



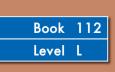
Fiction





Moosling the Hero

by Sharon Fear illustrated by John Bendall-Brunello





Moosling Series

Moosling the Hero

Author: Sharon Fear

Heinemann

361 Hanover Street Portsmouth, NH 03801–3912 www.heinemann.com

Offices and agents throughout the world

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Moosling

"Help! Help!" someone called. Moosling ran to help.

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A nest of baby birds had fallen into the river. The frightened mother bird was calling for help.

Help! Help!

Moosling jumped into the river. He swam as fast as he could. He swam under the water, and he came up with the nest and the baby birds on his head.



"Oh, Moosling, you are my hero!" said the mother bird. "Thank you! Thank you!" Other animals ran up to thank Moosling. They called him a hero, too. Then they tried to get the bird's nest off Moosling's head. First, Beaver tugged at it. Then Rabbit tugged even harder. That didn't work, so Beaver, Rabbit, and Skunk all tugged at it together. But the nest was stuck!

"My babies are too little to leave the nest," their mother said. "They will have to stay there on Moosling's head until they can fly."



So Moosling began to look after the baby birds. He had to be very careful. He didn't run or jump. The babies could fall out of the nest! He didn't swim. The babies could float away!

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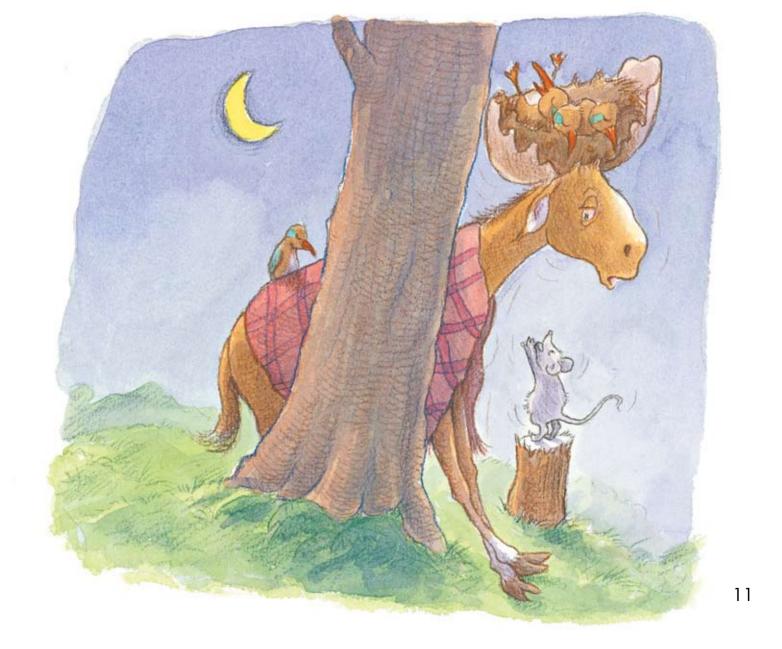
He was careful to keep the little baby birds out of the cold rain and the hot sun, too.

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Moosling stayed very still and quiet when the baby birds were napping. And when he got sleepy, he had to sleep standing up!

"Being a hero is hard work," he whispered to Mouse.

"I can see that," Mouse whispered back.



Then at last, one morning, a baby bird hopped up on the side of the nest. She flapped and flapped, and then she flew up into a tree.

"Good girl!" said her mother. Another bird flapped and flew. "Good boy!" said his mother.

Then the last little bird flapped and flapped and flew away! "Good bird!" cried Moosling.



As soon as the birds were gone, Moosling called to his friends. Together, they tugged and pushed and tugged some more. At last, they got the nest off his head. Then Moosling ran and jumped. He had a good, long swim. Then he shook the water off, and he ran and jumped some more.



Thanks again! "It is nice to be a hero," Moosling said. "But it is more fun just to be a moose."