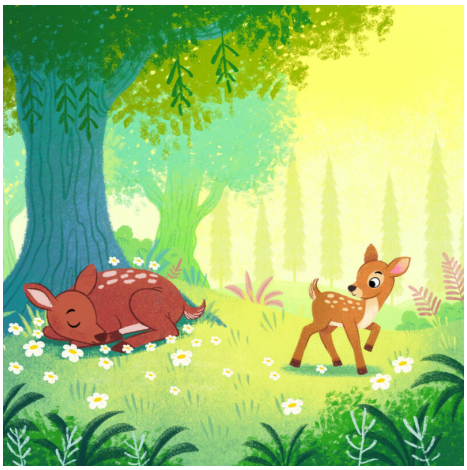
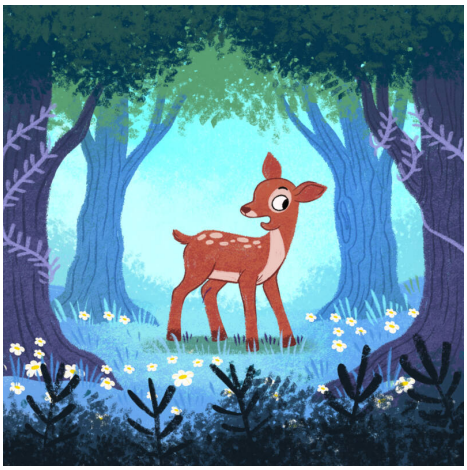
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READ ANYWHERE, ANYTIME

An interrupted nap

Arthur Scott Bailey



The fawn Nimble crept into the forest while his mother slept. He made a great effort not to disturb her, making sure not to step on a twig, as he knew that the sound of a breaking branch would be enough to wake his mother from her deepest sleep. He also made sure not to step on a stone with his hooves, as the slightest click would let his mother know he had left her. So Nimble chose his way over the pine needles and made no noise at all. Meanwhile, his mother slept peacefully.



She didn't miss her son until she suddenly woke up and immediately stood up, ready to run away. She didn't see Nimble and momentarily forgot she had a child. Her only thought was to flee from the creature that was stalking through the undergrowth and getting closer and closer. She was ready to jump away but suddenly remembered who she was and that she had a child named Nimble. She stood still and looked around with a wild look. But she couldn't see her little spotted fawn anywhere.

And now she was terribly afraid. "Nimble, where are you?" she called out.

"Here I am!" replied Nimble. As he spoke, he suddenly came into view and jumped so elegantly over the stone wall that his mother could only be proud of him.

"What's going on?" she asked anxiously. "Who's chasing you?"

"No one's chasing me," Nimble said to her. "When I saw the fox, I hurried here."

"The fox!" his mother cried out. "Well, he won't dare to catch you when I'm with you." She was somewhat relieved. If it was just a fox, she certainly wasn't going to run away. "Where did you see the fox?" she asked.

"He was right above my head," Nimble said.

"My goodness," his mother gasped for breath. "That was very dangerous. Was he really above you?"

"He was in a tree," Nimble answered.

His mother gave him a strange look and asked him sharply, "Did you really see him in a tree? What did he look like? Was he red?"

"He was grayish and he had black rings around his long bushy tail, and his long pointed nose stuck out from under a black mask."



"You're talking nonsense," Nimble's mother cried out. "You didn't see a fox. You saw a raccoon!"

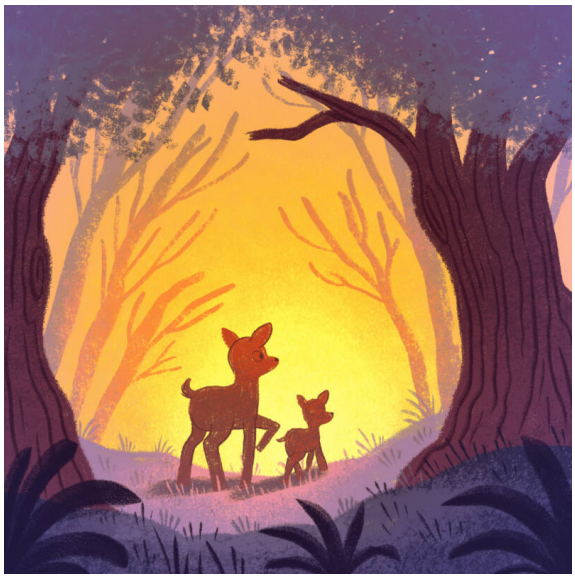
Nimble was surprised.

"You told me once," he reminded his mother, "that a fox was a sly animal with a long bushy tail and a pointed nose. This creature in the tree looked like that."

"Yes, yes," his mother said. "Now listen carefully to what I'm saying: a fox is red and its tail has no rings at all. And foxes don't climb trees."

"Yes, mother," Nimble replied meekly.

He was glad to learn all that. And he was also glad that his mother didn't ask him why he had secretly walked into the woods alone.



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