

How Fly Saved the River

By Sheila Black

There was once a river so beautiful that all the animals came to drink from it. One day a giant moose came to this river.

“He’s so big!” cried out a beaver named Barney.

“Even bigger than Big Bear,” added Betty, another beaver.

“He sure is thirsty,” **noticed** Marty, a muskrat.

“He’s drinking so much that the river is going down!” yelled Mary, another muskrat.

The animals grew worried.

“Our beaver dams will be destroyed,” warned Barney.

“And we’ll have no water to drink,” said Mary.

Big Bear, who had been listening the whole time said, “Let’s meet tonight and plan how to get rid of this **pest**.”

“Count me in!” added Fly.

All the animals laughed at Fly. How was such a tiny creature going to help?

As the sky grew dark, Fly joined the others on the riverbank.

“So, what’s the plan?” he asked.

Barney started by saying, “I will **gnaw** on that moose’s legs until he runs away.”

“But he’ll kick you with his big strong hooves!”, warned Betty.

“Oh,” said Barney. “I didn’t think of that.”

“We need another plan,” both muskrats said at the same time.

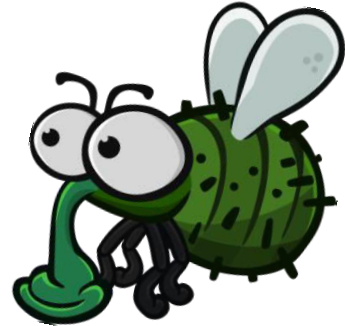
“I am the strongest,” said Big Bear. “I’ll fight that moose.”

“But the moose is twice your size!” said Fly.

The beavers and muskrats all said to Fly, “Be quiet. You are the weakest of all.”

The next morning, Bear was worried. Was Fly right? Was the moose truly twice his size?

“Bear hurry!” said the muskrats.



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But Big Bear did not move.

"I'm... I'm... scared," he replied.

"Maybe we should try my plan," Fly **admitted**. But all the other animals just laughed at Fly.

So, Fly flew onto the moose's back. Holding on tightly, he bit the moose as hard as he could.

"Ouch!" cried the moose.

Fly flew up and bit the moose's ear.

"Stop it!" the moose yelled.

"I'll never stop," said Fly, as he flew around and bit the moose on its leg.

The moose was unable to stop Fly, so he turned and ran. The animals never saw him again.

That night, the beavers made fish stew. The muskrats danced a special dance in **honor** of Fly.

"Hooray for Fly!" they all sang.

"You see," began Fly, "even the weakest animal can beat the strongest if he uses his brain."



Vocabulary

Notice: *paying attention to something*

Pest: *an annoying person or thing*

Gnaw: *bite or nibble on something for a long time*

Admit: *to say something is true*

Honor: *to show respect*