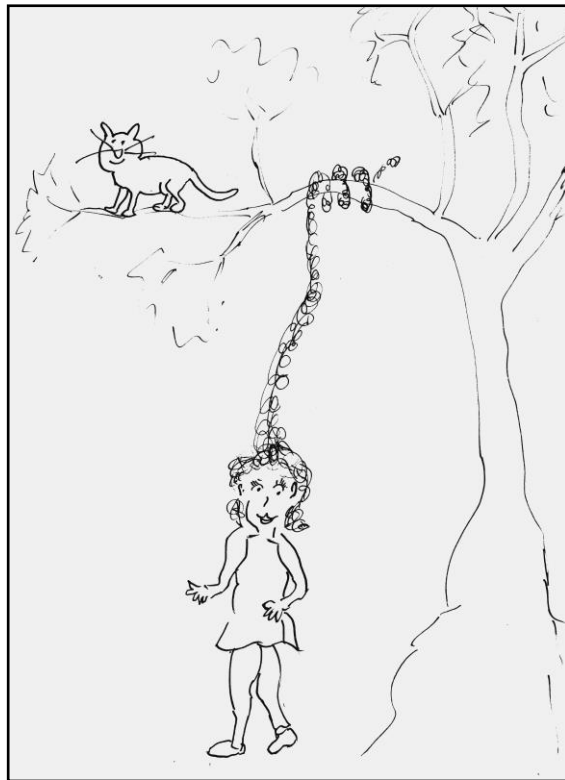
The twins looked under their pillows, but the pebbles were gone. Instead, there was a note, which said: “Thank you Mark and Vicki for the really nice polished ‘jewels’ (well, those pebbles are jewels to me) which I will add to my treasure chest. Many Cheers, from the Hairy Fairy.”

Vicki and Mark looked in the bathroom mirror. “We are the terrific hairy kids now!” they shouted together. “We are the one and only, bushy-wushy, hairy scary twins!”

\*

Before their parents woke for breakfast, both ran outside to show their friends.

On the way, they heard a kitten crying. It had climbed a tree across the road, and couldn’t get down. So Vicki tossed her pony tail around a branch, and then climbed up, right beside the kitten. She wrapped the poor little thing in her jumper, and brought it back to ground, where the kitten meowed and looked very happy.



Next, they came to a little stream, where Mark made his beard into a small bridge, which they crossed easily.

Then they went to a local park, and met some of friends.

Vicki swung her pony tail like a big lasso for them, whooshing it round and round her head. Then picked up one of her friends in it, who enjoyed the ride.

But, suddenly, Mark's beard began to twitch.

"My beard's gone crazy!" he called out. Watch out everyone!"

The beard sizzled and bounced, like it was having an electric shock.

Then all the bristles suddenly leaped up. Then they all stood straight out, and then...

To Mark's amazement, the beard leapt right off his chin, and began running down the street, jumping over fences, doing somersaults and cartwheels.

It looked so funny, scampering along. Vicki couldn't help laughing, and neither could their friends.

Mark chased after his beard, but it ran too fast. He looked around everywhere, but it disappeared over someone's fence. It could be half way to the moon by now, he thought.



Vicki patted her head very carefully, to see if her pony tail was still there, or if it would also make a run for it. But it had slowly shrunk back to normal, to her usual neat pony tale, the one she always wore.

"Whew," she said. "I don't think I could have caught it, if it had also grown two legs and ran after that crazy beard."

\*

Suddenly, they both woke up!

They looked under their pillows, and the pebbles were still exactly where they had left them.

Yes, it must have all been a dream.

\*

As Mum and Dad made toast and tea for breakfast that morning, Mark said to Vicki, “I dreamt I grew a beard, and that you...”

“Grew a magic pony tail,” she said.

“And we chased my beard down the street!”

Hearing this, their Dad looked across from his newspaper, grinned and shook his head.

And their Mum also overheard this, while sipping her tea.

“You know, she said, “twins often say the same things.”

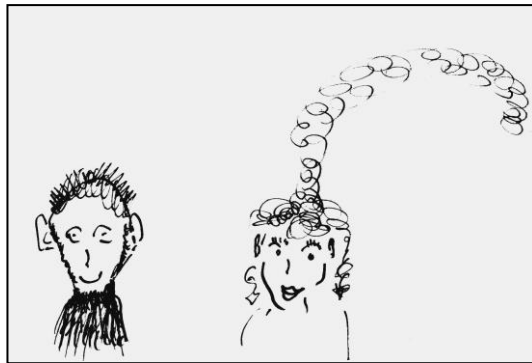
“That must be it!” said Vicki and Mark together.

“We can share our dreams!” they said as one.

Their Mum smiled slyly.

“Ah yes, she said. “Dreams! Funny things!

Hair today, gone tomorrow!”



\*\*\*\*

