

A Football Storm

by
Amanda Hyatt



Chris lay in bed. He should have been very sleepy. After all, it was way past his bedtime. But he wasn't sleepy at all. Instead, his eyes were wide open and his hands clutched the sides of his duvet cover so tightly that his knuckles were white and his fingers were beginning to ache.

Outside a fierce storm clattered and clunked and whistled and boomed. The thunder sounded just like Dad in a bad mood clearing out the garage. And the lightning was just so very, very scary. Chris squeezed his eyes shut, pulled the duvet cover up over his nose and waited for the next roar.

But it never came. Chris opened his eyes. Slowly. Very slowly. He poked his nose up over the duvet cover. His face was burning and

his cheeks were puffy and swollen. “Oh no. I’m ill,” he thought. But then he remembered. He was holding his breath. He opened his mouth and let out all the air. His cheeks returned to normal and he instantly felt better. He even felt a little braver, too.

Through the gap in the curtains he could see a hundred clouds wrestling in the sky. “Ouch”, he thought, as two clouds collided with a bump that must have been painful.

“Don’t worry, Chris. They didn’t hurt each other”, said a soft, dreamy sort of voice. Chris almost fell out of bed. He fumbled frantically for his teddy, too shocked to even yell out for mum. A large, round ice-creamy face inched its way around the curtains and smiled at him from outside. “Now why aren’t you asleep, young man?” it said. Chris could only stare. “You’re not afraid of the storm, are you?” said the moon. “Just a bit”, said Chris finally, in a voice that didn’t sound anything like his own.

“But storms are not anything to be frightened of”, said the moon. “The clouds are simply having some rough and tumble fun. They’re playing football. You like playing football, don’t you?” “Yes”, said Chris. “I love football, but what’s the thunder all about, then?” “Why, that’s the wind applauding when there’s a goal! You jump up and down and clap your hands and cheer when your team scores, don’t you?” “Of course”, said Chris, feeling less scared now. “But I never knew the clouds played football and stuff.

So, what’s the lightning for?” “Lightning is the signal for the game to start again after each goal”, explained the moon. “Like the whistles you use in your football”. “Oh”, said Chris. “I think I understand now”.

“I’m glad”, said the moon. “And now, I think it’s time you went to sleep. The final whistle’s gone, the clouds are tidying up and I’ve got some dusting to do before morning. With all this tramping about the stars get terribly dusty. Now, you’re not afraid any more, are you?”

“Not a bit”, said Chris. “Thank you, Moon. Will you come back again?”
“Some day, perhaps, but meanwhile I have a lot of children to visit. Like you, they just don’t know about our football matches. Perhaps you could help me spread the word? None of us likes to frighten children, you know?” “Don’t worry, Moon. I’ll tell everybody I know. I’m so excited now I can’t wait for the next storm, I mean ... *match*”.

“Marvellous”, said the moon. “Now, would you like me to sing you a lullaby before I go?” “I’d love that”, said Chris, snuggling down under his duvet with teddy. He closed his eyes and listened, but before the moon had even started to sing, he was fast asleep, dreaming happily of football and clouds and whistles. Storms would never be scary again.



The End

