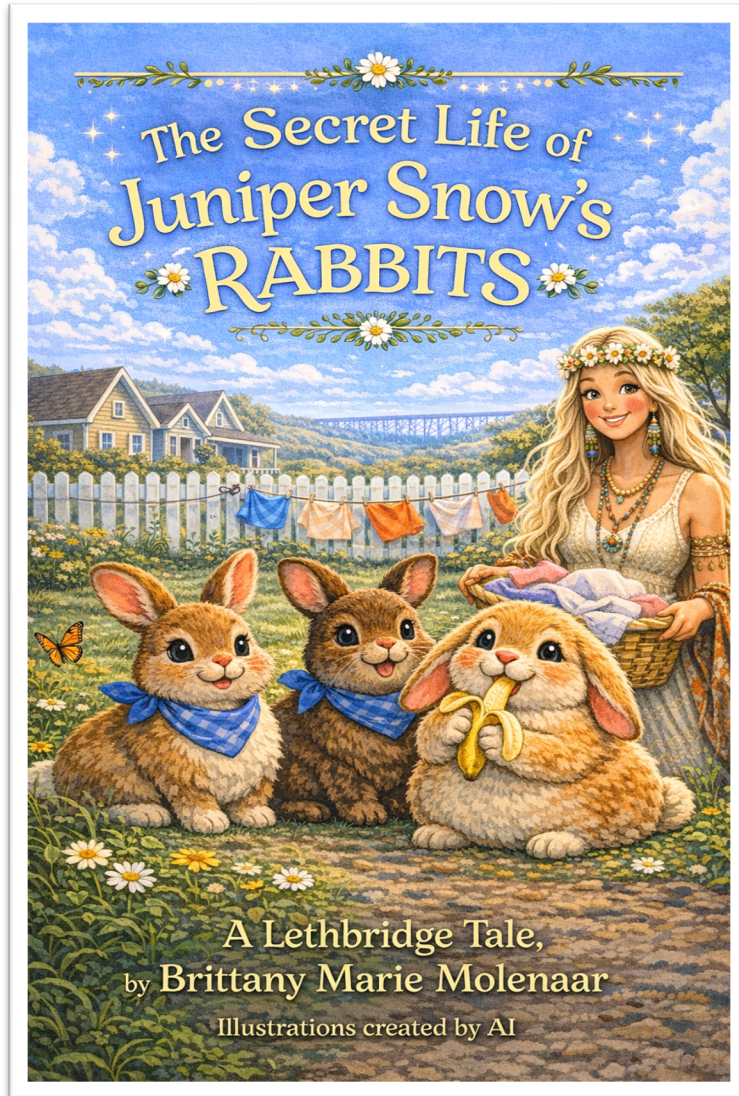


The Secret Life of Juniper Snow's Rabbits

Episode 4, Part 2: Mopsy and the Prairie Pack

A Night of Narrow Escapes



An Easy Reader

Grade 4

Fluent Reader

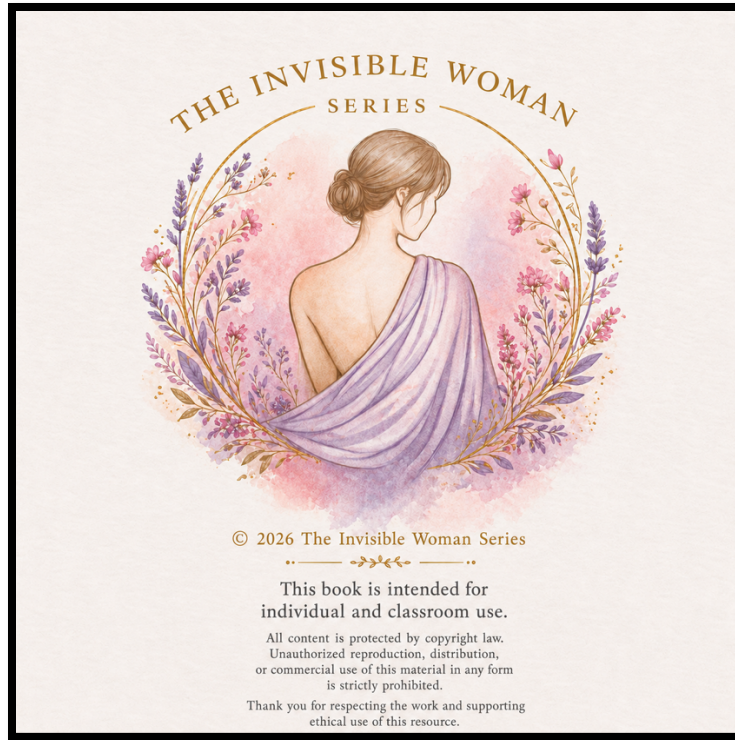
The Secret Life of Juniper Snow's Rabbits

Episode 4, Part 2: Mopsy and the Prairie Pack: A Night of Narrow Escapes

Story and characters by Brittany Marie Molenaar

"A Lethbridge Tale"

Illustrations created with AI



Easy Reader Edition — Grade 4 (Fluent Reader)

First Easy Reader edition, 2026

© 2026 Brittany Marie Molenaar. All rights reserved.

This Easy Reader is an adaptation of the original story, simplified for the listed grade level and aligned with the Alberta English Language Arts and Literature curriculum (Kindergarten–Grade 6). The storyline and illustrations follow the original work.

No part of this publication may be reproduced or distributed in any form without the written permission of the copyright holder, except for non-commercial classroom and educational use.

Printed for educational use in Alberta, Canada.



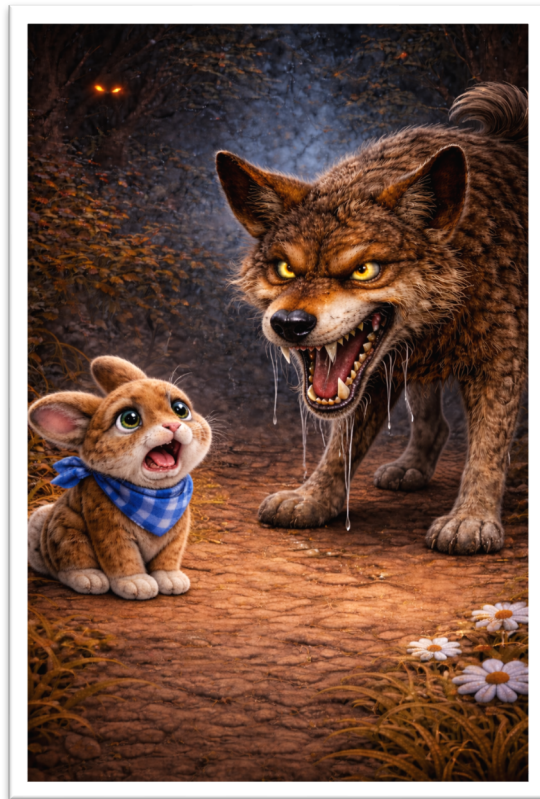
Out of the darkness, shapes emerged — one by one. Glowing eyes. Crooked grins. They circled her. At the center stood a scruffy coyote with a patchy grey-and-silver coat, a crooked eye patch, and a tattered red scarf. “Baron Von Biteyface,” he announced proudly. Fear washed over Mopsy, and she trembled all over.



But Mopsy wasn't just any rabbit. She was Juniper Snow's rabbit, and Juniper Snow's rabbits were clever. She thought quickly under pressure, lifted her chin, and said, "Oh dear... you're too late. There's a much bigger rabbit over that ridge — round as a hay bale!" The pack turned. "Bigger, you say...?" "Forward, my pack!" shouted the gullible, impulsive Baron. They bolted.



All but one. Snaggle-tooth Steve lingered, watching her with that nasty snaggletooth sticking out of his jaw. He hadn't believed a word of it.



Steve stepped forward, drooling, his jaw gleaming. “Hey there, little rabbit,” he grinned. “We eatin’ or talkin’, eh?” Mopsy’s eyes darted from side to side, but she didn’t wait for him to advance.



She simply turned and ran — hopping, zigging, and zagging as fast as she could. Steve stumbled and tripped after her, but he couldn't keep up. Before long, she lost the blithering, mangy beast in the wheat.



Mopsy was shocked and relieved: she had done it! She danced in celebration. “Ha! Those carrot-brained coyotes couldn’t get the best of me!” Then a shadow passed overhead. The owl. “Oh no,” cried Mopsy. “From the oven... back into the fire!”



She darted. The owl swooped. Claws grazed her fur, and she shrieked! Mopsy burst deeper into the wheat field — but behind her, paws thundered. The coyotes had figured it out. Now she had two predators: air and land. What was Mopsy going to do?



There, thought Mopsy, and she dove beneath a rusted, discarded milk pail and hid. “Come out, come out, wherever you are...” She squeezed her eyes shut, bracing for the worst — until BANG! Something made a loud sound in the distance. The coyotes’ heads shot up, and the whole gang took off after it.



Exhausted, Mopsy stayed hidden a long time. Soon the pack came crashing back, thoroughly annoyed with their leader. “We ran the wrong way,” said Snaggle-tooth Steve. “With purpose,” the Baron replied. Sam sniffed. “...She played us.” Silence.



Then Sam mentioned the goats nearby — two of them, watching hockey on an old TV. The Baron rubbed his furry chin. “We strike during the game.” “...We’re gonna get distracted, dude,” replied Sam. “Me likes hockey!” Boots exclaimed. “...After the game, then,” snarled the Baron.



On the far side of the field, Mopsy trembled. “I don’t know where I am,” she whispered. Then — a soft sound above. Perched on a scarecrow was the owl. “My name is Ksiistsikomm. I come in peace. If I wished to eat you... you would not be standing.” In that moment, she saw him for who he really was — a friend.



“I’m lost,” said Mopsy. “Yes.” “I didn’t listen...” “You learned.” Ksiistsikomm gave her a wink and glided ahead. Guiding. Not chasing. Mopsy followed, step by step, until at last — the Gregory fence! She understood now: it wasn’t there to keep her in... it was there to keep everything else out. “Bravery is not being unafraid,” the owl’s voice lingered on the wind. “It is learning how to return.”



Mopsy had returned home at last, safe and proud. She had wanted to prove she was brave, and now she knew she truly was.



But not far off in the darkness, by the fence, multiple sets of glowing eyes snapped open. The coyotes were already plotting their next mistake — this time, against the hockey-loving goats. Mopsy had excellent hearing, and she caught every word. Bravery, she now knew, meant doing the right thing even when you were scared. For the very first time, she wasn't running away — she was running toward something bigger. To be continued...

Teacher & Family Guide

Reading level: Grade 4 — Fluent Reader.

Curriculum focus: Word study and morphology (roots and affixes), reading fluency with prosody, and comprehension strategies (Alberta ELA & Literature — Grade 4).

Themes: Courage and growing up • Cleverness over strength • Friendship in unexpected places • Home as a place of safety • Doing the right thing even when afraid.

Key Words

Vocabulary from the story, chosen to match what readers at this level are learning to read and understand.

- **impulsive** — acting quickly without thinking
- **blithering** — talking foolishly; silly
- **infamous** — well known for something bad
- **plotting** — secretly planning something
- **exhausted** — very, very tired
- **bravery** — courage in the face of fear

Let's Talk About It — Questions

Comprehension questions for this grade, using Alberta's before/during/after reading strategies (recall, inferencing, predicting, visualizing, connecting, and analyzing).

1. How do Mopsy's actions show she is truly "one of Juniper Snow's rabbits"? (analyze character)
2. The Baron calls running away a "strategic retreat." How is this different from what really happened, and why is it funny? (irony / author's craft)
3. Why does the owl guide Mopsy home instead of just telling her the way? (inference)
4. How does the setting — night, prairie, wheat field — build tension in the story? (analyze setting)
5. State the theme of the story in your own words and support it with evidence. (synthesize)

Sound Play — Phonemic Awareness

Short sound activities that build phonological and phonemic awareness with words from the story.

By this grade, Alberta's focus shifts from early phonemic awareness toward word study and morphology — using sounds, roots, and word parts to read and understand longer words.

Roots and affixes

- im-puls-ive, in-fam-ous, ex-haust-ed, un-a-fraid

Suffix meanings

- -ous = “full of” (famous, nervous); -ive = “tending to” (impulsive, active)

The schwa (lazy vowel)

- Listen for the soft “uh” in unstressed syllables: a-gain, coy-o-te, a-bout.

Read it smoothly

- Reread a page of dialogue with expression — match each coyote's voice (fluency / prosody).