

Katy Kitten's Frightening Adventure

By Shirley Young



The Bible tells us that one day Jesus Christ is going to return to rule the earth.¹ This story takes place in the future when Jesus is King and there is peace on this earth. At that time, everyone will co-operate with each other - even the animals!²

It happened like this. It was spring time and it had been raining hard all morning, but now the sun was out, the clouds were scudding away across the sky, and the rain drops were sparkling like diamonds in the sunlight. The blossom trees were in full bloom and everything was lovely.

Katy the kitten was so happy that she skipped and leapt with wild abandon across the field. Her mother had warned her that she must always stay close to the barn where it was safe, and not go across the field, because at the far end of the field there was a steep bank that sloped down to a fast flowing river - and it would be very dangerous if she fell in.

But on this day Katy was so full of joy that she hurtled across the field, like a little bundle of fur, without watching where she was going. Before she knew it, she found herself slipping and slithering down the steep muddy bank, which was still wet with rain, and with a great "**SPLASH**" she fell right into the river.

"Oh, help, help!" she meowed as loudly as she could. "I can't swim!" Katy's head went down under the swirling waters and then bobbed up again. As she opened her eyes she saw a long tree bough stretching out low across the river and quickly made a grab for it. She clung to it tightly with her little claws and shouted again.

¹ See, for example, Revelation 11:15; Psalm 72; Psalm 96:11-13; Psalm 97:1-6 and Psalm 98:4-9.

² See Isaiah 2:2-4 and Isaiah 11:6-9.

Nanny Goat, who had been chewing on some tasty twigs nearby, saw what happened and began to shout. "Oh dear, oh dear! Katy has fallen into the river. Someone please help her!"

Reggie Rabbit and his family heard Nanny shouting and popped out of their burrows. They stared at poor Katy with wide frightened eyes, not knowing what to do to help her.

Nanny Goat's loud shouts even woke up Ollie Owl, who had been asleep on a nearby branch. He quickly took in the situation and flew out over the water.

"Cling on tightly Katy," he hooted. "We'll try to get someone to pull you out."

"I'm sure-footed," said Nanny Goat, "perhaps I could climb down the bank and pull her in."

"No! No! Nanny," said the owl quickly. "You'd never be able to reach her and you would end up falling into the river too."

"Oh whatever shall we do?" wailed Nanny.

"Don't panic! I know exactly what to do," called a voice behind them. It was Wally the wolf running swiftly towards them from the edge of the forest. He was followed by fat old Bertie Bear, who was slowly lumbering along behind him.

"Do you remember Mr Elephant who used to live in the zoo?" panted Wally breathlessly. The animals nodded. "Well, he is now kept as a pet by old Mr Barker who lives quite near here. If I run to his house and fetch Mr Elephant, he could rescue Katy with his long trunk!"

"What a good idea Wally!" said the owl decisively. "Run as fast as you can and fetch Mr Elephant!" The wolf immediately shot off like an arrow across the field in the direction of the woods.

Meanwhile, Katy was clinging to the large branch as tightly as she could and was trying to pull herself up out of the water and onto the tree bough. But the branch that Katy was clinging to was rotten! And as she heaved and thrashed about, the branch suddenly broke off the bough with a loud "**CRACK!**" and began to drift slowly out and away from the bank.

It drifted further and further into the middle of the river and was caught by the strong current, gathering speed. Poor Katy's head bobbed up and down in the water as she desperately clung on, shouting for help. Ollie Owl considered trying to snatch her up in his large talons so he could carry her to safety, but decided not to risk it. Katy was a very fat, heavy kitten and if he couldn't hold her weight, she might drop into the water and drown!

Nanny Goat gasped when she saw Katy drifting further and further away and old Bertie Bear, who had a very kind heart, began to cry. Big tears rolled down the front of his fur suit.

"Oh, it's no good crying," said Nanny, "we've got to think what to do."

"But you don't understand," blubbered Bertie. "White Water Falls are only about a mile down river. If Katy gets carried down and over the waterfall she'll never survive. She'll be lost and gone forever!" And with a sob, he began to cry again.

When they heard what Bertie said about the large waterfall, Nanny Goat and the rabbits also joined in the loud sobbing, and even Ollie Owl blinked his big eyes furiously to try and hold back the tears.

"Now be quiet, all of you! Let me think!" came a quiet, but firm voice nearby.

It was Freddie Fox. He had been standing silently beneath a tree watching everything that had happened. He always walked so stealthily that no one ever heard him come or go. The animals stopped crying and waited with baited breath to hear what Freddie Fox would say.

"I know all the secret paths through the woods," Freddie announced, "so I'll run fast and stop Wally Wolf and Mr Elephant from coming back this way. I'll tell them what has happened and that Katie is floating down the river. Then I'll lead them by one of my short-cuts to the head of the waterfall. If we get there in time Mr Elephant will be able to reach out with his trunk and pluck Katy to safety as she floats by."

Without further ado the fox set off at a tremendous pace in the direction that the wolf had gone.

"Come on!" shouted Ollie Owl to all the other animals, "let's go down the river towards White Water Falls." So with their eyes fixed on Katy, who was now being whisked further and further downstream, the animals began running along the bank in the direction of the falls. Old Bertie Bear puffed and gasped for breath as he brought up the rear. A small flotilla of ducks joined in the chase, following Katy along the river.

Meanwhile, Freddie Fox met up with Wally Wolf and Mr Elephant. The fox quickly explained what had happened and, without wasting any more time, they set off at a great pace through the forest, following Freddie along a short-cut to the head of the waterfall.

Mr Elephant thundered along, pushing over any vegetation that got in his way, and very soon they heard the roar of the falls as they came to the edge of the river.

"Look, there she is!" yelled Wally excitedly. And sure enough, there was Katy, still clinging to her little branch, which was now being swept along at an ever increasing rate. The water boiled and churned white as it gathered pace.

But Mr Elephant didn't stop to look at Katy. He already had his trunk wrapped around a tall straight tree. With all his mighty strength he pulled and pulled and pulled.

"Stand back!" he trumpeted. Then with a great "**CRASH!**" the tree toppled over and fell right across the narrowed neck of the river at the head the falls, and landed on the opposite bank.

Just then Katy came hurtling around the last bend towards the waterfall! Her eyes grew wide with terror as she suddenly heard the great noise of the falls. Certain that she was being catapulted to her death she closed her eyes tightly and held her breath. Seconds passed, and then all of a sudden, she felt a big "**BUMPI!**" as the branch she was clinging to hit the tree that Mr Elephant had felled across the river. Katy's eyes popped open and, when she saw where she was, she flung herself upwards onto the trunk of the tree in one agile movement. Then, still shaking with fright, she scampered along the trunk to the bank and **SAFETY!**

Mr Elephant sounded his trumpet in sheer delight. A few minutes later the other animals came running along the bank, gasping for breath but desperate to know what had happened to Katy. Mr Elephant pointed his trunk toward Freddie Fox and Wally Wolf, who were standing protectively around a little wet heap on the ground. It was Katy - and she was **safe and sound!**

A little later, when they had moved back and away from the river, they sank all down on the soft grass of a field, weak with relief. But poor Katy was still trembling from her ordeal.

"Have some of my milk, dear" offered Nanny Goat. "It will help you get over the shock."

Then Wally Wolf began licking off the mud from Katy's fur coat with his big tongue. This soothed Katy and she gradually stopped trembling and began to purr.

As soon as the other animals saw that Katy was going to be OK, they started to praise Mr Elephant for rescuing Katy.

"Nonsense!" said the elephant, who was a very modest animal. "I couldn't have done it without the help of Wally and Freddie."

"The point is," put in the owl, in his best school masterly voice, "we all co-operated together. In the old days, before Christ was King, we would have been too busy fighting and arguing with one another to have even bothered about Katy falling in the water. But today, because we all live in peace and help one another, we were able to save Katy's life. How much better it is to live this way!"

All of the animals nodded and agreed with the owl's great wisdom.

As the sun grew warmer and warmer, the wolf finished licking the mud off Katy's fur and left it to dry and fluff up in the sunshine. The other animals smiled as they watched Katy curl up contentedly next to the wolf and fall asleep. Then one by one, their own eyelids drooped, and worn out by the worry and exertion of the day, they were soon all fast asleep too!

The End

