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Author: Al-Sayeed Ibrahim

Illustrator: Ayman Al-Qadi



## **Little Billy, What Do You Want to Be?**

Billy the hippo doesn't know what he wants to be when he grows up. Will he discover his own special talent?



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Illustrator: Ayman Al-Qadi  
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In a big swamp, lived little Billy the Hippo and his mommy. She fed him milk under the water where no one could see him and she carefully hid him from any dangers.



She allowed him to play with his friends, of course, but she was always nearby, as close as she could be.



Billy grew day by day. All he did was swim, eat and play. He dove in the water, competing with the others, but he never really thought about doing anything useful or important.



He had all he needed. There was plenty of water and plenty of food, so why think of anything else?!



Billy's mother became upset, Billy's mother became mad. Then, she suddenly yelled, "Can't you make yourself useful, young lad?"





When it was nap time and Billy was ready to go lay down, his mom hugged him and said, “Look at all these photos, my dear son. Your grandpa was strong wrestler and your uncle was a track star. We were so proud of them!”



“Billy, my dear, what do you think you’d like to be?” Then she kissed him goodnight and he fell asleep.



The next morning, Billy woke up and among the trees. He thought and thought. He was looking for an answer to the question mom had asked him, “Little Billy, what do you want to be?”



While he was walking, a swarm of mosquitoes attacked him. Little Billy screamed and said, “Bad mosquitoes, terrible buzzing mosquitoes!”



Little Billy ran away. As he sat there, he got an idea. He said, "I think I know what I want to be. "I'll get rid of the mosquitoes, I'll catch them wherever they go."



Little Billy chased the mosquitoes on the swamp, he chased mosquitoes up the hill and in the trees. He chased mosquitoes everywhere until he was very tired. Then he took a deep breath and said, "Frogs are better at catching mosquitoes than I am. This is not what I want to be. But soon I'll know what I want to be..."



That night, the moon shone brightly in the sky. Little Billy walked around, and he thought, “Little Billy, little Billy, what do you want to be?”



Then he heard some voices and saw a bonfire in the distance. As he came closer, he found a monkey juggling watermelons. The animals around the monkey were enjoying the show. Little Billy, thought, “He’s such a great juggler!”





After the performance was over, Little Billy's eyes sparkled as he said to himself, "I think I know what I want to be."



Little Billy tried but he couldn't juggle watermelons like the monkey. The sparkle in his eye faded as he thought, "This job just isn't for me. Monkeys are better jugglers than I am, but one day I'll know what I want to be."



Next morning at the river, Little Billy was taking a walk. As Little Billy walked, he thought, “Little Billy, little Billy, what do you want to be?”



He stopped when he saw a beaver moving tree branches to build a big dam across the river and make his little ones a pond. Little Billy exclaimed, "What an amazing beaver, he's a brilliant architect!"



Little Billy found the beaver doing something great and he said, “I know what I’ll be... a great architect and I’ll build a bridge as strong as the beaver’s dam.”



Little Billy was very busy building the bridge. But the bridge fell apart as the first water buffalo calf crossed it and the calf fell into the water. Little Billy yelled, “How can I rescue him, what can I do?”



The calf yelled and screamed, “Help, help!” He was terrified! Little Billy had to do something, so he jumped in the river. The animals watched him as he swam against the current, undaunted in his effort to rescue the calf.



The current was strong, but Little Billy managed to rescue the calf. He got him out of him the water, where his mother was waiting for him. She had been so worried about her son.





Little Billy patted the calf's back and said, "I'm very sorry I caused you all this trouble. I hope you're ok." The calf looked at little Billy proudly and said, "What a great swimmer! You're my hero. You saved my life!"



From that day on, the words “Great swimmer, great swimmer,” played over and over in his mind.



Little Billy started teaching little animals how to swim so that they are safe in the river. Now Billy is admired by everyone.



THE END