

The Story of Little Mouse Sister – Part 2

By Delmar Johnnie

In part one, little mouse sister went to find the sound, the strange sound. The river. And she did that successfully. She comes back and lives quite happily gathering seeds and nuts in her territory getting ready for the winter. Then all of a sudden, the wind changed and the little mice started to get sick. Some of them just started to cough and get sick, and having a hard time breathing. And pretty soon, more and more of them were getting sick and there wasn't enough people, enough mice to be looking after them. They were saying, "What can we do, what can we do?" Little mouse sister was one of those who were still healthy and she was trying to find the answer. "What do we do, how do we do this, how do we take care of them?" Then, she would ask her uncles and her aunts, mom and dad, "Is there something I can do? Is there some way I could fix something or, warm tea isn't going to do it anymore. What can I do?" "Ahh," one of her uncles said, "I remember a story of a magic lake, I think. Go and ask grandpa. Talk with him. He knows about it more. I can't think right now."

So she runs off and asks grandpa, "Grandpa, Grandpa!" He was organizing everybody to clean the beds, boil the water, do all kinds of stuff and then he stopped and he said, "Yes, yes, what is it?" She said, "There is a story about a magic lake!" "Ahh, I had forgotten about that," said Grandpa, "Thank you for reminding me. It's way over that way, in that direction. You go there, get somebody to go with you. Get somebody to help you. Go and wait, wait, wait. No, I think the first thing you should do is go this way to where the humans are. And they left all kinds of stuff, find a container that you can take."

So she went there, and there was a great big heap of garbage that the humans had left. And then she ruffled through that and finds a jar with a string on it and hangs it around her neck. "That'll do, now I need to find a lid for it," said Little Mouse Sister. So they find a piece of wood, doesn't fit, find a little acorn, and it fits in there. That'll do. And then she runs back to her home. "Grandpa, grandpa, how about this?" said Little Mouse sister. "Oh, that'll do, that'll do. You go to the lake, how many ever can leave with you," said grandpa. Then she got up the next morning, and more of them were sick. Pretty soon nobody could leave with her. Everybody else had to stay back and look after all of those getting sick. So she said "Ok, just point me in the right direction. I will go and find this magic lake, and bring back some water to help our people."

And then the next morning, early, she started out. There was nobody there to say goodbye to her. Everybody was sick. So she looked back and the village was really quiet and, everybody was still sleeping. She thought, "I've got to do this" and she ran off, looking quickly left and right. Looking into the sky. Looking for danger, and just running and running and running. She come by the big tree where squirrel was, was all quiet. He'd been still sleeping, taking care of things, so she just ran past there like. I can't ask anybody or do anything, can't ask any more direction. I know it's over that way someplace. She's runnin along, runnin along and she seen something going on. Something going on along the river. She seen a character so she's hiding, and this character's moving around, just over there. And he was kinda splashing around like a, ohh I don't know what that is. Then she started sneaking along the rocks. Then all of a sudden, she seen this big fuzzy tail. Ahh, it's squirrel, he's over there. And he was washing up and he was singin along, "hummm, hummm." And he's just washing his

face and he turns around and looks, "AAHH, Little Mouse Sister, are you lost, I can take you home." "No, not lost, I'm not lost." "Where are you going?" "I'm going over there to find the magic lake. Ah, I just have to do this." "Ok, ok, it's over that way, but the problem is that you gotta cross the river, and right now the river is high. Like, holy, the river is really high, it's, I don't know, maybe get a log, or swim across. It's really dangerous and really rough now." So she said, "Ok, thank you, thank you, thank you." And she runs along the river looking for a spot to cross. Maybe there is a log jam there, maybe there's something she can cross.

She's walking along, just really tired, thinking, "Oh, I've got to cross the river pretty soon. I know on the other side, I haven't been there. Nobody's been there, but it's over that way someplace." And I gotta, then she could hear something in the distance. (noise) She stops. "I wonder what that is?" (noise) Pretty soon, she stands up and she kinda peeks around. She could see something over there. (noise) Then, she starts sneakin over there, sneakin over there. (noise) It's like whoa, this thing's huge, it's big, it's a monster! She kind of moves a little closer. She gets right up close to it, and there's a HHMMM, and whoosh sound as he breathes out his nose. All this dust flies. And she says, "Whoa, I wonder what this thing is?" She kinda walks around and she looks at it. All of a sudden this big eye, huge eye, bigger than her kinda opens up and looks at her, and kind of focuses and focuses. It looks right at her and groans. Then she says, "What happened to you?" and he said, "Arrghh, in the storm last night it was real windy, heavy with clouds and I was so excited and I was running, and I was galloping all over the place. And I was having a great time. I was just runnin, runnin, and all of a sudden I tripped and fell and I got this stick in my side. And it punctured me right here. So I am just kind of laying here waiting to die." And she thought, "Whoa! Waiting to die. Ohh, so what are you?" and he said "Ohhhh, I am buffalo" and he says "OOHHHHH, this really hurts."

And she says, "What can I do, is there something I can do?" "AAhh, you kind of look so little, I don't think you can do anything," said the buffalo, "I am just ready to, just go about your business, and leave me alone. I am just going to wait until I die." And she says, "Can I look at it? Can I look at your wound?" He says, "Yeah, you just kinda walk up on my leg and take a look. There's a big hole over here." So, she climbs up on his hoof, and walks up and walks up and walks up and then gets there and she can see this hole and says, "Whoa, you got a damaged lung there." With out even thinking, in an instant, she reaches in her chest and pulls out a lung and puts it in there and starts to rub and starts to rub. And all of a sudden he starts to moan, "Oh that feels good," and then he starts to get up and she runs down his leg and jumps off. And she's laying there and she's got pain in her chest where she took her lung out. Then all of a sudden, buffalo stands up and he's so huge and he's grunting. "Ohhhhhh I feel good. Ohhhh, thank you, thank you," and then he runs off and the ground shakes and she's hanging on to this little bush. Oh pain and pain. He runs off and she couldn't hear him no more. Pretty soon, the ground starts shakin and he comes runnin back. "Ohhh gees this is good, and I'm better, I'm all better. If there's anything I can do for you Little Mouse Sister, anything I can do for you, I will do it."

She says "Well, I'm trying to get across the river. I'm trying to go find the magic lake." And he says, "Ohhh I can bring you. I know where it, ummh, I know where the mountain is that it's on. I can bring you that far." So, he reaches his head down and he says, "Climb up on my nose, climb up between my horns here, and sit there." And she climbs up and she grabs on and, "OHHH, geesh, your nose is all wet." She climbs up between his eyes and sits there. Grabs onto the fur. And then, he stands up and all of a

sudden she's way up there. Then he starts running. Just running towards the river and then he jumps right into the river and he starts swimming. And when he goes across, he gets to the other side and he says, "Ohh, that river is really big this time of year." And he puts his nose down and she climbs down for a little bit and she says, "Is that it?" And he says, "No no no, just kinda wait there." He starts to shake. Water all over the place, and she's hanging onto this little bush and she gets all wet and he says, "Oh man, ok. There. Now, I am pretty dry." And he puts his nose down. "Get back on." She climbs on and he starts running. "Oh," she says, "Slow down! Slow down. It's too bumpy."

Pretty soon he slows down to a trot. "Oh, that's a lot easier, that's a lot easier," says the mouse. Then, he runs and runs and pretty soon she starts to see animals, other animals in the field. There's buffalo, there's deer and there's elk. "Oh, I've never seen all this before." And pretty soon, he comes through the mountains and he says, "Well, this is as far as I can go. I'm a buffalo and I can run the plains really fast but I cannot climb. I cannot go up that way, up to the rocks where you need to get to the lake. This is as far as I can bring you." She climbs down off his nose, gets to the ground and all of a sudden, without even saying a word, he sticks out his tongue and slurps her. "Oh, buffalo breath all over me." And she groans. And he says, "Thank you, thank you little mouse sister for saving my life." And she says, "No, thank you for bringing me this far." And then she grabs around her chest, and she can't find her little glass jar. Oh, where did it go, and then she finds a string. Oh it's on the back, and pulled it forward. Oh, I'm all set and I have to start heading up there.

So she starts climbing up the mountain. She's holding her side. She's still hurting, climbing, climbing up the rocks. She gets to a rock and kind of pulls herself up, swings her leg up. "Oh, geez, this hurts. This hurts. I hope we are not too far from the top. And then she kind of puts her hands up on the next piece of rock and she could feel the air. "Oh, there is a breeze. I must be near the top. The wind is blowing. I am going to climb up there." And she grabs on. Oh, oh, just pulls herself up and she gets up to her chin and she looks, and there is this wolf sitting there. Oh, wolves eat mice. And she let herself back down again. And as her arms stretch out, she sits down and says, "I'll just wait here for awhile until he goes away." And then she thinks, "Oh man, it seems like I've been here for a long time. I can't see too much. I've got tears in my eyes." So she grabs the rock again, and climbs up and wolf is still sitting there. Oh, man. So, she sits down again, and waits and waits and waits. He's gotta be gone now. She jumps up and grabs onto the rock, pulls herself up to her chin and she looks, and wolf is sitting there. He's got his eyes closed, and he's just sitting there. She thinks, "I got this far, I can't go around him. I don't have enough energy. I just gotta get up here and if he eats me, I guess that's it, I'm finished."

So she climbs up there, she sits there and looks at wolf, and says, "Hi there." "OH, OH, who is there?" said the wolf. He can't see, he is blind. She looks at him, "OH, I said to myself, I can sneak around him." And she kind of looks at him and says, "What happened to you?" "OH", he says, "the wind was blowing last night," and he says, "I was howling." He said, "I was having such a great time. And I was runnin and runnin and I got this stick right across my eyes that had some thorns in it. It was like, oh yeah, painful. So, a wolf can't see, and I'm just sitting here waiting until I die cause I can't find my food, can't do anything." And without thinking, she just kind of reached up and took an eye out and put it in his face. She reached over and took the other eye out and put it in his face. And he's like blinking and blinking and blinking. Howwwwwwl! He could see and he looked at her and said, "Oh, a snack! Oh no, she helped me. I just can't kind of have that as snack." And then he was just so happy, he started jumping around and he

ran off. And she could hear him way down there howling. And she said, "Oh, I should have asked him directions while he was here. Where's this lake? It's up here some place"

She can't see now. She's blind. Pretty soon she could hear this thing grinning, really quietly. "Howwwwwwwl", the wolf says, "is there anything I can do for you? You have given me sight. You have extended my life. Is there anything I can do for you?" "Well I am here, I am looking for the magic lake," said the mouse. "Ah, the lake," said the wolf, "it's just over there. Climb up here on my nose, I will bring you there." She was so happy. She climbs up and gets between his ears, and then he runs off. Trots off. Just real gentle like. He runs and runs and pretty soon he stops. "Here you go. This is as far as I can bring you. The lake is right there. Not too far." He puts his head down and she climbs off. And she says, "Oh, thank you, thank you." And he says, "No... thank you." And without hesitating, he just kinda licks her. She moans and groans, "Oh, the second time today. This time wolf breath. Gross! I can't see, and he's still kind of licking me. Anyways, which way is it?" He kind of nudges her, nudges her, "Straight that way. You go about 14 steps and you're at the lake." And he says, "Thanks again, thanks again." And he runs off, "Howwwwwwwl!"

You could hear him way down there and he's so happy, and she said, "Oh, the lake's here. I could smell it. I could smell the water. It's like oh so close." And she kind of looks and looks, and feeling and checking things out. "It's not too far. It's not too far he said." Then, she could hear *swoosh*, just a little wind blowing on the lake. And it's rubbing up against the sand. "Oh, it's right here," said the mouse. Pretty soon there was *woosh, woosh, woosh*. "Oh, this is it. A hawk or something? An owl is going to come, and they eat mice. And they're going to eat me. Ah that's it!" said the mouse. And *SWOOSH*. It lands right beside her. It's Raven. "Ah, little mouse sister! Are you lost? Can I bring you home? It's not even far for me. I can just fly you that way," said Raven. "No, no, no," said the mouse, "I have come to the lake." "Oh, you've come to the lake," said the raven. "I heard it's a magic lake," said the mouse. "Oh, a magic lake. You heard it's a magic lake," said the raven. "Yeah, it is, kind of. Sort of. But there's a few things you have to do when you get there. You gotta walk in ankle deep. Anyway this is the way I heard it. You gotta walk in ankle deep and you gotta wash your face four times. And then you gotta jump as high as you can and you gotta scream as loud as you can before things work." "Oh, ok. Well thank you," said the mouse. "Yeah, ok. It's just a little ways down that way. But anyway, you're ok? I'll see you, I'm gone," said Raven.

Swoosh, swoosh. He flies off and she's like 'Whoa' and she walks. Pretty soon, she could feel it on her toes. "Ahh the lake, ahh the lake," said the mouse. And she gets there, and she grabs her little flask jar and she fills it up. She's standing there. Nothing's happening. This lake is magic, but nothing's happening. "Here I am. I got some water. I'm ready to head back, but it's supposed to be magic," said the mouse. "Nothin's happening. What's going on? Oh, did I come to the wrong lake or were they just kind of misguiding me, or what's going on? Is everyone just kind of standing over there, and giggling quietly and looking at me cause I can't see and I'm hurting? What's it...oh yeah...Raven. Raven said I got to wash 4 times. Oh yeah, I can do this." And she washes up, grabs the water, puts some on her chest and rubs, and rubs. Oh, four times, and she washes her face, splashes herself off four times. She stands there. Nothing happens. She says, "This lake isn't magic. Nothin has happened. I washed myself four times and nothin's happened. And, uh, oh, Raven said that I gotta jump as high as I can, and scream as loud as I can." And she reaches. "I don't think I can jump very high this time." And she crouches down, and says, "Oh."

She gathers her energy, and jumps. "Ahhhh!" she screams. And she kind of giggles and looks around. "I think some one is laughing at me someplace. I can't hear nothin'. Well, I jumped and I screamed, but I didn't jump as hard as I could, and I didn't scream as loud as I could. So maybe I'll try it again," said the mouse. So, she crouches down and gathers all her energy, puts her arm on her chest, because it hurt the last time, and she jumps again. She puts her arms out like this and her mouth is wide open. And nothing comes out. She's got her mouth wide open, and her arms are out, and she can feel the wind on her face. And then all of sudden she started to think. "I jumped and my mouth is wide open but I didn't scream. And I didn't hit the water. I didn't land," said the mouse. "I can feel this breeze on my face. And I didn't land back in the water. Ah, what's going on here? My mouth is still open. I can feel this.....," and then she opened an eye. And it was like, 'Woah!' She could kind of see a little bit. Oh, she opened an eye, and said, "Oh, my chest doesn't hurt anymore. Oh, I can see." And she opened her other eye and said, "My mouth is still open, and there's no sound coming out of it. And I can see out of my other eye. Woah!"

She looks over to the right, and she sees feathers. "Oh, when I jumped and the eagle swallowed me, he didn't swallow me whole with my head sticking out," thought the mouse. And she looked to the left and she could see feathers. And she said, "He's got me. He hasn't eaten me yet. But I'm up here and it's like he swallowed me. Oh man, he's gonna, oh, I got so close." She could feel the wind in her face, she looked again to the left. And the feathers were moving through the wind. And all of a sudden, like, 'Woah,' she went to close her arms and all of a sudden, she'd start to fall, right to the lake, and she'd spread her arms out. Then, she glided right along the lake. And she looked in the lake and she turned eagle. "Whoa, I'm an eagle," she said, "I can't be." She looked around. My mouth's not open anymore. Holy, I can see out of these eyes and I can see way over there. I'm eagle!"

She looked at her chest and the flask was there. How did it get there? I put it down on the ground. All these questions. I've turned eagle!" And she flew high, flew high and she said, "Oh, this is lots of fun. Oh, this is great. Oh, there's other mountains over there. I can...oh...my people. My people are hurting. I should go back there." So, she glided over the mountains. And through the prairies. And over the river. And then, she started to come close to her little village. And then she thought, "If I show up like this, they'll all be afraid of me. They won't come near." So, she landed on squirrel's tree and she started to think, "Hmm, I can't show up like this. Maybe I could just waddle over there and put the water right close to them so they can find it." Then, she flew down and landed on the ground and she said, "Hmm, what can I do, what can I do?" With her beak, she plucked out the acorn -the lid for the flask. And then, she stuck a feather in there and wiggled it around. "Hmm, magic water. Hmmm, magic water. This will help my people but I gotta...how can I?" Then, she splashed her face with water that was on her feathers and like..POOF...she turned back to little mouse sister. She was like, "Holy, didn't even hurt. Holy, here I am...!" and she looked around. There's feather marks and stuff on the ground in the dust. "Nobody will believe that. It's like, oh man, nobody will know this story. Hmm..anyway, better go and see my people."

She grabbed the flask, put it back on her chest, and she started heading to her people. And she said, "I got the water, I got the water." And she started to pour and gave a little bit to everybody. And soon they all started to feel better. And they started to get stronger. And they all thanked her for going to the magic lake. And nobody asked her how she got back. And she didn't tell anybody what happened there. Just that the lake was magic. And that's the end of Little Mouse Sister. Part 2.