

Artie and Julie

Merwin Books



Artie was a happy little lion.
Julie was a happy little rabbit.



Papa Lion hoped that one day Artie would become a ferocious lion. Every night before bed, he would tell Artie about wild lion adventures.



Papa Rabbit hoped that one day Julie would become a clever rabbit. Every night before bed, he would tell Julie stories about little rabbits that outsmarted mean nasty lions.



One day, Papa Lion said, "Artie, you're a big boy now. You should learn to find food for yourself. There are plenty of delicious rabbits out on the grasslands."



One day Papa Rabbit said to Julie, "You're a big girl now. You need to learn how to find food for yourself. There's lots of good grass out on the grasslands."



Papa Lion said, "Rabbits are fast and can jump high... and they can hear your footsteps from very far away. But don't worry. Once you learn how to move silently, you'll be able to sneak up behind them. Then you let out a huge ROAR! That will freeze them in their tracks and make them easy to catch!"



Papa Rabbit said, "Lions have razor-sharp teeth and claws. If you get caught by one, you're done for. But don't worry. You'll be ok as long as you run fast and jump high. And with your sensitive ears, you'll be able to hear them coming from very far away. If you're clever, a lion will never catch you!"



Papa Lion taught Artie how to walk without making a sound.



Papa Rabbit taught Julie how to listen for even the tiniest sound.



Papa Lion taught Artie how to do a ferocious roar. But when Artie tried roar, it came out more like "Meeooowww." Papa Lion raised an eyebrow and scratched his head.



Papa Rabbit made Julie practice jumping. She practiced from morning to night. At the end of the day, she was exhausted.



Artie practiced and practiced. At last he could walk silently and do a ferocious roar. He was ready to go to the lush green grasslands and catch rabbits. His mother was worried. "If he doesn't catch any rabbits, won't he be terribly disappointed?" Papa Lion said: "Relax. I know he can do it."



Finally Julie could run and jump as fast and high as her father. Her hearing was so sharp that, even from far away, she could hear the lions' footsteps. She was ready to eat grass out on the lush green grasslands. Her mother said, "I'm worried Julie will be eaten by a lion!" But Papa Rabbit said, "Relax. I'm sure Julie can outsmart any old lion."



Artie walked for miles and miles, but couldn't find the lush green grasslands. Instead he found a marvelous jellyberry patch. He was tired and hungry, so he stopped for a snack.



Julie hopped for miles and miles, but couldn't find the lush green grasslands. Instead she found a marvelous jellyberry patch. She was tired and hungry, so she stopped for a snack.



Artie ate jellyberries until he was full. He completely forgot about going to the grasslands to catch rabbits.



Julie ate jellyberries until she was full. She completely forgot about going to the grasslands to eat grass.



All of a sudden, it began to rain on the jellyberry patch. Artie ran to a nearby cave to keep dry.

All of a sudden, it began to rain on the jellyberry patch. Julie ran to a nearby cave to keep dry.



It was very dark inside the cave. They couldn't see anything. Artie said to himself, "This is boring. I want to go out to play!" Julie said, "Me too. I wish the rain would stop!"

Artie was startled. "Who are you?"
"I'm Julie! I'm a rabbit. Who are you?"
"I'm a lion. My name's Artie!"



Artie felt something climb over his tail. "What was that?!" he cried out. "Don't be afraid" said Julie. "It's just a mouse. I never thought a big lion like you could be such a scary cat." Artie laughed. "And I never thought a little rabbit like you could be so fearless!"



When the rain finally passed, Julie and Artie went to jellyberry patch and splashed in the water until both of them were completely soaked.



Artie and Julie played all afternoon. Julie taught Artie a game called "Jump like a rabbit."

Artie taught Julie a game called "Roar like a lion."



Artie was so happy to have a new friend. He gave a tuft of his fur to Julie as a gift.

Julie was so happy to have a new friend. She gave a tuft of her fur to Artie as a gift.



It was getting late. Artie and Julie went back to their homes.



Artie went back home. Papa Lion saw Artie was wearing a tuft of rabbit fur, and asked:

"So, how was the delicious rabbit?" "I didn't see any delicious rabbits. I played all afternoon with a new friend. I even learned a new game."



Julie went back home. Her mother gave Julie a huge hug. "Thank heavens you weren't eaten by a lion!"

Papa Rabbit spotted the tuft of lion fur. "Looks like our clever Julie has outwitted a ferocious lion." Julie said, "I didn't meet any ferocious lions. I just played with a new friend. I even learned a new game."



"What new game is that?" Papa Lion asked. Artie began to hop about, just like Julie had taught him. His parents looked at each other in shock, exclaiming: "Our baby's turned into a rabbit!"



Papa Rabbit asked: "What new game is that?" Julie took a big breath and did a huge "rrrRROOOOAR!" just like Artie had taught her. Her parents dove under the table, screaming: "There's a lion in the house!" "It's not a lion, it's just me!" said Julie, giggling.



Before he went to sleep, Artie told his father the story of "How the lion and rabbit became friends."



Before she went to sleep, Julie told her father the story of "How the rabbit and lion became friends."



Holding Julie's gift, Artie said softly: "Goodnight, Julie" and drifted off to sleep.



Holding Artie's gift, Julie said softly: "Goodnight, Artie" and drifted off to sleep.

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