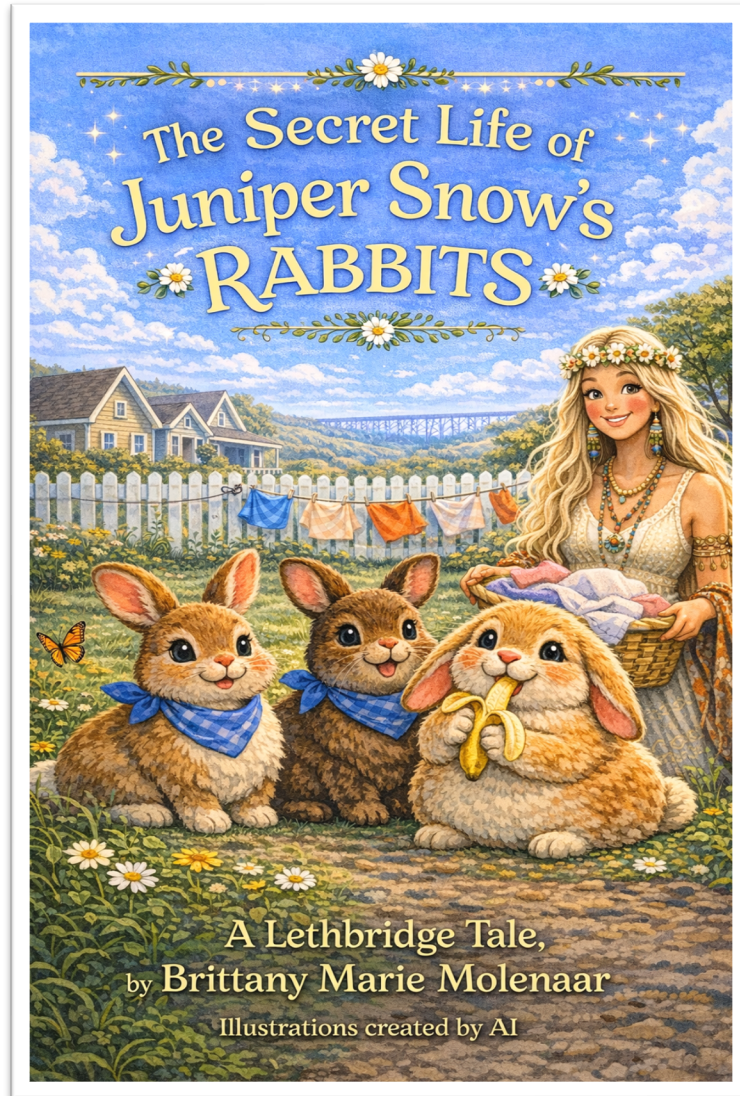


The Secret Life of Juniper Snow's Rabbits

Episode 4, Part 2: Mopsy and the Prairie Pack

A Night of Narrow Escapes



An Easy Reader

Grade 3

Transitional Reader

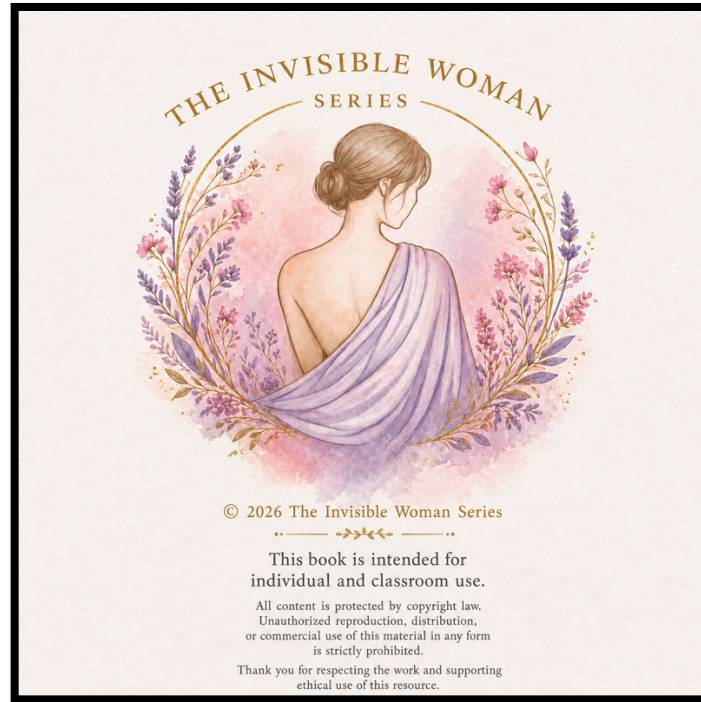
The Secret Life of Juniper Snow's Rabbits

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 3 (Transitional Reader)

First Easy Reader edition, 2026

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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.

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Out on the dark prairie, shapes emerged from the shadows — one by one. Glowing eyes. Crooked grins. A pack of coyotes slunk into a circle around Mopsy. At the center stood a scruffy coyote with a patchy coat, a crooked eye patch, and a tattered red scarf. “Baron Von Biteyface,” he announced proudly. Mopsy trembled all over.



But Mopsy wasn't just any rabbit. She was Juniper Snow's rabbit, and Juniper Snow's rabbits were clever. She lifted her chin. "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 Baron. And they bolted.



All but one. Snaggle-tooth Steve lingered behind, watching with that nasty snaggletooth sticking out of his jaw. He hadn't fallen for the trick.



Steve crept closer, drool dripping from his big grin. Mopsy's heart hammered, thump-thump-thump-thump. But she didn't wait for him to pounce.



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



Mopsy danced a little jig. “Ha! Those carrot-brained coyotes couldn’t get the best of me!” But then a shadow passed overhead. The owl. “Oh no,” groaned Mopsy. “From the oven... back into the fire!”



She darted deeper into the wheat. The owl swooped from above — and behind her, paws thundered. The coyotes had figured it out! Now she had two predators: one in the air and one on the land. What was Mopsy going to do?



Spotting a rusted, discarded milk pail, Mopsy dove beneath it and hid. “Come out, come out, wherever you are...” Then — BANG! A loud sound boomed in the distance. The coyotes’ heads shot up, and the whole pack raced off after it.



Before long, the coyotes came crashing back through the wheat, thoroughly annoyed with their leader. “We ran the wrong way,” said Snaggle-tooth Steve. “With purpose,” the Baron replied. Sam sniffed. “...She played us.” They’d been outsmarted by a rabbit.



Nearby, a pair of goats in hockey jerseys were glued to a game on a flickering old TV. The Baron rubbed his furry chin. “We strike after the game.” “...We’re gonna get distracted, dude,” said Sam. “Me likes hockey!” cheered Boots.



Meanwhile, Mopsy trembled in the wheat. Then came a soft sound. Perched on a scarecrow was the owl. “My name is Ksiistsikomm,” he announced. “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.



Ksiistsikomm gave her a wink and glided ahead. Guiding. Not chasing. Mopsy followed, step by step, until at last she saw 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," said the owl's voice on the wind. "It is learning how to return."



Mopsy had made it home, safe and sound. She had wanted to prove she was brave — and now she had. She lifted her chin, prouder than ever.



But far off by the fence, the coyotes were still plotting, their eyes glowing in the dark. Lucky for the goats, Juniper Snow's rabbits had excellent hearing, and Mopsy caught every word. 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 3 — Transitional Reader.

Curriculum focus: Decoding multisyllabic words, morphology (affixes), fluency, and comprehension strategies (Alberta ELA & Literature — Grade 3).

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.

- **gullible** — easily tricked or fooled
- **mangy** — dirty and scruffy-looking
- **thoroughly** — completely; very much
- **predator** — an animal that hunts other animals
- **outsmarted** — beat someone by being cleverer
- **courage** — the strength to face 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. What clever trick did Mopsy use, and why did it work on the Baron? (inference about character)
2. How does the author show that the coyotes are not very clever? Give two examples. (text evidence)
3. Why did Mopsy first think the owl was an enemy, and what changed her mind? (cause and effect)
4. Visualize: Describe the wheat field at night using details from the story. (visualizing)
5. What lesson does Mopsy learn about bravery? (theme)

Sound Play — Phonemic Awareness

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

Break big words into syllables

- gul-li-ble, scare-crow, thun-dered, mon-stros-i-ty

Endings (suffixes)

- **-ed** (lingered, drooled), **-ing** (guiding, chasing), **-ly** (proudly, quickly)

Hard & soft sounds

- **Hard c/g:** coyote, glided. **Soft c/g:** circle, gentle.

Vowel-team review

- **ea** (beast), **ow** (owl), **oa** (oats), **igh** (night, fright)