

The Mopsy Rescue

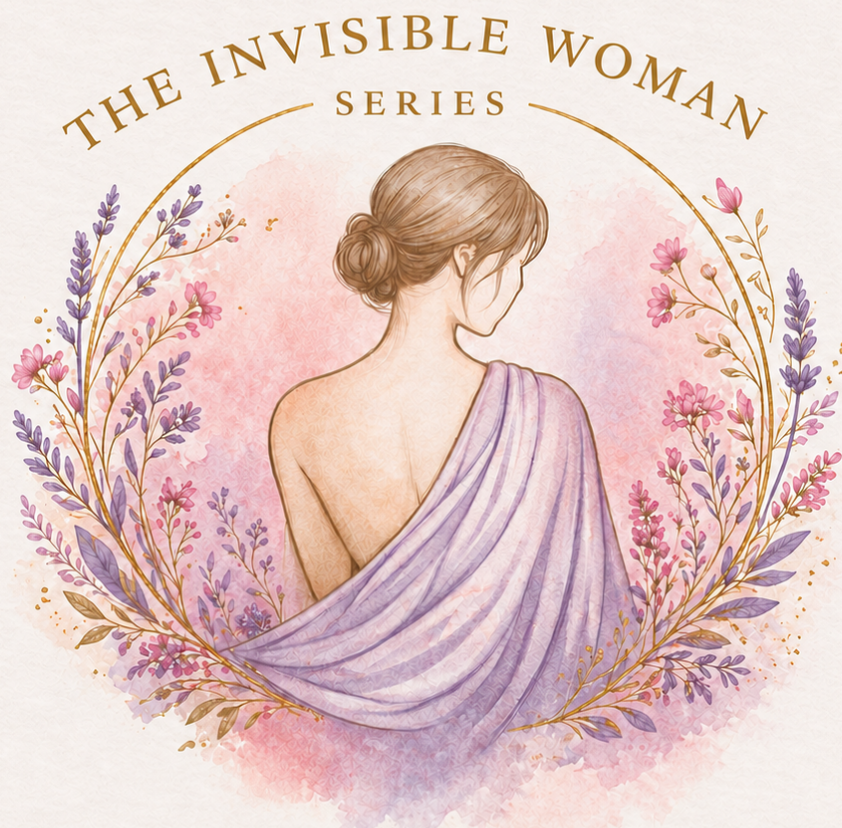
and the Prairie Showdown at Gregory Farm

A Levelled Reader for Grade 5



A story about being brave — even when you feel scared.

Reading level: Independent Reader



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The prairie wind whispered through the tall, golden wheat as
Flopsy, Big Bertha, Cheeto Puff, and Fluff Butt marched
forward on a very important mission: they were going to
rescue Mopsy! Together, the Midnight Munchers and Crunch &
Thunder stepped out from the safety of home and into the
wide, unknown world. The sun was already climbing higher —
it was lunchtime — and that was a problem.



Cheeto Puff's tummy rumbled. Not a small rumble. A long, dramatic, life-altering rumble. He clutched his round, burrito-shaped belly. "I've never missed a meal in my life," he whispered, his heart sinking right along with his tummy. The day was moving faster now. And somewhere out there ...

Mopsy was waiting.



But as they made their way toward Gregory Farm, none of them noticed the distant shapes shifting in the wheat. Or the eyes watching from afar. They had escaped Stinky Pete ... but they hadn't rescued Mopsy. Not yet. And at this rate, they might not make it home by suppertime.



Big Bertha, also known as Bunzilla, led the way like a fearless ninja general. Cheeto Puff, AKA Captain Wigglebottom, was distracted. Staring down at his rumbly-burrito-torpedo-shaped belly, he tripped over nearly everything. “We should call you the Marshmallow Ninja — you are far too soft for a real adventure!” said Fluff Butt, who was also called Thunderbum, because she was silent but deadly. “You are such a hypocrite,” whined the hangry Cheeto Puff. “I know that you are hungry too!” “No.” Fluff Butt lied, turning pink in the cheeks, as she too had stopped often ... mostly looking for snacks. She couldn’t find any. Not one.



Flopsy stayed close behind, her little heart beating just a little faster with every step. Mopsy ... my poor sister. Then — the wheat shifted. Just a little. Eyes gleamed in the tall grass. And then — “DINNER, eh-hh!?” howled Baron Von Biteyface as the coyote crew burst forward. Flopsy froze. Big Bertha gasped. Cheeto Puff fell over. “Not again! I want to eat dinner — not BE dinner!” Fluff Butt dropped a carrot. ... Hey. Where did she even find that carrot?



The coyotes circled closer. And closer. And closer. Now, remember, Juniper Snow's rabbits were not quite like other rabbits: they were smart, they were tough (even if they didn't yet know it), and they could hear everything. They knew how to move swiftly (when they wanted to), and think like the prairie wind — quick, quiet, and just a little bit wild. And right now ... they were going to need every bit of that.



But far across the prairie — Mopsy was not waiting to be rescued. Not even a little. She stood beside her new friends ... or rather, rode one of them. Perched proudly, bareback, she sat astride her new, stalwart steed — Murph: the hockey-loving, Canadian talking, rodeo-goat-stallion. He was brave. He was bold. He was hilariously wild. And no one — no one — dared to cross the Murph-myster, as he called himself. He was far too great a hockey-loving hero for any of that.



Murph the Billy Goat stomped the ground with unmistakable confidence. Once. Twice. Dust kicked up beneath his hooves.

And beside him — SKRRRT — WHOOSH!



SKRRRT — WHOOSH! Millie rolled forward. On two legs. Like a real hockey-loving hero. Her cobbled-together rollerblades (rescued from the dump) rattled slightly beneath her hooves, but she didn't care. Her hockey helmet — one of Mr. Gregory's from his youth — sat a little crooked, with two carefully cut holes so her horns could poke through. Her hockey stick, taped and re-taped and definitely loved, rested firmly in her grip. Ready. Always ready.



Millie tilted her head toward the prairie. “Looks like your friends are in trouble ... eh?” Mopsy didn’t hesitate. Not for a second. She leaned forward slightly, steady and sure. “Then
let’s go.”



Back in the wheat, the coyotes crept closer. Closer ... Closer ...

Until —



THUNDERING HOOVES. "MOVE!" shouted a familiar voice. Flopsy blinked. "MOPSY?!" Mopsy charged in on Murph's back, with Millie racing beside them like a blur. Millie didn't slow down. CRASH! She body-checked a coyote into a rock.



WHACK! Another spun into a hay pile. She skidded to a stop, pointing her stick. "You wanna go?!" she shouted.



"I can drop the gloves — eh?!"



She lifted her helmet slightly. Her horns poked out. The coyotes hesitated. But only for a moment.



Then they spotted something new: LUNCH! The group of cats and rabbits huddled together near some trees. The coyotes grinned. “New plan,” growled Baron Von Biteyface. “Leave these goats, we will eat them instead.” They turned and charged.



But by this point, the cats and rabbits were ready. And remember ... Juniper Snow's rabbits were not like ordinary rabbits. Not even close. "AWE MAN!" moaned Flopsy. "How many times are we going to get eaten in one day?!" "TEAM Crunch & Thunder, LET'S GO," the cats chanted together. "Ready, Midnight Muncher?" Big Bertha asked Flopsy. "Yeah ... okay! Let's save ourselves, and then we'll save Mopsy!" she replied, a little braver this time.



In a flash, the rabbits leapt onto the backs of Cheeto Puff and
Fluff Butt — and up they went. Climbing. Scrambling.
Scratching their way into the trees — quick as two shakes of
a rabbit's tail.



High above the ground, Cheeto Puff and Fluff Butt balanced on thick branches, their bunny friends riding along. Across from them, the cats positioned themselves kitty-corner in neighbouring trees, tails flicking, eyes locked on the target. The rabbits hopped down onto the branches. Then — they turned around. Backsides out. Bent over. ... What were they up to now? Cheeto Puff locked eyes with Fluff Butt. A serious nod passed between them. “READY!” shouted Cheeto Puff.

Carrots went in.



And then — POP! POP! POP! Rabbit beans BLASTED through the air in bright, colourful bursts — like a rabbity, jellybean-shooting machine gun. Cheeto Puff and Fluff Butt aimed straight at the dim-witted coyote gang — and fired. Again.

And again. And again.



PING! PLOP! POP! Rabbit beans smacked into snouts, ears, and eyeballs. One zipped straight into Snaggle-Tooth Steve's ear. "Ow! Ow! OW!" he howled, spinning in circles. "TAKE COVER!" yowled the Baron — just as he, too, was pelted again and again by bouncing bunny beans. Bitey Boots opened his big, foolish mouth to yell — "OOOOO-WOW-WOW-WOW!" — and POP! A rabbit bean flew straight in. Gulp. He froze.



He froze. Smacked his lips. Licked his chops. “Uh ... guys?” he said slowly. “... that bunny bullet was tasty.” The coyotes paused. Sniffed. Tasted another. And then —



“THESE ARE DELICIOUS!” yelled Bitey Boots. Suddenly — they weren’t dodging. They were SNACKING. Gobbling beans mid-air. Scrambling for more. Fighting each other over the tastiest ones. And just like that ... the plan had completely backfired.



Flopsy watched everything. Mopsy was brave. Millie was fearless. Murph was strong. And her friends were trying — even if it was messy. Something inside her shifted. Bravery wasn't about being the biggest. It wasn't about being the loudest. It was about stepping forward ... even when you were scared. Flopsy took a deep breath. Then she ran and JUMPED right out of the tree. Hit a few branches on the way down. OWW! BLAM! OOOOF! She stood, shook her little rabbity ears, dusted herself off, then ... not so gracefully ... she climbed up behind Mopsy on Murph's back. "Good to see you, sis," she said, squeezing Mopsy tight.



Looking very serious and a little more courageous, Mopsy gave the word. “Let’s do this ...” Murph charged.

“AAAAAAHHHHH!” THUMP! He donkey-kicked a coyote backward. STOMP! Another tripped and tumbled. Millie skated circles around them. “LAST CHANCE, EH?!” she shouted. “YOU WANNA FIGHT OR WHAT?!” She tapped her stick on the ground. The coyotes looked around. At the goats. At the flying rabbit beans. At the chaos. At Flopsy — no longer

afraid. They panicked. Slipping on jellybeans, crashing into each other, yelping and tumbling — the coyotes ran.



"We'll be back!" they howled from a distance ... but not very convincingly. The prairie grew quiet again. Millie rolled to a stop. Murph snorted proudly. Cheeto Puff dropped another carrot. Cheeto Puff and Fluff Butt were SO HUNGRY that they were eating the leftover carrots. "Where did all these carrots come from, anyhow?" asked Cheeto Puff while he munched. "Jellybeans just shot out of our rabbits ... You don't want to know," replied Fluff Butt. Cheeto looked at his carrot with

some concern, then shook his fluffy head and kept eating. He
was too hungry to care.



Big Bertha puffed up. “We had that handled,” she said smugly. “Um, guys, can someone get me down, please?”

Everyone stared at her. Then laughed. Flopsy looked at Mopsy. Mopsy smiled. No words were needed. Flopsy had changed. She hadn’t hidden. She hadn’t waited. She had stepped forward. She had been brave. Far beyond Gregory Farm, hidden deep in the wheat — the coyotes gathered again. “Next time ...” growled Baron Von Biteyface, “... we

bring something bigger.” And this time ... they weren’t coming
for jellybeans.

Sound Play: Phonemic Awareness

Advanced sound and word study. Read each word aloud and break it into syllables and meaningful parts.

1. Syllabify and blend: un·mis·tak·a·ble (5), con·vinc·ing·ly (4), hi·lar·i·ous·ly (5). Read each one smoothly.
2. Stress and schwa: find the unstressed 'uh' (schwa) sound in a·bout, sup·per, prob·lem.
3. Phoneme–grapheme awareness: count the sounds in whispered, gloves, and charged. Where do the letters and sounds differ?
4. Morphology: break into meaning parts — un + mistak(e) + able; re + treat; courage + ous. Read each part, then the whole word.
5. Manipulation challenge: delete or substitute one sound in stalwart, swiftly, and perched, then say the new word.

Words to Know

whispered — spoke in a very soft, quiet voice

stalwart — loyal, strong, and dependable

unmistakable — so clear it cannot be confused with anything else

perched — sat on the edge of something, high up

hesitate — to pause because of doubt or fear

hypocrite — a person who criticizes a fault they have themselves

swiftly — quickly; with great speed

courageous — brave, especially in a difficult situation

convincingly — in a way that makes people believe you

backfired — produced the opposite of the intended result

Let's Talk About It

Questions to check understanding and spark discussion.

1. Identify the main problem (conflict) in the story and explain how it is solved.
2. Bravery is a central theme. Trace how Flopsy changes from beginning to end, using at least two examples from the text.
3. The narrator says the plan “completely backfired.” Explain the situational irony in this moment.
4. Choose two characters and describe how their personalities are shown through their words and actions.
5. Authors use vivid verbs, sound words, and short sentences to build excitement. Find an example of each and explain its effect on the reader.
6. Write a short prediction for the sequel. Support your idea with evidence from the final page.

For Teachers & Families: Alberta Curriculum Tie-In

This levelled reader aligns with the new Alberta Grade 5 English Language Arts and Literature curriculum. It supports independent Reading and advanced Comprehension (analyzing conflict, theme, and character growth, and interpreting figurative and sensory language), precise Vocabulary, and the study of Literature and author's craft, including situational irony and narrative structure. The response tasks build critical thinking, inference, prediction with textual evidence, and written communication.

Reference: Alberta Education, English Language Arts and Literature (K–6), new LearnAlberta curriculum (curriculum.learnalberta.ca).