The little *Balloon*

by Jepe Wörz

Your personal relaxation story.

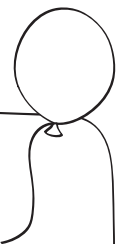Idea: Individualise, read aloud and play on Creative-Tonie

Before reading the story, adapt the following things to your situation

- Name of the main character: Which child should the story be about?
  In the example it is "**Lily**".

- Name of friend: A child who lives in another household.
  In the example, "**Timo**".

- Name of educator: A supporting role for adults.
  In the example, "**Mama**".

- Postal address of the child: A nice learning effect for children.
  Don't worry, the story and therefore, the address will only be heard by you.

- Favourite colour: for the balloon

If you want to make it extra lively, take a balloon at hand for some marked "*special effects*" while listening. But don't worry, it also works without.

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The little <u>red</u> balloon

<u>Lily</u> sat on the bed and stared at the wall of her room. <u>She</u> must have looked at the framed pictures of the old gliders a hundred times today and let the thoughts spin in her head. But they never spinned in one direction, had no destination, never landed. A bit like the wind howling around the house outside.

<u>Lily</u> was so bored!

It was one of those days when nothing happened. <u>Mum</u> was there, but she wasn't there either. <u>She</u> was working all the time, running around the house. Sometimes <u>she</u> stuck her head through the door, usually with the phone stuck between her shoulder and cheek, or she pushed a few toys aside with her foot or grabbed the laundry as <u>she</u> passed. Then <u>she</u> was gone again.

What a bore!

Through the window <u>Lily</u> could look out onto <u>her</u> street. On other days, the same place seemed like an adventure playground - full of climbing corners and secret hiding places - but today it was just a street, colourless and cold.

Somewhere, over some of the grey rooftops, a street or two away, <u>Lily</u> knew, that was where <u>Timo</u> lived. "You always play so nicely with <u>Timo</u>," <u>her</u> <u>mum</u> said. That was true, even if <u>Timo</u> only had rockets and spaceships on his mind. In fact, <u>his mum</u> said: "It's so nice to talk to <u>Timo's mum</u>". And that was the only reason <u>Timo's mum</u> came and dragged <u>Timo</u> along.

Wow, that was boring!

No, what <u>Lily</u> needed was a <u>friend</u>. <u>Someone who</u> wouldn't be dragged along but would like to come. <u>Someone</u> who would even come in wind and weather, rain, and storm. <u>One</u> who would drive away the dark clouds so that the sun smiles again. A real <u>friend</u>. Something stirred next to <u>her</u>. <u>Her</u> red balloon brushed against the wall.
🔊 *Special Effect: lightly knocking the balloon on the wall*

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Yesterday there had been a stall at the supermarket where a man had blown up balloons with such a special pump so that they could fly extra well.

🔊 *Special Effect: Blow up the balloon*

Each child got one and the parents were supposed to write their address on an attached card. The balloon man said, "Let your balloon go up and it can even reach far away countries."

Lily had been far too excited to let go of this great treasure straight away. Never!

Her mum, who had already filled in the address card, had only laughed. And so they had taken him home with them. Right now he was bouncing up and down under **her** ceiling.

🔊 *Special Effect: Lightly knocking the balloon on the wall*

He probably wanted to go out. He was bored too.

So bored!

And that's when **Lily** got the idea: Yes, fly away, little **red** balloon! And bring me a friend!

So **she** took the card of the balloon. **Lily** couldn't read, but knew what was written on the back. The address, of course: **Lily Miller, Street, 54555 Examplecity**.

Now **Lily** had to put on the front side of the card what **she** wanted. **She** fetched the beautiful coloured pens and first drew a stick figure. That meant:
Bring me a friend!
Then **Lily** drew dark clouds from which thick, long strokes grew downwards, which meant: one who comes even in wind and weather, in rain and storm. Quite simple, actually.
Finally, **Lily** drew a yellow, round sun with warm rays all over the page. That meant: one that drives away the dark clouds so that the sun smiles again.
Finished!

Lily went to **Mum** at the open window and released the balloon into the stormy world: Fly, little **red** balloon! Bring me a friend!

🔊 *Special Effects: Let balloon air escape, don't squeak*

And the little **red** balloon flew. Over the roofs, over the treetops, up to the grey clouds, and the wind blew it further and further away.

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It flew lonely. The houses flew away below him, the turrets, chimneys and antennae passed by like a great parade.

High above, he met a buzzard, a real professional among the wind gliders:
"Lovely weather today, isn't it?" said the buzzard, making a daring turn in the air to look closely at the map fluttering wildly in the wind:
"**Lily Müller, street, 54555 Examplecity**," he read. "Aha. But the stick figure doesn't have any wings! I don't get it."

At home in the children's room, **Lily** squatted on the bed and waited impatiently while high up in the clouds the little **red** balloon flew on.

🔊 *Special Effect: Let balloon air escape, don't squeak*

As the little **red** balloon flew on, it left the city, reaching the great green and yellow squares of fields and meadows that had settled over the grey world like a cosy check blanket. Exhausted, the balloon landed in the fork of a large cherry tree. A cat climbed up to him with gentle paws:
"Brr, nasty weather today, eh? Only my curiosity drove me out."
Her back muscles twitched unwillingly.
"**Lily Müller, street, 54555 Examplecity**," she read, "But I don't like the fat black rain clouds in the picture at all!" Her claws worked in the wood. Better watch out for the cat, little **red** balloon!

At home in the room, **Lily** squatted sadly on the bed, waiting in despair. How grey the world was without a friend.

Meanwhile, the little **red** balloon let the cat be a cat, hopped out of the branch and flew on.

🔊 *Special Effect: Let balloon air escape, don't squeak*

A gust of wind drove it into a small garden. The ribbon with the address card got caught in a rose bush under the veranda roof of a warped hut. A man, whose long grey beard swirled like a cotton candy machine under his boatman's cap, stepped out in surprise.

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It flew"Well, did you get lost in this wind, you little **red** balloon?" The man pulled up the address card, put on a pair of stained reading glasses and read: "**Lily Müller, street, 54555 Examplecity**. Well, my dear **red** balloon, you've made quite a long journey." He turned the card over and looked at the picture with the stick figure, the dark clouds and the yellow sun for a long time.

"Ah yes," he then said, "I think this **Lily** is looking for a friend. Because a friend is like the sun. Even if you don't see him, even if the sky is full of clouds, he is always there, warming your world with his rays."

The old man carefully untied the string of the balloon from the roses and held it in front of him for a moment longer:

"You don't have to fly so far, little **red** balloon. Our friends are usually not that hard to reach. We just have to look."

He let the balloon rise and went back inside to rummage for his old, specky address book.

The light of day was fading. At home in the room, **Lily** had sadly gone to bed. **She** had already given up hope of finding a friend, while the little **red** balloon still flew bravely through the air.

🔊 *Special Effect: Let balloon air escape, don't squeak*

But something was different now. The wind had shifted and the balloon changed direction. Again it flew over the checkerboard of green and yellow fields and meadows. And a little later, the parade of turrets, chimneys and antennas passed by again - only in the opposite direction. In the meantime it had become evening. A house peeled out of the darkness in front of him. Lights flickered in a window. Inside, a child was making a window decoration with flashing lights. The little **red** balloon flew closer.

Meanwhile, **Lily** had changed into her pyjamas and was snuggled up in her bed. **She** had pulled **her** duvet up to the tip of her nose so that this terribly boring day outside would be left behind. No friend had come. **She** looked out through the window into the dark night sky. Not even the stars managed to send **her** a little twinkling light through the dim window.

But then **Lily** saw, perhaps a street or two away, a bright light rising above the grey rooftops. Like a rocket, higher and higher, until it seemed to light up the whole sky. But - that was a **red** balloon.

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Her little **red** balloon! And it was covered all over with little flashing lights. They formed a golden wreath that rose higher and higher, like the sun that would rise again tomorrow.

It looked so beautiful!

Who could have made such a great thing?

And then **Lily** remembered a special **boy**. **One who** only had rockets and spaceships on his mind.

And then **Lily**'s whole face began to light up. Comforting warmth emanated from **her** smile and spread from under the blanket to **her** feet. Now **she** knew who **she** had to thank for that.

Later, her mum quietly entered the room and gently stroked **her** hair.

Lily already couldn't get **her** eyes open as **she** said:

"**Mum**, tomorrow I want to go see **Timo**."

"With **Timo**? Yes, let's see," **her mum** said. "It's supposed to be pretty bad weather tomorrow. Maybe another time would be better."

But with **her** eyes closed, **Lily** whispered:

"**Timo** is one who comes even in wind and weather, in rain and storm. **One who** disperses the dark clouds away so that the sun smiles again.

A real friend."