

## **“Cows – The hole story”**

***By Mac Mckechnie August 2024***



*Photo attributed to Royalty free website web page*

### **Chapter 1.**

We were generally a happy bunch. Life went on day after day, grazing peacefully on our lush green pasture on farmer Bills farm. Twice a day we would follow Mabel to the shed where for a short time we would chew on the hay while our full udders would get some relief by losing all our milk. This went on twice a day and life was pretty good. Mabel was our leader. She had been here the longest and earned the right to moo and we would all stroll after her. Then it happened.

On this day a big lorry pulled up near the shed. Mabel mooed loudly and we all looked up. Normally we expected Boris. He seemed to arrive every so often and then proceed to chase us all one by one around the field. When he caught up, he would have his way with us then just move on as if nothing had happened. This indignity did seem to result in a little calf arriving 9 months later. That was always so wonderful, being the centre of attention, with everyone crowding around congratulating you and a little baby suckling at you for a few days. Then your new baby was taken away to the nursery and you went back to the grazing and milking. BUT today it wasn't Boris who arrived but a large cow. She was bigger than we were, and we could see Mabel becoming uneasy, as if her leadership might be threatened.

The new addition to our herd was Flossie. Flossie didn't seem to want to be part of our group. She grazed well away from the rest of us and always seemed to hide behind trees and any other obstacles she could find. When Mabel mooed at milking times Flossie would look up and go back to grazing. Things just seemed different for Flossie.

We had all tried to approach her over the time she had been with us, but she just seemed distant. She would often see us coming and trot away and hide behind the next tree. We weren't sure if it was her superiority or just plain shyness, but we had done all we could to try and include her in our happy herd. Flossie still didn't line up behind Mabel to be milked but as we were all leaving the shed, she would walk past us without a word and give her milk after us.

The ground beneath her feet felt spongy and soft a blessed relief from concrete floor with a layer of hay to collect the processed food as it is digested through the two stomachs of all her barn neighbours. The upside of winter lockdown was it was warm, and food was on tap 24/7. Bit like and all-inclusive holiday if Flossie knew what one was. She had only heard the Farmer and farm hands go on about it. Flossie pondered for a while. They think we don't understand what they are talking about.

We're not as daft as we look you know us cows, cute big eyes and eyelashes to die for. A built-in waterproof Barbour jacket with a pattern that's unique and individual. We don't even need these earrings to tell us apart. You would think they could be more stylish than yellow plastic, not very eco is it?

As that day went on Flossie saw the creature a few times. Each time it bounced merrily across the meadow but then it seemed to disappear when it got to the tree. She decided she would name it as it was starting to become a regular visitor to what he thought of as "her field". What is it though a boy or a girl? Perhaps a gender-neutral name would be best till she found out who, what and why it was here in my space that is on my land. - Freddy! That's it, could be a Frederica or Frederick. It might not speak Cow. Well, that's its loss; we only have a few sounds to communicate to each other, learning to speak Cow shouldn't be too hard.

Flossie avoiding the other cows, strolled across to the tree in hope that she could intercept the visitor. She lay down and dozed for a while dreaming of her next encounter with the strange furry animal and what she might say.

Before long the creature appeared through the trees bouncing its way across the grass towards where Flossie lay dozing. It ran around the tree to the other side circumnavigating Flossie giving her a wide berth and again it seemed to disappear.

Right, there's something going on here that doesn't quite fit. I am going to find out just what it is. Oooh arrrgh harumph!!! Either the ground is getting lower or I'm getting older, or do I mean fatter? Let's have a closer look at this tree. There is obviously something attractive about the tree or that animal wouldn't be so obsessed with visiting it as often.

As she went round the huge trunk, she noticed a cavernous hole in the side of the tree about halfway up. Moving nearer she saw two bright yellow eyes staring back at him.

Do you speak cow Florence asked?

Sod off said the cat this is my hidey hole now leave me alone.

Ah you do speak cow where did you learn that?

What part of Sod off or go away are you unfamiliar with?

No need to be stroppy this is my field, and you are trespassing.

Look that small human back on the farm insists on putting these things on me and pushing me round in a pram. This is the only place I can find to hide and get some peace. I'm not wearing this get up by choice you know. Please may I use your tree as a place of sanctuary? The cat cunningly cajoled. "I'm not asking much. You can come over for a chat if you don't stay long and I can tell you some interesting stories of what goes on in that house. Do we have a deal?"

"Sounds like a plan. I like to people watch but can't hear properly from my position in the barn or field it will be fun to have a non-bovine buddy that knows about other stuff. I can't be doing with these other cows, I ignore them. Can I have a gander at your place of safety?"

Flossie moved closer and stuck her rather large head inside the hole to see what it was like inside. Her bulk blocked out the light, but she saw there was another entry hole at the bottom where the daylight came in. Freddy slithered down inside the tree trunk and exited through the hole, ran round and jumped on Flossie's back.

Snuggly and quiet, isn't it? Purred Freddy.

Flossie turned her head slightly to answer him and realised she couldn't move. "I'm stuck!" she mooed loudly.

Freddy fell off Flossie's back and rolled round on the floor laughing hysterically.

"Stop laughing! I need help" bellowed Flossie.

"What can I do I've had no hands", said Freddy falling in to fits of laughter again. "Don't worry Bill the farmer will see your missing when he comes out to bring you all back into the barn at dusk for milking. I hope he brings some butter with him to lubricate that massive head back out"

"You set this all up, didn't you? I'll get you back don't you worry. In fact, yes do worry be afraid VERY AFRAID" mooed Flossie

We were all munching away when Flossie started mooing. We wondered if Boris had arrived but there was no lorry, so we wandered over to where she was standing. Looking where she was facing, we could see Flossie, but all we could see was her rather large rear end. Her head seemed to have disappeared. We all began following Mabel as we moved slowly towards Flossie, and unlike other times she didn't move. When we got near it was obvious that silly Flossie had managed to get her head stuck in the hole of a tree. Mabel led the chorus as we all began mooing as loudly as we could, hoping it was loud enough for farmer Bill to hear. We all looked towards the shed near the cow barn and could see farmer Bill coming over to us. We stood aside to let him though and waited for what he was going to do when he saw the predicament Flossie had got herself into. 'My goodness Flossie!' he exclaimed, "What have you done?"

Well Farmer Bill pushed, and he shoved, Flossie's moos were getting more desperate, until finally with a big heave, Farmer Bill pulled her head out of the tree like a cork out of a bottle, and as Flossie shot backwards, he fell on his backside right in, yes you have got it, a big cow pat!

Freddie the cat had long since vanished! Flossie felt terrible. For the first time she thanked and acknowledged Mabel and the other girls, and said she was sorry for the way she had been previously. From that time on, the small herd of cows went about their business in peace and contentment, and tranquillity reigned across the farm, - well apart from the trouble with Freddy the cat when it eventually came! – but that's another story!