



EAGLE AND BULLFROG

LITTLE EAGLE

High in the treetops a baby eagle shrieked and called for its parents to return. Little Eagle was growing quickly. He was always hungry, so both parents had to leave the nest to find food for him. They loved Little Eagle and couldn't wait to soar with him into the sky and show him the amazing world they lived in.

But Little Eagle couldn't fly. His parents were getting worried — all the other baby eagles were already flying.

That night, when Little Eagle was asleep, his parents sat up talking.

'Little Eagle's wings just aren't as long as the other birds, he might never be able to fly,' said Father Eagle sadly.

'What will we do?' Mother Eagle asked.

Little Eagle's parents knew he couldn't stay in the nest high in the trees. It would be too dangerous as he got bigger — he might fall.

'We will wait until the next moon,' said Father Eagle. 'If Little Eagle's wings still haven't grown, then we will have to teach him how to live as a land creature.'

Little Eagle was very quiet. He had only been pretending to sleep and he'd heard everything his parents said. It was bad enough that all the other baby eagles laughed at him as he wobbled on the edge of his nest, awkwardly flapping his little wings. Now even his parents didn't think he would fly! Little Eagle knew he had to be a sky creature, he just couldn't be like those silly land creatures he watched from his nest.

Little Eagle was determined to prove

everyone wrong. As he nestled down to sleep he whispered to himself, 'Tomorrow I will fly.'

LEAVING THE NEST

The next morning Little Eagle waited until all the other eagles had flown off in search of food. He didn't want anyone watching him as he practised his take off. He walked to the very edge of the nest. It really was quite high when he looked down. He was scared. Maybe he should wait another day?

'No,' he said out loud. 'Today is the day. I must show everyone that I can fly.'

Little Eagle was so busy talking to himself that he didn't notice it was getting rather windy. Was that a willy-willy coming? He was peering down for one last look before

take-off when he tumbled over the side of the nest. The willy-willy caught him. Over and over, round and round he tumbled. Little Eagle didn't know which way was up and which way was down. The willy-willy wouldn't let him go. But then, just as suddenly as it started, it began to slow. Little Eagle found himself falling until he landed with a thump.

BULLFROG

'What happened? Where am I?' said Little Eagle.

'Get off me,' a cross voice replied.

Looking down, Little Eagle saw a small green serpent that had been lazing in the sun.

'You fell from the sky,' said Serpent.

'My wings are too small to fly,' said Little Eagle sadly.

'No they're not,' said naughty Serpent, 'you just have too many feathers. Here, let me help you.' And with that, Serpent pulled three feathers from each of Little Eagle's wings.

'No!' Little Eagle cried. 'Stop!' Without his

precious wing feathers, Little Eagle knew he would never be able to fly. But Serpent slid off quickly into the bushes.

Little Eagle felt very sorry for himself, and his wings hurt. He started walking, looking for somewhere to shelter. Soon he came to a waterhole and started to drink.

'What are you doing here?' demanded a croaky voice. There was a large bullfrog, looking at him. 'This is *my* waterhole,' said Bullfrog, putting on his scariest voice.

Little Eagle started to cry. 'I've lost my tree and I'm scared and I can't fly,' he wailed.

Bullfrog looked at poor Little Eagle and his voice became not quite so grumpy. 'Your wings are small now but when they grow you will fly home.'

But Little Eagle just cried harder. 'Even if my wings grow, I won't be able to fly and I'll never get home.' Little Eagle told Bullfrog about losing his precious feathers.

'Oh well,' said Bullfrog. 'You can stay with

me and share my waterhole.’ Bullfrog gave Little Eagle some reeds and sticks to make a nest and Little Eagle settled down for the night.

WARNING

In the morning Bullfrog began teaching Little Eagle how to live as a land creature. When other animals came to drink at the waterhole, Bullfrog would tell Little Eagle about them — which ones were trustworthy and which ones to avoid.

‘Be careful of that naughty green serpent,’ warned Bullfrog, ‘he’s very greedy and always takes things.’

But Little Eagle already knew that.

ALONG CAME A SPIDER

Eagle lived happily with Bullfrog. His wings finally grew but he was still missing his special feathers.

One day, when Little Eagle was out looking for food, he heard a call for help. There, caught in a spider's web, was a winged serpent unable to get free.

Little Eagle started to break the web with his strong claws and sharp beak.

'I'm sorry winged serpent,' he said, 'but I will have to break your wings to free you.'

The winged serpent started to cry.

'Don't cry. I'll try and save some of your

feathers,' Little Eagle said.

'Oh, Eagle, they aren't my feathers,' replied Serpent. 'I stole them from you. I always wanted to fly and be a sky creature *and* a land creature. But the feathers kept falling out, so I tried to get some spider's thread to tie them on tight. I got stuck instead. I'm so sorry for taking your feathers. I deserve to be left for Spider.'

Little Eagle was very upset, but he still felt sorry for Serpent. Serpent had been struggling for a long time to get free of the web and was growing weak. Spider returned every night to her web, and soon Serpent would not be strong enough to fight her.

As Little Eagle broke the last strand and freed Serpent, they heard a crashing noise in the bushes. Spider was returning.

'Run,' said Serpent, 'save yourself before Spider casts her web and catches you too.'