

Busy Mr. Burp

By Tygo Lee
All Rights Reserved, 2015

Busy Mr. Burp

Katy the Kid was ambling down the street on which she lived one sunny Sunday morning without a care in the world. She was a rambunctious, happy-go-lucky little girl who just loved going out exploring around her neighborhood and trying to start up a conversation with whomever she happened to run into when she was out and about.

Most of all, she had an unbridled curiosity regarding the world around her and thus took advantage of her encounters with other people to try to learn more about what was going on and why. She had the tendency to drive a lot of the adults a bit crazy with her incessant chattering and questioning, but they made great attempts to put up with her verbal barrage since she was such a sweet and sincere child.

Katy the Kid just spotted a fellow out in his front yard and merrily skipped over to where he was standing.

“Hi ya, Mr. Burp!”

“Burke, Katy, Mr. Burke!”

“Who were those old people that just got in their car and drove away from your house, huh? I thought you were pretty old, but they are even older than you!”

“I’ll have you know that I’m not that old, little girl. But anyway, those were my parents and of course they are older than me. So what are you up to?”

“I’m walking down my street checking out the neighborhood to see what’s going on, that’s all. But Mr. Burp, why did you send your parents away like that, huh?”

“Burke, Katy, Burke! And I didn’t send them away! They came to visit my wife and me today and now they have to go back to their home.”

“But don’t ya want them to stay longer, huh? Why don’t they stay longer with you and your wife? They could do that, huh. Couldn’t they, huh, Mr. Burp, couldn’t they?”

“It’s Mr..., well, whatever. We’re all very busy, Katy. For example, today being Sunday, my wife and I have to go back to work tomorrow, so...”

“And your parents too? Do they have to go back to work too, huh? Is that why they left, Mr. Burp? Is that why?”

“No, Katy, my parents are retired now.”

“So then they could stay longer because they have no work to go back too, right? Yeah, go run after their car, Mr. Burp, and tell them that they can stay longer!”

“What an inquisitive little girl you are! No, they don’t have to go back to work, but my wife and I are busy with our own lives, so...”

“Then they’ll come back to visit next Sunday, right Mr. Burp? Huh? Next Sunday, right! That’s when they’ll...”

“This is rather frustrating. It’s not Burp, but Burke, Burke, Burke! Oh, what’s the use.”

“Anyway, if you must know, no they will not come back next Sunday. We try to see each other maybe at least once a month or something like that.”

“Then they must live a long, long, long, long, long, long ways from here, right Mr. Burp? That’s why they can’t come very often, right? They live on some other planet or something like that and their spaceship uses up a whole bunch of gasoline to make the trip here, so that’s why...”

“Oh my gosh. Spaceship? What a vivid imagination you have!”

“Actually it’s only a couple hours’ drive, but... Do you ever stop asking questions? Well, okay. I’ll explain it to you then.”

“You see, Katy, we adults have many responsibilities that we must attend to—something you surely wouldn’t understand at your age—so for that reason we can’t...”

“I have responsibilities too, Mr. Burp. Yep, I’ve got some of those things, those responsibility things. I sure do! I’m not an adult or anything like that, but I’ve got...”

“Yeah, right. Okay, Katy. What responsibilities do you have?”

“Ya see, I have to be sure I go outside everyday to have some fun, like talk to some of my friends who live around here, and pet some of the dogs that are out in their yards, and jump in water puddles when it has rained, and kick rocks around on the street, and a bunch of things like that!”

“Well that sounds very nice, Katy, but us adults don’t do things like that.”

“Huh? You don’t have fun? Is that true, Mr. Burp? You adults don’t have fun like I do?”

“Of course we do, but when we have a little time for it.”

“But ya don’t have some fun every day, Mr. Burp? Huh, don’t ya? Don’t ya have some fun every day?”

“There’s no time for that. We’re very, very busy, and like I said, we adults have responsibilities—serious responsibilities, not like little kids like you.”

“But isn’t having some fun a serious responsibility, Mr. Burp? Isn’t that as important as cleaning your room, and eating everything on your plate, and helping to dry the dishes that mommy washes, and folding up your clothes nice and neat, and a bunch of things like that? Huh, Mr. Burp, isn’t it? Isn’t having some fun a serious responsibility too!”

“I, well, uh, no! I mean... Well, no, of course not! You see, when you’re older like me someday, you’ll understand.”

“Yeah maybe, Mr. Burp, because I sure don’t get it now. Like you say, maybe when I’m older, huh? Okay, maybe when I’m older.”

“Phew! I think we’ve finally begun to communicate with each other for the first time today.”

“Mr. Burp, you and your wife don’t have any children, do ya? Huh, ya don’t do ya?”

“Well, no we don’t. But what does that have to do with anything?”

“You see, I’ve got this nice bouncy rubber ball in my house and I could run home now and get it...”

“Katy, you don’t have to...”

“...and then we both could stand in your driveway and I could bounce it to you and then you could bounce it back to me and we could do it again and again and again, and then you could have some fun with me for awhile and we’d have a great time playing together!”

“Well, I, uh, let’s see. Yes, that’s very nice of you to offer to play with me, but...”

“It’ll be lots of fun, Mr. Burp! You’ll see. Lots and lots and lots of fun! You’re gonna like it a whole lot and...”

“Listen, Katy. I appreciate you’re wanting to play with me, but I don’t have time right now, okay?”

“Okay, Mr. Burp. I understand. Then when ya get home from work tomorrow I’ll be watching for you and then I’ll come running over so we can play with my bouncy ball tomorrow afternoon. Huh, Mr. Burp, huh?”

“Well, uh, no, Katy. Thank you again. Yes, thank you very much for offering. But you see, Monday’s are very hectic for me and my wife, so when we finally get home from work we just want to...”

“Then how about the next day, Mr. Burp? I could come over then, okay? Let’s see. What comes after Monday? I got it—Tuesday! On Tuesday we can...”

“Listen, Katy. Let’s maybe leave this sort of ‘open’ for the moment. How does that sound?”

“What does that mean? What is ‘open,’ huh? When does ‘open’ come? I don’t get it. Open, open, open. Hmmm. I don’t get it. Is ‘open’ in a few days? Or next week? Or...”

“Uh, well, uh, ‘open’ means... ‘open.’ It means, uh, when I have time. Yes, when I have time.”

“I’m very, very busy. When I have time, I’ll definitely let you know, okay Katy? As I said, we adults have a lot of responsibilities to attend to. A lot of responsibilities. I’m very, very busy.”

“Okay, Mr. Burp. I guess you’re too busy to play bouncy ball with me for a little while.”

“That’s okay. I won’t bother you anymore. I’m gonna continue on down the street, checking things out. I hope you get a bunch of ‘opens’ real soon though so you can maybe have some fun everyday like I do. Wouldn’t that be great!”

“See ya, Mr. Burp. See ya!”