The Door

Billy had always been curious, so when he saw the battered, wooden door in the hillside, he turned the handle. It creaked open. Inside, he found himself in another world, standing by the shimmering ocean. Along the beach, he could see a field of golden flowers, a little village and what looked like hundreds of tiny people.

Twenty minutes later, Billy had walked across the rippling sand and there he met the little folk. They were indeed tiny people who wore rainbow-coloured clothes that glittered in the sunlight. Billy asked them if he could explore their world. “Yes,” they replied happily, “but do not pick any of our golden snapdragons!”

So, Billy explored the winding river, ran along the sandy beach and in the end, he stumbled across a sea of snapdragons. Amazed, he waded through the flickering lanterns before picking the most beautiful, golden snapdragon. At that very moment, Billy remembered what he had been told.

At that moment, he could hear their voices ringing in his ears like a thousand bells. Afraid, he ran from the echoing sound. Clutching the stolen snapdragon, Billy ran across the sinking sand, round the river and up the hill until he found the door that took him back to his own world.

Amazingly, two very strange things happened after Billy reached home. First, the stolen snapdragon did not die. It stayed alive, glowing in a jam jar like a tiny sun. Even stranger, poor Billy never found the door again, never saw the little folk again and never ever explored the hills again. That other world had disappeared. Well, at least, Billy never found his way back...