

The Night on the Hill

 COLOR THE PICTURE



All afternoon, the sky over Wonderful Woods was the color of an old gray rock. The wind came in gusts, *hwoo... hwoo...*, and the snow blew sideways across Sunny Square in little swirls that spun like tops and then fell down.

Mr. Moose and Mr. Monkey were standing by the giant snow lantern, looking up at the cliff, when it happened.

The little light at the top flickered. It flickered again. It bent over, and came back, and bent over.

And then it was gone.

The top of Everest's cliff was dark.

"NO!" said Mr. Monkey. He grabbed a candle from Mama Moose's basket. "We have to go up! Right now!"

"We can't," said Mr. Moose. "It's almost dark. The wind's too strong. The ridge is too slippery at night."

"But Everest is all by himself up there!" said Mr. Monkey. "In the dark! In the cold!"

"But we could get lost," said Mr. Moose. "Or fall. We can't even see the trail at night."

"We HAVE to!"

"We CAN'T!"

They stared at each other. Mr. Monkey's face was hot. Mr. Moose's ears were flat. They had never, ever disagreed this much about anything.

Mr. Monkey turned around and stomped off to the treehouse. He grabbed his vine to climb up in a big

angry hurry. But he was so cross that he forgot to use his feet, and he slid right back down the vine, *zzzzzip*, and landed on his bottom in the snow.

He climbed again, even crosser. And slid down again. *Zzzzzip*.

Over by his door, Mr. Moose let out a big angry snort. It blew a little cloud of snow off the doorstep, right into his own face.

"Pfff," said Mr. Moose, covered in snow.

Mr. Monkey looked over from his snowy spot at the bottom of the vine. Mr. Moose looked over from his snowy doorstep. And they both kind of wanted to laugh, but they were too cross to do it yet.

So Mr. Monkey sat at the bottom of the vine, and Mr. Moose sat on his doorstep, and they didn't talk.

Mr. Monkey looked up at the dark cliff. He thought about what Shiloh's mama always said. Look up. Look at what you really want.

What did he want? He didn't really want to climb the ridge in the dark. He was scared of that, too. What he really wanted was for Everest not to be alone. Everest had come all the way down once and walked them home through a snowstorm, under his wing. Mr. Monkey couldn't stand to think of him sitting up there in the dark all night by himself.

Across Sunny Square, Mr. Moose was thinking, too.

The ridge at night was the wrong path. He was sure of that. Somebody could get hurt. But he looked at Mr. Monkey sitting all alone in the snow, and he knew Mr. Monkey wasn't wrong either. Leaving Everest alone in the dark felt wrong too.

So both of them got up at the same time, and walked to the middle of Sunny Square, and met by the snow lantern.

"I don't want to climb in the dark," said Mr. Monkey. "I just don't want him to be alone."

"I don't want him to be alone either," said Mr. Moose. "I just don't want anybody to get hurt."

Then Mr. Moose's eyes got bright. "Lookout Ledge," he said slowly. "The back way. The easy way, where we rode the Tail Train. We can't take the light all the way up to him tonight. But we could go up on Lookout Ledge and hold our lights up high, all night long. Then every time he looks down, he'll see us."

Mr. Monkey's whole face lit up. "So he'll know he's not alone."

"So he'll know."

"Then we stay up there," said Mr. Monkey. "All night. With him."

Daddy Moose and Daddy Monkey came, with big blankets. Bruno came, with an even bigger blanket. Benji came, and Shiloh, and Ricky with a lantern of his own. They went up the back way, the easy way, in the dark, holding tails, until they were standing at the very top of Lookout Ledge, as close to the cliff as they could get. By then the gusts had blown themselves out, and the night was still and cold.

They all held their lights up high. Candles and lanterns, and Mr. Monkey holding the brightest one of all, up over his head with both hands.

Way up on the dark cliff, something moved. A great shape at the edge, looking down.

"He sees us," whispered Benji.

Then they waited. They kept their lights up. It got later, and later, and colder, and darker.

Bruno wrapped himself up in his giant blanket so tight that he turned into a big furry blanket ball with just a nose sticking out the top. Then Benji crawled inside it with him. Then Shiloh. Then Ricky.

"Is everybody in here?" asked Bruno, from somewhere in the middle.

"Haw haw haw!" he went, and the whole blanket ball jiggled.

Around midnight, Daddy Moose and Daddy Monkey picked up the whole blanket ball, with Bruno and Benji and Shiloh and Ricky still inside it, fast asleep, and carried it home down the back way. It was very heavy. It snored the whole way.

Mr. Monkey stood holding his light high. He was going to stay awake all night. He was sure of it. But his eyes got heavy. And heavier. And then, still standing up, still holding his light over his head with both hands, Mr. Monkey fell asleep.

"Hnnnk-shoo," snored Mr. Monkey, standing straight up like a little lamppost.

"Ha-ha-ha," whispered Mr. Moose. And very gently, he took the light out of Mr. Monkey's hands and held it up himself, so Mr. Monkey could sleep against his side.

So that's how it went, all night long. When Mr. Moose got sleepy, Mr. Monkey woke up and took the light. When Mr. Monkey got sleepy, Mr. Moose took it back. One of them was always awake. One light was always up. All night.

Every once in a while, they looked up at the dark cliff. And every once in a while, the great shape at the edge was still there, looking down at them.

And then, very slowly, the sky in the east turned gray. Then pink. Then gold.

And out of the morning sky came Everest Eagle.

He swooped down off the cliff, over the trees, and landed right beside them on Lookout Ledge, with the morning light on his feathers. In his talons, he was carrying the little squash lantern, cold and dark, with Ricky's jar still inside it.

He set it down at Mr. Moose's feet.

Mr. Moose and Mr. Monkey didn't even need to talk about it. Mr. Monkey put a brand-new candle inside the jar. Mr. Moose lit it from the light he'd been holding up all night. And the little squash lantern glowed again.

Everest looked at them for a long time. Then he picked the lantern up very carefully in his talons, opened his great wings, and with three slow beats, *foom, foom, foom*, he carried it back up to the top of the cliff.

A moment later, there it was again. A little gold light at the very top.

"What a day!" said Mr. Moose on the way home, still wrapped in a blanket. "The light at the top went out, and Mr. Monkey and I disagreed. He slid down his vine twice, and I snorted snow in my own face. Then we figured out what we both wanted. Bruno turned into a blanket ball, and Mr. Monkey fell asleep standing up. And in the morning, Everest came and got the light."

Mr. Monkey whistled, and Mr. Moose hummed, and together they sang:

*We are better together,
Moose and Monkey forever.*

And high above the waking woods, the little squash lantern glowed again at the top of the cliff, as the first long rays of the morning sun came over the hills to meet it.

Let's Talk

- 1 Mr. Moose and Mr. Monkey wanted different things. How did they find a plan for both of them?
- 2 Who might be feeling alone? How could you spend time with them?

Your Turn

Give your time! Draw who you will spend time with and what you will do together.

I will give my time to _____.

SAMMY'S JOKE



What do snowmen call their kids?

Unscramble the letters to finish the joke. The picture is a clue!



CLUE



_____ -dren!

👁 Spot the Difference

Look closely. Can you find 5 differences?



Read With Me

DRAW THE STORY

We Will Sit With Him

The lamp at the top is not lit!  has no lamp.

“Run up!” says . “Not at dusk!” says .

 is mad.  is mad.

Then they sit and chat.

“We can not go up,” says . “But we can sit on the hill with lamps!”

The pals sit with lamps up, up, up.  can see them.

 naps, and  has the lamp. Then  naps, and  has it.

PICTURE WORDS



Everest



Mr. Monkey



Mr. Moose



For grown-ups: New sounds: th (thin) and ch (chop). New words to learn by heart: no, they, we.

Color a star each time you read it.

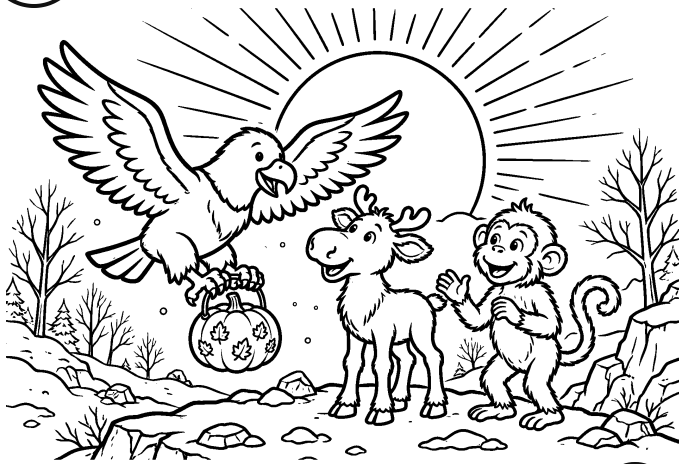
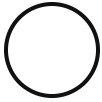
My Gift

Trace the dark word. Then trace or write the light words. Who did you give your time to?
Write their name on the line.

I gave my time to _____

What Happened First?

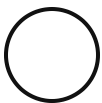
Write 1, 2, 3, 4 in the circles to put the story in order.



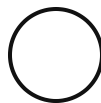
A



B



C



D