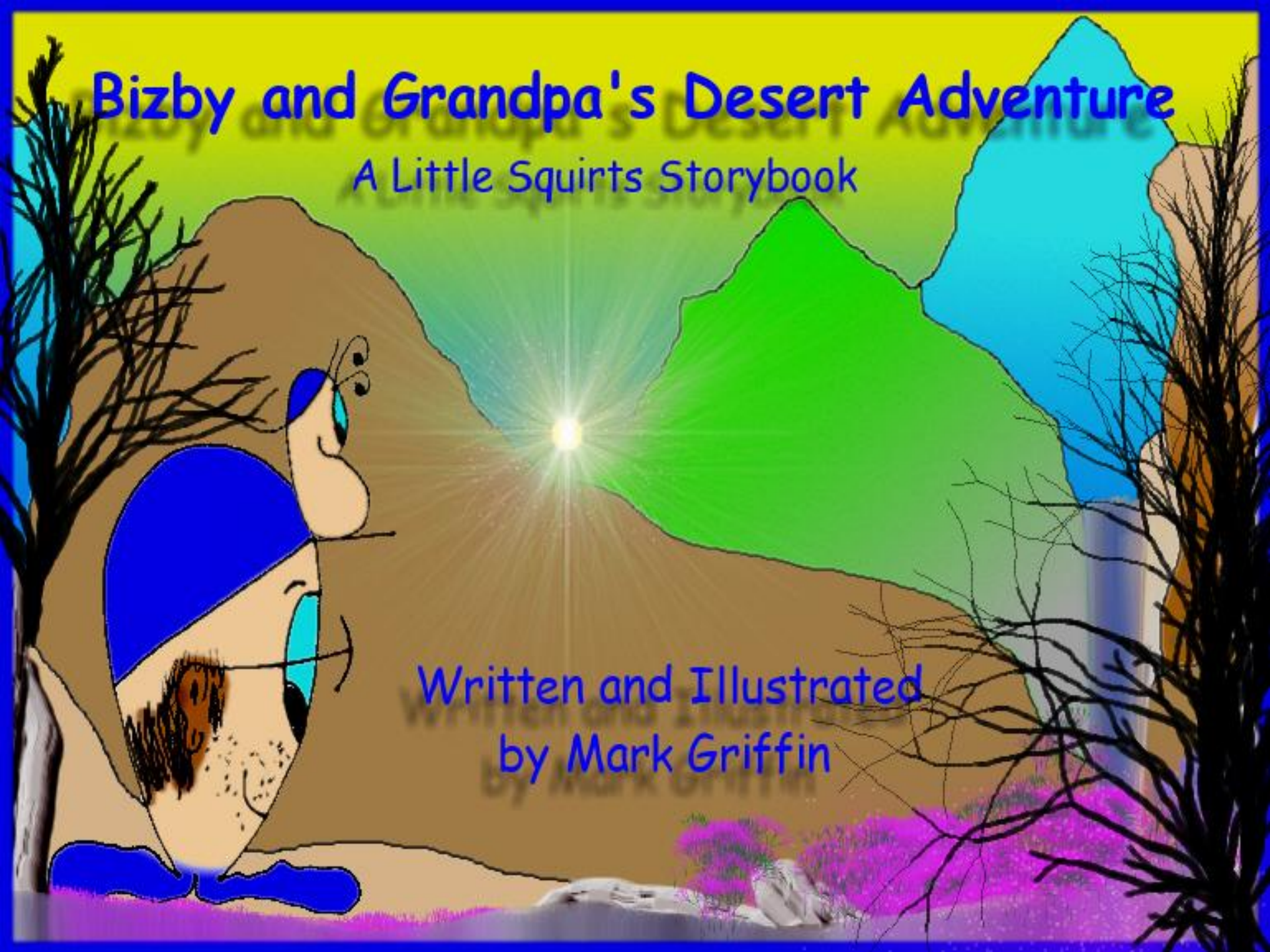


Bizby and Grandpa's Desert Adventure

A Little Squirts Storybook

Written and Illustrated
by Mark Griffin



It was a beautiful morning. The sun was just coming up over the mountains. Grandpa and Bizby were several miles from home looking for hidden treasures. Two best friends enjoying a hike in the desert.



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Bizby loved to fly with the birds and butterflies. He could be seen making figure eights in the air. He talked to the fliers in their own language and sang happy songs. Sometimes, Bizby would fly so high he would get lost in the clouds.



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Grandpa was watching Bizby and not paying attention to his feet. Suddenly the ground gave way. Grandpa found himself sliding into a deep hole.



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He fell for what seemed to be a long ways but luckily he landed on soft sand and didn't get hurt. The fall nearly scared the daylights out of him.



Bizby was off chasing butterflies and didn't see Grandpa disappear.

Grandpa screamed and screamed, getting more scared by the minute.

"I sure hope that little squirt finds me! I'm starting to get cold. Besides, it is so dark down here," worried Grandpa.



Grandpa's eyes were starting to adjust to the darkness. Much to his surprise, the hole was really a large cavern. He could see the outlines of old buildings built right out of the rock. Suddenly the room filled with one of Bizby's favorite songs. Grandpa knew he had been rescued. A little squirt always has a tune in his head. If you listen, you can hear it too.



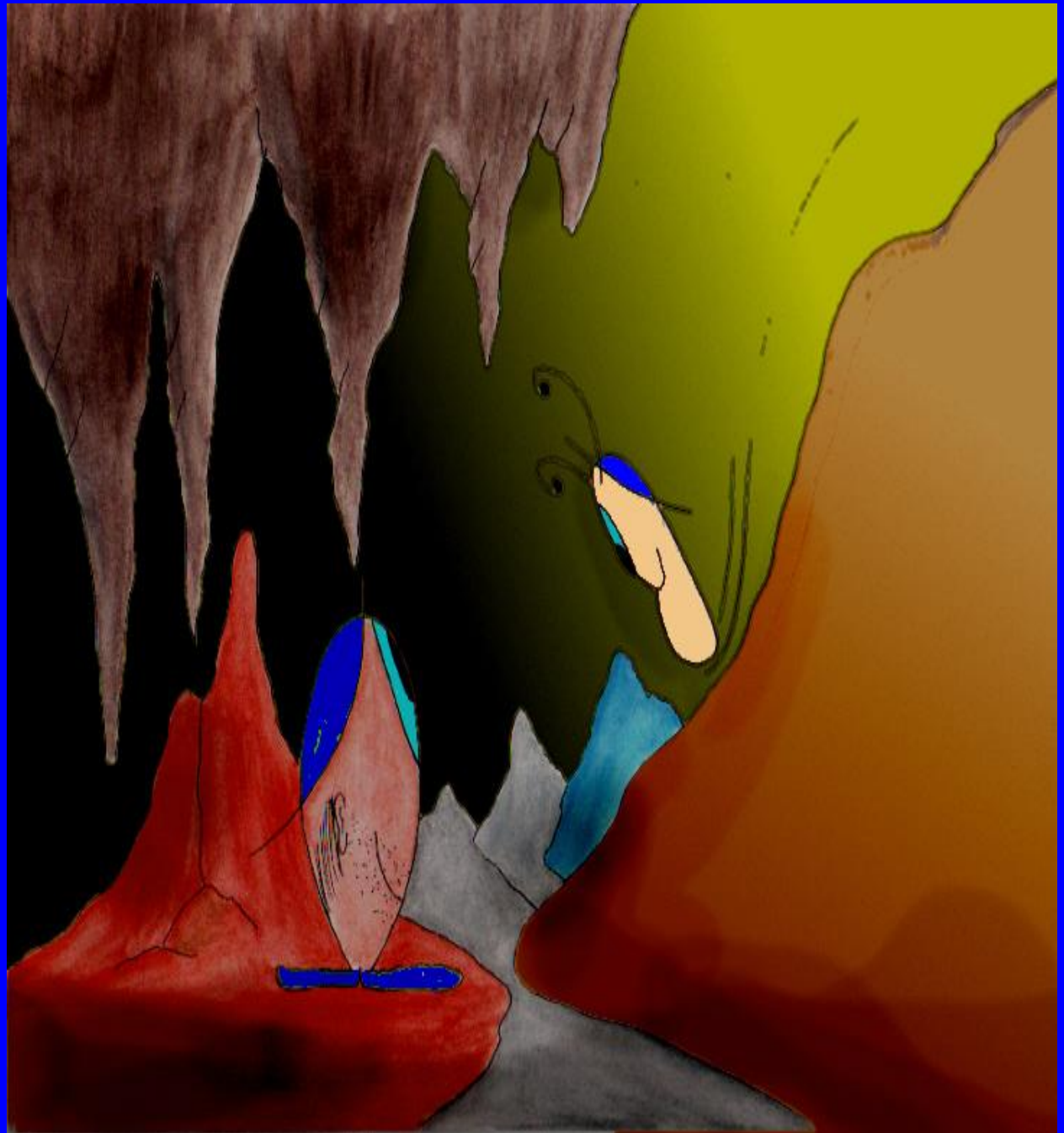
"What are you doing down there?" laughed Bizby.

"Oh, I just thought I'd drop in," shrugged Grandpa.

"Could you use a little more light? It looks pretty dark," said Bizby with a smile.

"Sure, have you got a lantern in your pocket?" asked Grandpa.

"What pocket?" giggled Bizby.



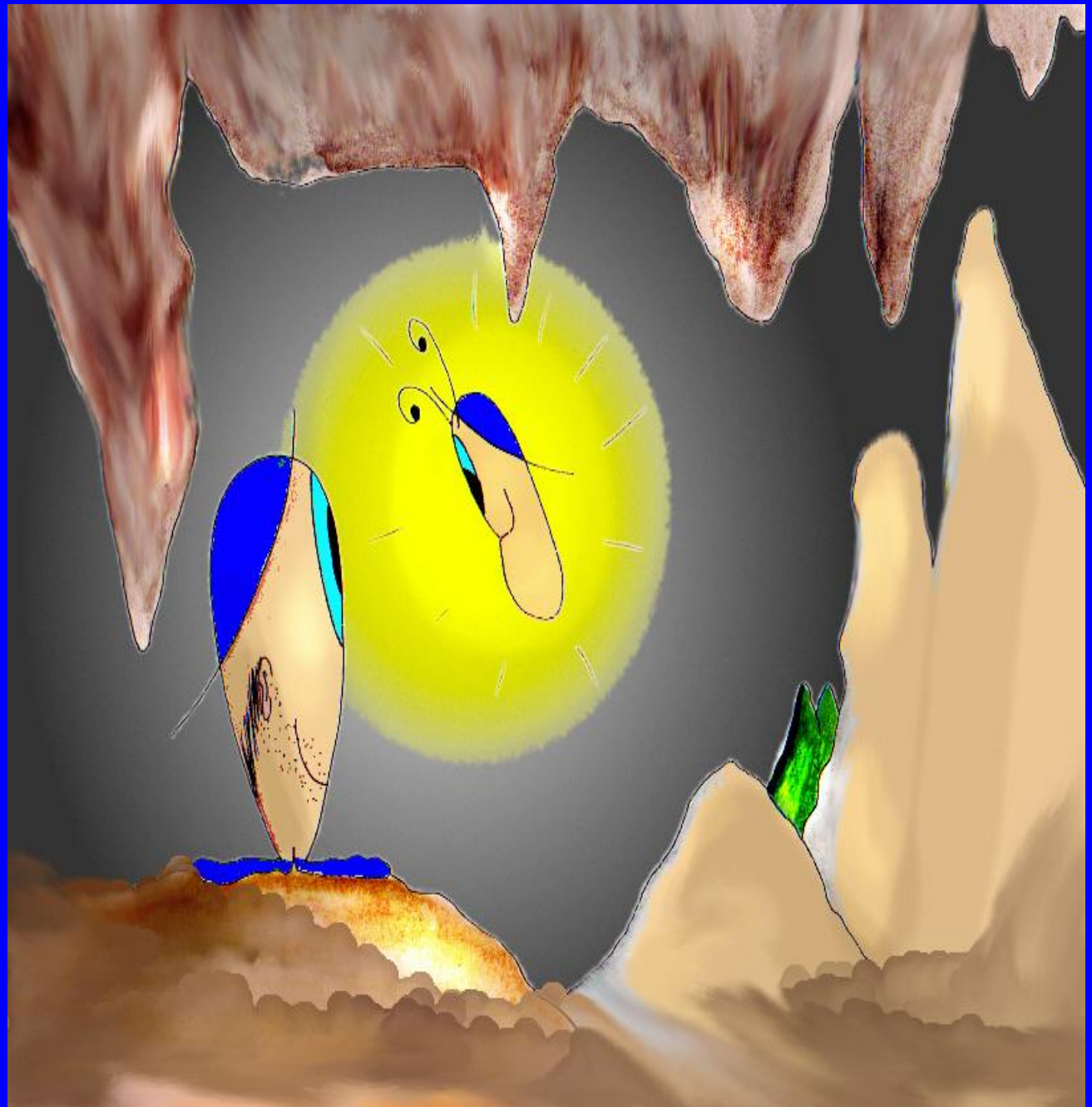
"Is this all right?" asked Bizby as he started to glow.

"How did you do that?" asked Grandpa.

"Oh...I just borrowed a couple of sunbeams. After all, I am a little powerplant," said Bizby.

"Well, can you get me out of here?" asked Grandpa.

"No problem, just hang on," laughed Bizby.



It was starting to get dark. They decided it would be best to head on home and come back in the morning. The predators come out at night to hunt and even though little squirts are too fast to get caught, Grandpa wasn't taking any chances. Bizby was a big help. He flew ahead watching for side-hill gougers and wild carangas. There used to be a lot more in this area. But now that winter was almost here, most had gone south to warmer hunting grounds.



Grandpa was making pretty good time. The excitement of finding an underground city made him want to run. He hoped Bizby wouldn't get there first and blab the news before he got there. In his haste to beat Bizby, he didn't notice a small tree branch sticking out of the ground. He caught his foot and fell head over heels.

"OUCH! MY FOOT! Screamed Grandpa.

"What happened to you?" asked Bizby.

"Oh..the day was going too good, so I thought I'd hurt myself. What does it look like?" grumbled Grandpa.

"Do you think you can walk?" asked Bizby with concern.

"Yikes! I hope it's not broken. Don't just stand there. HELP!" said Grandpa with a frown.



"It's going to be dark soon. I know you would like to walk, but wouldn't you rather fly?" asked Bizby.

"Right! I'll just sprout wings and take to the sky," frowned Grandpa, mad at himself for not seeing the tree branch.

"I could fly you back if you like," suggested Bizby.

"You wouldn't drop me, would you?" asked Grandpa.

"No problem, just lean a little bit forward and enjoy the view," said Bizby.

"I don't know about this!" thought Grandpa.



Grandpa always trusted Bizby, but flying on the back of a little squirt can be a hair-raising experience. Especially if the little squirt is the fastest flyer in the village.

That is how he got the name Bizby, "busy as a bee."



Within minutes they were zooming through the air right to Grandma's porch, much to her surprise.

"We found an abandoned city!" yelled Bizby.

"Would you put a lid on it and let me tell it!" grumbled Grandpa.

"That's right, we found an underground city several miles from here in the desert."

"Maybe we should talk it over with the Wheelrights and the powerplants before we get in over our heads," suggested Grandma.

"I think you are right. Let's go down to the pond. I'll just hop on Bizby and meet you down there," laughed Grandpa.



"That would be the *Lost City of Shroom*". It has been lost for hundreds of years. Most people thought it was just a legend," said one of the powerplants as they looked at each other in amazement.



The legend says...

There came a time when the sun was so hot all the people had to move underground to keep from getting scorched. They found a huge cavern with a fresh water spring. The only things that would grow in the dark were mushrooms. The villagers discovered a bunch growing deep in the cave and found them to be very tasty. Each color tasted different. Some even tasted like candy. The cave was lost along with the village that lived there. A huge sandstorm covered the entrance and no one has seen the people or the cave since.



That night Grandpa and Bizby planned out the best way to explore the cavern. "We'll send in the ship's robot first and have it build a staircase and move any rocks and junk that are in the way. This way no one will get hurt," said Grandpa. "We can mark the entrance so it will never be lost again," added Bizby. "Let's all get to bed early so we'll be refreshed in the morning," said Grandpa. But he knew no one would sleep with all the excitement.



The next day, Grandpa, Grandma, and the crew set out to explore the cave.

"This is really amazing!" exclaimed everyone at once.

"This place would make a great summer home," thought Grandpa. "It really is a lot cooler down here than it is on the surface."

"Look at the size of those mushrooms!" said Bizby as he licked his lips.



Bizby disappeared down a corridor to do some exploring on his own when suddenly he entered a huge cavern. A pale stream gurgled through the center. A small waterfall was flowing into a pool and huge mushrooms were growing on the edges.

"I better tell the others, but first, I think I'll try a sample," thought Bizby. He took a small bite. It tasted real sweet. Kind of like fresh fruit only a little bit different. He could hardly wait to tell the others when suddenly everything went dark...



"Is he alive! What happened?" everyone screamed at once.

"I'm not sure. I didn't think a little squirt could get hurt," said Grandpa sadly.

"Here, let me handle this," said Slipper, as she placed one of her antennas on his forehead. "He's only sleeping."

"Oh, thank heaven! What do you think caused that?" asked Grandpa.

"That mushroom has a bite out of it," said someone.

"We better take one of these back to the powerplants. They'll know what to do. One of you bring Bizby and we'll head back to the village," ordered Grandpa.



Bizby was still asleep when they arrived back at the village. The powerplants already knew what had happened.

"How did you know?" asked Grandpa.

"We were told by a little butterfly who said she was a friend of Bizby's," laughed the Powerplants.

"Well, what should we do?" everyone yelled impatiently.

"We need to send someone back for a blue mushroom. It is the only thing that will wake our little friend," said the powerplant.

"Is he going to be all right?" asked Slipper.

"He'll be fine. Nothing can harm him while he is asleep, but he won't wake up until we find a blue mushroom."

"I'm worried. I didn't see any blue ones at all," said Grandma.



Grandpa sent Sparky and Slipper along with two of the ship's robots to seek out the blue mushroom. The robots were sent down several shafts, but no blue mushrooms were found. They called the powerplants on the videophone to see if they knew of any place the blue mushrooms might be hidden.

"Look for some big earthen jars. That's where they keep the seeds. Be careful though. Don't spill them. The blue mushrooms grow real fast and could fill the entire cave. Plant a few down by the stream and within minutes we'll have enough to wake Bizby," replied the powerplant.



There were several large pots on the porch of one of the houses. Each one had a different color seed in it.

"We found them!" exclaimed Sparky. "I think it's our lucky day!" he looked around but Slipper was no where in sight.



"Hey! I wonder where that little squirt went?" thought Sparky.

"Where are you, Slipper?" he hollered.

"I'm down here. You better come quick. You aren't going to believe this!" exclaimed Slipper.

"Look! There is a whole village down here asleep!" they both cried out at once.

Sure enough, everywhere they looked there were sleeping villagers.

"Looks like everyone got into the wrong mushrooms," observed Slipper.

Sparky called the powerplants on the videophone to tell them of the new discovery.

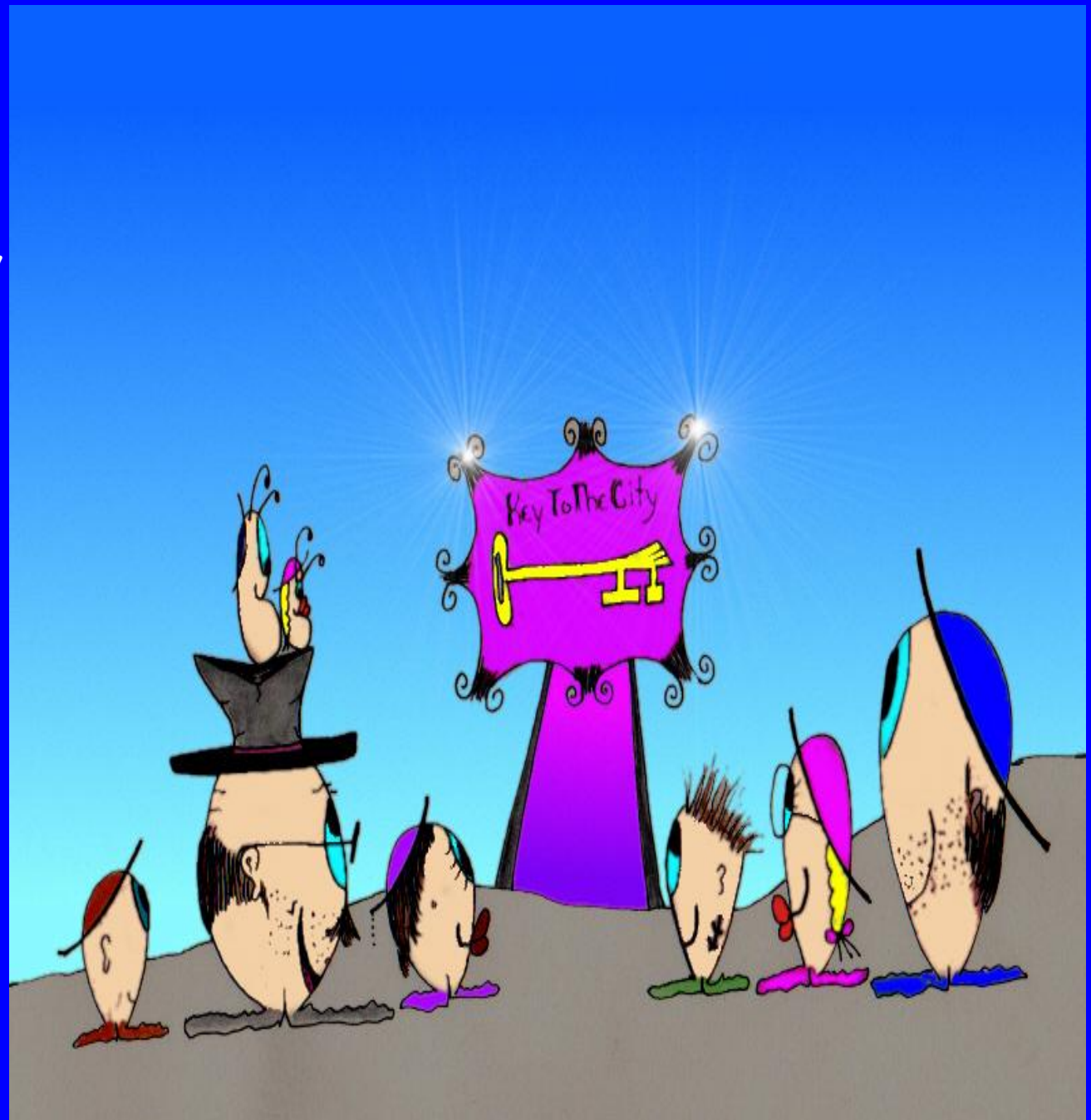
"Be careful not to spill the blue seeds. We'll need all of them to wake the villagers," said Slipper.



The next few hours were spent waking the villagers. Each one was so happy to be out in the sunlight again. A big celebration was planned. Everyone danced and sang and ate until they were exhausted. It was a very special day.



The Mayor of Shroom gave the key to the city to Grandpa, Bizby and Slipper. To this day it is hanging over the fireplace at Grandpa's house.



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"Hey, does anybody want some mushrooms?" asked Bizby with a giggle.

"NO MORE MUSHROOMS!" screamed the whole village.

THE END

