

## The wrong crowd

As you know, Billy is a very keen supporter of his local football team, Drip Town United. There's nothing that he likes better than standing on the Terrace with all the other Drip Town supporters as they cheer their team on to victory. They all sing:

"Come on the Drippies!" And: "The Drippies, the Drippies, the Drippies are the best!"

Whenever Drip Town score a goal the whole crowd jump to their feet all at the same time. The cheers are usually so loud that you can hear them right on the other side of Drip Town. Billy always thinks that it is the most fantastic feeling to be part of the crowd. He always tries to be the first to jump to his feet, or to cheer louder than anyone else.

"Come on the Drippies!"

Sometimes Billy goes to away matches, especially when Drip Town are playing one of the nearby towns, like Oldcastle or Liverpuddle. Liverpuddle is only a short train ride away, and the station is near the football ground. Billy often went with Grandpa, but one Saturday, when Drip Town were playing Liverpuddle in an important cup-tie, Grandpa had a very bad cold and couldn't go.

Billy was desperate to go. This was one of the most important matches of the season.

"O come on Mum," he pleaded, "I know the way. I've been there lots of times with Grandpa. I can go on my own. It would be a shame to waste the ticket!"

Billy went on and on nagging his Mum, until eventually, really just to shut him up, she said yes!

Billy got to the station at 12 o'clock to catch the quarter past 12 train to Liverpuddle. There were lots of other Drip Town supporters there, but no one he knew really well. So when he got on the train he found himself sitting in a seat all on his own.

Billy was so interested in what he could see out of the window that he almost didn't notice when the train had stopped at Liverpuddle station. The train had been still for about a minute when Billy suddenly realised and scrambled off onto the platform just as the Guard was about to blow his whistle for the train to go.

"Phew," thought Billy, "that was close!"

When Billy looked around, all the other Drip Town supporters had gone. They had rushed off eager to get their seats for the big match. Billy made his way out of the station and set off toward the ground. He was sure he knew the way, but somehow things weren't quite how he had remembered them. Suddenly he saw a large crowd of football supporters so he decided to follow them.

When he got to the turn-style he showed his ticket and went in. But inside it was all very confusing. There were signs and corridors and steps and tunnels. Billy just didn't know which way to go. So he followed the crowd again and suddenly found himself being pushed along a row of seats right at the front of the stand.

"What a great view," he said to himself. He went to take out his Drip Town scarf, with its bright purple and yellow stripes, when suddenly he looked around. Billy was in for a big shock! Instead of seeing lots of other purple and yellow scarves, all he could see were Green and White ones. The Green and White scarves of Liverpuddle supporters!

Billy swallowed hard. He suddenly realised that he was in the wrong stand. Instead of being with the other Drip Town supporters, he was in the middle of thousands of Liverpuddle supporters. He carefully scrunched up his Drip Town scarf and pushed it deep into his pocket, hoping that no one had seen it. Billy couldn't get out. He was squashed against the railings at the end of the row. He just didn't know what to do.

The match started.

"Come on the Drippies," shouted the Drip town fans on the other side of the ground.

"Come on the Drippies," whispered Billy to himself.

"Wa' you say?" said the Liverpuddle supporter next to him.

"O nothing, nothing," replied Billy quickly.

Mick Boots, the Drip town forward got the ball and hammered it at the Liverpuddle goal. Billy's heart was pounding. He jumped up on his feet and was about to cheer when he remembered where he was. So he quickly pretended he was standing up to take his coat off. Then the Liverpuddle forward got the ball and hammered it at the Drip Town goal. Everyone sitting round Billy jumped to their feet and cheered. Billy didn't know what to do, but he couldn't just sit there, everyone would know. So he stood up, waved one hand in the air, and said: "Hurray." But under his breath he was really saying: "Boo."

By half time it was 1 all.

"Good match eh?" said the person next to Billy. Billy was relieved that he could say 'yes' even though they wanted different teams to win.

The second half got more and more exciting. The play was furious and there were lots of chances. Pete Diver, the Drip Town Goal keeper, made a brilliant diving save. Billy jumped to his feet. "Hurray" he shouted, Good ....." He was about to say 'Good save' of course, but then he remembered where he was, so he found himself shouting: "Good shot!" Billy felt absolutely dreadful when the Liverpuddle supporters agreed with him.

"This is terrible," thought Billy, "I support Drip Town, not Liverpuddle."

The Liverpuddle forward got the ball and scored a brilliant goal. Everyone around Billy went wild with excitement. Billy knew he couldn't just sit there. So even though it made him feel terrible, he just had to stand up and wave his hand in the air again. He said a very sheepish, "Hurray," But all the time he was thinking: "O no, this is terrible. I don't want to be doing this!"

Mick Boots got the ball again, and with a brilliant curving shot he scored the equalizer to make it two all. Without thinking again Billy jumped to his feet. He was just about to do one of his loudest cheers when he realised that everyone around him was booing. He found himself shouting: "rubbish!"

Poor Billy had never felt so bad in all of his life. He had actually shouted 'Rubbish' when his hero Mick Boots had scored a brilliant goal. He sat down on his seat and hung his head in shame.

The full time whistle blew.

"Good match eh?" asked the person next to Billy. But Billy didn't answer, he just slowly put on his coat and waited until he could get out of the row.

On the train on the way home Billy hardly dared look in the direction of the other Drip Town supporters. He felt like he had been a traitor, and he was sure that all of them knew it as well!

The next week Drip Town were playing at home. Billy sat in his usual seat, and every time one of the Drip Town players even touched the ball he cheered and shouted "Brilliant!" That made him feel a bit better. But I have to say that Billy has never forgotten the time he booed Drip Town, and I don't think that he ever will.

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